



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on July 22, 2016

## A Policeman's Reality: Would You Walk in Their Shoes?

Dallas has seen [five of its police officers murdered](#) and seven more wounded, along with two civilians. An angry former Army private named [Micah Johnson](#) carried out the rampage that was a deliberate attack on police. The motivation for the deadly sniper attack, as stated by the killer himself, amounted to revenge over the recent shootings of black Americans by police in Maryland, Minnesota, and Louisiana. Johnson died when the police employed a robot to attack him three hours after his deadly standoff began.



As expected, there have been numerous responses about the incident issued by officials, even by President Obama who attended a memorial service in Dallas for the slain officers. But in the aftermath of the tragedy, [Dallas Police Chief David Brown](#), a black American, issued some truths worthy of consideration by everyone. At a press conference, Chief Brown focused on the real job of policemen, not the many tasks they have been given in recent years.

“We’re asking cops to do too much in this country,” Brown stated as he explained that policemen are being forced to pay the price for society’s failures. He specified:

Not enough mental health funding? Let the cops handle it. Not enough drug addiction funding? Let’s give it to the cops. Here in Dallas, we’ve got a loose dog problem. Let’s have the cops chase loose dogs. Schools fail? Give it to the police. Single women are raising seventy percent of the African-American community. Let’s give it to the cops to solve that as well.

The chief suggested that those who are demonstrating and protesting against police in general ought to consider joining the police force. “We’re hiring,” he said, and he promised to send new recruits, once trained, into the neighborhoods to do police work and not be transformed into social workers.

Inherent within Chief Brown’s comments is a simple truth: Societal disintegration exists and it needs attention. Not from the policemen, who have enough to do in their frequently dangerous work, but from teachers, clergymen, parents, business leaders, and ordinary folks. Micah Johnson’s attack on the Dallas police didn’t solve any of the problems mentioned by Chief Brown. Johnson’s death-dealing rampage may have even added additional problems to the many already present.

Especially pertinent is Chief Brown’s pointing to the breakdown of families. Not only in Dallas, but all across our nation, huge numbers of youngsters are being raised in broken families and deficient schools where the values marking a healthy civilization aren’t being taught. When families are broken, those who grow up in what’s left don’t have the benefit of a stable environment. If families were more solid, many of the problems cited by the chief would be diminished if not completely erased.

Chief Brown, like police chiefs in other cities who have had to respond similarly to demonstrators in their regions, deserves the thanks of all Americans for pointing to a basic cause of the obvious and widespread deterioration. If America is going to reverse course and see a lessening of civil turmoil and



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a return to civility, it must start within the family structure.

Clergymen, teachers, business leaders, and others along with parents must be encouraged to meet their responsibilities. If they don't, the already serious deterioration will grow worse — and other Micah Johnsons will arise.



*John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#). This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.*



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