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The War on Cops



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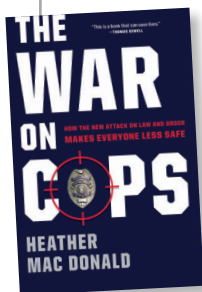
HEATHER MAC DONALD

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN HINDERAKER

On December 8, 2016 Heather Mac Donald spoke at the fourth of Center of the American Experiment's quarterly 2016 lunch forums. She spoke about her book, "The War on Cops" to a crowd of over 400 and we were honored to have 150 members of Minnesota law enforcement in the room. While she was in Minneapolis the Center arranged for her to speak with the Star Tribune editorial board and at a round table with local law enforcement leaders. Heather Mac Donald is the Thomas W. Smith Fellow at the Manhattan Institute

and a contributing editor of City Journal. She is a recipient of the 2005 Bradley Prize. Mac Donald's work at City Journal has covered a range of topics, including higher education, immigration, policing, homelessness and homeless advocacy, criminal-justice reform, and race relations. Her writing

has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The New Republic, and The New Criterion. Mac Donald's newest book, The War on Cops (2016), warns that raced-based attacks on the criminal-justice system, from the White House on down, are eroding the authority of law and putting lives at risk.



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THE WAR ON COPS

HEATHER MAC DONALD

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN HINDERAKER

John Hinderaker: Welcome. There are more than 150 officers and other personnel representing a number of Minnesota law enforcement agencies here today. In honoring the law enforcement officers who are here today, we say thank you to them, personally, for everything they do to keep us safe. We're also thanking them symbolically as representatives of all Minnesota law enforcement. Today's guests include members of the following law enforcement agencies.

Annandale Police Department, Anoka County Sheriff's office, ASAC, Benton County Sheriff's Office, Bloomington Police Department, Burnsville Police Department, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Cannon Falls Police Department, Carlton County Sheriff's Office, Champlin Police Department, Chisago County Sheriff's Office, City of Hutchinson Police Department, City of Maple Grove Police, City of Ramsey Police Department, City of St. Anthony Police Department, Corcoran Police Department, Dakota County Sheriff's Office, Dodge County Sheriff's Office, Dundas Police Department, Eden Prairie Police Department, Grand Rapids Police Department, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, Houston County Sheriff's Office, Howard Lake Police Department, Lonsdale Police Department, Minneapolis Police Department, Minnesota Chiefs, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Minnesota Sheriff's Association, MPD Federation, MSA, Northland Law Enforcement Systems, Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, Rochester Police Department, Rogers Police Department, Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, South St. Paul Police Department, St.

Paul Police Department, St. Paul Park Police Department, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Wayzata Police Department, West St. Paul Police Department, Winona Police Department, Wright County Sheriff's Office, and Zumbrota Police Department. I have no doubt that I missed a couple.

Thank you, again.

It is my great pleasure to introduce Heather Mac Donald.

Heather Mac Donald is a graduate of Yale University, Cambridge University, and Stanford Law School. She is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor of *City Journal*. Heather has been writing about crime and policing for many years. Earlier in 2016, she published *The War on Cops*, the book she will discuss today.

Heather Mac Donald is the number one authority in America on the intersection of policing and race. Heather is more than an expert. She is a hero. You shouldn't have to be a hero to tell the truth—not in America. Yet there are some topics on which it takes courage to tell the truth, and this is one of them. Heather isn't just an academic. She is in the public arena day after day, defending police officers against unfair attacks. Please welcome Heather Mac Donald.

Heather Mac Donald: Thank you so much. I am just extraordinarily honored and moved.

We are here to talk about one of the most profound matters facing our society today. I would say, of all things shaken by the earthquake of November 8, the question of our policing and current crime climate is one of the most important. The intense anti-police agitation of the last two years played an unquestionable role in the election's outcome, and I suspect there may be varying views about that outcome in this room. I'm not going to take anything for granted.

HOW WE GOT HERE

Later, I'm going to offer some speculation about the future regarding crime and policing under a Trump administration. First, I want to talk about the present and the immediate past in an effort to understand how we got here.

Law and order is breaking down in inner cities. When police officers get out of their cars today to conduct an investigation, ask a few questions, or make a pedestrian stop, they find themselves frequently surrounded by hostile, jeering crowds, people cursing at them, sometimes throwing things at them, resisting their lawful authority, and sometimes violently resisting arrest. Sometimes bottles and rocks are thrown.

About a month ago, I was invited to address the fugitive task force of the U.S. Marshals Service—the New Jersey/New York task force. These are the guys who are tasked with apprehending the most violent felon absconders, guys who even the New York Police Department, which thinks of itself as a bunch of pretty tough cops, can't necessarily get off the streets.

A black officer in the back of the room stood up and said, "I want to tell you about what happened to me a couple of days ago." He was trying to make an arrest of a violent felon absconder in the Bronx in the North Plains Road. He was immediately surrounded by 23 people cursing at him. A guy picked up a pike and threatened to kill him. The only way he got out of there was by calling for backup, and two cars arrived.

I spoke with an emergency services technician who works in the South Bronx, and he was trying to free a woman who had been pinned under a car after a car accident. A guy walked into the accident scene across

the tape and stuck a cell phone right in the officer's face. The officer politely said, "Please get back on the curb." The guy said, "You can't make me do that." That sort of resistance is now typical.

I spoke with an officer in Chicago in June who told me he has never experienced so much hatred in his 19 years on the job. He said it has basically become an undoable job now.

Why is this happening? It is because of a false narrative about policing that has taken over our national discourse. That narrative holds that the police are the greatest threat facing young black men today and that we're living through an epidemic of racially biased police shootings of black men.

That narrative is, of course, most associated with the Black Lives Matter movement and its media enablers. Yet it has been amplified, I'm sorry to say, by President Barack Obama—at nearly every opportunity, it sometimes seems. This July, three hours before five police officers were assassinated in Dallas, President Obama saw fit to take time from a diplomatic trip to Poland to repeat his usual litany of statistics that he uses to try to prove that cops are racist and the criminal justice system is racist. One of his statistics was the fact that blacks are arrested at twice the rate of whites. Now, I want to return to that statistic later, so keep it in your head.

After the Dallas assassinations, at the memorial service for those five officers, President Obama had the gall once again to resurrect this conceit about racist police officers, and he said black parents were right to fear that every time their son goes out into the street, he could be killed by a cop for doing something, as Obama put it, stupid.

Now, if you make such statements, you had better be sure they're right, because they profoundly de-legitimize our criminal justice system—and, with it, the moral basis for government itself. Such claims are inflaming the hatred against cops that inner cities are now routinely experiencing. Is it true, as Obama said, that policing is lethally racist? No. It is false. Virtually everything that the public thinks it knows about policing and race from the Black Lives Matter movement is wrong. Reverse it, and you have the truth.

Let me be clear at the onset. Every unjustified shooting of an unarmed civilian is a stomach-churning tragedy. The police have an indefeasible obligation to treat everyone they meet with courtesy and respect and within the confines of the law. Given this country's appalling history of racism in betrayal of its most fundamental founding principles, and given the complicity of the police in maintaining slavery and Jim Crow segregation with lawless and often brutal force, police shootings of blacks are particularly and understandably fraught.

There have been some bad shootings over the last two years: The Laquan McDonald shooting in Chicago was clearly a tragic and offensive and terrifying miscarriage. The Walter Scott shooting in North Charleston also looks bad. If those officers violated criminal laws, they must be held criminally responsible.

Training must work incessantly on giving officers the tactical tools not to find themselves without cover so that they feel compelled to make those split-second, excruciating, shoot/don't-shoot decisions that sometimes, infrequently, can turn out wrong.

Nevertheless, those shootings are not representative. It is appropriate that Michael Brown continues to be venerated as a martyr by the Black Lives Movement, because the entire narrative around Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri—the hands-up-don't-shoot narrative—was a hoax, just as the Black Lives Matter movement is based on falsehoods.

SOME DATA

Now, I hate to burden you with statistics, but if we're going to get to the heart of this matter and try to deconstruct the Black Lives Matter narrative, we're going to have to look at some numbers.

Last year, the police fatally shot 987 civilians. Most of those victims were armed and dangerous. Is that too many? I don't know, and nobody from the Black Lives Matter movement has ever said what an appropriate number of police shootings should be. The police have about 385 million civilian contacts a year. In 2014, they made over 11 million arrests. Deadly weapons assaults against officers in just two-

thirds of the nation's police departments occur 27 times a day. For every ten deadly weapons assaults on a police officer, the police shoot one person. Is that too high a number? What's the right number? I don't know, and, again, neither do the activists.

Of those 987 victims of police shootings last year, 60 percent were white, and 26 percent were black. If the media focused exclusively on white victims of fatal police shootings this nation would think that we're living through an epidemic of racially biased police shootings of whites. Instead, many people, in good faith, presumably, think that the only people the police shoot are black. Last July the Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus stood up in Congress and said, "As we all know, to date, the vast majority of people killed by the cops this year have been black." In fact, as of that date, 51 percent of all people shot by the cops that year had been white, and 27 percent had been black.

Among the white victims of fatal police shootings last year was a 50-year-old man in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who was involved in a domestic incident, and he ran at the officer with a spoon. There was a 28-year-old driver in Des Moines, Iowa, who led the police on a chase, then got out of his car and walked quickly toward the officer. And a 21-year-old suspect in a grocery store robbery in Akron, Ohio, who escaped on a bike and then didn't remove his hand from his waistband when ordered to do so.

The public at large has never heard of those cases, because they don't fit the prevailing narrative. Had the victims been black, there is a good chance we would have heard their names and, in fact, possibly the world would have heard their names and they would have been added to the roster of the victims of police racism.

In fact, a greater percentage of white and Hispanic homicide victims are killed by a police officer than black homicide victims. Fully 12 percent of all whites and Hispanics who die of homicide are killed by a cop, compared to four percent of blacks who die of homicide. If we were going to have an anti-cop lives matter movement, it would actually make more sense to call it White and Hispanic Lives matter.

What about that 26- to 27-percent share of victims of fatal police shooting who are black? Does that show that the cops are racist? After all, it's twice what the black share of the national population is, which is 13 percent. It does not. I would like you to take away one thing from this, and it is that when we're talking about police activity, the relevant benchmark is crime, not population.

Policing today is data-driven. The police go where people are being victimized, and they go where the community is asking for help. That means, unfortunately, given crime disparities in this country, policing is going to be heaviest in minority neighborhoods. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, which is our nation's premier keeper of crime data in the Justice Department, in the 75 largest counties of the United States, which is where the vast majority of the U.S. population resides, blacks commit nearly two-thirds of all violent crime, even though they constitute 15 percent of the population in those counties. Nationally, blacks commit homicide at 11 times the rate of whites.

The police don't wish this reality. It's a reality forced upon them by the reality of crime.

In New York City, for example, blacks constitute 23 percent of the population. According to victims and witnesses, they commit 75 percent of all shootings. Add Hispanic shootings to black shootings, and that accounts for 98 percent of all shootings. Whites constitute 34 percent of the population; they commit less than two percent of all shootings.

Officers tell me in New York City, when they are called out on a shots-fired call, they hope against hope that for once they will be given a description of a white suspect, and it almost never happens.

I can't get the data from Minneapolis, but in nearby Chicago, blacks and whites each constitute about a third of the population. Blacks in Chicago commit 80 percent of shootings; whites, one percent.

This means that when officers are called out on a shots-fired call, they are going to be in minority neighborhoods, confronting minority suspects. Blacks are actually shot less than their crime rates would pre-

dict. Four studies that have come out this year alone from various researchers show this. One researcher—a Harvard economist, a black guy—showed that if there is a bias in policing, it works in favor of blacks and against whites. This is hard to accept, because it is so contrary to everything we've been taught to believe.

These crime rates have an implication for every other type of policing, as well.

RECENT IMPACTS

Remember that Obama statistic from Poland, that he put out there, and the media picked it up and replayed it as another example of systemic criminal justice system racism, that blacks are arrested at twice the rate of whites. Given these crime disparities, what do you expect? The cops are going to where people are being victimized.

However false this narrative, it is having an enormous effect on policing and crime. Cops are being told by the media, by vast swaths of academia, and by activists that they are racist for engaging in pedestrian stops in minority neighborhoods or enforcing those low-level, public-order offenses known as broken-windows policing.

They are also, again, encountering this hatred, and, as a result, they are doing less of that type of discretionary, proactive policing. They are running to 911 calls. If there is a victim who has already been shot, they are running with alacrity to respond. Yet there is a vast universe of discretionary policing that they don't have to do. It is what they do between 911 calls. Many cops are deciding it's not worth it. They get the cell phone in their faces immediately, and they're worried about being CNN's racist cop of the week on the endless video loop.

In Chicago this year, pedestrian stops are down 82 percent. That's on top of last year's drop in proactive activity that was so great that when U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch called big city mayors and police chiefs and U.S. attorneys to Washington in October to discuss the rise in crime that this nation is experiencing, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel told her, "My cops have gone fetal. They're no longer interdicting criminal behavior."

An LAPD officer told me that guys and gals in coffee shops, referring to cops, are telling each other, “You’d have to be crazy to get out of your car and make that stop. You don’t have to do it.” What happens when officers back off proactive policing in high-crime areas? Crime shoots through the roof. Last year, homicides in this country had the largest single one-year increase in nearly half a century: 12 percent. In cities with large black populations, the increase was even higher. Here in Minneapolis, you had a 52 percent homicide increase; Washington D.C., 54 percent; Milwaukee, 73 percent; and Cleveland, an astounding 90 percent one-year increase in homicides.

I have called this dual phenomenon of de-policing and resultant emboldening of criminals the “Ferguson Effect”—highly controversially. I would like to say that FBI Director James Comey is right on crime and has three times confirmed the Ferguson Effect.

In Chicago, homicides and shootings are up over 50 percent this year—4,100 people have been shot in Chicago this year. That works out to one person every two hours. The victims are overwhelmingly black. They include a three-year-old boy who was shot on Father’s Day who is now paralyzed for life. A ten-year-old was shot over Labor Day Weekend when playing outside of his house in a drive-by shooting; the bullet ripped through his intestines, kidney, and spleen. Fifteen children under the age of 12 were shot in drive-bys in the first seven months of 2016, alone.

Since these victims in Chicago are overwhelmingly black, if you believe the Black Lives Matter narrative, you would think, “Boy, those Chicago cops are really out of control. They’re shooting a lot of black people there.” As of Tuesday of this week, the cops had shot 25 people—virtually all of them armed or dangerous. That is 0.6 percent of the total. Therefore, when President Obama says black parents are right to fear that their child is going to be shot by a police officer when he goes outside, that is statistically innumerate.

In other cities, the toll has been just as great. In Cleveland this year, three children ages five and younger were killed in September alone in these mindless drive-by shootings. In August 2015, a nine-year-old girl in Ferguson, Missouri, where Black Lives Matter started, was studying in her mother’s

house on the bed; a bullet ripped through the house and killed her.

In Cincinnati in July 2015, a four-year-old girl was shot in the head and a six-year-old girl was left paralyzed and partially blind from two separate drive-by shootings. This daily toll of violent crime is virtually off the radar screen. The activists are not talking about it, and the press is not, either.

Something else happens when the police back off, besides the rise in crime: The police are no longer responding to the good, law-abiding residents of inner-city neighborhoods the way they want them to be responded to. Again, this is a political pressure on the cops, and I don’t blame them.

I have never been to a police community meeting in Central Harlem, the South Bronx, or South Central L.A. where I do not hear some variant of the following requests:

- A. You arrest the dealers, and they’re back on the corner the next day. Why can’t you keep them off the streets?
- B. There are kids hanging out on my stoop. Why can’t you arrest them for loitering?
- C. I smell weed in my hallway. Why can’t you do something about it?

I spoke with an elderly cancer amputee in the Mount Hope section of the Bronx, Mrs. Sweeper, who told me, “Please, Jesus, send more police.” The only time she felt safe to go down to her building lobby and pick up her mail was when the police were there, because it is otherwise colonized by trespassing youth hanging out, dealing drugs, and smoking weed.

The tragic irony that the police face is that they cannot respond to those heartfelt requests for public order and the same safety that people in other neighborhoods take for granted without generating the type of racially disproportionate statistics that will be used against them in the next ignorant racial profiling lawsuit.

Officers are also at risk in this current narrative. They are second-guessing themselves when confronting armed and resisting suspects. In October,

there was a guy who was speeding from the cops, got in a car accident, and took off running. Three Chicago officers tried to apprehend him. One of them was a female. The guy started beating the female officer's head against the concrete, pulling out large chunks of her hair. She was beaten unconscious and later told Eddie Johnson, the police superintendent in Chicago, from the hospital bed when she recovered consciousness, that the reason she didn't use her weapon, even though this would have been justified, was that she was so terrified about a YouTube video.

Nationally, gun murders of officers are up 63 percent this year. In Chicago, gun assaults against officers are up 100 percent. We are at risk if this narrative, with its resultant Ferguson Effect of de-policing continues, of losing the 20-year crime drop that this nation has enjoyed through 2014. But we are also at risk of something worse than a crime increase. I think we're at risk of losing civil peace.

Riots have been returning to the urban landscape. There is not a single law enforcement practice that is not under criticism for having allegedly a racially disparate impact. I don't care if it's bail, or warrant enforcement, or traffic enforcement, everything is now being de-legitimated as racially biased. Those charges are as false as the charge that street policing is racist, but it puts the public at jeopardy.

A NEW ADMINISTRATION

What happens now? We have a new administration. The most important thing that Trump can do, and I think will do, is change the narrative. Trump is wrong about one thing. During the summer he was right, he would talk about the false narrative, and I would think, "Yeah, go for it!" But he also claimed that it is Obama's policies that are at fault. In fact, as we heard today with this amazing cornucopia of local law enforcement, the feds have not so much to do with fighting local crime. That is overwhelmingly a local responsibility, and federal policies tend to screw things up as often as they make things better, if not more often.

We can breathe a sigh of relief. Had Hillary Clinton won, she would have continued imposing federal

consent decrees on departments, using the same faulty methodology of comparing police activity to population data, rather than crime data. She would have strong-armed cops into implicit bias training. I don't know if you guys have heard this term yet, but this has been a big thing. The Obama Justice Department has sent all the federal law enforcement to implicit bias training. I attended one of these in Missouri, and it is an insult.

Again, the underlying assumption behind it is that cops are shooting blacks out of bias. The studies show the opposite. Cops are desperate for more hands-on training. I know officers who pay for their own training. They need more tactical training. But it is a grotesque waste of resources to send them to these implicit bias workshops. Worse than that, Clinton would have continued the same rhetoric which she embraced during her campaign that said policing is racist.

The absence of an echo chamber in the White House for the Black Lives Matter falsehoods should give the police at least a fighting chance to curb the rising violence of the last two years. Unfortunately, the Black Lives Matter movement is not going to go quietly into the night. It may even grow more extreme, fueled by a university culture devoted to racial victimology.

Hate-filled chants have been uttered in Chicago: "CPD [Chicago Police Department], KKK, how many kids did you kill today?" Such chants are going to continue to plague city streets, but while the media and academia will continue to amplify such lies, at least the next president will not.

The ironies of this election, when it came to public safety, have been many. Trump was the only candidate, of the final two, to express concern about the growing homicide toll in black neighborhoods. He was promptly denounced as a racist for doing so. In his acceptance speech, however, he again pledged to "fix our inner cities," which means, first and foremost, honoring the desire of the millions of law-abiding residents in those communities for assertive but respectful police protection.

Thank you.

AUDIENCE Q&A

John Mathesrud: A friend of mine who is a retired police officer asks why they don't want police on a citizens/police review committee. It's like having a medical review board without doctors.

Heather Mac Donald: Well, right. We know why: because of the false narrative that police are so racist that they will not look at the facts accurately. This is something that is of concern because the public is clueless about what it takes to subdue a resisting suspect. It can take five or six guys to take somebody down who is determined to resist arrest, and officer use of force is never pretty.

We are a very peace-loving society, and we don't live with a lot of violent force. Those partial YouTube videos do not show the precedent that leads an officer to have to use force against resisting arrest, and it can look bad. Therefore, it is important to get police voices on panels like that so that they can have some understanding of what the interaction really represented.

That having been said, there may be some instances of corruption. It was very troubling the cover-up that went on in Chicago when you had all the officers at the scene at the Laquan McDonald shooting corroborating the initial false report that officer Jason Van Dyke came out with that Laquan McDonald had lunged at him with a knife. That was not true. And it is unfathomable to me that even the Chicago Detectives Bureau cleared the shooting.

There can be some problems with police solidarity. I understand the blue wall of silence, and it's hard to pierce it, because cops often feel like it's them against the world and solidarity is a good thing. There can be problems, but generally, of course, a review board should have the added expertise on it.

Dan Hunt: Regarding your moniker, the "Ferguson Effect," other than conversations with individual police, are there studies that show this dramatic change in behavior of police people?

Heather Mac Donald: Where data have been collected on proactive policing, they show a very strong

drop. Again, stops in Chicago this year are down 82 percent over last year's already precipitous decline. In Baltimore, there is a guy who looked at what happened to drug enforcement in Baltimore following the Freddie Gray riots. Remember: Drug enforcement is discretionary. Drug enforcement just disappeared, and shootings utterly spiked.

There have been other previous studies. In Cincinnati in 2001, there were anti-cop riots, and an economist at the University of Washington studied the de-policing and resulting increase in felony crime.

I don't know the data on stops. It's not published on the web. But across the country, cops will tell you that they are not making those stops.

Again, let me just say, I'm not saying the police are being cowardly, or not doing their jobs. Policing is political, and that balance, especially in the area of discretionary policing, is a political judgment. If the most vocal segment and the most powerful segment of the population is sending a message that that sort of discretionary policing is unwanted, we shouldn't be surprised if the cops are doing less of it.

Tom Westcott: What would you tell President Trump to do with these uber-liberal mayors about these sanctuary cities?

Heather Mac Donald: The sanctuary city phenomenon is just an example of how lawlessness breeds further lawlessness. It's a parallel to the whole issue of the quality-of-life, broken-windows policing: You allow low-level public disorder to fester, and greater lawlessness follows. With sanctuary cities, it is the same issue. We have this massive violation of our nation's sovereignty with our immigration policy now being made on a de facto basis—not by citizens and their elected representatives in the laws that they have passed governing immigration, but by people living outside the country who are making our de facto immigration policy by their decisions to enter the country illegally. We tolerate this. That's one form of lawlessness.

Then, because of the demographic and political pressures, you get this even more appalling form of lawlessness, which is cities refusing to honor detain-

er requests from federal immigration authorities to say, “Please do not release this illegal alien convicted criminal back onto the streets.” These localities are thumbing their noses at this and getting away with it. It’s astounding.

Note the irony. Liberals were rightly concerned about state’s rights defiance in the 1960s of federal desegregation orders and federal authority. They thought that was an example of lawless localities. Well, that’s exactly what is going on now with the localities refusing to honor the federal government’s detainer requests, and President Obama has chastely looked the other way.

There should be financial penalties. Whether there is anything that can be done beyond that, as far as a civil suit, I don’t know.

Clearly, Trump is a little wobbly on things. You never know when he is going to back-track, but he had better not back-track on this, because this is not just an immigration issue, it is a rule-of-law issue that has to be nipped in the bud.

Peter Bell: Let me give you a paradox about implicit bias that I wrestle with a lot and give you a formula and see how you respond to this: Stereotypes are the statistical probabilities applied to a situation in a hurried world. Because law enforcement is often aware of the facts that you laid out, if not in detail, in general, how does that not affect behavior to some extent, for all law enforcement, regardless of their racial background?

In other words, if you know that a segment of the population is disproportionately involved in certain behaviors, then how do you get that out of your head? You can’t. No matter how much training you have, that’s a paradox that I have. The term that I get uncomfortable with is rational stereotyping. It makes me very uncomfortable to say that and use that term. It’s a paradox. On the one hand, I understand it; on the other hand, I’m uncomfortable with it. I wonder how you deal with that dilemma.

Heather Mac Donald: I have often said that for the last 20 years, we have been obsessively talking about largely phantom police racism in order not to talk about a far more difficult and uncomfortable truth, which is

vastly elevated rates of black crime. If we could bring the black crime rate down to that of whites and Asians – Asians virtually don’t commit crime – we wouldn’t be having this discussion about police racism, because, again, policing is an epi-phenomenon of crime.

Asians are not shot by the cops. Why is that? Because they’re not out committing violent street crimes. It is true that officers experience again and again the profile of violent street crime today. Unfortunately, the face of it is largely black and Hispanic. These are very difficult truths to talk about, but the statistics bear it out.

I say that law-abiding black men pay a crime tax. It’s a tragic burden that they bear, but given the disparities of violent street crime in places like New York City, the people engaged in drive-by shootings are almost exclusively black and Hispanic. That applies for robberies, as well, and I can guarantee you it is identical in Minneapolis and St. Paul. That means law-abiding black men have a higher chance of getting stopped, because they meet the suspect description more than a white guy does.

In New York City, you can go to every police precinct in the city, and they will have the wanted posters for fugitive felons, and you don’t see white faces. If we could have spent one-tenth of the time over the last two decades talking about how to get black crime rates down that we’ve devoted to trying to deal with this alleged police racism, we wouldn’t be having this conversation.

John Hinderaker: Now we are going to hear from Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek.

Rich Stanek: That was a marvelous presentation.

Words cannot express the sincere gratitude we have for the work you have done to support our law enforcement men and women, not just in this state, but across our country. Yes, we’re the ones who are patrolling the streets and arresting the bad guys – and girls – and yes, we answer those tough calls and respond to emergency medical situations.

We’re the ones who run toward danger when others are maybe running the opposite direction. The

individuals in this room with me today, the men and women in law enforcement, are the guardians and the protectors in our society.

Now this is a call to action back to all of you. We in law enforcement need our own guardians and protectors. We need individuals who are going to advocate for the men and women in this room. Whether law enforcement is being attacked for political reasons, through academics, or through certain media outlets, we need people to stand with us.

We need elected officials, academics, researchers, and businesspeople to stand up to work with us to tell our story. We need people to help get the facts on the record and to separate fact from fiction.

Heather, your analysis is clear, and it is solid. You tell our story, and for that, Minnesota's law enforcement community says thank you.

John Hinderaker: Thank you, Sheriff Stanek.

That concludes our lunch forum today. With that, thank you all, and goodbye. ■

Minnesota's Think Tank.

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