

KEVIN S. PARKER
SENATOR, 21ST DISTRICT
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

COMMITTEES
CODES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& SMALL BUSINESS
FINANCE
HIGHER EDUCATION
INSURANCE
RULES
NEW AMERICAN TASK FORCE



THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

ALBANY OFFICE:
ROOM 604
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
PHONE: 518-455-2580
FAX: 518-426-6843

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1300 FLATBUSH AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11210
PHONE 718-629-6401
FAX 718-629-6420

e-mail:
parker@nysenate.gov

December 7, 2011

Raymond W. Kelly
Police Commissioner of the City of New York
One Police Plaza
New York, NY 10007

Re: NYPD Officers' Questionable Facebook Activity Regarding the West Indian Day Parade 2011

Dear Commissioner Kelly:

I write to you to express my concerns regarding recent press reports alleging disparaging remarks and behavior towards racial and ethnic minorities by members of the New York Police Department (NYPD). The New York Times quotes NYPD officers as identifying West Indian Day Parade-goers as "animals" and "savages." Another officer boastfully claimed, "Drop a bomb and wipe them all out." These and other remarks were unveiled in the criminal case of Tyrone Johnson last month. If true, these statements are beyond explanation or apology.

It is my understanding that an internal investigation is underway. I request that the result of this internal investigation be made public. In the event that any officer is found to be in violation of department policy, I request that said officer(s) be disciplined at a level that fosters deterrence of future actions, and not merely restrictions to administrative duties.

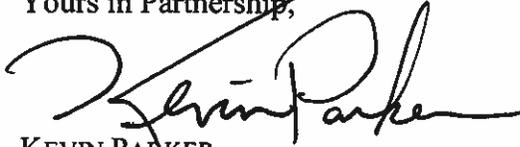
Further, it is my belief that these are not only a potential violation of police policy but also reflects a growing chorus of concerns of a department that promotes racism and bigotry when there is a presumption of wrongdoing if you are black, Hispanic, Muslim, or South Asian. Whether it is "stop and frisk" or the operations of the Intelligence division that operates outside constitutional bounds, members of the Department from a new graduate of the Academy to precinct captains are aware it is acceptable to profile some New Yorkers. It is time to address this issue systematically as well as on an individual basis.

There is a pattern of discriminatory practices that permeate through the Department. Just last month, three NYPD officers were disciplined for the excessive force used in the arrest of Councilman Jumaane Williams and Mr. Kirsten John Foy. I agree with Councilman Williams that these are not isolated incidents but blatantly offensive systemic practices that lead to citizen mistrust, illegal stop and frisks, excessive force and even death – in the case of Sean Bell.

Racist and prejudicial attitudes often lead to racist and prejudice behavior. Some of the comments of this 1200 member group are abhorrent. It has been reported that the names of over 60 percent of these commenters matched the names of NYPD officers and some commenters even identified themselves as officers. The West Indian Day parade-goers deserve the respect and protection of any other parade-goer and or New York city resident.

I urge you not to dismiss this issue as another "individual" or "isolated" incident but rather conduct an extensive investigation and implement the proper punishment and the systemic policy changes necessary to ensure that these types of racist and prejudice occurrences do not happen again.

Yours in Partnership,



KEVIN PARKER