

# FORUM

## Police brutality, racism and politics



**Walter Smith**  
Guest Columnist

Police have a civic duty to protect and serve individuals, but like most people who hold a great deal of authority, their powers are sometimes abused. Unfortunately, police brutality is a common occurrence in America and especially when interacting with African-American men. It's often accompanied by several other examples of police misconduct.

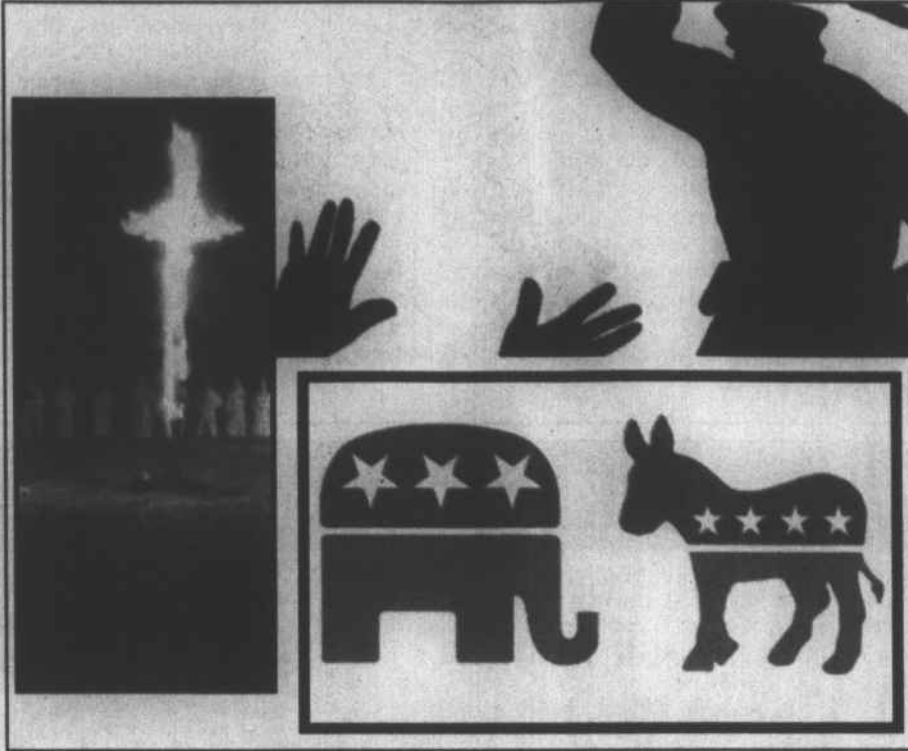
Police officers have an implicit bias linking blacks to crime. So the black crime implicit bias might be implicated in some of the use of deadly force against African-Americans.

Rudy Giuliani quotes crime statistics in Chicago among black males as if Al Capone and the Chicago mob never existed. In 1929 it was bootlegging and prohibition that precipitated a dispute between North and South Side mob gangs. In 2016 its drugs, black street gangs and territorial invasion. In the wake of two tragic incidents involving the death of two African-American men at the hands of police, a cross section of US citizens organized by members of "Black Lives Matter" took to the streets in various cities across the US to protest the senseless murders. At the end of the peaceful demonstration and protest in Dallas, Texas, shots rang out and 12 police officers were shot and five of them fatally.

Micah Xavier Johnson, the shooter, was a sole dissenter who decided to express his

opposition to the killing of the two men by sacrificing his life while taking the lives of white police officers. Critics of the demonstrations are blaming "Black Lives Matter" founders for the attack and assuming the demonstrations is a "black" activity. They are now focusing their attention on demonizing and criminalizing the group's founders and activities.

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani is standing by his recent com-



ments that the Black Lives Matter movement is "inherently racist." "It's inherently racist because, number one, it divides us," he said. Nothing divides Americans like the labels "Black" and "White." No one has white skin color, its light pink at best. No one has black skin color, it's deep dark chocolate at best.

However, these labels have meaning and are indelibly etched in our minds. White falsely represents purity, privileged, intelligent, ambitious, and authority. Black falsely represents the opposite. Too many Americans take these labels as facts of life. In opposition to the activities of "Black Lives Matter" Trump has reverted to the days of the '60s with his announcement of being the "Law and Order" candidate, effectively declaring war on "Black Lives Matter" as Nixon and Hoover did on civil rights activists in the 1968 presidential elections. By declaring himself the "law and order" candidate, Trump has ripped a page from the campaign playbook of Richard Nixon, who successfully ran for

the presidency in 1968 as the "law and order" candidate.

Trump has also cribbed the Nixonian phrase "silent majority" to describe his supporters who, like Nixon's, are largely white and middle class. Unlike the sixties, when the civil rights movement was in full swing, today's voters are not as "Black" and "White" committed as they were then. The nation is browning and racial identities are becoming less important. In 1968 the black population in the US was about 23 million. Today that number has grown to 44 million.

The racial and ethnic makeup of the American people is in flux. New immigrants from Asia and Latin America have added a large measure of cultural and phenotypic diversity to the American population, just as waves of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe did a century ago. "Black Lives Matter" is not a Black thing. It is a sampling of the American public, protesting police brutality and racial injustice.

Trump's adaptation of Nixon's "Law and Order" campaign slogan may not serve him as it did Nixon. Donald Trump and Rudy Giuliani are living in the past and hoping to resurrect the racial policies of the past.

The attack on the Dallas police had absolutely nothing to do with "Black Lives Matter". For the good of America, both Trump and Giuliani should focus on the millions of young black men who like Micah Johnson, are fed up with racial profiling, police brutality, and especially the indiscriminately killing of young black men.

They need to listen to the cries of Black America, instead of demonizing and criminalizing the protests. It's easy to demonize and criminalize an organization of known individuals but it is impossible to do the same to the Micah Johnsons of the country who decide to sacrifice their lives while taking a host of innocent citizens with them.

The energy and resources they are expending on demonizing and criminalizing "Black Lives Matter" would be better spent eradicating the labels that separate us, "Black and White." If they are really serious about getting rid of protesters and especially "Black Lives Matter" all they need do is correct the root causes that spawn these protester groups. Get rid of racism, racial profiling, police brutality, and allow black minds to develop to their fullest potential.

Donald Trump profits politically from his racist positions. So don't expect him to change positions even if he changes his rhetoric. America, and especially blacks and Latinos, are facing the danger of a Trump-run country.

You are urged to register and in November make your way to the polls with a friend or a family member in tow and vote. Black lives mattered yesterday, they matter today. And will matter tomorrow and forever!

Walter Smith is publisher of the New York Beacon.

## In memoriam of Mr. Alton Sterling and Mr. Philando Castille



The Greater Church of Deliverance Inc. joins with millions across this nation who mourn the loss of another life and the senseless murder of another African-American male at the hands of law enforcement officers, while apprehended under suspicion for a victimless crime.

As a reformation of Christian churches and ministries who believe emphatically that our call requires that we speak boldly and intelligently concerning the injustices against any individual or group. This public statement is not only our right, but it is also our responsibility.

The Christian church and most specifically the African-American church has always been at the forefront of civil rights issues. Through the church, our congregants have historically been educated of their rights under the constitution of the United States of America. Churches have led organized acts of protest and non-violent civil disobedience.

This important church work has given voice to those who most times feel voiceless and hope through faith in Jesus Christ to those who feel hopeless. As leaders within Christendom, this nation, and our



*Sterling*



*Castille*

communities, we speak as a reformation today because it is our responsibility. This is our collective voice and we will raise it until there is awareness among our constituency and those within the reach of our voice.

The leadership of this reformation firstly and foremost calls us all to prayer. Prayer for the family of Alton Sterling, the family of Philando Castille, and the families of the many victims of violent crimes throughout this nation and the world. Prayer for law enforcement, officers who truly protect and defend communities, its citizens and property. Prayer for all government officials. Prayer for the safety of African-American men and women, young

and old. Prayer for all of mankind especially those who are underrepresented and under resourced.

Secondly, we ask that the non-African-American leaders within the Christian Church community raise their voices. It is paramount that we raise our voices and stand together during these tumultuous times.

In August 1963, Dr. [Martin Luther] King addressed the clergy in his "Letter From The Birmingham Jail." In that same spirit, we ask that you stand with us hand in hand concerning the blatant disrespect those of color still experience daily here in the United States. Raise your voices with us in prayer, on social media and in public.

We do not expect you to feel all we feel, yet we do expect you to respond to our cries, our calls and our cause.

You have not read of legalities in this missive because we are not officers of the court. You have not read statistics because we are not scientists; you have not read interviews because we are not reporters.

What you have read is the voice of apostolic leadership and prophetic confrontation because we are the prophets of the most high God. We speak as his oracles and we speak as those having authority. We will not sit silently or distance ourselves from our brothers and sisters of any race, creed or color who are in the center of any struggle. We stand for respect and freedom from oppression. We encourage others to join your voices individually and collectively to this call to action. Join us in prayer and protest. Join us as we advance the Kingdom of God in the earth.

With Prayerful Contemplation ...

The three authors of this letter are affiliated with Greater Church of Deliverance Inc. in Winston-Salem: Bishop Freddie B. Marshall, Ph.D., presiding prelate of Greater Church Inc.; Bishop David M. Callands Jr., executive vice presiding prelate; and Dr. Cassandra Smith, secretary-general.

## Pray for our officers, their families and the people of W-S

BY ALLEN JOINES AND BISHOP TODD FULTON  
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Once again tragedy targeting law enforcement, the very entity in place to protect us, has befallen a community. Times like this call for us to look at our residents and law enforcement and turn to a greater power for comfort and

guidance.

From the 21 recruits, who just yesterday [July 18] completed their first day of Basic Law Enforcement Training in the Winston-Salem Police Academy, to our longest serving veteran officer and the chief of police, we fully support the Winston-Salem Police Department in their effort to provide the rule of law in our city.

We know that each man and woman of the department, with his and her own life story, volunteered to defend us from crime, violence and evil that exists everywhere. We are witnessing unprecedented times and traumas in communities around the nation, most recently this weekend in Baton Rouge. We're drawn to keep them in our thoughts and prayers, and

we invite you to hold close in your heart our men and women who patrol and protect our community around the clock and across the city. Pray for safekeeping over the 21 brave men and women who started their training this week. They enter the profession during tumultuous times, yet they have agreed to answer the call to serve and protect Winston-Salem.

Our police respond to the aftereffects of many problems; poverty, abuse, conflicts, mental health disorders and conditions we can't explain. Our communities must recognize the need to help each other and respond with grace, love and support. We stand united in support of our community's efforts to find peace before these problems overrun our capacity.

Join us in praying for all of our officers, for their families and for the people of Winston-Salem.

Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines and Bishop Todd Fulton, president of the Ministers' Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, issued this joint statement.