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Berke M.M. Bates, 40



Lieutenant H. Jay Cullen, 48.

## THE NATIONAL TRAGEDY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

A Special Editorial by J. R. de Szigethy

Over 150 years after the American Civil War ended, racially-motivated violence continues to plague the United States, with many citizens concerned that we as a Society are moving backward, not forward. The riot by Neo-Nazis and White Supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia has sent shock waves across America, a country still reeling from the racially-motivated violence last year that was among the most deadly in history for the nation's Law Enforcement community. In this latest incident, an avowed racist and Neo-Nazi used his vehicle as a weapon to mow down dozens of citizens, most of whom were peacefully protesting the presence in their city of extremists who had congregated in Virginia to express their opposition to the plans of the local City Council to remove a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee from public grounds. As a result of this riot, one young American woman was killed. And, as is all too often a consequence, two members of America's Law Enforcement community, First Responders to protect American's Civil Rights, died also.

It is during such difficult times that the American people question whether we live in a "Sick Society," a question postulated by the Media during the violence of the 1960s. What happened in Charlottesville was not a local problem; many of the angry, White men who assembled there, including KKK leader David Duke, as well as the Ohio resident being held for murder, were residents of other States. Racism is a national problem, and as Americans seek out the root causes, the "reasons" such hatred exists, what must be recognized is that "Reason" has nothing to do with any of this.

Among those searching for answers is a father in North Dakota who has denounced his own son for participating in the rally in Virginia. "We do not know where he learned these beliefs," he told a Fargo newspaper. "He did not learn them at home. I pray my Prodigal Son will renounce his hateful beliefs and return home. Then and only then will I lay out the Feast."

Over 600,000 American men died in the great war to end Slavery. Most of these men were young, and most would experience slow and painful deaths due to battlefield wounds and/or disease. Over 400,000 Americans died in the war to save the world from Nazi Germany and Imperialist Japan. These facts are disseminated to America's young people in most American schools, through the mass Media, through the Entertainment Industry, including popular motion pictures, and via the Internet. In one form or another, most young Americans must be aware of our country's troubled history, which includes the photographs of public lynchings of Blacks, in the North as well as the South, and the horrors of the Nazi gas chambers, which so many young American men sacrificed their lives to close.

Despite this, some young American men - and women - embrace the ideology of the neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. Whatever the "reasons" are for the production of new generations of American racists, the American people must not tolerate their actions of violence.

The first response the American people need to take is to demand that our national leaders condemn and confront these hate crimes in the strongest possible terms. When Janet Reno was Attorney General during the Clinton Administration, she did not hide her personal opposition to the Death Penalty. However, in the case of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, who obliterated 168 Americans with a vehicle bomb, including 19 children between the ages of 4 months to 5 years old in a Day Care Center, the Attorney General quickly announced that the Death Penalty would be pursued. Accordingly, the two Domestic Terrorists were charged for the murders of the 8 Federal Officers killed by their bomb at the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, which allowed a Federal Prosecution as opposed to a State Court Prosecution. Those 8 were Agents of the United States Secret Service, Customs, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Their Federal law enforcement status allowed the Reno Justice Department to make that bombing a Federal case.

In the Charlottesville case, Federal Civil Rights statutes can be invoked to make a Federal prosecution possible. Also, many of those who rioted used Inter-State telephonic signals and devices, mostly via the Internet, to solicit proponents of the KKK and other hate groups to cross State lines to attend the rally in Virginia, which escalated into multiple acts of violence. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has already, appropriately, assigned FBI Agents to pursue such an investigation.

Another action Americans should take is to demand of their elected leaders that all monuments and symbols of hatred, racism, and Evil - such as the statue of General Lee - be dismantled and destroyed. In recent months, such actions have taken place in cities such as Columbia, South Carolina, and New Orleans, among others.

Americans should also respond to this racist event by supporting the First Responders who rush towards such scenes of violence to protect the Civil Rights of all American citizens. Every day across America, Police Officers and Firefighters leave their homes and families to go to work, not knowing when their hands release the closing of their front door if they are going to return home. On Saturday, August 12, 2017, Virginia State Police Troopers H. Jay Cullen and Berke Bates closed that door to go to work. They responded to the KKK and Neo-Nazi riot by surveying this on-going crime scene from their helicopter, which then crashed for reasons that have not yet been determined.

Each Officer is survived by their wives and their 2 children. These six Americans can last connect with their loved ones by touching with their hands the last object these husbands and fathers last touched; the knobs to the front door of their homes, to which they never returned.

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