

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-6074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

Opening Statement
Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Hearing:
Hearing: “Confronting Violent White Supremacy (Part IV):
White Supremacy in Blue—The Infiltration of Local Police Departments”
September 29, 2020

Good morning. I want to start by thanking my very good friend, Chairman Raskin, for convening this very important and timely hearing. The Subcommittee has already held three hearings focused on violent white supremacy—and Chairman Raskin’s leadership on this issue is inspiring.

As Chairman Raskin said, racism is not new to America. It is particularly not new to Black Americans. Since our nation’s founding, racism has been used to treat Black Americans as second class—or no class—citizens. We must never forget that policing in America started with slave patrols. Many slave patrols evolved into police departments that, for decades, have been used to ensure Black Americans could not exercise their full rights as citizens.

We are dealing with that legacy today. Many police departments face the continued infiltration of white supremacists into their ranks. As the FBI found—and I quote—“militia extremists, white supremacist extremists, and sovereign citizen extremists often have identified active links to law enforcement officers.” End quote.

This year, we have seen millions of people march in the streets. They are asking for the end of state-sanctioned killings, and calling for the dismantling of systemic injustice.

Their mission is straightforward. They are asking for the bare minimum: that our nation be a place where the lives and deaths of Black Americans matter. But these protests have been met with violence and, in many instances, police-sanctioned violence by white extremist groups.

This hearing is not about good officers versus bad officers. This hearing is about making sure we, as a nation, acknowledge that white supremacy has no place in any police department. The idiom does not end with just “a few bad apples.” The saying is: “a few bad apples spoil the bunch.”

We cannot let white supremacy continue to spoil the bunch.

Instead, we should all condemn the behavior that Chairman Raskin described.

I am honored to attend this hearing. It is shameful—absolutely shameful—that the FBI chose to ignore the Committee’s request to attend, and instead disavowed their own terrifying findings about the pervasiveness of white supremacy in police departments. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about their extremely

important work and I hope we remember the wise words of Chairman Cummings when he said “we are better than this.”

###