

The abuse of police officers towards the citizens

Law



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The issue of police brutality and police violence is not a new one. One of the interesting compliments of the way in which police treat the civilians they interact with is with regards to the fact that it is these civilians that ultimately pay the salaries for the policeman who so often abuse them. In such a way, a delicate balance between citizen taxpayer and law enforcement officer has evolved. Regardless of this evolution, the events of the recent past indicate that a marked increase in police abuse of these civilians has been evidenced. The following analysis will seek to indicate whether or not this seeming “ increase” is indeed true and if so what contributing factors are the most salient in this escalation of incidents. It is the hope of this author that such analysis will be able to pinpoint not only the overall level of violence and whether or not it increases or decreases with time, but whether the ultimate relationship between the police and the civilian has fundamentally shifted over time. The first metric which must be discussed with regards to the level of police violence and abuse is with regards to the fact that the recent geopolitical situation within the world has created a glut of rather specialized and otherwise non-employable veterans. What is meant by this is that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have created an entire generation of returning veterans, oftentimes with little to no education beyond high school, that desperately seek to find their niche in an incredibly competitive job environment. As a direct function of this, police departments around the United States have seen themselves become increasingly militarized. This militarization does not only have to do with the type of hardware and tactics that are employed, although it is doubtless true that this is exhibited as well, it has to do with the mentality of the departments as they exist throughout the nation (Lawson, 2013). As a result

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of the conflicts that had previously been discussed, many of these recruits, and senior policeman for that matter, approach their line of work in something of a “kill or be killed” mentality. Within such a mentality, a common expression that is heard among police around the nation is as follows: “whatever it takes to get me home alive”. Although it is apparent and obvious why such a statement resonates so well with law enforcement around the country, the fact of the matter is that such an approach necessarily values the rights and life of the police officer much higher than the citizen to whom he/she is charged with protecting. As such, the old dictum “to protect and serve” is turned on its head as officers will go to any and all lengths to preserve their own life at the expense of whatever rights may be trampled on the part of the civilian. Another relevant reason that must be discussed is with regards to the increased levels of active shooter training, counterterrorism training, SWAT team training, and a litany of other unlikely scenarios that factor into a massive amount of law enforcement operations training within the current era (Balko, 2013). Although it is not the suggestion of this author that such training should be done away with, the fact of the matter is that focusing such an inordinately large amount of time upon situations that are at most unlikely to ever occur, create a mentality within the mind of the officers that the world in which they regularly interact at the police officer is inherently more dangerous and threatening than it already is. This compounds the situation which is been defined above and create something of a hairline trigger within the mind of the police officer (Out, 2006). Accordingly, officers are trained that each and every situation could rapidly escalate to a life or death scenario. Although there is some truth to this level of training, the end result is that officers are bound up to <https://assignbuster.com/the-abuse-of-police-officers-towards-the-citizens/>

believe that each and every interaction with society proves to be a life-and-death struggle; one which they seek above all other to escape from and survived. Yet, all of these factors notwithstanding, it is the opinion of this author that the actual prevalence of police violence directed towards the citizen has not ultimately increase within the past several decades. Whereas the reader may take offense at such a remark, it must be appreciated and understood that reliable studies using reasonable metrics to infer the overall levels of police brutality and violence at necessarily been dependent upon proper reporting of such incidences. Moreover, the availability and proliferation of personal computing devices, to include cell phones that are capable of video, audio, and photographic recording, has greatly increased the rate to which individual stakeholders within society can document, record, and promote stories of police malfeasance. Accordingly, it is the belief of this author that it is likely, although difficult to prove, that police brutality and violence has increased within the past several years. However, without verifiable means of proving this, the only method through which such a realization or hypothesis could take place is with regards to seeking to measure an increase in police violence and/or brutality the widespread proliferation of cell phones and other personal computer devices. In this way, dependence upon reporting and the media will not be as important a metric as has been exhibited previously. References Balko, R. (2013). Rise of the Warrior Cop. ABA Journal, 99(7), 44-52. LAWSON, T. F. (2013). POWERLESS AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY. St. Thomas Law Review, 25(2), 218-243. Otu, N. (2006). The police service and liability insurance: Responsible policing. International Journal Of Police Science & Management, 8(4), 294-315.