



THE HISTORY OF ASSAULTS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT IN AMERICA

A Special Report by J. R. de Szigethy

The murders of 5 Police Officers and the wounding of 9 others in Dallas, Texas on July 8, 2016, was the deadliest day for American law enforcement since 9/11. In the course of American history, over 20,000 members of the law enforcement community have been murdered. (1) Over this time, there have been a series of cycles during which physical assaults against members of law enforcement have been common, followed by extended periods of little such violence committed against those who seek to protect their communities from harm. The catalysts for these cycles are many and varied; the spread of radical ideology in the 1880s and 1960s; the passage in 1920 of the Constitutional Amendment prohibiting alcohol, which facilitated the rise of organized crime syndicates; the demise of the “nuclear family” that accelerated in the 1970s; the failure of the U. S. government to halt the import of cocaine during the 1980s.

Violence is an integral part of the history of America. The 20th Century witnessed the emergence of new, science-based professionals, including Psychologists, Historians, and Sociologists, who studied and analyzed the history of violence in America and were able to proffer their own determinations as to causation of this phenomenon. Psychologists have diagnosed many of these perpetrators as possessing an “Anti-Authoritarian Personality Disorder.” Research on this disorder by members of the medical community has established that the use of drugs is often a co-factor in many who commit such acts. Anti-depressants, cocaine, and heroin are the drugs most commonly found.

Anti-Authoritarian behavior is actually part of the national psyche and heritage of the United States. Back in the 1700s, those Americans who dared to demand Independence from England adopted guerilla warfare tactics that shocked the “civilized” world. These included the ambush of British soldiers by shooting them in the back with a rifle or a gun. Such were the methods that allowed the rag-tag militias of the American Revolution to defeat the greatest military power in the world at that time.

Once Independence had been achieved, the Founding Fathers drafted a Constitution that attempted to resolve an issue regarding Slavery. Slave States wanted their Slaves counted as part of the population, which determined the degree of representation in Congress. Those leaders of the Free States were opposed to counting the Slaves, realizing that this would give the Slave States more power in the Federal government. A "Compromise" was reached whereby African-Americans would be counted as 3/5 of a White man. By denying Slaves the very Freedoms that the Revolutionaries had used violence to obtain themselves, the Founding Fathers created the conditions that guaranteed violence would become an integral part of America's future. Over 600,000 American men would die in the great war to end Slavery. Most of these men were young, and most would experience slow and painful deaths due to disease, as opposed to the quick death from the bullet, bayonet, or cannonball. Once the war was over, one more person involved in that war died in an act of violence that would set a precedent; Abraham Lincoln, the President who freed the Slaves.

Thus, America was deprived of this great leader as the country faced the task of rebuilding a nation. America became a "melting pot" of immigrants from around the world as the country continued its embrace of the Industrial Revolution. Factories continued to be built across the country, a vast continent being inter-connected by the railroad industry. Prior to the Civil War, Americans had migrated outward, from East to West. After the war, the population migrated inward, from the farmlands into the growing cities.

In 1881, a group of American citizens banded together around an ideology that had been published decades earlier; "The Communist Manifesto," by Karl Marx. Thus was founded a labor union which exists today as the AFL-CIO. On "May Day," May 1, 1886, Union activists introduced what would become an enduring part of American society; the Demonstration, in which people would take to the streets, exercising their Freedom of Speech, demanding Social and Political change. The Demonstration in Chicago was considered disappointing by the labor activists there, so on May 4, thousands of protesters descended upon the Haymarket Square retail center for another Demonstration. A riot ensued, which escalated when a protester launched a bomb towards the Police Officers on hand. 7 Police Officers and 4 civilians were killed. 4 Union officials would be convicted and executed for the murder of Police Officer Matthias U. Degan. (2)

The rise of radical ideology during the 1880s is reflected in the numbers of law enforcement officials murdered during that decade. From 1791 to 1849, there were 49 such murders during that 58 year time period. For the decade 1850 to 1859 the number was 82. For the decade of 1860 to 1869, which included the Civil War, the number was 134. For the following decade, the number of law enforcement members murdered almost doubled, to 252. For the years 1880 to 1889, there were 437 murders of members of law enforcement, an increase of 73 percent over the previous decade.

As the populations of American cities grew, so did tensions between the Caucasian and African-American communities. The Chicago Race Riots of 1919 was a fight between Caucasians, most of whom were Union activists, and African-Americans, who were not members of a Union. The final murder tally was 23 Blacks and 13 Whites, including one Police Officer. (3)

The following year brought the great experiment of Prohibition. The growing labor union movement was already established as venues for criminal activities, thus the infrastructure was in place for the quick rise of crime gangs which provided illegal alcohol to a thirsty public. On the evening of May 10, 1922, two Chicago cops, Thomas J. Clark and Lt. Terrence Lyons, were shot to death in separate incidents 30 minutes apart. (4) Eight members of Organized Crime and Organized Labor were arrested for the murder of Officer Lyons. The New York Times would later report that two of the 8 men Indicted had secretly pleaded guilty and agreed to co-operate with the authorities. Letters were then sent by radicals to various law enforcement authorities threatening that supporters of the Defendants would burn Chicago to the ground. This threat was taken very seriously, given the legacy of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 that rendered 100,000 people homeless. (5) The charges against the 6 men were dropped. This case set a dangerous precedent; some Prosecutors to this day will allow the threat of public violence and rioting to influence their actions, particularly in cases in which Police Officers are involved.

In June, 1925, Chicago Police Officers Charles Walsh and Harold Olsen were gunned down by two Mafia hitmen, Albert Anselmi and John Scalise. Both men were convicted for the murder of Officer Walsh. In 1927, on the anniversary of the murder of Police Officer Matthias Degan, a streetcar was intentionally crashed into the statue of Officer Degan that had been erected in his memory in 1889. On the anniversary in 1968, a Demonstration was organized by people opposed to the Vietnam war. Protesters vandalized Officer Degan's statue with black paint. On October 6, 1969, the domestic terrorist group known as the Weathermen blew up with a bomb the statue of Officer Degan. The statue was rebuilt and on the anniversary of the first bombing, the Weathermen once again destroyed the statue with a powerful bomb. The statue was rebuilt again and today is safe inside the Chicago Police Headquarters. (6)

The 1920s was the deadliest decade in American history for law enforcement. 2,437 members of law enforcement were murdered. The population of the U. S. at the end of that decade was only 122 million. The Census in 2010 counted 308 million people. Thus, the percentage difference in the population reveals that the "Roaring Twenties" was even more violent than the murder tally indicates. Prohibition, however well intended, created the conditions that fueled organized crime syndicates in the large cities of America.

During the 1930s, the labor union movement continued to grow. One top priority of the Administration of Franklin Roosevelt was a bill, which was eventually passed by Congress in 1935, called the National Labor Relations Act. This legislation facilitated the organizing of labor unions in workplaces across America, bringing about a sharp increase in union membership which continued into the mid-1950s. Unfortunately, the labor union movement was already dominated by avowed Communists, as well as members of the growing American Mafia. When Roosevelt first came into office, he succeeded in getting Congress to Repeal the 18th Amendment which Prohibited alcohol. One consequence of making liquor legal again was that it put the illegal liquor operations of the American Mafia out of business. However, with the spread of labor unions across America, the Mafia was able to infiltrate and take control of the Health Care and Pension Funds many unions operated.

The 1930s was the third most deadly decade in terms of the numbers of murders of members of law enforcement. 2,227 murders occurred during those years. In terms of deaths as a percentage of the population, however, the 1930s was the second most deadly decade.

For the 1940s, the murder total was cut in half, to 1108. The reason for such a dramatic decline should be obvious; many of the men who had the potential to kill police officers were instead off to war, killing the soldiers of Germany and Japan.

The 1950s was a time of Authoritarianism and "Law and Order." Americans twice elected as President General Eisenhower, who had led the war effort against Germany. The murder total for 1950 to 1959 was 1195, a 7 percent increase from the decade previous. The "nuclear family" was the norm during that time; according to the Pew Research Center, by the year 1960, 73 percent of children in the U. S. were being raised by married parents who were in their first marriage.

This, however, was not the case for some members of America's African-American community. In 1965, the Sociologist Daniel Patrick Moynihan, serving as President Johnson's Assistant Secretary of Labor, released what is now referred to as The Moynihan Report. Moynihan's research had revealed that as a result of racial discrimination throughout America, many African-American men were unemployed or under-employed, and one result was the decline in the Black nuclear family. Moynihan advocated jobs training programs for African-American men as one method to fight what President Johnson had declared his "War on Poverty."

The Moynihan Report was controversial when it was first released. However, the passage of time has validated Moynihan's findings. In the decades since its release, the nuclear family among Whites has declined, resulting in more single-parent families in this community. Numerous studies show that children raised in single-parent households - regardless of race - are more likely to become involved in the commission of crimes. Members of America's law enforcement community, regardless of race or gender, understand this. This is what they experience on a daily basis as they police America's varied communities.

Beginning in 1961, the new Administration of John F. Kennedy launched an unprecedented assault on crime. President Kennedy's Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, had gained expertise on the subject of organized crime as the chief attorney for the Senate Labor Rackets Committee from 1957 to 1959. In 1960, Kennedy published a book, "The Enemy Within: The McClellan Committee's Crusade Against Jimmy Hoffa and Corrupt Labor Unions." This would be the focus of Kennedy, and among those attorneys he hired were Robert Morgenthau and G. Robert Blakey, who would later create the RICO statute that, once passed by Congress, would become an effective method for prosecuting the American Mafia.

In the 1960s, America experienced a new wave of radicalism not seen since the 1880s. A new reign of terror was about to begin, in which authority figures, including members of law enforcement, would become the targets of would-be murderers, whose motivations included racial, political, ideological, and religious intolerance. Most of the assassins were young men. This new "Age of Assassins" would last from 1963 to 1981. 1,577 members of law enforcement would be killed in the 1960s, with 2,316 to be murdered in the 1970s.

This new era began in Dallas, Texas on April 10, 1963, when an avowed Communist attempted to assassinate a public figure, U. S. Army General Edwin Walker. A decorated war hero from World War II, General Walker was a leader in the anti-Communist movement. Walker also held racist views towards African-Americans but still followed the orders of President Eisenhower when Walker commanded the troops sent into Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 to De-Segregate that city's school system.

Walker's home in a quiet, middle-class neighborhood made him an easy target for his intended assassin, a man who had just moved to Dallas after having spent the several years previous living in the Soviet Union. On that evening in April, Lee Harvey Oswald snuck into the yard of Walker's home, where he had a clear view of Walker through his window. The General was seated at his desk when Oswald pulled the trigger of his new rifle he had purchased through a mail-order catalog under an assumed name. The bullet, however glanced the edge of the wooden frame of the window, thus the General only received minor wounds.

On November 22 of that year, Oswald assassinated President Kennedy in Dealey Plaza in downtown Dallas. Earlier that morning, Dallas Police Officer J. D. Tippit left the home he shared with his wife and three children. One horrific occupational hazard for police officers as well as firefighters is that when they leave the front door of their home on the way to work, they do not know if they will return home. That was Officer Tippit's Fate that Fateful day. Shortly after the murder of the President, Officer Tippit received word of this over his patrol car radio as he drove the streets of the Oak Cliff section of Dallas. Tippit stopped his car when he viewed a man who fit the description of the suspected assassin. It was in fact the President's killer. As Tippit got out of his car Oswald pulled out a handgun and shot Tippit three times in the chest. Oswald then bent down and fired a fourth bullet into Officer Tippit's head.

The assassination of President Kennedy caught the Federal government off guard. At that time, there was no Federal law regarding the murder of a Federal employee. Had Kennedy's shooter not himself been murdered, the local Prosecutor's office would have had to bring Oswald to trial on two counts of murder, the President and Officer Tippit. In 1965 Congress passed a law that now made the murder of the President a Federal crime. Several law enforcement associations, including the National Police Defense Foundation, have proposed Legislation that would make it a Federal crime to kill a Police Officer.

In 1968, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator Robert Kennedy, would be assassinated 2 months apart. The age of television would bring the horrors of domestic violence as well as the war in Vietnam into American homes on a daily basis. As the 1960s came to an end, most Americans hoped that the violence that was the hallmark of that decade would end with it. But the killings would not end.

On June 29, 1971, Colombo Mafia Family Godfather Joe Colombo was shot in an assassination attempt at a Columbus Day rally in New York City's Columbus Circle. Colombo's assassin, Jerome Johnson, was quickly shot dead, but his African-American female accomplice escaped. The NYPD's investigation of Johnson revealed he had connections to pornographers aligned with the Gambino Mafia Family, as well as ties to a Communist organization calling themselves the Black Liberation Army. (7) This Marxist group had been founded by former members of the Black Panther Party, who had found that organization less radical to their liking. The BLA's method of operation was to raise funds through armed robbery,

including illegal narcotics and gambling clubs run by the Mafia, the funds of which would be used to purchase deadly weapons, including machine guns, bombs, and hand grenades. These weapons would be used to assassinate authority figures in public. It was such extreme measures that the BLA believed were necessary to bring about the social chaos they hoped would lead to Revolution. (8)

On the evening of May 19, 1971, members of the BLA opened fire with a machine gun on two police officers guarding the home of the Manhattan District Attorney, Frank Hogan. Both officers, Thomas Curry and Nicholas Binetti, were wounded for the rest of their lives. On May 21, 1971, the gang assassinated Police Officers Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini outside a public housing building in Harlem.

On August 29, 1971, 3 members of the BLA burst into a police station in San Francisco and gunned down Sgt. John Victor Young as he sat at his desk. On November 3rd, 1971, 3 associates of the BLA executed Atlanta Police Officer James R. Greene as he serviced his patrol vehicle at a gas station. (9) On December 20th of that year, the gang attempted to murder 2 NYPD cops by throwing a hand grenade under their patrol car. The car was demolished, but the cops survived. (10) On January 27, 1972, the gang executed 2 NYPD cops, Rocco Laurie and Gregory Foster by shooting them in the back with a machine gun. The two cops were targeted because one was Black and the other White. Laurie and Foster had previously served together as soldiers in Vietnam, and the NYPD had intentionally paired them as partners to improve race relations within the Department. (11)

A few weeks later, on February 16, 1972, some members of the BLA had relocated temporarily to St. Louis, Missouri, given that the authorities in New York were working overtime to find the killers of Officers Laurie and Foster. The gang got into a confrontation with the local police, and a shoot-out resulted, killing one BLA member, Ronald Carter, a suspect in the murders of Officers Laurie and Foster. Joanne Chesimard had rented one of the vehicles used by the BLA. (12)

On April 14th, 1972, a New York City Police Officer, Philip Cardillo, was murdered in a Mosque in Harlem. Cardillo had responded to a phony 10-13 call, which means that a Police Officer needs assistance, at the Nation of Islam Mosque on 116th Street. It was a set-up to an execution. Once inside the Mosque, Cardillo was surrounded by a group of men. Cardillo was gunned down and another cop was severely beaten. In 2009, members of the NYPD called upon the FBI to release it's files on the Mosque un-redacted, in the hopes that such intelligence could result in prosecutions for this murder. The files, the product of FBI Informants working inside the Mosque, have yet to be turned over by the FBI. (13)

The murderer of New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster has also escaped Justice. On May 2, 1973 Trooper James Harper pulled a car over for a traffic violation, and was joined by Trooper Foerster in another patrol car. A gunfight ensued and when it was over, Trooper Foerster and a BLA member were dead; Joanne Chesimard, aka Assata Shakur, and Trooper Harper were wounded. Shakur was eventually convicted for the murder of Trooper Foerster, but escaped from prison in 1979. In 2013 the FBI added Assata Shakur to the FBI's Most Wanted list. She is currently living in Cuba, being protected there because of her lifelong commitment to Communism. (14)

In 1975, President Gerald Ford would be the target of not one but two separate assassination attempts. Both occurred in San Francisco. The first attempt was by a woman, Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, a member of the Charles Manson gang, who pointed a gun at the President during a public event. The gun did not go off. The second attempt came 2 weeks later. Sara Jane Moore lunged toward President Ford with her handgun pointed towards him, firing one shot, and then another that was deflected by the quick action of a bystander, Oliver Sipple, a Marine Corps Veteran.

With the coming of the 1980s, the Age of Assassins was not yet over. On March 31, 1981, the new President Ronald Reagan was shot by a nutcase named John Hinkley, Jr. A police officer, a Secret Service agent, and Reagan's press secretary, James Brady, were also injured, with Brady suffering for life with permanent brain damage. While Reagan nearly died, his swift recovery endeared him to a nation weary of political violence. (15)

On October 20, 1981, 6 members of the BLA, along with 4 members of the May 19th Communist Organization, murdered 2 police officers, Edward O'Grady and Waverly Brown, and a Brinks armored truck guard, Peter Paige, while stealing a Brinks truck with over \$1 million inside in Nanuet, New York.

The May 19th Communist Organization was an offshoot of the Weathermen Underground, a 1960s radical group that was mostly Caucasian and devoted to the overthrow of the U. S. government. One of its most infamous members was Kathy Boudin, born into a family of notorious Communists, including her father. In 1970, Boudin was among several members of the Weathermen who were assembling a bomb at a townhouse in Greenwich Village which they planned to detonate later that evening at a social event for U. S. soldiers at Fort Dix, New Jersey. The bomb exploded during assembly, leveling the townhouse and killing 3 of the terrorists. Boudin was among 2 who survived. For her role in the Brinks killings, Boudin accepted a plea bargain and pled guilty to one count of felony murder and armed robbery and was sentenced to 20 years to Life in prison. (16) In 2003, Kathy Boudin was released on Parole and was hired as a Professor at Columbia University in New York City.

The Brinks robbery marked what would be the last gasp of Revolutionaries and assassins that were the hallmark of the 1960s and 1970s. The Age of Assassins was finally over.

With the dawn of the 1980s, the traditional American Mafia began to change, largely because of the tremendous amount of dirty cash that could be obtained through the trafficking of drugs, most notably cocaine. Investigations by members of the FBI and other organizations revealed that the edict by the American Mafia not to harm journalists or cops might be in jeopardy.

On December 16, 1985, Gambino Mafia Family Godfather Paul Castellano was murdered, along with his driver, outside Sparks Steak House in mid-town Manhattan. Law enforcement quickly determined that Gambino figure John Gotti was responsible. Since it is against Mafia protocol to murder a Godfather without "permission" from "The Commission," the Mafia's ruling body, members of law enforcement became very concerned that Gotti might order violence against cops or FBI Agents determined to take him down.

These concerns dated back to 1983, when an associate of John Gotti became aware of wiretaps in his home. There were, in fact, dueling factions in surveillance against John Gotti and his associates; both the FBI and the NYPD were installing electronic eavesdropping devices against Gotti's gang. The NYPD's efforts were led by Detective Jack Holder. When FBI Agent Bruce Mouw learned that Gotti's associate Angelo Ruggiero was making threatening statements against FBI Agent Donald McCormick, Mouw and McCormick paid a visit to Gotti's humble home in Howard Beach, Queens. Resembling a scene from a Clint Eastwood movie, Agent Mouw thrust his finger in Gotti's face and warned him that no harm should come to any of his men, or else! No harm ever would. (17)

Agent Mouw's concerns about Gotti breaking Mafia protocol may have been unwarranted, given the fact that Gotti had what he considered a legitimate reason to order the murders of Paul Castellano and his key money earner Robert DiBernardo. In many of the secretly-recorded conversations of John Gotti, the Godfather uses language that reveals his contempt for sexual degenerates. Paul Castellano was accepting a substantial amount of income from his associate DiBernardo. Part of this money came from DiBernardo's control of a corrupt Teamsters Union, but also from his lucrative business in the production and distribution of pornography. Some of this material was child pornography. Castellano and DiBernardo were both under Indictment when Gotti organized their murders.

Some of these recorded conversations were later made public during Gotti's Federal racketeering trial in 1992. The tapes reveal the contrast between the greed of Castellano versus the manner in which Gotti "shared the wealth" with the members of his gang. Castellano lived in a 17-room mansion on Staten Island's appropriately-named Todt (Death) Hill, that featured an Olympic-sized swimming pool. Gotti lived in a modest house in a middle-class neighborhood. Castellano's greed resulted in his demands that the members of his crime family contribute a greater percentage of their earnings than did the other 4 Godfathers in New York. "I would be a billionaire if I was a selfish Boss," Gotti states on the tapes.

Castellano fashioned himself a businessman and gentleman. He pretended that he was opposed to the trafficking of drugs, but readily accepted dirty drug cash. To his neighbors out in an up-scale, wealthy community on Long Island, Robert DiBernardo presented himself as a successful real estate investor who coached a Little League baseball team. (18) The parents of those kids must have reacted in horror when DiBernardo was Indicted for the production and distribution of child pornography.

Thus, as bad as Gotti was, he was morally superior to the two men he ordered killed. Regarding the murder of DiBernardo, Gotti states on one of the tapes: "I was in jail when I whacked him!"

No one in law enforcement could have predicted that there would come a day when gangsters like John Gotti would be missed. That day would come less than 2 years after Gotti had Castellano and DiBernardo killed. As a result of the crack cocaine epidemic, new criminal syndicates sprung up during that time across America. Columbian drug lords were the "Wholesalers" of these drugs; the "Retailers" here were new gangs, some made up of African-Americans, and some by immigrants from the Dominican Republic.

One such African-American gang was led by "Pappy" Mason, who, while behind bars on weapons charges, ordered the murder of Police Officer Edward Byrne. On February 26, 1988, the 22 year old cop was sitting inside a patrol car, guarding the house of an immigrant from South America whose house had been firebombed twice by the local drug gang. One of the four members of Mason's gang that snuck up on Byrne's patrol car fired 5 bullets into Officer Byrne's head. This murder stunned America, with President Reagan personally calling the family of the young cop to offer his support. (19)

In 1999, David McClary, the convicted shooter of Officer Byrne, was awarded \$650,000 by a Federal jury in a lawsuit against 5 prison officials involved in McClary's having been placed in solitary confinement for 4 years. The lawsuit alleged that this violated the convicted cop killer's civil rights, but the prison officials claimed that because of his notoriety, it was necessary for his own safekeeping to separate him from the general population. And, as the cases involving Pappy Mason and John Gotti clearly shows, it is very easy for prisoners not in solitary confinement to order murders while incarcerated. One of the officials found Liable for damages was Thomas A. Coughlin III, who had a distinguished career and was nationally recognized on the subject of prison reform. (20) Pappy Mason is currently being held at "Supermax," the most secure prison in America, located near Florence, Colorado.

October 10, 1988, was one of the most tragic days in NYPD history. Police Officer Michael Buczek, just 24 years old, and married for one year, was murdered by three Dominican drug dealers on the streets of Washington Heights in Manhattan. In a separate incident that day in Upper Manhattan, Police Officer Christopher Hoban was killed when 3 drug dealers opened fire on Hoban and his partner while on patrol. Hoban was 26 years old. One of the killers was himself killed in the shootout and the other 2 were apprehended, convicted, and sentenced to 25 years to Life. The family of Officer Buczek, however, would not see Justice for 15 long years.

Justice was delayed because the murderers fled to their native Dominican Republic, which does not have an extradition treaty with the United States. In the case of Michael Buczek, a varied group of public servants formed a coalition in order to bring Buczek's murderers to Justice. These included Officer Joseph Barbato, Buczek's partner; U. S. Congressmen Guy Molinari and Benjamin Gilman; Howard Safir, a former DEA Agent and U. S. Marshall's Chief who later served as New York City Police Commissioner; Joseph Occhipinti, Chief of the Anti-Smuggling unit of the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service; NYPD Detective John Hickey, and NYPD Chief Patrick Harnett.

Pablo Almonte, one of two surviving perpetrators, was captured in 2000; accomplice Jose Fernandez was captured and returned to the U. S. in 2002. In June, 2003, both men were sentenced to 25 years to Life for their role in the murder of Officer Buczek.

The new ethnic gangs that were supplanting traditional organized crime syndicates would also target journalists. In March, 1992, Colombian drug lord Jose Santacruz Londono ordered the public execution of Manuel de Dios Unanue, the former Editor of El Diario, New York's largest circulation Spanish language newspaper. Unanue was among several nationally-recognized journalists who had championed former INS Agent Joe Occhipinti, now the Police Foundation Executive Director. Others included Al Guart of the New York Post, Bill O'Reilly, and Mike McAlary.

Unanue, an outspoken critic of the destruction drugs had wrought on New York's minority communities, was murdered on March 11, 1992 in a restaurant in Queens. The triggerman in this murder was eventually convicted in Brooklyn Federal Court. Londono, who bribed his way out of prison in Colombia, was killed in a shootout with police as a result of the combined efforts of Colombian authorities, President Bill Clinton, his DCI John Deutch, and Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

In the mid 1990s a former lawyer living in Queens, who had previously been Dis-Barred in the State of California after being convicted of embezzling his clients, began to post on the new Medium - the Internet - personal information he was compiling about Police Officers and other members of the law enforcement community. This man, an American citizen, also had a history of using a gun to commit violence - against himself. As a young man in 1971, he had attempted suicide by placing a gun in his mouth and pulling the trigger. The failed attempt left him disfigured and blind in one eye.

With the passing of years, his information uploaded to the Internet became more detailed about the members of law enforcement he was surveiling; these lists now included the address of cop's homes, the routes in public they took when out jogging, and even the names of some of their children. Alan Munn was convicted in 1999 of Aggravated Harassment for threats he communicated via the Internet against an NYPD Officer. Munn stated in one of his posts: "Please kill (the Officer), all other NYPD Cops and all of their adult relatives and friends." (21)

The NYPD was able to get Munn's websites shut down, but in 2002, Munn moved to Germany and once again began publishing on the Internet personal information about police officers, government officials, and Federal Agents. At that point, some targeted members of law enforcement brought the matter to the attention of Joe Occhipinti. The Police Foundation was able to get the New York Post and New York Daily News to run stories regarding this growing menace of cybercrime. The Police Foundation also worked with diplomats in the German Consulate in New York City and eventually the government of Germany was able to take down Munn's website.

On 9/11, 2001, 72 members of America's law enforcement community were murdered. Two such will be mentioned here. This reporter met John Perry of the NYPD through our mutual friend the Reverend Betty Neal, the Executive Director of Ministers of Harlem, a non-profit that operates programs by which the cops and firefighters who work in Harlem can interact with the residents of that community. In the early morning hours of 9/11, Officer Perry could not sleep, so he called Reverend Betty and they had a long talk. Perry's anxiety was due to the fact his life was about to change; in a few hours, he would travel to Police Headquarters to file his retirement papers. Perry's future interests included the acting profession as well as the field of civil rights. When the first plane hit the World Trade Center, Perry rushed over from Headquarters to save as many lives as possible. He was the only off-duty cop to die that day. Moira Smith of the NYPD was one of the "She-roes" of 9/11. Using her flashlight as a beacon, Officer Smith directed hundreds of people to safety inside a stairwell in the South Tower until it collapsed.

The murders of law enforcement personnel during the decade from 2000 to 2009 that included 9/11 was essentially the same as the decade before it; 1662 and 1620, respectively. These numbers reflected an average decline of 14 percent when compared to the 1990s. For this decade through 2015, the number is 817. Compared to the same number of years in the decade previous, the murder rate so far is down 21 percent.

This might be surprising to some, who would have guessed that assaults on cops have increased. What is different about this decade as opposed to the last is the change in which people in America receive news and information and how they react to it. The news industry has changed dramatically in recent years. Millions of Americans now carry with them cell phones. Instead of buying newspapers, more and more people are getting their news from the Internet. Newspapers and magazines across the country have gone out of business, or begun the transition to digital content on-line only.

Also, during the past 6 years, the use of "Social Media" as a means of communication has expanded exponentially. "Gone Viral" is a new term added to the dictionary. One of the problems with posts on Facebook or Twitter or similar venues is the fact that incorrect information often gets disseminated quickly to a large audience.

Mass shootings are now part of the American experience. Most are the act of a lone gunman, obviously mentally ill and most often under the influence of drugs, usually prescription drugs such as anti-depressants. Some are the result of radical theology. Few Americans take to the streets to protest such senseless acts of violence.

However, when a crime, or what appears to be a crime, occurs in today's society, and it involves race, and particularly members of law enforcement, the situation can have national consequences. Florida resident

George Zimmerman was never a member of America's law enforcement community. Nor is he Caucasian; he is Latino. Still, just 3 short years ago, when Zimmerman was Acquitted for his shooting to death an unarmed, teenaged boy, Trayvon Martin, a "hashtag" appeared on a Twitter account that went viral; #BlackLivesMatter. A national movement was born. (22)

On August 9, 2014, a White Police Officer in Ferguson, Missouri, Darren Wilson, shot and killed 18 year old Michael Brown in an altercation on the street. Protests and riots ensued, with many of the participants identifying with the Black Lives Matter movement. Before the shooting, Michael Brown had assaulted an elderly Latino man in a bodega as he was shoplifting some cigars. Brown and a friend then ran out of the store. The assault victim called the police and Officer Wilson received the description of the two men over his car radio. When Officer Wilson then saw two young men walking by who matched the descriptions, he stopped his patrol car. Michael Brown then assaulted Officer Wilson, making a grab for his gun. Knowing that Brown had already assaulted an elderly man during a theft, and having been assaulted himself, the situation escalated and ended when Officer Brown resorted to the use of deadly force. (23)

The Grand Jury that considered all of the available evidence in this case did not Indict Officer Wilson. The evidence they reviewed included the videotape inside the bodega which documented Brown's assault on the elderly Latino man. One bi-racial witness to the shooting testified that as Brown was charging towards Officer Wilson on the street, he, the witness, was certain that Officer Wilson's life was in danger and at that point Wilson fired at Brown. There were 3 African-Americans serving on this 12-person panel. (24)

Because of the public outcry over this case, the Justice Department launched an investigation to determine if Officer Wilson had violated the civil rights of Brown. The Attorney General at that time was Eric Holder, an African-American who came to Washington determined to make civil rights a top priority of his stewardship of that office. After an exhaustive investigation, the Justice Department cleared Officer Wilson of wrongdoing in this case. (25)

On December 20, 2014, two New York City Police Officers were assassinated as they sat in their patrol car in Brooklyn. Their assassin, Isamaaiyl Brinsley, had a few days earlier posted on social media that he would murder Police Officers in retaliation for the death of Michael Brown. Isammaaiyl, a devout Muslim, first had visited his former girlfriend, Shaneka Thompson, and shot her in the stomach. She survived. Brinsley, who had 19 prior arrests and had served 2 years in prison on weapons charges, then traveled to Brooklyn, where he executed Police Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos. (26)

In speeches given in October, 2015, FBI Director James Comey denounced the Black Lives Matter movement for creating what has been called the "Ferguson Effect." This concept suggests that criticism of the law enforcement community results in Police Officers being less aggressive in confronting criminals for fear that their actions will wind up on Social Media, thus endangering the public safety. Stated Director Comey in a speech: "In today's YouTube world, are Officers reluctant to get out of their cars and do the work that controls violent crime?"

On July 5, 2016, police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana responded to a report that a man was brandishing a handgun while selling CDs outside a grocery store. Two local cops attempted to subdue the man, Alton Sterling and the three of them fell to the ground. One Officer yelled to the other that the suspect was reaching for his gun and then three shots were fired, followed by three more. Most of the altercation was captured on a cell phone by a bystander. The two cops were placed on Administrative Leave. The cell phone footage of this event attracted national and international attention. (27)

On the following day, July 6, another Officer-involved shooting led to heightened tensions across America. A Police Officer in a patrol car in a suburban area of St. Paul, Minnesota observed a car being driven by a man who bared a remarkable resemblance to photographs distributed to local cops the day before showing a man with a handgun during a recent armed robbery of a gas station in that very neighborhood. Officer Jeronimo Yanez, who is Mexican-American, pulled over the car being driven by Philandro Castile, who is African-American. Seated next to Castile was his girlfriend Diamond Reynolds. In the back seat was the couple's 4 year old daughter. Officer Yanez shot Castile 4 times with his service revolver. At that point, Ms. Reynolds began uploading a live stream of the aftermath of the shooting to her Facebook page. At one point, a surprisingly calm Reynolds states: "You shot four bullets into him, sir.

He was just getting his license and registration, sir.” Yanez is heard stating: “I told him not to reach for it!” (his handgun) “I told him to get his hand open!” Reynolds later stated that instead of offering first aid to Castile, the other Officer embraced Officer Yanez, who was crying.

Millions of Americans have viewed the Facebook video of this tragic incident. Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton issued a public statement: “Would this have happened if those passengers, the driver and the passengers, were White? I don’t think it would.” The Governor’s remark was condemned by law enforcement officials nationwide for inflaming an already volatile public by speaking about a situation before even rudimentary facts were available. Officer Yanez did not pull over Castile because he was Black; he pulled him over because he very closely resembled the photos of the local armed robbery suspect, whose gun appeared very similar to the one Yanez indicated he noticed next to Castile.

Protests over the shootings of Sterling and Castile erupted nationwide. Some were peaceful, and some were not. The one in Dallas, Texas the next day, on July 7th was peaceful until an Army veteran, Micah Xavier Johnson, began shooting at the Police Officers on hand to maintain order during the Demonstration. As the Demonstrators ran away from the shooter, Dallas’ Finest ran towards him. Protestor Lynn Mays stated that an unknown Police Officer pushed him out of the way as the killer began shooting in their direction. The next thing Mays heard was another cop yelling “Officer Down!” Several of the Demonstrators also acted heroically. Shetamia Taylor, an African-American, was shot in the leg, at which point she threw herself on top of one of her sons, so that she would take any further bullets, not him. At that point, a Dallas cop threw himself on top of Taylor, so that any further bullets would strike him, instead of Ms. Taylor and her son. (28)

On July 11, a memorial service was held in Dallas for the 5 slain Police Officers. It was yet another speech President Obama would have to make in the wake of a mass shooting. President Obama got it right when he stated, “We ask Police to do too much, and we ask too little of ourselves!” Former President George W. Bush’s remarks were on a similar vein: “Too often, we judge other groups by their worst examples, while judging ourselves by our best intentions!”

President Obama also revealed that the 12-year-old son of Shetamia Taylor has announced that he wants to be a Police Officer when he grows up. Dallas Police Chief David Brown felt that he would be no match for the oratorical skills of Bush and Obama, so instead he read the lyrics of a Stevie Wonder song during the memorial service.

During the funerals of the 5 cops murdered in Dallas, hundreds of local Firefighters, along with their Firetrucks, formed an honor guard along the highways through which the fallen Officers’s caskets would be transported in the funeral processions that would take them to their early graves.

6 days after the Memorial service in Dallas, a U. S. Marine Corps Veteran by the name of Gavin Eugene Long, who was under the influence of 2 anti-Depressants and one other drug, opened fire on Police Officers in Baton Rouge, killing 3 and wounding 3 others. (29) In response to the Dallas shootings, Long had rented a car in his hometown of Kansas City and drove to Dallas. It was there, on July 10th, that Long posted to YouTube a video in which he addressed the latest shooting of Police Officers. In the video, Long declared his admiration for Malcolm X and George Washington. Long then describes the Fourth of July holiday as “a celebration of an uprising against oppressive forces!” Long changed his name to Cosmo Ausar Setepenra after identifying himself as a member of the Nation of Islam. (30)

One of the cops murdered by Setepenra was Police Officer Montrell Jackson, an African-American and the proud father of a 2-year-old son. His sister Jocelyn Jackson told the media that while she sympathizes with the “Black Lives Matter” movement, “it’s coming to the point where No Lives Matter, whether you’re Black or White or Hispanic or whatever!” (31)

EPILOGUE

Last year, President Obama's eulogy at the Church in Charleston, South Carolina, where a White racist, drug-addled punk had murdered 9 African-Americans, was regarded by many as one of the greatest speeches in American history. The speech has been compared to the Gettysburg Address by President Abraham Lincoln, the "Only thing we have to Fear is Fear itself!" speech by Franklin Roosevelt at his first Inauguration, and the "I Have a Dream" speech given by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the historic March on Washington in 1964.

However, there is a single sentence uttered by an African-American, beaten by police in an incident captured on video, that may speak more to Americans of this time, in regards to the troubles of this time, than the three speeches alluded to. The words came from a simple man, a taxi driver, a convicted felon who spent a year in prison for the violent robbery of a grocery store owned by a Korean immigrant, a man who was stopped by cops in California for driving while intoxicated, who was then beaten repeatedly by several Police Officers, while other cops watched and refused to intervene. The videotape of this beating reverberated around the world. Eventually, this man would achieve Justice; two of the cops who beat him were convicted in Federal Court on Civil Rights charges. A jury in a Civil case awarded him over \$5 million. But before these Judicial victories, the 4 Police Officers faced State charges for police brutality. After these 4 were Acquitted, riots broke out on the streets of Los Angeles. Over 50 people were killed; over 2,000 were injured. During the riots, the police brutality victim appeared on local television, pleading for the violence to stop. Rodney King challenged Americans with these simple words; "Can't we all get along?"

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"Bombs and the Mob! Part One: Chicago, Illinois." February, 2011. http://americanmafia.com/Feature_Articles_471.html

"Who Killed President Kennedy? A Special Report on the 50th Anniversary of 'The Crime of the Century!'" November, 2013. http://americanmafia.com/Feature_Articles_512.html

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