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What lies behind the demonstrations after George Floyd's killing

*Contributed to The Dedham Times
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For the first 200 years in America up to the Civil War, slavery filled the lives of persons of color with hurt, anger, indignity, inspiration, depression, hunger and desperation – and many of these passions are seen in today's demonstrations in America, and globally.

The fuel of the demonstrations has been supplied by the choices of the majority population for 400 years.

George Floyd's killing was a spark in an unbroken history within which the reservoir of systemic racism runs deep.

In the 100 years after slavery, the majority, again, covertly, and by silence and condonation, continued systemic racism.

Many features of slavery were institutionalized to ensure that black people were subordinated indefinitely.

In the most recent 100 years, the resistance to equal citizenship has continued to maintain marked disparities in every facet of life for African Americans.

Mississippi, symbolically, did not ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery until 1995, and delayed the paperwork until 2013.

When Ahmaud Arbery was hunted in Georgia and George Floyd was killed with a white police officer's knee on his neck in Minneapolis, the roots of racism were tapped wide open across the nation.

Today's reaction was the result of four centuries of the majority's failure to commit to the equality of people of color with the same commitment it made to itself.

America's resistance to ending slavery and the lynching of black Americans through the mid-twentieth century captures well the enormity of the layers by which the majority has denied African Americans equality.

After the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, President Andrew Johnson, a former slaveholder, pardoned 7,000 rebel secessionists, rescinded land grants to black farmers and opposed black voting rights. Whites controlled American capital and routinely denied blacks credit. White supremacy reigned. Much of slavery was kept.

In 1866, white police officers opened fire on black citizens in Memphis and mobs rampaged and burned black residences, churches, schools and neighborhoods, indiscriminately raping and killing black people.

A few months later, blacks tried to convene a state constitutional convention in New Orleans to extend voting rights and repeal the Black Codes, which led to a white mob, joined by police, indiscriminately killing convention supporters and black citizens.

To prevent black political and economic competition, whites terrorized black Republicans in Louisiana, killing 150 in two weeks.

Another wave of terror by white militia killed dozens of black Republicans after a gubernatorial election in 1873 in Colfax, Louisiana.

In 1875, the paramilitary "Red Shirts" organized mob attacks on black political gatherings and killed black leaders.

In 1865, Confederate veterans formed the Ku Klux Klan, whose members came from every social echelon including political, judicial, business and

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(Left): J. Thomas Shipp and Abraham S. Smith were young African-American men who were murdered in a spectacle lynching by a mob of thousands on August 7, 1930, in Marion, Indiana.

The photo at left was taken by Lawrence Beitler. It is in the public domain. The following information is credited to Wikipedia.

Shipp and Smith were taken from jail cells, beaten, and hanged from a tree in the county courthouse square. They had been arrested that night as suspects in a robbery, murder and rape case. A third African-American suspect, 16-year-old James Cameron, had also been arrested and narrowly escaped being killed by the mob; an unknown woman and a local sports hero intervened, and he was returned to jail. The local chapter of the NAACP had tried to evacuate the suspects from town to avoid the mob violence, but were not successful. The NAACP and the State's Attorney General pressed to indict leaders of the lynch mob, but, as was typical in lynchings, no one was ever charged for their deaths, nor for the attack on Cameron.

Cameron was later convicted and sentenced as an accessory to murder before the fact. He served

some time in prison, then pursued work and an education. After dedicating his life to civil rights activism, in 1991 Cameron was pardoned by the state of Indiana.

The night of the lynching, studio photographer Lawrence Beitler took a photograph of the crowd surrounding the bodies of the two men hanging from a tree. He sold thousands of copies over the next 10 days. This is an iconic image of a spectacle lynching.[citation needed]

In 1937 Abel Meeropol, a Jewish schoolteacher from New York City and later the adoptive father of the sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, saw a copy of Beitler's 1930 photograph. He later said that the photograph "haunted [him] for days" and inspired his poem "Bitter Fruit". It was published in the New York Teacher in 1937 and later in the magazine New Masses, in both cases under the pseudonym Lewis Allan. Meeropol set his poem to music, renaming it "Strange Fruit".

In 1939 the song was performed, recorded and popularized by American singer Billie Holiday. The song has since been recorded by numerous artists, continuing into the 21st Century.



(Above): A lynched life-size model to intimidate African American voters. This photo was taken in 1940. Text on sign: "This Nigger Voted." Stetson Kennedy (1916-2011), writer and civil rights activist, collected these photographs during the course of his career fighting for equality throughout the Southern United States.

law enforcement.

The Klan, White League and other white organizations used economic reprisals, whippings, mutilations and lynching to keep black workers from leaving sharecropping, organizing their labor, voting, socializing with whites and from succeeding economically.

The United States Supreme Court completed the assault on black citizenship. It struck down 13 congressional acts as "unconstitutional" during Reconstruction from 1865 - 1872. It had only stricken 2 acts in all prior U.S. history.

The Slaughterhouse and Cruikshank cases restricted the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendment from allowing the federal government to enforce the Reconstruction amendments and prevented a federal criminal response to lynch mobs and organized terror.

In Cruikshank, the Court declared that blacks "cease to be the special favorite of the laws."

By 1876, the Court legalized segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson* and declared that "if one race be inferior to the other...the Constitution of the United States cannot put them on the same plane."

Two decades earlier, in *Dred Scott*, the Court declared that it could not reverse God's creation of blacks as inferiors and "the black man had no rights which the white man must respect."

To break the deadlock of the 1876 presidential election, Rutherford Hayes, Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to end Reconstruction.

By 1872 confederate leaders regained the ability to hold office. New southern state constitutions guaranteed a racial caste which persists to today.

Convict leasing laws were passed to cause blacks to be arrested as "vagrants," "loitering" or unemployed, held in penitentiaries and leased for profit by the state to work in brutal conditions, often starved, beaten, badly injured and denied medical care. This was justified on grounds that the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery "except as punishment for crime."

The seeds were sown to transfer responsibility for racial dominance to the criminal justice system.

The white majority chose that America would continue to be white dominated. Black equality was sacrificed, again, as it was by the Founding Fathers.

The die was cast for lynching to become an American tool of white dominance.

By 1900, blacks were lynched 17 to 1 as compared to whites. Blacks were lynched for any reason or no reason such as for sassing a white person, failing to address a white person by a proper title, swearing, suing a white person, having a romantic relationship with a white person, not moving over on a sidewalk for a white person, making whiskey, competing for labor, acquiring property, voting, receiving a government job to suspicion of crimes such as rape, murder, assault and arson.

The lynching of African Americans was intended to convey an unmistakable message of racial subordination. Victims were tortured, hot irons gouged out their eyes, their flesh was removed with corkscrews, organs were mutilated, genitals cut out, heads

decapitated and body parts were sold as souvenirs or displayed in local stores.

Black bodies were burned on pyres and their corpses were dragged through main streets and black neighborhoods and hung in front of courthouses and public buildings. Women and children, especially young boys, were encouraged to attend, and in many cases, to participate.

This racial terrorism was often carried out in front of large crowds and whole communities with the assistance or condonation of police and public officials.

In most cases, whites were not charged; when they were, they were acquitted and freed by juries.

In all lynchings after 1900, only 1% resulted in a criminal conviction. Some "trials" lasted minutes before juries returned guilty verdicts. Defendants were poorly represented, if at all. Black witnesses were often forbidden to testify. Juries were all-white. In some cases, black "confessions" were wrought by beatings, instruments inserted deep into their noses and mouths or by having their bodies placed in an electric chair.

Black men were lynched for having any relation, real or imagined, mundane or consensual, with white women.

In 1865, Sax Joiner wrote a note promising to protect two white women in South Carolina if Union soldiers came. Mr. Joiner was arrested for daring such familiarity with white women, taken from the jail by a mob and hung across from the courthouse.

John Walthall, a black farmer was believed to have frequented a white brothel and shot and whipped more than 100 times by the Ku Klux Klan until he died.

(Right): The charred corpse of Will Brown. This photo was taken in Omaha, Nebraska in September 28, 1919. The image is in the public domain.

The following information is credited to an online article, "The Omaha Courthouse Lynching of 1919," by Alonzo Smith (see <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/omaha-courthouse-lynching-1919/>).

The infamous Omaha Courthouse Lynching of 1919 was part of the wave of racial and labor violence that swept the United States during the "Red Summer" of 1919.

It was witnessed by an estimated 20,000 people, making it one of the largest individual spectacles of racial violence in the nation's history.

Will Brown, a 40-year-old African American meat-packinghouse worker had been accused of raping a 19-year-old white woman, Agnes Lobeck.

Prior to Brown's arrest, the Omaha Bee newspaper carried detailed accounts of the story along with pictures of Brown and Lobeck.

When police went to Brown's residence to arrest him, a mob tried and failed to seize him. He was arrested and held for a few

hours in the Douglas County Courthouse in downtown Omaha. Largely due to the newspaper story, a mob of 250 men and women gathered in the white working class area of South Omaha and marched north into downtown, gathering outside of the Courthouse in the late afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 28...

The mob broke into the courthouse, tore off Brown's clothing as he was being dragged out, hanged him from a lamppost, and riddled his already dead body with bullets. His body was then tied to a police car, dragged to a major downtown intersection, and then burned. Fragments of the rope used to lynch him were sold as souvenirs for 10 cents apiece.

Numerous photographs were taken, including this one, which shows some of the lynchers proudly posing behind Brown's charred body. That photo became known around the world as the iconic image of Red Summer violence.

One of the witnesses to the lynching was young future actor Henry Fonda, who later remembered, "It was the most horrendous sight I'd ever seen... My hands were wet and there were tears in my eyes. All I could think of was that young black man dangling at the end of a rope."



In 1893 in Kentucky, two white sisters were found dead. A mob scoured the county to find a black suspect. The mob targeted a black male who had been arrested for hitching a ride on a freight train. The father of the girl's daughter did not believe that this man had killed his daughters and later asked that the case be reopened to pursue a white suspect. It made no difference. Without a trial, the black man was taken by a white mob, stripped naked, collared with a heavy log chain around his neck, dragged through the street, raised up a pole, used for firearm practice, his toes and fingers were cut off and his corpse was lowered into a raging pyre.

In 1893, Lee Walker of Tennessee met a similar fate after he was accused of harassing two women in a buggy trying to get a hand out or take something.

Edward Coy of Arkansas and a man known as "Ed" of South Carolina were both lynched for dating white women, in one case after a love letter was intercepted.

In 1906, Edward Johnson, a black carpenter, was falsely accused of raping a white woman. All local lawyers refused to defend him. The Judge appointed counsel who did nothing to defend him. Blacks were excluded from the grand and petit juries. Mr. Johnson was convicted and sentenced to death. His appointed lawyer refused to appeal. Mr. Johnson found counsel to appeal. In the rarest of occasions, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Mr. Johnson was denied a fair trial. The local sheriff responded by leaving an elderly man over 70 in charge of the jail so that a mob could overrun the jail. The sheriff then arrived at the jail and

cooperated with his lock up in a bathroom. The mob dragged Mr. Johnson to a bridge before a crowd of 200 where he was hung and shot with hundreds of bullets. The mob left a note on Mr. Johnson's corpse for the Supreme Court which read: "Come get your nigger now." It took 100 years for the government to declare Mr. Johnson's innocence.

In that same year in Atlanta, Lucius Frazier was accused of threatening a white woman with a shoe. A lynch mob of several thousand whites smashed black owned businesses, stoned public trolleys, and shot, stabbed and beat blacks indiscriminately while police watched. The mob carried black corpses and laid them at the foot of a Confederate monument.

In 1922, in Kirvin, Texas a white teenager was raped. Her grandfather with whom she lived, a prosperous rancher, suspected that his white neighbors with whom he had a feud had done this. A white mob of 500 nonetheless rounded up 3 black laborers, roped them together and dragged them through the streets, castrated one and mutilated his organs, then roasted them, and burned the other two.

Between 1908 and 1949 Virginia had executed 45 black men charged with rape, but not a single white, and Mississippi had not executed a single white for rape either.

In 1950, Mississippi's highest court deemed that any defense that sex was consensual between a white woman and a black man was a "revolting insinuation...any white woman...not completely down and out, degenerate, degraded and corrupt, could [not] have anything to do with a Negro man..."

In 1955, a 14 year old boy named Emmett Till visited his family in Money, Mississippi. Emmett was alleged to have flirted with the wife of a white store owner as he was buying candy. The woman's husband and brother accosted Emmett and made him carry a 75 pound cotton-gin fan to the Tallahatchie River. They made Emmett get naked, beat him near to death, gouged out his eye, shot him in the head and threw him into the river tied to the fan with barbed wire. Emmett's mother allowed an open casket to expose racial brutality.

Two weeks later, Emmett's killers went on trial in a segregated courthouse with few witnesses. In less than 1 hour, the all-white jury found the defendants "not guilty"

African Americans were lynched because whites feared that they would vote and have the same political opportunities.

In 1897, Frazier Baker, a black school teacher held the position of Postmaster in Florence County, South Carolina. Whites boycotted the post office, complained that his smell offended white women, shot his assistant and burned the post office. Mr. Baker moved the post office to his home only to have a mob of 300 burn down his house, shoot at his fleeing family, and kill Mr. Baker and his infant carried by his wife. Every mob leader was acquitted or freed by juries.

In 1898 in eastern North Carolina, blacks built communities with black political and business organizations and leaders including a deputy sheriff. White mobs raided the offices of black candidates, egged speakers, fired canons, threatened to assassinate the Governor, conducted mass rallies

with floats that read "White Supremacy" and performed a "clearance" of black communities.

In Wilmington, a mob of 400 invaded the black quarter, burned black media buildings, killed blacks randomly, drove black families into the woods and rounded up remaining black citizens and forced them onto trains and out of state.

States amended their constitutions to impose literacy tests and poll taxes to keep blacks from voting.

Illiterate whites were allowed to vote under "grandfather clauses" because they had an ancestor who had voted, whereas it had been illegal for blacks to be literate and to vote.

Black voter registration in Louisiana was 130,334 and blacks were majority voters in 26 parishes after Reconstruction; by 1904, there were only 1,342 black voters and no black majorities.

Mississippi Governor and



(Above): Rubin Stacy, a 37-year-old black man, hangs from a tree on Old Davie Road in Fort Lauderdale, Florida blood trickling down his body and dripping off his toes. Behind him, a white girl, about 7 years old, looks on, a strange smile on her face as she takes in the sight of what her elders had done on that hot day in July 1935.

The photo above is in the public domain. The following information is credited to N.A.A.C.P., "Lynching of Rubin Stacy," Textbook, accessed June 30, 2020, <http://historymaking.org/textbook/items/show/263>.

On July 16, 1935 an unidentified black man knocked on the door of the home of Marion Jones of Ft. Lauderdale and asked for a drink. When she let him in, he threatened her with a penknife. She screamed until he ran off and her 5-year-old son ran for help.

Two days later, local law enforcement arrested Rubin Stacy because a passing driver had reported him as "suspicious looking." ...Though Stacy denied attacking Marion Jones he was subsequently arrested and turned over to Broward County Sheriff, Walter Clark.

On July 19th, instead of using a police lineup to allow the victim to identify her assailant, Sheriff Clark took Stacey to the home of Marion Jones. After Jones' children screamed "there he is!" Jones and each of the deputies present received a \$25 reward for identifying Stacy as Jones' attacker. Deputies subsequently returned Stacy to the Broward County Jail where rumors quickly spread that Jones had been raped. Sheriff Clark stated that he noticed signs of a rising "lynching spirit" in the local populace, the black population of which had grown in the previous fifteen years from 1,870 to 15,000.

In response to rumors that local vigilantes planned to remove Stacy from the county jail after nightfall, Sheriff Clark decided to move Stacy to the Dade County jail in Miami "for his own protection."

During transport a group of at least fifty local men, which may have included Sheriff Clark, ran Stacy's car off the road in broad daylight.

The mob took Stacy to a spot near the home of Marion Jones and hung him from a pine tree using a wire clothesline from Jones's house. He was then shot multiple times. After Stacy's death a crowd, including several young white children, gathered to view his dead body. Whites also collected souvenirs of the event, including pieces of Stacy's clothing, bark from the tree, and pieces of the wire used to hang him.

After only 40 minutes of deliberation, the coroner's inquest concluded Stacy had died at the hands of "a person or persons unknown." A Broward County grand jury four days later also led to no indictments.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) used a photo of the lynching of Rubin Stacy on a flyer trying to get support for the Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynching Bill.

The flyer focused on the physiological effects of the lynching on the seven white children in the photograph. The group's efforts, however, did not garner sufficient support to pass the bill.

In 1988, over 50 years after Rubin Stacey was lynched, the Broward County Sun Sentinel interviewed witnesses who claimed that Sheriff Clark and his deputy (who was also his brother), planned Stacy's lynching. The witnesses also claimed the brothers had killed other African Americans throughout the years, for offenses as minor as spitting on them. The brothers' reign of terror continued until 1950 when they were removed from office by the Governor and indicted on charges of corruption. They were later cleared when key witnesses "forgot" their testimony.

later U.S. Senator, Theodore Bilbo declared that all blacks should be shipped back to Africa and, in 1946, called "for every red-blooded white man to use any means to keep the nigger away from the polls."

African Americans were lynched because whites feared that they would compete economically and as punishment when they succeeded.

In 1892, whites in Memphis resented the competition of two black partners of People's Grocery. The competing white store owner tried to have the black business declared a "public nuisance" and a mob opened fire on the grocery store. The black grocers were arrested and removed from the jail by a white posse who shot and killed them and drove about 2,000 black people out of the area. No indictments resulted.

In 1916, Anthony Crawford was a successful black landowner in Abbeville, South Carolina who fought with a white store owner over the price of cottonseed. Mr. Crawford was arrested and dragged from his cell by a white mob, paraded through the black quarter, hung from a tree in the fairgrounds and filled with bullets. The mob proceeded to the courthouse and voted with other whites to clear the Crawford family out of the county, take their land and take all black businesses.

In 1917, whites reacted to the migration of black workers to East St. Louis, Illinois where they became economic competition. In a series of riots, white mobs shot up black neighborhoods, burned their homes, killed and hung blacks from streetlamps, killed 29 children and "cleared" 6000 black residents. Police and national guard joined the whites.

In 1918, in Valdosta, Georgia, a white planter and black sharecropper were in a fight and the planter was killed. White lynch mobs began a series of indiscriminate killings of black people. The sharecropper's 8 month pregnant wife was arrested, taken from jail by the mob, stripped, hung upside down from a bridge and her baby was cut from her belly, stomped and burned by the mob. 17 mob members were identified; none were prosecuted.

By 1921, Tulsa, Oklahoma's Greenwood District had become home to the most affluent black community in America with black lawyers, educators, doctors, dentists, professionals, oil industry workers, grocery stores, movie theatres, newspaper and nightclub owners, churches and black veterans returning from World War I.

Whites resented the success of African Americans in Greenwood. A black teenage shoe shiner, Dick Rowland, was accused of assaulting a white female elevator operator and arrested. Rumors spread that Mr. Rowland was lynched. Prior to 1921, 26 black men and boys had been lynched in Oklahoma. Black residents were determined to prevent another lynching and some came armed to the courthouse. Shots were fired and 12 people were killed. Within a short time, white rioters rampaged through Greenwood killing blacks indiscriminately, burning and looting their businesses and homes and rendering 10,000 black people homeless. The 1996 Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921 estimated that 150 - 300 people were massacred.

African Americans were lynched because whites feared black autonomy and assertiveness.

In 1898, black Army private, James Neely was shot and killed by a white mob in Hampton, Georgia for protesting a white storekeeper's refusal to serve him at a soda counter.

In 1906, black war veterans returned to Brownsville, Texas where they were insulted, spit on, and banned from establishments and parks. When a white woman accused a soldier of sexual assault, media published inflammatory press emphasizing the bestial nature of black men. Shooting broke out in the streets between soldiers and a white citizen guard. Theodore Roosevelt, who called the black soldiers "Smoked Yankees" and believed that black males had uncontrollable sexual appetites, dishonorably discharged 167 soldiers including those with 25 years of service and 6 who had won combat medals of valor.

In 1918, in Hickman, Kentucky, a black WWI veteran, Charles Lewis, was in uniform when harassed by a white policeman claiming that he fit the description of a robbery suspect. When Mr. Lewis insisted that he was a soldier and had harmed no one, the officer charged him with police assault and arrested him. A white mob broke into the jail, seized Mr. Lewis and hung him. U.S. Senator James Vardman warned America that allowing a black man to be a soldier "inflate[d] his untutored soul" and created "a short step to the conclusion that his political rights must be respected."

In 1930, SS Mincey, a 70 year old black man from Georgia, who had been a political organizer for 25 years, delegate to the Republican National Convention and a prosperous farmer returned the verbal slights of whites in arguments. Mr. Mincey was removed from his home by masked raiders, stripped naked and flogged until his flesh was ripped to shreds, and he was left to die. No one was prosecuted.

In 1947, black WWII Naval veteran, Joe Nathan Roberts visited his family in Sardis, Georgia when a group of white men became insulted because he would not call them "Sir." That night, Mr. Roberts was removed from his parents' home and killed.

In 1948, another group of white men killed black veteran, Isaiah Nixon at his home in front of his wife and children for casting his vote in the county election. All of the defendants were acquitted by white juries.

Systemic racism was given sanction by government, media and whites of every calling. Northern academics promoted "scientific racism."

Daniel G. Brinton, President of the International Congress of Anthropology and the American Association for the Advancement of Science declared in 1890 that black people evolved "midway between the Orang-utang and the European White."

Newspapers and white public speakers referred to blacks as "niggahs, darkies, coons, pickaninnies, mammys, bucks, high-yallers and yaller hussies."

Blacks were described to have big feet, kinky or wooly hair, flat noses, flappy ears and to be genetically inferior. Nicknames meant to degrade were attached to black individuals such as "Prince Orang Outan, Nuttin Tal, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Napoleon Boneyfidey and Piddlekins."

Blacks were characterized as lazy, stupid, cowardly, sexually uncontrollable, and purveyors of sexual disease. Solutions were publicly declared to be castration, deportation, criminalizing sexual mixing and scattering blacks so widely that they would become extinct.

Many Christians justified slavery and white "Redemption" by explaining that Negroes were the children of Ham, cursed by Noah to be "servants of servants...unto his people."

White North Carolina preacher Thomas Dixon wrote "The Leopard's Spots" and "The Clansman," glorifying the Klan.

D.W. Griffith released the film "The Birth of a Nation" in which a white virgin commits suicide rather than submit to a black man and Jesus Christ sanctions sectional reunion and the safeguarding of racial purity.

President Woodrow Wilson segregated federal employees, downgraded black officeholders and segregated cafeterias and bathrooms in Washington, the U.S. Treasury and the Post Office.

Because of America's systemic racism, in 1949 Congress supported the new United Nations but not the Genocide Convention, fearing that America would be cited for daily violation of Article II of the Convention which proscribed genocide against a targeted group.

African Americans, from their first day in America, have had the majority populations' "knee on their neck" and felt that they "could not breathe."

For 200 years, blacks were owned, chained, raped, their children sold, and used as property for whites to do with as they pleased.

For the next 100 years, whites controlled how African Americans could act, speak, work, live, earn, whom they could marry, whether they could vote and controlled their every behavior under Jim Crow, the Black Codes, racial terror and lynching.

In the past 75 years, African Americans have seen improvements, but remain subject to systemic racial disparity in every measure of life.

Richard Rothstein, in "The Color of Law," details how the U.S. Government guaranteed generational segregation by denying loans and federal insurance to African Americans across the nation. Private citizens joined with racial covenants, redlining, gerrymandering and threats of violence. Vast suburban tracts were set up, from sea to shining sea, to be exclusively or primarily for whites.

Adding to poverty and segregation, African Americans are controlled by the criminal justice system. Young African Americans, particularly males, are bound by the juvenile and criminal justice system to be disadvantaged from employment, voting, education, separated from their families, deprived of good health care, guaranteed dim prospects as husbands and fathers, and broken physically, emotionally and spiritually. The behaviors for which African Americans are criminalized are the same behaviors in which people of all races engage.

Minorities make up 84.9% of state prison commitments for drug offenses...Even within poverty areas, Black and Hispanic state prison commitment rates are over five times higher than White rates. (1997 William Brownsberger, Assistant Attorney General of Massachusetts and Research Fellow of Harvard Medical School)

From 1930 - 1976, of 455 executions for rape, 90% were black. The rate of death penalty prosecutions for drug-related crimes by race, 1988 - 1994, 78% African American versus 11% White. In 82% of cases, the death penalty was applied for crimes in which the victims were White. (American Civil Liberties Union)

In 1995 blacks were 88.3% of all federal crack distribution convictions and whites only 4.1%, though whites were 52% of crack and 75% of powder cocaine users. (United States Sentencing Commission)

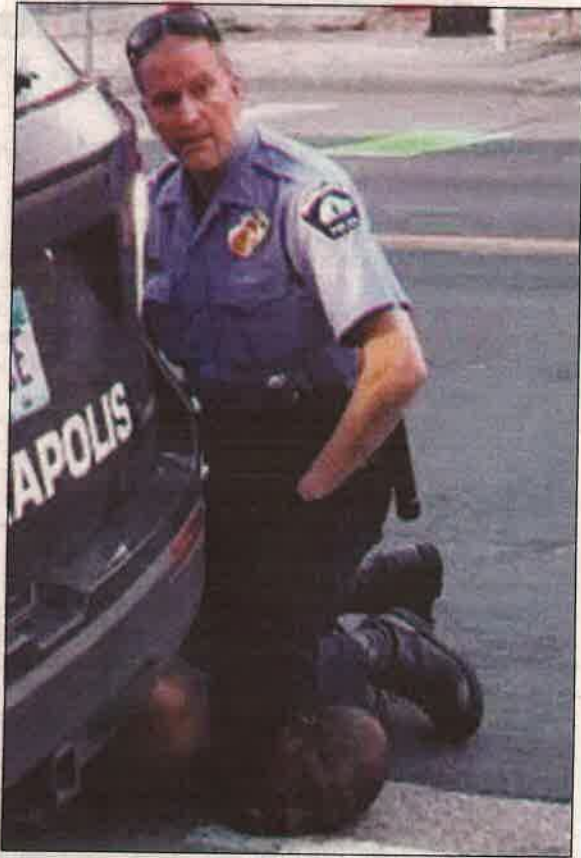
Near 1 in 3 young black men aged 20 - 29 is under criminal justice supervision every day. (1990 The Sentencing Project)

A Villanova University study of the Philadelphia Police Department's stop and frisk data from 2014 - 2015 showed that black neighborhoods had 70% more frisks than nonblack areas despite the fact that less contraband was discovered.

In 2014, USA Today analyzed over 3,500 U.S. police departments and found that 95% arrested black people at higher rates than other groups.

An FBI investigation of Dearborn, Michigan showed that more than 50% of people arrested in 2011 - 2012 were black despite being only 4% of the population. The police department arrested 4,500 black people, 500 more than that lived in the city, with an arrest rate 26 times higher than for other races.

A Temple University traffic survey by race on I-95 in Maryland showed that 74% of violators were White versus 17.5% Black but 80.3% of all drivers stopped were racial minorities. All



(Above): A frame from a witness video, showing Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin, with his knee on the neck of George Floyd, on May 25, 2020. Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for almost eight minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down, begging for his life and repeatedly saying, "I can't breathe." Officers J. Alexander Kueng and Thomas Lane further restrained Floyd, while Officer Tou Thao prevented bystanders from intervening. During the final three minutes, Floyd was motionless and had no pulse while Chauvin ignored onlookers' pleas to remove his knee, which he did not do until medics told him to.

but 2 of 13 State Troopers assigned to I-95 stopped racial minorities 81.3 % - 100% of the time. (1993 Wilkins v. Maryland State Police, U.S. District Court of Maryland)

The U.S. District Court of Massachusetts reported that 100% of federal cocaine prosecutions and 90% of such state court prosecutions in several western Massachusetts counties were against people of color though whites made up 78 - 94% of those counties. (1999 U.S. v. Tuitt)

White Americans engaged in warfare to stop British taxation without representation and the Stamp, Townshend, Tea and Intolerable Acts.

America's white majority was subject to a small fraction of the oppression, for a fraction of the time, to which it has subjected African Americans. Were the conditions suffered by African Americans suffered by the white majority, this conversation would have been ended centuries ago.

America is an ideal that "all people" are created for and entitled to equal enjoyment of life, liberty and property. America defined "all people" as white people, white men especially, and exercised its power to guarantee that people of color would suffer inequality for centuries. Talk of race does not "divide" the majority.

The majority has always been "divided" as to whether "all people" includes persons of color and whether they should be treated as part of the American family as the majority has overall accepted, for example, those who are Greek, Italian, German, Polish, Irish and the many peoples of Europe.

The truth is that the majority and the minority population will be happier, stronger, more moral, an example to humanity, wealthier, when people of color enjoy and experience the same quality of life in America with the majority population. For the practical minded, the truth is that America will fail if it does not keep its promise, whether it destroys itself, or, whether a new non-white majority evolves and turns the table.

We have no choice, and we should wish no other. The majority must open their lives, in every aspect, every day, to people of color, as they do rather naturally, with other members of the majority.

America needs an honest truth and reconciliation. Most of America's racial problems will then ebb to tolerable levels such as between European whites in America.

Each person knows what this means and should devote all that they can, every day, to meet America's greatest challenge and keep its promise.

That is what will "Make America Great."

One of America's greatest NAACP leaders, James Weldon Johnson, explained that the "race question involves the saving of black America's body and white America's soul." Its resolution is essential to save all of our lives and souls.