The “Criminal” is the Real Victim

Headlines in Idaho declared that Blake Edmund Cody was guilty of a most heinous crime — he tried to grab an officer’s gun during a fight! Mr. Cody, you see, had the misfortune of being the passenger in a vehicle whose driver failed to obey a traffic sign. Predictably, this victimless act on the part of the driver resulted in the involuntary detention and intrusive questioning of both him and his passenger by the local constabulary. When it was all said and done, Mr. Cody was not only beaten to a bloody pulp, but he was charged with felony battery on a law enforcement officer, felony removing a firearm from a law enforcement officer, felony possession of meth, as well as misdemeanors for possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia, resisting and obstructing and two counts of failure to appear.

Despite these myriad charges, however, I find little for which to condemn Mr. Cody. Perhaps this is because I understand that any action which does not constitute the initiation of force against the life, liberty, or property of another is not a crime — it is merely a personal choice regarding how to exercise one’s freedom. This of course includes the production, distribution, and consumption of drugs or other ‘illegal’ substances; and it also includes ignoring the government and its agents, refusing to cooperate with them, and attempting to mitigate their ability to do harm to others. Furthermore, I know that once an agent of the government has initiated force against someone (which includes detention or any other involuntary act), it is fully justifiable to use whatever defensive force is necessary to terminate the actions of that agent.

None of that accusations made against Mr. Cody are legitimate because none of the actions of which he is accused constitute true crimes. There is no duty to appear before a magistrate of the fiction know as a state, so his ignoring of these commands is not only justified, but laudable. His possession of banned substances is also not truly criminal for such actions do not constitute the initiation of force against the life, liberty, or property of another. Finally, if he in fact used force against an officer and attempted to take the officer’s gun, such actions were taken (even according to the story told by the police) only after the police attempted to restrain or otherwise limit Mr. Cody’s freedom to ignore them and leave the scene of the officer’s initiation of force against the driver of the vehicle.

Allow me to reiterate: even if Mr. Cody did exactly what he is accused of doing, he is not guilty of any true crime. On the contrary, it is the state enforcers who are guilty of kidnapping, harassment, assault, and battery.

Any force used against an individual by a law enforcement officer is unjustified and criminal unless that action is taken to prevent actual, articulable harm to another person. Unless there is an actual victim (not a theoretical victim) whose life, liberty, or property is being aggressed against; any coercive action on the part of the law enforcement officer

(including stopping a vehicle, asking for ID, etc.) is an act of unjustified force initiation which may be justly resisted with whatever defensive force is necessary to terminate the actions of the aggressor.

Mr. Cody did not initiate force against anyone. The driver of the vehicle, Robert Jay Mitchell, did not initiate force against anyone. As is typical, it was the tax-fattened enforcers employed by a coercive state who started—and finished—the fight. It is truly a cruel and confounded world in which professional bullies funded through coercive taxation are allowed to harass and detain peaceful people and yet are still widely regarded as the ‘good guys’ while their victims are castigated and subject to additional abuses.

— Parrish