



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on July 14, 2016

Challenges for Black People

President Barack Obama and his first attorney general, Eric Holder, called for an honest conversation about race. Holder even called us “a nation of cowards” because we were unwilling to have a “national conversation” about race. The truth of the matter is there’s been more than a half-century of conversations about race. We do not need more. Instead, black people need to have frank conversations among ourselves, no matter how uncomfortable and embarrassing the topics may be.



Among the nation’s most dangerous cities are Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Baltimore, Memphis, Milwaukee, Birmingham, Newark, Cleveland and Philadelphia. These once-thriving cities are in steep decline. What these cities have in common is that they have large black populations. Also, they have been run by Democrats for nearly a half-century, with blacks having significant political power. Other characteristics these cities share are poorly performing and unsafe schools, poor-quality city services, and declining populations.

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Each year, more than 7,000 blacks are murdered. That’s a number greater than white and Hispanic murder victims combined. Blacks of all ages are killed at six times the rate of whites and Hispanics combined. According to the FBI, the police kill about 400 people a year; blacks are roughly one-third of that number. In Chicago alone, so far this year, over 2,000 people have been shot, leaving over 320 dead. It’s a similar tale of mayhem in other predominantly black cities.

Heather Mac Donald’s most recent book, *The War on Cops*, points out some devastating and sobering statistics: “Blacks were charged with 62 percent of all robberies, 57 percent of all murders, and 45 percent of all assaults in the 75 largest U.S. counties in 2009, while constituting roughly 15 percent of the population in those counties. From 2005 to 2014, 40 percent of cop-killers were black. Given the racially lopsided nature of gun violence, a 26 percent rate of black victimization by the police is not evidence of bias.”

The primary victims of lawlessness are black people. To address this problem and most others, black people should ignore the liberal agenda. If civil authorities will not do their job of creating a safe environment, then black people should take the initiative. One example comes to mind. In 1988, at the request of residents, [black Muslims began to patrol Mayfair Mansions](#), a drug-infested, gang-ridden, unsafe Washington, D.C., housing project. The gangs and drug lords left. The Nation of Islam sentinels were not deterred by the wishes of politicians and the American Civil Liberties Union. They didn’t feel obliged to give kid glove treatment to criminals. Black residents of crime-infested neighborhoods should set up patrols, armed if necessary, to challenge thugs, gangs, drug dealers and other miscreants and make black neighborhoods safe and respectable. No one should have to live in daily fear for his life and safety. Most Americans have no idea of — and wouldn’t begin to tolerate — the climate of fear and intimidation under which so many black people live.



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Without self-initiative, there is not much that can be done about the high crime rate in black neighborhoods. Black and white liberals and their allies in the ACLU, as well as many libertarians, will not countenance the kind of tools needed to bring about civility. For example, the Chicago Police Department recently entered an agreement with the ACLU to record contact cards for all street stops. The ACLU claimed that police were disproportionately targeting minorities for questioning and searches. The practical result will be fewer investigative stops by policemen and more crime, and it will be black residents who suffer.

Black people have the capacity to run the criminals out of their neighborhoods. Let me put the issue another way. Suppose it were the Ku Klux Klan riding through black neighborhoods murdering 7,000 blacks year after year. How many black people would be willing to wait for the Klansmen to behave themselves or accept political promises and wait for a government program?

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