



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on March 2, 2011

Seattle Cop Speaks Out Against City's Social Justice Program

The Seattle city website says that "the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) envisions a city where racial disparities have been eliminated and racial equity achieved." The website describes RSJI as "a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government." It also boasts of the program's uniqueness: "There was no roadmap for this work; no American city or other government institution had ever undertaken an initiative that focuses explicitly on institutional racism."



"As part of the City's commitment to RSJI, City departments develop and implement annual RSJI work plans," the website continues. "City employees also attend RSJI training to learn more about the Initiative and how to apply racial equality tools to City business."

[According to Fox News' Megyn Kelly](#), the program "will reduce prosecutions of driving with suspended license in the third degree by 90 percent because Seattle believes it's a race and social justice issue, since 44 percent of the charges are being brought against African-Americans." City attorney Pete Holmes claims that the disproportionate number of blacks being prosecuted for this crime is a direct result of economic inequalities. "Racial minorities are more likely to be poor than whites and unable to pay their fines. If we start to learn and understand that one of those institutional causes of racism is actually in the criminal justice system," says Holmes, "it's our obligation as prosecutors to address it."

Kelly adds that under the program, the city of Seattle will be "seeking shorter sentences against illegal immigrants or non-citizens on gross misdemeanors to avoid deportation (the difference of 364 days versus 365 days in order to keep the charged individual off the federal government's radar)." While Holmes asserts that they are pushing the same treatment for all Seattle citizens, he admits that this provision was inspired to avoid deportation for non-citizens.

The Seattle city website suggests that requiring a college degree may be racist for those applying for city jobs and implies that the requirement may be relaxed under the new program. The site reads, "Institutional racism is when organizational programs or policies work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently. For example, job requirements that put undue emphasis on college degrees over work experience may impact those of color."

Police Officer Steve Pomper [wrote](#):

The city, using its Race and Social Justice Initiative, continues its assault on traditional and



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constitutional American values such as self-reliance, equal justice, and individual liberty. But more to our concern, the city is inflicting its socialist policies directly on the Seattle Police Department. When somebody comes in with a policy like that, it doesn't allow us to treat people with equal justice.

Pomper bemoans the city of Seattle's insertion of race and social position into the criminal justice system, which defies the very principles of justice, as depicted by Greek goddess Themis, who holds a scale in her hands and wears a blindfold over her eyes.

Simply stated, Pomper notes, "It's socialism."

Pomper's right to free speech has been defended by the President of the Seattle Police Officers Guild. Naturally, Holmes articulated his displeasure with Pomper's opinionated piece, but perhaps more surprisingly, so did Pomper's superior officers.

Police Chief John Diaz said, "We firmly and wholly support those programs. This is something that [is] critical to how we run our department and this city."

Fox News' local affiliate anchor Dan Springer [explains](#) of the reaction to Pomper's opinionated piece. "That of course opened up a huge can of worms out here in Seattle. He was shouted down by the mayor of the city, the police chief, and several protesters protesting a rash of incidents involving police officers and minorities in Seattle out here in recent months."

Proponents of the program defend it by asserting that there have been a number of instances of undue police brutality involving minorities in recent months in Seattle.

Springer adds:

There have been at least five different cases involving white police officers and minority suspects, where there was at least questionable, if not excessive force, the most serious coming just a short time ago in which a white officer shot and killed a Native American wood carver holding a pocket knife. He was offered to put the knife down, he didn't, and within four seconds of the command, the officer shot and killed the man.

However, the program appears to be yet another example of government overreaction to plaguing issues, similar to those extreme measures proposed by Democrats following the [Tucson, Arizona shooting](#).

Pomper contends that the program will have a particularly detrimental impact on beat cops who were initially trained to enforce the law equally. For this reason, Pomper has dubbed the program "de-policing classes."



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