In America, we support our troops who heed the call to defend liberty. We support peace officers who answer the call to serve local communities.

You’re invited to attend “Support Your Local Police and Keep Them Independent!”, a video presentation by former police officer, James Fitzgerald. In this video, he will explain the efforts to turn our local police into national police. Learn how to keep police accountable to local communities.

The presentation is free, but the meeting room is limited to 75 people.

Please reserve your seat by ordering your tickets at Eventbrite: tinyurl.com/y3mudzo3 or Facebook: www.facebook.com/events/413906782491092

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Sponsored by
Georgia Support Your Local Police Committee
Who Are YOUR LOCAL POLICE?

Your local police are men and women who choose to put their lives on the line to protect and serve their community. Every day they face threats both on and off the streets. Aside from the obvious “crime fighting,” police officers deal with a constant onslaught of criticism from the media, anti-cop organizations, and the Left. Many officers do not understand the sinister motives behind the “war on cops” — it is up to you to educate your fellow citizens, support your local police, and keep them free of federal control.

OUR LOCAL POLICE

- Part of the community
- Protect & serve the community
- Accountable to the community
- Sheriff elected by the community
- Paid for locally

The Dangerous Trend Towards NATIONALIZING POLICE

- Federal funding & training
  Tax dollars being used to make local law enforcement dependent on the federal government.

- Increased government oversight
  Increased authority over local law enforcement by the federal government.

- Fusion centers
  Centralization of all law enforcement agencies and data by the federal government — minimizing local accountability.

HAPPENING NOW

- Police consolidation
  A national movement to shift control of police from locally elected officials to regional appointed officials.

- Fusion centers

- Black Lives Matter
  Anti-police groups leading violent protests seek to trigger federal government to nationalize police. Many are shown to be communist front groups.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Contact your local JBS coordinator
- Join or form a SYLP Committee
- Get to know your sheriff or chief of police
- Help educate others about the dangers of nationalizing the police
- Influence local police not to take federal funds

TO SERVE AND PROTECT...

Who should our local police serve and protect — you or the federal government?

Our Constitution specifically limits government power in order to keep us free. America is unique in having local police forces who answer to the people rather than the central government. Nationalizing the police reduces the power of the people and increases the power of government. The citizens of a community know their own needs better than anyone. Make sure your police work for you!
INTRODUCTION

Police officers. We see them everywhere. Police officers serve the interests of the community. You might even know several of them on a first name basis. They serve municipalities, counties, and states.

Their function is to enforce the laws to keep us safe at our homes, local high schools, football games, parks, county fairs, downtown, and on the highways.

There are an estimated 12,575 local police departments in the United States. The United States is one of the few countries in the world that has a locally controlled law enforcement system managed by locally elected officials at the town, city, and county level.

The jurisdictional overlap of the many local police departments and various other law enforcement agencies is an essential component of the checks and balances that have made this country a free and prosperous republic for over 200 years.

Following the proceedings of the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, a woman approached Benjamin Franklin and asked him what form of government the convention delegates had created. Franklin replied, “A Republic, ma’am if you can keep it.”

John Adams, our nation’s second president, defined a republic as “a government of laws, and not of men.” In our constitutional republic, the U.S. Constitution serves as the law, which both government and citizens must obey. Its main feature is limitation of the federal government’s powers.

To help ensure the independence of local and state governments, the Founding Fathers strictly limited the powers of government at the federal level and reserved those “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution” to the individual States, or to the people, as stated in the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution.

In his famous An American Dictionary of the English Language published in 1828, Noah Webster, a renowned lexicographer and reformer of English spelling, recognized the locality of police in his definition of a police-officer: “An officer entrusted with the execution of the laws of a city.”

Locally controlled police are the hallmark of a free society. Ultimately, there are just two types of police. The first is locally controlled police. The second is nationally controlled police, who serve the national government, not the citizens.
HISTORY: FROM REPUBLIC TO REICH

Philosopher George Santayana once wrote, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Sadly, too many today are forgetting the past, condemning all of us to suffer repeats of its errors.

Following the Treaty of Versailles, which formally ended the First World War, Imperial Germany was restructured into a republic, the Weimar Republic.

The birth of the new German republic coincided with the birth of a now infamous political party: The National Socialist German Workers’ Party or Nazi Party.

On January 30, 1933, after 15 years of planning, Nazi party leader Adolf Hitler was sworn in as Chancellor of Germany. On February 27, 1933, the German parliament building, known as the Reichstag, was burned down in a horrific fire. Debate still rages about whether the fire was caused by a terrorist member of the Communist Party of Germany (as the Nazis claimed) or by the Nazis themselves. Nevertheless, the fire provided Hitler with the perfect excuse for overthrowing the German republic.

A month after the fire, the Nazi government enacted passage of the “Enabling Act of 1933” that consolidated much of the country’s power into Hitler’s hands. As a result of this act, the German peoples’ civil liberties were lost and Hitler was soon named leader of the German Reich and People, or Führer. This was just the beginning of Germany’s descent from freedom to fascism.

Hitler and his Nazi Party companions understood that for tyranny to thrive, they must first place local police under central government control and then replace it with a national police force.

In The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, American historian William Shirer identified the point at which Germany became a Nazi dictatorship:

On June 19, 1936, for the first time in German history, a unified police was established for the whole of the Reich – previously the police had been organized separately by each of the states – and Himmler was put in charge as Chief of the German Police. This was tantamount to putting the police in the hands of the S.S., which since its suppression of the Roehm ‘revolt’ in 1934 had been rapidly increasing its power. It had become not only the single armed branch of the party, not only the elite from whose ranks the future leaders of the new Germany were being chosen, but it now possessed the police power. The Third Reich, as is inevitable in the development of all totalitarian dictatorships, had become a police state.

Many wonder how German citizens could just stand by and let this happen. Like the frog in the pot, the water slowly heats until the frog realizes it is being cooked. But by that point it is often too late. As noted below, a police state cannot come into existence in one fell swoop; it must be established through a series of transitional steps. Even in the case of Germany under Hitler’s rule, it took several years for Hitler to establish his police state. In order to prevent a repetition of the past, we must consider how a police state might be established in America.

A POLICE STATE IN AMERICA?

The United States is virtually unique in that it has not turned its system of local law enforcement into a national police force. But for one moment, imagine how the transformation would occur if it were to happen here.

In order for our nation’s state and local police
to be nationalized, an array of transitional steps, such as the following, would be needed.

1. **CRISIS.** Regardless of whether a crisis is real or fabricated, awareness about it would be enough to sway public opinion in support of immediate government action. This would provide for the acceptance of “solutions” to perceived threats that would otherwise be unacceptable to society.

2. **AID.** Incapable of dealing with the crisis, local police would accept aid from the military or in the form of funding, grants, and equipment from the federal government. This would eventually translate into the permanence of the “helping hand” of the federal government followed by controls.

3. **LEGISLATION.** New crisis-targeting laws would be passed. These would place requirements on local law enforcement to adopt measures that would overturn the traditional role of police as local servants and protectors of the community and/or that would also ignore long-standing constitutional limitations and protections. Discontent would slowly develop, fostering animosity between the people and the police.

4. **PROPAGANDA.** A propaganda campaign would be started by radical groups to discredit local law enforcement. Incidents would also be exploited to depict all policemen as “brutal” or “racist.”

5. **INDOCTRINATION.** As all of this would be happening, the federal government would begin training local police to respond to and prevent future crises, similar to the initial one. This federal training would have two main goals: (1) train local police how to use (and rely) on equipment and tactics coming from the federal government, and (2) indoctrinate local police with information from the federal government about individuals labeled “extremists” or “domestic threats.”

6. **IMPLEMENTATION.** The gradual implementation of these steps would continue to a point where the local police, for all practical
purposes, would become an arm of a national police force beholden, not to the people, but to the national government. The people would eventually become conditioned to believe in the need for greater federal government control over their lives and local police.

7. NATIONALIZATION. At this point, a true national police force would become a reality. Local police departments would be assimilated into a national police force, which would take full charge of the responsibilities and duties of previously local-and state-controlled law enforcement agencies.

The new national police force would supersede local authority and would supervise law enforcement for the whole country. What was initially thought to be temporary would become permanent.

These steps could occur quickly or over an extended period. The actual course would depend on the intensity of the crisis and the awareness of the people.

Let us make one thing clear, as the old saying goes, “there’s no such thing as a free lunch,” meaning that there is always a price to pay.

The same applies to “free” help from federal agencies, particularly when supplied to local police departments. The payment usually comes in the form of more federal control or an eventual police state.

Here are the danger signs that a police state is emerging in America through the seven transitional steps discussed previously.


   This was the single deadliest day in U.S. law enforcement history. Seventy-two police officers were killed responding to the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C.

   In 2014 and 2015 the riots in Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore, Maryland, in response to alleged police brutality caused major civil unrest. Although these riots were localized to two cities, they led to sympathy demonstrations in numerous cities around the nation.

2. AID. Following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the federal government began providing significant funding and technical assistance to support the establishment of fusion centers where federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel cooperate in response to terrorism and crime.

   Following the Ferguson riots in 2014, President Obama announced a $263 million federal police aid program to fund and train local police forces.

3. LEGISLATION. Within a little over a month after the 9/11 attacks, Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed the Patriot Act, which authorized warrantless searches and wiretaps, as well as many other invasions of privacy.

   The following year, in November 2002, Congress passed and President Bush signed the Homeland Security Act, which authorized the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

   In September of 2014, following the Ferguson riots, the federal government initiated The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice. The Justice Department announced that a three-year, $4.75 million grant would fund a pilot program in six U.S. cities. This initiative would develop and deploy federal guidance for local police.

Reports published by fusion centers and the DHS have labeled conservatives and veterans as domestic terrorists and rightwing extremists.
Moreover, over the past two decades Congress has provided more than $14 billion to the Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to advance “community policing,” including grants awarded to more than 13,000 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to fund the hiring and redeployment of more than 127,000 police officers.

**4. PROPAGANDA.** Many radical groups have emerged over the years with a campaign against local police, such as the ANSWER coalition, New Black Panther Party, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Revolutionary Communist Party, and the Universal Zulu Nation.

In 2011, the Party for Socialism and Liberation officially stated:

> Police brutality is a symptom of the capitalist disease. Socialist revolution is the cure.

In 2014 as discontent toward the government among these groups increased, they have exploited alleged cases of police “brutality.”

As could have been predicted, all five groups mentioned above were on hand to inflame the riots in Ferguson and Baltimore in 2014-15.

**5. INDUCTRATION.** In order to share information and work closely with local law enforcement, the Department of Homeland Security has created Fusion Centers.

Fusion Centers are information and analysis dispensers that serve as transmission belts from the federal government to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and private sector partners for the gathering and sharing of threat-related information. Since their creation in 2003, at least 77 known fusion centers have been set up throughout the country.

In 2009, one such fusion center, the Missouri Information Analysis Center (MIAC), released its now infamous MIAC Strategic Report, entitled, “The Modern Militia Movement.”

This report, given to local police, sheriffs, and other law enforcement agencies in the state of Missouri, warned that individuals who display political paraphernalia supportive of the 2008 presidential candidates Ron Paul, Chuck Baldwin, and Bob Barr are potential domestic terrorists. Again that same year, the DHS released its own official report, entitled “Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment”.

This report, which was distributed to local law enforcement agencies throughout the country, warned that “disgruntled military veterans” returning from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars could join “extremist groups.” Additionally, the report stated:

Rightwing extremism in the United States can be broadly divided into those groups, movements, and adherents that are primarily hate-oriented … and those that are mainly antigovernment, rejecting federal authority in favor of state or local authority, or rejecting government authority entirely. It may include groups and individuals that are dedicated to a single issue, such as opposition to abortion or immigration.

Does this describe you? Are you focused on a single issue of concern about what is happening in this country? Do you oppose abortion or illegal immigration? If you answered yes, then according to the DHS you are a rightwing extremist and thus a potential threat to the security of the country.

Reports such as these are used to train and educate our local police. But who is supplying the intelligence? A leading source of intelligence for these MIAC and DHS reports is the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). However, a fairly brief online investigation of SPLC will reveal it to be a very biased, leftwring interest group.

**6. IMPLEMENTATION.** In the years since passage of the Patriot Act, Congress has reauthorized and extended it several times.

Congress has also continued to provide funds to the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Justice COPS Programs for direct financial aid to local police as well as providing them with real or questionable threat intelligence.

Then, on December 18, 2014, following the Ferguson riots, President Obama signed an Executive Order establishing the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, which reveals the federal strategy for implementing a national police force by imposing federal “standards” on state and local police.

The federal Justice Department and its COPS program will take the lead in working with local police chiefs and local elected officials to get them to adopt federal guidelines for “best practices,” etc. When the task force released its first report on March 2, 2015, President Obama said that this federal initiative will “really transform how we think about community law enforcement relations.” Which is to say that all of this activity will be leading to federal management of local police forces.

**7. NATIONALIZATION.** The “Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing” (released May 18, 2015) provided further detail on how our nation’s local police forces are to be nationalized.

In the concluding section of this “Final Report” entitled “Implementation,” Recommendation 7.3 states:

The U.S. Department of Justice should charge its Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) with assisting the law
earnestly thanks the following sponsors for supporting this effort to remind and help agencies independent. We hope you share the information contained herein with others and encourage them to actively show their appreciation and support to the brave men and women who daily serve throughout our communities working selflessly to

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Local Police Committee

inform citizens why it is so important to keep our local law enforcement officers and encourage them to actively show their appreciation* and support to the brave keep us safe and free from harm and danger.

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| Habersham Hardware Of Clarkesville | Sweet House BBQ |
| Hangry’s A&E Grill | The Art-Full Barn |
| Northeast Veterinary Hospital |

* A plate of your favorite cookies, a pot of hot chocolate, your scrumptious cake, or a letter to the editor to help these officers have a pleasant day as they police our streets and neighborhoods laboring and, at times, risking their own lives to maintain peace and safety for us all.
enforcement field in addressing current and future challenges.

This recommendation reveals that the federal COPS program will be taking the lead in nationalizing local police forces. Following this recommendation, a series of bullet points explain how the COPS program will accomplish this. Here are a few examples (Emphasis added to highlight how all of this activity is intended to nationalize local police.):

• Create a National Policing Practices and Accountability Division within the COPS Office.

• Establish national benchmarks and best practices for federal, state, local, and tribal police departments.

• Provide technical assistance and funding to national, state, local, and tribal accreditation bodies that evaluate policing practices.

• Recommend additional [national] benchmarks and best practices for state training and standards boards.

• Provide technical assistance and funding to state training boards to help them meet national benchmarks and best practices in training methodologies and content.

• Prioritize grant funding to departments meeting [national] benchmarks.

• Support departments through an expansion of the [national] COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative.

• Provide support to national police leadership associations and national rank and file organizations to encourage them to implement task force recommendations.

• Work with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to ensure that community policing tactics in state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies are incorporated into their role in [national] homeland security.

As you read the bullet points above, notice how every one of these recommended actions by the federal COPS program will serve to nationalize local police.

Although this review of the current status in the United States of the seven steps generally required to nationalize local police forces doesn’t tell us exactly when this nationalization process will be complete, it does reveal that the forces promoting nationalization have made a great deal of progress since 2001, and especially in 2014-15.

WHAT’S WRONG WITH NATIONAL POLICE?

Would having a national police force be so bad? After all, don’t we already have police at the state level? What would be so wrong with adding another layer of police at the national or federal level?

We already have a partial national layer, in the form of U.S. Marshals (1789), the FBI (1908), the Military Police Corps (1941), and the Federal Protective Service (1971).
U.S. Marshals and the FBI serve a specific function in apprehending criminals who cross state lines or break federal laws. The Military Police Corps is limited to law enforcement within the U.S. armed services.

When we refer to the dangers of national police, or urge support of independent local police, we are not advocating the elimination of the FBI and U.S. Marshals; rather we want to prevent the consolidation of all police departments, including our local police, into a single national police force.

If the transition from local police forces to a national police force is ever accomplished, then bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. would dictate the number of police officers and the amount and type of equipment allotted for your local community, as well as mandating detailed police policies for all local communities in the service of national objectives.

This is why The John Birch Society named its campaign “Support Your Local Police and Keep Them Independent.” We do not want to see local police departments, county sheriffs, state police, U.S. Marshals, and the FBI merged into a single national police force that would be controlled by one federal government agency and tasked with the responsibility of enforcing the laws and regulations of the national government.

Why change something that has worked so well? Simple: there is no need to fix what is not broken.

History has proven that when a country transforms its local law enforcement into a national police force, freedom is greatly diminished.

Under such a national system, police serve the national government rather than the local people. Societies that have national or secret police forces are those with autocratic or totalitarian governments where the state deems it necessary to repress the people.

In The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire, author Brian Crozier notes that following the October Revolution of 1917:

The Marxist revolutionaries were in power, but their hold on it was still precarious. It would be necessary to enforce and perpetuate it with suitable ruthlessness. To do so, on December 20 Lenin made a decision of major and

From 1917 to 1991, the Cheka/KGB served as the principal state security body for the Soviet Union, tasked with both intelligence and police law enforcement.

National police, like those empowered in the Soviet Union, were, as Crozier noted, used to ruthlessly repress the people, not to serve or protect them.

In order for our freedom as Americans to endure, it is essential that we support our local police and keep them independent.
**A LETTER TO GEORGIA**
**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLICE COMMITTEE**

Dear Committee Members,

I have met with members of your Committee and reviewed your “Support Your Local Police” program and your literature designed to inform citizens and law enforcement personnel of the threats to maintaining local control of law enforcement. I am pleased to endorse your program and to encourage the widespread distribution of your literature.

Sincerely,

Joey Terrell
Sheriff, Habersham County

“I consider the local police officer to be our first line of defense against crime, and I am opposed to a national police force. The need is for effective local action, and this should begin with wholehearted support of honest, efficient, local law enforcement.”


“Our forebears were not willing to trade away long-range freedom for short-term solutions to problems. That is why the Constitution reserves police power to state and local governments. Thomas Jefferson warned that ‘when all governments shall be drawn to Washington as the center of power, it will become venal and oppressive.’”

— Cleon Skousen

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### GEAR UP
**FOR THE “SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLICE” CAMPAIGN**

**SYLP ‘What Can I Do?’**
— Slim Jim
Hand out these slim jims at your next event to get your local community members involved in the SYLP campaign. Purchase in bulk for the best deal and to ensure you have enough to hand out. (2015, 1 set of 25/$3.00; 2-4 sets/$2.50ea; 5+ sets/$2.50 ea) SJWCDSYLP

**Support Your Local Police**
This booklet provides detailed information on the essential role locally controlled police play in the preservation of our freedom. It examines signs that we are at risk of losing our freedom due to the ongoing transformation of our system of local police into a national police force. (2015ed, 21pp, pb booklet, 1/$2.95; 10-24/$2.00ea; 25-49/$1.50ea; 50-99/$1.00ea; 100-999/$0.75ea; 1,000+/$0.50ea) BKLTSYLP

**Sheriffs and Legislators**
— Reprint
Federal government officials, especially President Barack Obama, are working to undo Second Amendment protections, but state and local officials are planning to nullify any anti-gun efforts in their states. (2013, 8pp, 1-99/ $.05ea; 100+/ $.03ea) RPSAL

**SYLP — Fact & Resource Card**
Use this striking, bi-fold, “Support Your Local Police” campaign card for large-scale distribution at exhibits, meetings and parades. (2015, 1 set of 100 cards/$8.00; 2-4 sets/$7.50ea; 5+ sets/$7.00ea) CFRSYLP

**SYLP — Bumper Sticker**
(1/$1.00; 10-24/$0.85ea; 25-99/$0.75ea; 100+/0.50ea) BSSYLP

**Support Your Local Police Window Clings**
Influence others to get involved with one of our window clings. Use the large cling for businesses and homes, and our small clings for vehicles. 6”x6”, 4 Color Cling (1/$2.00; 5-9/$1.75ea; 10-24/$1.50ea; 25-99/$1.25ea; 100-499/$1.00ea; 500-999/$0.90ea; 1,000+/$.75ea) WCSYLP6X6
4”x4”, 2 Color Cling (1/$1.00; 10-99/$0.85ea; 100+/$.75ea) WCSYLP

Go to ShopJBS.org to order and view additional SYLP tools
O
n October 20, 2014, Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke — along with at least eight other officers — responded to a call of a young black man breaking into cars. When Van Dyke arrived on the scene, that young man, Laquan McDonald, who was carrying a small folding knife, was walking down the street away from officers who had him mostly surrounded. Though no other officer on the scene felt the need to use lethal force, Van Dyke drew his weapon as soon as he exited his vehicle and began walking toward McDonald. Seconds later, he began firing at McDonald, who was walking away from him and was more than a road lane’s width away. By the time Van Dyke had been on the scene 30 seconds, he had fired 16 rounds into McDonald — the last 14 of those as McDonald lay dying on the asphalt.

Because of the evidence, including an autopsy and a dash-cam video — Van Dyke was indicted by a grand jury on December 16, 2015. The charges were first-degree murder and official misconduct.

On October 5, 2018, the jury found Van Dyke guilty of second-degree murder and 16 counts of aggravated battery with a firearm, but not guilty of official misconduct.

Van Dyke was sentenced to almost seven years in prison.

The murder of McDonald happened just two and a half months after the justifiable shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, which sparked riots around the nation and led to increased interest in the Black Lives Matter movement and other anti-police campaigns. That anti-police sentiment has only increased in the months and years since then.

Part of the anti-police climate that holds America in its grip is the narrative that all police officers are corrupt and have free rein to run roughshod over the life, liberty, and property of citizens — especially minority citizens — because there is a lack of oversight. Enter, from stage left, the Civilian Review Boards (CRBs) being formed across the nation. Only they can provide that much-needed and sorely lacking oversight, according to those who reiterate the narrative.

That narrative is based on several false assumptions.

First, while there are certainly police officers who violate both departmental policies and the law (as the example of Van Dyke shows), the assumption that all police officers are corrupt rests on an irreconcilable dichotomy — while it is understood by almost everyone that it is wrong to paint any group of people with a broad brush, that understanding is jettisoned if the group in question happens to be made up of men and women from various classes, races, and socio-economic backgrounds who all have in common only the simple fact that they wear a police uniform.

That broad brush ignores the salient fact that the vast majority of police officers are dedicated professionals who stay within the boundaries of both departmental policy and the law in the performance of their duties.

Second, the “solution” of creating CRBs to provide oversight assumes — wrongly — that such oversight is not already in place.

It is correct that those entrusted with power need to be held accountable and kept in check, but the reality is that there are already multiple layers of oversight in place to hold police accountable. Checks and balances abound.
For instance: Police departments have internal review boards; police chiefs investigate their own officers’ conduct; state police investigate criminal complaints against police officers; elected officials have authority to hold police officers and departments accountable; state and county grand juries are able to hear cases and deliver indictments; and district attorneys can bring charges.

All of these can and do happen as a matter of routine. Again, the example of Van Dyke illustrates this point. Van Dyke was indicted by a grand jury, prosecuted by a district attorney, judged by a jury of his peers, and found guilty. The system — comprised of those layers of oversight and other elements — worked.

Furthermore, the idea that CRBs are needed to provide oversight for police departments is itself a faulty idea. When a doctor is suspected of having acted improperly, he or she can be brought before a medical review board to determine the facts of the case. Those review boards are made up of doctors. Lawyers suspected of improper actions are brought before the Bar Association, made up of lawyers. Other professions have similar review boards made up of men and women in those professions.

When it comes to police, though, the plan for CRBs ignores the basic principle that review boards are best when they are made up of those who understand the requirements of the job. They know what the standards are and can recognize when they are and are not being met. Instead, CRBs are made up of a panel of civilians who have never worn a badge or had to make life-and-death decisions in a fraction of a second, but are empowered to judge that which they know not. While juries in trials are likewise comprised of civilians who are not police officers, the differences are important: Juries are made up of randomly chosen peers while CRBs are made up of people who — usually for political reasons — volunteer for the position; juries hear all of the available evidence, for both the prosecution and the defense (including expert testimony), while CRBs routinely only consider “evidence” indicating the guilt of officers; and jury trials are presided over by a judge, whose job is to keep the trial on track and inform the jury of what can and cannot be considered “evidence,” while CRBs are given free rein to make up their own rules and define their own powers. In a jury trial, the power is divided between the prosecutor, the defense, the judge, and the jury. A CRB acts as prosecutor, judge, and jury while the “defense” is usually non-existent. Fortunately, its power stops short of that of executioner.

To make matters worse, since the narrative is that all police officers and departments are corrupt and untrustworthy, CRBs undoubtedly attract those who accept that false premise. In other words, an anti-police element is given authority over local police departments.

This is proving to be a bridge too far for many police officers. Case in point: Charlottesville, Virginia. Having withstood the constant barrage of anti-police sentiment from major media and within their own communities in the wake of the Unite the Right Rally that thrust their city and their department into the national spotlight in August 2017, officers are leaving the department over the newly formed CRB.

Police Chief RaShall Brackney told Charlottesville’s Daily Progress that her department is experiencing a “mass exodus.” “It seems like, I think, on average, one to two officers a week are leaving the department,” said Brackney, who took over the department in June 2018. She replaced Al Thomas, who “retired” in December 2017 due to criticism over the way his department handled the violence that broke out during the Unite the Right Rally.

She was hired after the city council had already voted to form a CRB. At the city council meeting where she was introduced to the community, it was immediately apparent that she was inheriting a hornet’s nest. Comments from citizens were dominated by discussion of the August 2017 rally and violence. Brackney was challenged by pro-CRB activists. One activist, Rosia Parker, addressed the council, saying that she no longer has any patience for police and city officials. Then, she addressed Brackney directly, saying, “I appreciate you coming, but are you truly ready?”

This is the climate in which CRBs are created: distrust, frustration, and anger based on the false narrative that all police are corrupt and city officials
will not hold them accountable. Evidence of this is seen in the fact that when CRBs are impaneled, they are populated by the very people who see the police as enemies, as we will show later in this article.

In explaining the “mass exodus” in her department, Chief Brackney addressed what she calls a “toxic” environment for police officers. “Officers in our community are routinely verbally assaulted, they’re cursed at. There’s a lot of not feeling as though they’re appreciated,” she said. “We have it on video where people are cursing our officers, calling them names for no other reason than walking down the street.”

That “toxic” environment has found a home in the newly formed CRB. Brackney said board members have been “vocal and biased” against officers on radio and television, saying officers’ days are numbered and that the CRB is coming after them. “The officers do not believe that there’s going to be any fair, impartial oversight,” Brackney said. “It’s well-documented how some of them have treated our officers, including me.”

The net result is that with a declining police force, the communities most in need of police will have fewer police. If the trend continues, crime — especially violent crime — will likely increase in those communities. If the trend does not continue, it will be due entirely to the leadership of people such as Chief Brackney and the sacrificial dedication of those willing to weather the storm of a “toxic” environment. In other words, it will be in spite of — not because of — the CRB.

Law-enforcement agencies in communities are taking Charlottesville’s experience with its newly formed and not-quite-empowered CRB as a cautionary tale. On November 6, 2018, Nashville, Tennessee, approved the creation of a CRB for that city. The next day, the Nashville Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) voiced concerns. Former FOP President Robert Weaver said, “It appears this board is not set up for fact finding and truth finding. It appears this board is set up for some means of retaliation and retribution for a problem that doesn’t seem to exist.” Weaver’s claim of “a problem that doesn’t seem to exist” is a reference to what this writer pointed out earlier in this article: Layers of accountability and oversight already exist. As Weaver explained, “You already have the ability to file a complaint with an officer’s supervisor. You have the ability to file with the district attorney’s office, the US attorney’s office, or the TBI and the FBI. There is even recourse through civil courts if you believe you have been wronged.” Weaver’s logical and correct argument was ignored by the powers that be. The CRB was approved and is moving forward. And that is causing concern for some in Nashville.

The Tennessee Star recently reported to its readers about the experience of Charlottesville and drew a comparison to what Nashville could expect once its CRB is impaneled and officially operating. The article pointed in particular to the “mass exodus” of police officers in Charlottesville.

And Metro Nashville Council member Steve Glover told the Tennessee Star, “They (the officers) will leave us. They will say bye. They already have a hard-enough job.” He added, “I’m not just talking about police. I am talking about first responders. Everyone. They will say bye because we apparently don’t appreciate them. I do appreciate them, but if we keep pushing and pushing and pushing as we are doing now then this is a dangerous place to go.”

Glover is correct in that the job police officers do is hard enough already. To add to that already difficult job the danger of being raked over the coals by unelected, unaccountable, anti-police activists is to ask too much. Of course, the anti-police activists that make up too-large a percentage of CRBs don’t care what police have to do. They see them as the enemy.

*This article has been edited. The full article can be found in the March 4, 2019 issue of The New American magazine or at TheNewAmerican.com

The full reprint of this article can be purchased at ShopJBS.org.
GET TO KNOW your Chief of Police.
He is responsible for:
• The public safety of the community
• Oversight of officers and their duties
And, along with the city council:
• The acceptance of outside grants and training that take away control from local communities
• The independence of the police department from federal or international interference and oversight

Know your police department.
• Get to know the officers, chief, sheriff, and other law enforcement leaders, and inform them on the importance of staying local and independent.

Know your rights as a citizen,
as well as the role of the police. Oftentimes, what is touted as police brutality happens because the situation escalates. Know what you have the right to do and not do. Cooperate with the police and address any problems afterward.
Monitor your local government and take an active role!

How can you keep your local police independent?

1. WORK with local & state officials
   • Police officers
   • Police chief or sheriff
   • Internal affairs or police union
   • Mayor or city council (meetings)
   • County Commissioner
   • Governor or State Attorney General
   • State legislator

2. GET TO KNOW your Chief of Police.

3. KNOW your police department.

4. KNOW your rights as a citizen,
   as well as the role of the police. Oftentimes, what is touted as police brutality happens because the situation escalates. Know what you have the right to do and not do. Cooperate with the police and address any problems afterward.
Monitor your local government and take an active role!

5. GET involved.
   • Visit the Support Your Local Police (SYLP) page at JBS.org to learn about activities and committees.
   • Join or create an SYLP committee (phone 1-800-527-8721).
   • Distribute any of our SYLP products and literature to members of your police force and sheriff’s department as well as to citizens in your community.
   • Organize events involving both police and citizens to celebrate the vital role of local police and sheriffs in preserving our freedom under the Constitution.

http://www.jbs.org/issues-pages/support-your-local-police