

MAC DONALD: thank you. I am a fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Felony crime in the United States has dropped 50%. Tens of thousands of lives, the majority Black and Hispanic, have been saved, closing the life expectancy between whites and blacks by 17%.

This crime drop was the result of a policing revolution that began in New York City in 1994 and spread nationwide. Upon taking office, New York police commissioner William Bratton dared something that few police chiefs had ever risked. He publicly set himself a target for crime reduction. He not only met his one-year goal of 20%, he beat it -- 10% but he beat it. With 12%. The next year he upped the ante, declaring the New York police department would lower crime by 15%. That year's crime drop logged in at 16%. The idea that the police would take measurable responsibility for public safety was transformative.

Bratton accomplished his crime route with three main strategies -- timely information, accountability, and proactive policing. Deputy commissioners started demanding crime information in real time so that crime patterns could be addressed as they first broke out. Top brass held precinct commanders ruthlessly accountable for crime in their jurisdictions and officers on the beat were asked to intervene proactively when they observed suspicious behavior.

Broken Windows policing was a crucial aspect of this policing revolution. It addresses low-level social disorders such as loitering, unruly conduct, and public drinking and drug use. Broken windows policing is not just a crime strategy, however, it is a moral imperative. It is the hardworking, law abiding residents of high-crime neighborhoods who beseech the police to address street disorder. Go to any police community meeting in a high-risk community and you will hear the good people there beg the police to get the drug dealers off the streets, to clear the corners of rowdy youth, and to crack down on loud music and illegal street parties. The residents know that it is out of such unchecked social disorder that more serious crimes emerges.

A 2015 Quinnipiac poll found that 61% of black voters in New York City wanted the police to issue summons or make arrests in their neighborhood for quality of life offenses, compared to 59% of white voters.

Should the police ignore their voices because the activists say that broken windows policing is racist?

We're also told that we're living in an epidemic of racially biased police shootings of black men. This, too, is false. A study published this August in the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences is just the latest research undercutting the median narrative about race and police shootings. It is the rate of violent crimes that determines police shootings, the study found. The more frequently the officers encounter violent suspects from any given racial group, the greater the chance that members of that group will be shot by a police officer. In fact, black civilians are shot less compared to whites than the rates of violent crime would predict, the study found.

If there is a bias in police shootings, it is against white civilians. The anti-police narrative deflects attention away from solving the real criminal justice problem which is high rates of black victimization. Blacks die of homicide at eight times the rate of whites. The homicide death rate for black males between the ages of 15-24 is 16 times higher than that of young white men.

That is the civil rights problem that should most concern us. Those black victims are killed not by cops, not by whites, but by other blacks.

Blacks commit homicide nationally at eight times the rate of whites and hispanics combined. In 2017, there were nearly 8,000 black homicide victims. More than all white and homicide victims combined. Only 2.8% of those black casualties, the vast majority armed with a gun or otherwise dangerous were killed by a cop. The best solution to urban crime is to reconstruct the family. That is a long-term project, however. In the meantime, the policing revolution that began in New York in the 1990's and spread nationwide has given law-abiding residents of high-crime communities greater freedom to take their children to school or to go to the grocery store without fear, an expectation that's the government's most fundamental obligation to meet. Policing today is more professional and restrained than at any time in its history, and there is no government agency more dedicated to the proposition that black lives matter than the police. Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to your questions.

DR. GOFF: My name is Phillip Atiba Goff. I am a professional nerd. Also by disposition, a relatively conflict-averse person but my love of country and respect for this body and mostly my vocation as a scientist will not allow me to move to my prepared remarks just yet.

I feel I must at least correct the record on some statistical elements. The fall of crime over the last quarter century is just abjectly not in response to police behavior alone. If the members would like further reading on this I can highly recommend Pat Sharkey's book on "Easy Peace" which identifies quite clearly that community-based anti-violence work is a large and underappreciated component of reductions in crime. Not just police behavior.

I should say I believe that the 2015 Quinnipiac poll was just cited as evidence perhaps implying that black people actually liked Broken Windows policing. If memory serves, that same Quinnipiac poll showed that black people were concerned about racial bias within law enforcement, a trend that's escalated over that -- the period of time since 2015. To suggest that black people enjoyed the treatment in New York or anyplace else, of Broken Windows policing is what scholars Veshla Weaver and Elizabeth Hinton referred to as selective hearing. Hearing only what is convenient to an ideological narrative and not the fullness of what those communities are calling for, which is safety and justice at the same time. Surely not too high a bar for law enforcement.

Last in terms of clarification, a study and proceedings in the National Academies of Sciences was just cited, and I have to say, first of all, no, that's not what it said.

Most importantly, the authors of that study have recently acknowledged to the rest of the scientific community, to some members of the scientific community, that their central causal claim is unsupported by the data and factually wrong.

This committee hearing should not be a dumping ground for bad faith arguments --

NADLER: that -- dr. Goff, we've heard a lot of witnesses and you're testifying now about a central causal claim. Can you tell us what you're -- which causal claim you're refuting, what you're talking about?

DR. GOFF: The study just cited by Ms. Mac Donald does not show that white officers are less or more likely to be involved in deadly shootings. It simply does not. It's a correlational study and the authors themselves have admitted to others in the scientific community that the central causal claim that they make which is there is no bias in this is unsupported by the data that has been made public and have been publicly analyzed by scholars like Jonathan Mummalo at Princeton -- Princeton university. I do not like to be part of something that becomes a laundromat for junk science and I apologize for stepping out of my character to say so. I want to thank you for allowing me to testify.