**Balancing in Times of Calamity**

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It always seems like whenever a police shooting happens that ignites the country. This news is disheartening to hear. The incidents of the recent Twin Cities, Baton Rouge, and Dallas incidents weigh especially heavy. Another unarmed black man being unfairly shot? Another planned mass murder? It’s become the gruesome standard of America.

With three major national stories breaking within 72 hours, something was different. Different from Sandy Hook; even different than Columbine: there was a moment, even for just a brief breath, the country felt defeated. The wear and tear of so much injustice had become slightly heavier than previously thought to be handled. It was no longer just a sense of fear and anger, but defeat.

Most of us either know of or have a loved who is a cop. Most of us either know of or have a loved one who has been racially profiled. This isn’t much of a surprise. What is a surprise is how the conversation on improving the situation became so easily hijacked by demagogues who think solely in extremes rather than compromise.

That’s what became most surprising: compassion and empathy have been put on the backburner.

By no means should either extreme thoughts of ignoring an obvious systematic bias against colored individuals or completely abolishing the police department be humored. But the fact that, yes, racism is very much alive in the U.S., and the Twin Cities is one of the more despicable examples of racial wealth disparities, needs to be addressed. The belief that every single cop is simply a power-tripping, trigger-happy racist is simply illogical.

Where progress and healing begin to take place is when we are able to look at each other and see the happiness, pain and concern that defines the human condition. There is a lot of work that needs to be done just to work through the frustration alone.

It is easy to immediately judge and become cynical of the situation, but something to be thankful for is President Ginny Arthur’s proactive response outlined in her message to Metro State’s population. It is moments like that in which hazardous situations are defined: order derived from empathy and genuine care, not the desire to maintain a status quo that might not necessarily work.

Don’t get this wrong: the prison, justice and police system absolutely needs to be reformed from the bottom up. It is worth it to also see the individuals not only behind the badge, but behind the Black Lives Matters t-shirt. Hopefully it goes without saying that both are human, and both are a part of the community.

Healing takes everyone in the community. We must all live, grieve, and heal as one.

Rest in peace to all of those tragically lost. Let us band together to create positive change for a vibrant and compassionate community.

-The Metropolitan Staff