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President Barack Obama listens as Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga. speaks in the South Court Auditorium in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex in Washington, Thursday, Aug. 6, on the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

Half of blacks say police have treated them unfairly

By Jesse J. Holland
WASHINGTON (AP) - A majority of blacks in the United States - more than 3 out of 5 - say they or a family member have personal experience with being treated unfairly by the police, and their race is the reason.

Half of African-American respondents, including 6 in 10 black men, said they personally had been treated unfairly by police because of their race, compared with 3 percent of whites. Another 15 percent said they knew of a family member who had been treated unfairly by the police because of their race.

This information, from a survey conducted by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, comes as the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, Missouri, approaches its first anniversary and the nation continues to grapple with police-related deaths of black Americans.

White Americans who live in more diverse communities - where census data show at least 25 percent of the population is non-white - were more likely than other whites to say police in their communities mistreat minorities, 58 percent to 42 percent. And they're more likely to see the police as too quick to use deadly force, 42 percent to 29 percent.

Larry Washington, 30, of Merrillville, Indiana, described his encounter with a white police officer when he was arrested for theft in Burbank, Illinois, as a teenager. "When I got to the police station, the officer who arrested me told me that I looked like I wanted to do something about it," Washington said, adding, "And he kept calling me 'nigger.'"

"It's been like this for a long time," Washington said. "It's just now that everybody starting to record it and stuff, it's just hitting the spotlight. Most Caucasians, they think it's just starting to go on when it's been like this."

The AP-NORC poll also showed:

-More than two-thirds of blacks - 71 percent - thought police are treated too leniently by the criminal justice system when they hurt or kill people. A third of whites say police are getting away with it, while nearly half - 46 percent - say the police are treated fairly by the criminal justice system.

-Sixty-two percent of whites said a major reason why police violence happens is that civilians confront the police, rather than cooperate, when they are stopped. Three out of 4 blacks, or 75 percent, said it is because the consequences of police misconduct are minimal, and few officers are prosecuted for excessive use of force. More than 7 in 10 blacks identified problems with race relations, along with poor police-community relations, as major reasons for police violence.

-Nearly 3 out of 4 whites - 74 percent - thought race had nothing to do with how police in their communities decide to use deadly force. Among blacks, 71 percent thought police were more likely to use deadly force against black people in their communities, and 85 percent said the same thing applied generally across the country. Fifty-eight percent of whites thought race had nothing to do with police decisions in most communities on use of deadly force.

Seventy-two percent of whites said they always or often trust police to do right by them and their community, while 66 percent of blacks said they only

sometimes, rarely or never trust the police to do what is right. David A. Clarke Jr, sheriff in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, said African-Americans have more encounters with police than whites because of crime rates in urban areas. "If you have more interaction with the police because of the crime and the disorder in our urban centers - the American ghetto I like to say it - it's going to skew the numbers," Clarke said.

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Attendees react to President Barack Obama during his remarks in a town hall at the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Mandela Washington Fellowship Presidential Summit at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., Aug. 3. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

Confederate monument vandalized for second time in 3 weeks

By Emily Masters

RALEIGH (AP) - A Confederate monument in Charlotte has been vandalized for the second time in three weeks, police said Tuesday.

The names of eight of the nine people killed in the mass shooting inside a historic black church in Charleston, South Carolina, were spray painted on one side of the monument. Shooting victim Ethel Lance's name was not included.

The phrase, "The cause for which they fought -- the cause of slavery -- was wrong," was spray-painted on the other side of the granite monument, which was first unveiled in 1929.

No one has been charged and the investigation is ongoing, said Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police spokesman Keith Trietley. Police believe the monument was vandalized between 11 p.m. Monday and 9 a.m. Tuesday.

On July 16, liquid cement was smeared on the monument, which was cleaned at Mecklenburg County's expense.

The monument's inscription gives "grateful recognition" to the Confederate soldiers who "preserved the Anglo-Saxon civilization of the South." The granite monument also features four Confederate battle flags.

The vandalism comes as the nation debates the appropriateness of the Confederate battle flag and Confederate monuments after the shooting of nine worshippers at 'Mother Emanuel' AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The suspect in that case, a white man, posed with the Confederate flag in photographs.

Last month, South Carolina removed the Confederate battle flag from its statehouse grounds but left the Confederate memorial standing. Also in July, North Carolina passed a law banning state or local authorities from removing "objects of remembrance" -- including Confederate monuments -- from public property without state legislative action.

The Mecklenburg County monument was one of two monuments vandalized in Charlotte on July 16. The word "racist" was spray-painted on a memorial at Old City Hall. The city removed the monument and relocated it to a city warehouse for cleaning, where it remains.

"The city is still working to determine the most effective and cost-efficient measures to clean and repair the monument," said corporate city spokesman Ken Brown. "Considering the possibility of repeat acts of vandalism, the city is also exploring measures to apply a protectant."

The Old City Hall monument was donated by the Confederate Memorial Association of Charlotte in 1977. The United Confederate Veterans raised funds with Charlotte citizens to pay for the Mecklenburg County monument.

Maya Angelou for sale: Belongings of late poet draw buyers

WINSTON-SALEM (AP) - Crowds are funneling through late poet Maya Angelou's home for a sale of some of the furniture, books and everyday possessions she left behind.

The three-day estate sale for the acclaimed writer and activist is wrapped up Saturday in Winston-Salem. Items for sale ranged from boxes of light bulbs and bags of cheese knives to Angelou's personal typewriter.

Proceeds will be donated to Angelou's foundation and other charities.

Mobilizing for the Oct. 10 Justice or Else' March in D.C.

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA Columnist

When The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan issues a sacred clarion call for a national and international mobilization for justice, freedom and equality, millions of people across America and throughout the world respond with responsive enthusiasm and energy. Such was the case in response to the minister's call for the Million Man March (MMM) in Washington, D.C. 20 years ago. I believe that history will be repeated once again this year on October 10 in Washington, D.C.

Analysis

Minister Farrakhan boldly has issued a new call: Justice Or Else mobilization on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Million Man March on the National Mall. The minister asserted, "On 10.10.15, show the world our unity." Our demand for justice will be a united demand. It will be an unequivocal demand for equal justice.

Without hesitation or fear, I made a decision to join Minister Farrakhan in 1965 to help him organize and mobilize the historic Million Man March as its national director. Being an ordained minister in the Church of Christ, I knew then as I still know today that God continues to bless Minister Farrakhan uniquely with the vision and mission to redeem and empower black Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans and all others who struggle for a better quality of life in America and throughout the world.

At four times the size of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the Million Man March is believed to have been the largest march ever on the nation's capital. I believe that God hears the prayers of people and communities that cry out for justice. Today, we must organize and mobilize again with renewed vigor and determination.

Almost every day now we hear and learn of another dastardly fatal act of racially motivated police brutality and misconduct that leaves our families and communities in great sorrow, grief and anger. As president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), I get the daily reports and feeds about the growing systematic injustices in the United States from our 206 African American-owned newspapers based in every region of the nation.

We are the trusted voice of black America and I am telling you that the suffering cup of patience in America has run over. The madness of constant videotaped modern-day lynching of black people in the U.S. has become intolerable. We are simply not going to take it anymore!

This providential and a welcome sight to witness the steady growth and development of Justice Or Else 50th Anniversary Local Organizing Committees (LOCs) in every major city. A broad cross section of community activists from the NAACP, the National Urban League, National Action Network, the Black PUSH Coalition and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Latino and Native American organizations and many others are joining with Nation of Islam organizers and officials to build a national network of LOCs.

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Dashboard video key in police officer's manslaughter trial

By Jeffrey Collins

CHARLOTTE (AP) - Jurors have heard their first account of what happened in the seconds when a Charlotte police officer shot and killed an unarmed black man looking for help after a car crash. Footage from officer Adam Neal's dashboard camera was shown publically for the first time as Neal testified in the third day of fellow officer Randall Kerrick's voluntary manslaughter trial.

Neal returned to the stand Aug. 6. On the September 2013 video, Jonathan Ferrell runs out of the camera's view just before he is shot. Kerrick can't be seen firing his gun 12 times. But the sound of each shot was recorded through the microphone on Neal's uniform, along with the voice of someone yelling "Get on the ground!" three times. Ferrell was hit by 10 bullets.

Jurors watched 36 minutes of video. The critical portion lasted only about five seconds. Ferrell is seen in the headlights of officer Adam Neal's cruiser as Neal pulls up without using his blue lights or siren. Neal testified that Ferrell was pacing, and Neal saw red laser dots on Ferrell's chest as the officer aimed his Taser at Ferrell.

As Ferrell runs out of the camera's view, a voice is heard yelling "Get on the ground!" Four shots are heard then a pause and eight more shots are heard as someone keeps yelling to for Ferrell to get on the ground. After the final shot, a voice yells "Don't move!"

Ferrell's family had seen the footage as part of a wrongful death lawsuit they settled with the city of Charlotte for \$2.25 million. They showed no reaction to it last Wednesday. Dashboard footage from Kerrick's car and the car of a third officer is also expected to be introduced in evidence.

Prosecutors said Kerrick is guilty because he overreacted when he killed Ferrell. Authorities said the officers did not identify themselves and Neal's video appears to confirm that.

Defense lawyers said the shooting was justified because Ferrell charged officers before they could get out what was going on and tried to grab Kerrick's gun when he fell on the officer.

Neal testified he didn't pull his gun, Taser or baton because he planned to wrestle the 24-year-old former Florida A&M football player to take him into custody. Neal and other officers were investigating after a woman called 911 and reported Ferrell was trying to break down her door as he pounded on it looking for help.

Under cross-examination, Neal said he didn't fire his weapon because he would have hit Kerrick. He agreed that he told investigators Ferrell looked like he was "amped up" and was in a "zombie state." Kerrick, 28, faces up to 11 years in prison if convicted of voluntary manslaughter. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department hired him in 2011 after he had worked as an animal control officer.