

Sunday, December 21st, 2014 — Good Morning, Stay Safe

FROM THE P.B.A.

Starting IMMEDIATELY- At least two units are to respond to EVERY call, no matter the condition or severity, no matter what type of job is pending, or what the opinion of the patrol supervisor happens to be.

IN ADDITION: Absolutely NO enforcement action in the form of arrests and or summonses is to be taken unless absolutely necessary and an individual MUST be placed under arrest.

These are precautions that were taken in the 1970's when Police Officers were ambushed and executed on a regular basis.

The mayor's hands are literally dripping with our blood because of his words actions and policies and we have, for the first time in a number of years, become a "wartime" police department.

We will act accordingly.

FORWARD MESSAGE IN ITS ENTIRETY TO ANY AND ALL MOS

FROM THE S.B.A

It is with deep sadness that I write this narrative. Today is certainly one of the most horrific days in the history of the NYPD. At approximately 1445 hours today, two of NY's Finest were ambushed and executed while performing CRV adjacent to the Tompkins Housing Projects.

The miscreant, who savagely pulled the trigger on these two police officers, then cowardly ran to a subway station and killed himself.

Please keep these heroes and their families in your thoughts and prayers as we as a Department attempt to get through this very difficult time.

It was only yesterday that the Mayor of this city decided to meet with a group of protesters about these ongoing demonstrations. Ever since this Mayor took office there has been a sense of lawlessness that is rampant in every borough. From the civil disobedience occurring on a daily basis to our own Police Commissioner having red paint thrown at him. If we can't keep the PC from danger, what lies ahead for all of us?

Mayor de Blasio, the **blood** of these **two officers** is clearly on your hands. It is your **failed policies** and **actions that enabled this tragedy to occur**. I only hope and pray that more of these ambushes and executions do not happen again.

Fraternally,

Ed Mullins

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FROM THE L.B.A

Today, Steve Birbiglia and I have been, and continue to be, at Woodhull Hospital to support Pat Lynch, the PBA Executive Board, and all members of the PBA during this tragic time when two Police Officers were ambushed and killed. The LBA stands resolutely in solidarity with the PBA, DEA, SBA and CEA to ensure that the safety of our members becomes the paramount concern of all New Yorkers. This is a time when, due to the words and actions of our politicians, the safety of all members of the NYPD has been increasingly put in jeopardy.

Today, the New York City Police Department once again mourns the loss of fellow officers. Today, two of our fellow Officers were callously assassinated. These two Officers' names will be added to the never ending list of those Officers killed in the Line-of-Duty. These two Officers made the ultimate sacrifice protecting the rights and lives of the citizens of New York. These two Officers, who, knowing the inherent dangers associated with our chosen vocation, selflessly put their lives on the line every day to try and make New York City a better place to live, work and visit.

Today, there are two families who will grieve the loss of their heroes. Today, there are two families, who will forever remember a usually festive time of year as now a time of mourning and absence. Today, there are two families, countless friends and fellow officers who are forced to say goodbye forever to these two brave men.

These two Officers became the lightning rod of the subjective, misinformed, unfounded and incendiary rhetoric espoused by irresponsible and opportunistic elected officials, media, community activists, celebrities and sports figures.

Our elected officials have irresponsibly added to an **incendiary** atmosphere of distrust against law enforcement. Their words and actions have emboldened and inexplicably legitimized the illegal actions of the "Peaceful Protesters". Over the past several weeks the media (print, radio and television) has **fanned the flames of hate** and distrust of all law enforcement by continuously publishing one-sided and incendiary stories demonizing the Police and legitimizing the increasingly hostile actions of the "Peaceful Protesters".

Today, these same individuals and entities will voice hollow words of how terrible a loss the NYPD has endured. They will do their best to distance themselves from the devastating situation they, either consciously or

unconsciously, incubated. They will now attempt to capitalize on the tragedy impacting on our law enforcement family. They will now divorce themselves of their prior words and actions which exacerbated an already tense environment and fueled people to catastrophic actions.

These are tenuous and dangerous times for members of the NYPD. I ask all our members to ensure that they and the members they supervise wear their vests. Make sure officers are backing each other up at all radio runs. Ensure that there are no solo patrols. Tell your officers that, now more than ever, they should transmit when they are 84 and when they go 98 so we know they are okay. Your main job is to ensure the safety of yourselves and your Officers. You also owe an obligation to your families to come home after your tour.

Please keep the two officers, their families, their friends and their co-workers in your thoughts and prayers.

Fraternally,

Lou Turco
President

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FROM THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

LODD: Guidance on Communicating with the Public and Media

There is no more important task at hand than the proper investigation of the murder of our officers, and the proper handling of all matters attendant to it.

Members of the service will limit statements via all venues, including social media, to expressions of sorrow and condolence. We will not comment on the details of the incident or the progress of the investigation. Even in our most difficult times, we will remain consummate professionals.

Stay alert, use proper tactics, and protect yourself and your fellow cops.

By order of the Chief of Department

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COMMENT: Hero police officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were assassinated because of incendiary anti-cop rhetoric from the mayor, race hustlers like Al Sharpton, and all the politicians out there who sought political gain from the Gardner arrest and Ferguson, Missouri.

And God forbid, we should mention the news media, which fanned the flames -- all in the interest of selling a few more newspapers, boosting TV viewership and increasing ad revenue.

It all came about for political advantage, egos and the almighty dollar.

Also, concerning the FINEST Message from the Chief of Department, why limit officer statements to expressions of sorrow and condolence?

Does this mean that the department is primarily interested in protecting the political viability of Mayor de Blasio, and keeping William Bratton the P.C.?

There can't there be any other possible rational reason for transmitting that FINEST message?

I don't believe the mayor or Bratton want to hear the truth or can handle the truth.

Unfortunately their self-interests come above all, including dead cops. -- *Mike Bosak*

DO NOT SIGN THE PETITION For the Resignation of New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio on **MoveOn.Org**

This petition is through **MoveOn.Org** — the **George Soros** venue used for liberal, **anti-police** agitation and linked to Wall Street chaos.

Signing the petition provides **MoveOn.org** with the names, addresses and email addresses of people **MoveOn.Org** would consider "**political enemies**".



Confines of the 79 Precinct: 84 Pct. Police Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos Are Executed

Gunman executes 2 NYPD cops as 'revenge' for Garner

By Larry Celona, Shawn Cohen, Jamie Schram, Amber Jamieson and Laura Italiano — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Post'

Two uniformed NYPD officers were shot dead Saturday afternoon as they sat in their marked police car on a Brooklyn street corner — in what investigators believe was a crazed gunman's assassination-style mission to avenge Eric Garner and Michael Brown.

"No warning, no provocation — they were quite simply assassinated, targeted for their uniform," Police Commissioner William Bratton said.

Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were working overtime as part of an anti-terrorism drill in Bedford-Stuyvesant just before 3 p.m. when they were **shot point-blank in the head** by lone gunman Ismaaiyl Brinsley, 28, who had addresses in Georgia, Maryland and Brooklyn.

Moments after killing the two officers, Brinsley, too, was dead, having turned his gun on himself on a nearby subway platform as cops closed in.

Liu, 32, a newlywed of only two months, had seven years on the force; Ramos, 40, dad to two sons, had two years on the job.

Brinsley was already a fugitive, suspected of putting a bullet in his ex-girlfriend's abdomen at her residence in Baltimore at 5:45 a.m. Saturday, Bratton said.

By early Saturday afternoon — just three hours before shooting Liu and Ramos — vile anti-police threats were posted to Brinsley's Instagram page. The threats referenced the recent police-involved killings of Garner and Brown.

"I'm Putting Wings on Pigs Today," a person believed to be the gunman wrote. "They Take 1 Of Ours . . . Let's Take 2 of Theirs," the post continued, ending with, "This May Be My Final Post."

The Instagram page included an image of a silver automatic handgun with a wooden handle.

That gun matches the Taurus semiautomatic that police recovered from Brinsley. Another image showed the same camouflage pants and distinctive blue sneakers worn by the gunman as his body was carried from the scene on a stretcher.

"I Rather Die a Gangster Than Go To Sleep A Coward," read another post.

The sickening missives used the hashtag #ShootThePolice, along with two other hashtags referencing Garner and Brown.

Police in Baltimore had reached out via a "warning flier" to alert NYPD that Brinsley might be en route to Brooklyn, but the fax tragically arrived at 2:45 p.m. — five minutes before the shooting, Bratton said. "The tragedy here was that just as the warning was coming in, the murder was occurring," Bratton said.

The execution of the cops follows nearly three weeks of powder-keg tensions in the wake of a Staten Island grand jury's decision not to indict a police officer for the chokehold that contributed to Garner's death.

Four officers have suffered minor injuries in scuffles with protesters, including two lieutenants attacked on the Brooklyn Bridge a week ago Saturday.

Brinsley walked up to the cops' patrol car at the corner of Myrtle and Tompkins avenues, approaching from the sidewalk.

"They were sitting in a marked NYPD car, in full uniform," Bratton said of Liu and Ramos.

Brinsley "took a shooting stance on the passenger side and fired his weapon several times through the front passenger window, striking both officers in the head," Bratton told reporters.

"Officer Liu and Officer Ramos never had the opportunity to draw weapons," he said. "They may never actually have even seen their assailant — their murderer," he said. Witnesses also said Brinsley opened fire without uttering a word, a law-enforcement source told The Post.

Brinsley stood stock still for a few moments, fleeing into the subway when he heard the sirens of a second police car.

“The cops were struggling to get out of the vehicle,” eyewitness Courtney Felix, 23, of Bed-Stuy, told The Post. “They were hanging onto their wounds.

“One was clutching at his neck and the other was holding onto his collarbone. One cop stumbled out of the driver’s side and he leaned over to fall down,” the witness added. “He was trying to catch himself. He was mostly on the floor and he was fading out.”

Brinsley fled south on Tompkins to the subway where “they engaged the guy and he ‘did’ himself,” an NYPD investigator said.

“While on the platform, Brinsley shot himself in the head — took his own life,” the commissioner said.

Brinsley has a criminal record dating back to at least 2006, when he was arrested in Georgia for carrying a concealed weapon, a knife, as well as shoplifting, according to online records.

The next year he was nabbed in Dekalb County, Ga., for criminal trespass, and by 2009, he was indicted in Ohio for robbery — a charge that was later apparently dismissed.

In 2011, he was arrested again in Georgia for reckless conduct, tampering with evidence, criminal property damage, and discharging his weapon. The outcome of the case is unknown.

The two officers were pronounced dead at Woodhull Hospital, where colleagues and family members huddled tearfully.

Lieutenants Benevolent Association President Lou Turco said: “I don’t even know how to respond to this. Twenty-eight years on, and I don’t know what to say.”

Both shooting locations — above and below ground — were scenes of blood and terror.

“I heard shooting, four or five shots,” witness Derrick McKie, 49, told The Post of the cops’ tragic murder.

“He took a high-caliber weapon to the face. He was lifeless . . . All I could see was blood. His body was lifeless.”

Carmen Jimenez, 32, a social worker from Bed-Stuy, was on the subway platform when the gunman ran in, pursued by cops.

“It looked like two cops came in. There was lots of yelling and they said, ‘Everybody get down,’ ” said Jimenez, who is eight months pregnant.

“People were screaming. People were trying to run,” she said.

“I threw myself on the floor. I was afraid for my life and afraid for my baby.”

Additional reporting by Ben Feuerherd, Kevin Fasick, Erin Calabrese and Kathianne Boniello

Two N.Y.P.D. Officers Are Killed in Brooklyn Ambush; Suspect Commits Suicide

By BENJAMIN MUELLER and AL BAKER — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘The New York Times’

Two police officers sitting in their patrol car in Brooklyn were shot at point-blank range and killed on Saturday afternoon by a man who, officials said, had traveled to the city from Baltimore vowing to kill officers. The suspect then committed suicide with the same gun, the authorities said.

The officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, were in the car near Myrtle and Tompkins Avenues in Bedford-Stuyvesant in the shadow of a tall housing project when the gunman, Ismaaiyl Brinsley, walked up to the passenger-side window and assumed a firing stance, Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said. Mr. Brinsley shot several rounds into the heads and upper bodies of the officers, who never drew their weapons, the authorities said.

Mr. Brinsley, 28, then fled down the street and onto the platform of a nearby subway station, where he killed himself as officers closed in. The police recovered a silver semiautomatic handgun, Mr. Bratton said.

Mr. Brinsley, who had a long rap sheet of crimes that included robbery and carrying a concealed gun, is believed to have shot his former girlfriend near Baltimore before traveling to Brooklyn, the authorities said. He made statements on social media suggesting that he planned to kill police officers and was angered about the Eric Garner and Michael Brown cases.

Authorities in Baltimore sent a warning that Mr. Brinsley had made these threats, but it was received in New York at essentially the same time as the killings, officials said.

The shootings, the chase, the suicide of Mr. Brinsley and the desperate but failed bid to save the lives of the officers — their uniforms soaked in blood — turned a busy commercial intersection on the Saturday before Christmas into a scene of pandemonium.

The manager of a liquor store at the corner, Charlie Hu, said the two police officers were slouched over in the front seat of their patrol car. Both of them appeared to have been shot in the head, Mr. Hu said, and one of the officers had blood spilling out of his face.

“Today two of New York’s finest were shot and killed with no warning, no provocation,” Mr. Bratton said at Woodhull Hospital in Williamsburg, where the officers were declared dead. “They were, quite simply, assassinated — targeted for their uniform and for the responsibility they embraced to keep the people of this city safe.”

“Officer Ramos and Officer Liu never had the opportunity to draw their weapons,” he continued. “They may have never even seen the assailant, their murderer.”

Mayor Bill de Blasio, standing beside the police commissioner, said, “It is an attack on all of us; it’s an attack on everything we hold dear.”

Mr. de Blasio said he had met with the officers’ families, including Officer Ramos’s 13-year-old son, who “couldn’t comprehend what had happened to his father.”

Late Saturday night, President Obama condemned the “murder of two police officers in New York City,” noting that officers who serve their communities “deserve our respect and gratitude every single day. Tonight, I ask people to reject violence and words that harm, and turn to words that heal — prayer, patient dialogue, and sympathy for the friends and family of the fallen.”

The double killing comes at a moment when protests over police tactics have roiled the city and other parts of the nation. Since a grand jury declined to bring criminal charges in the case of Mr. Garner, a black Staten Island man who died after a police chokehold in July, protesters have filled the streets on numerous occasions. Those protests followed more violent ones in Ferguson, Mo., after there were no charges in the police shooting of Mr. Brown, an unarmed black teenager.

The mayor has taken care to praise officers' work repeatedly since the grand jury decision, but he has stressed the rights of protesters to express themselves and spoken of his personal experience instructing his biracial son, Dante, to "take special care" during any police encounters.

Some union leaders suggested the mayor had sent a message that police officers were to be feared. Cries for the police to use more restraint have been buttressed by historic drops in violent crime. The city has seen roughly 300 killings so far this year, a number so low as to be unheard-of two decades ago.

But the shooting on Saturday seemed reminiscent of decades past, when the city was mired in an epidemic of drugs and violence and, in 1988, a police officer was shot while he sat alone in his patrol car guarding the home of a man who had testified in a drug case. That killing shook the city, sparking an escalation in the war on drugs and an aggressive crackdown on violent crime. Mr. Bratton said that the attack on Saturday was the seventh time since 1972 that partners in the Police Department had been killed at the same time.

The killing seemed to drive the wedge between Mr. de Blasio and rank-and-file officers even deeper. Video posted online showed dozens of officers turning their backs to the mayor as he walked into a news conference on Saturday night.

"There's blood on many hands tonight — those that incited violence on the street under the guise of protests, that tried to tear down what New York City police officers did every day," the head of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, Patrick Lynch, said outside Woodhull Hospital. He added, "That blood on the hands starts on the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor."

Mr. Brinsley, whose records indicate that he was born in New York, had been arrested several times in Georgia and Ohio. He was arrested on accusations of carrying a concealed weapon and stealing in Georgia, and in Ohio in connection with theft and robbery, among other run-ins with the police. His last known residence was in Georgia. Mr. Bratton said the suspect also had ties to East Flatbush, Brooklyn, but would not be more specific.

Earlier on Saturday, law enforcement officials said, Mr. Brinsley shot his former girlfriend in the stomach near Baltimore. She survived.

Mr. Bratton said investigators believed that after the Maryland shooting, Mr. Brinsley posted to an Instagram account that he was headed to New York to attack police officers and that the posting might be his last. Mr. Bratton lamented the timing of the warning from authorities. "The tragedy here is that just as the warning was coming in, the murder was occurring," he said.

Mr. Bratton said that the Instagram posts reviewed by investigators, which he said had been widely circulated and may have been on the account of a girlfriend, revealed a "very strong bias against police officers."

In the Instagram posting that was apparently written by Mr. Brinsley, he called the attack retribution for the deaths of Mr. Garner and Mr. Brown.

Below a photo of a firearm, the Instagram posting, which misspells Mr. Garner's name, reads: "I'm Putting Wings On Pigs Today. They Take 1 Of Ours.....Let's Take 2 of Theirs #ShootThePolice #RIPErvinGardner #RIPMikeBrown."

Mr. Brinsley's sister, Nawaal Brinsley, said on Saturday that she had not seen her brother in two years. "Oh my goodness, oh my goodness," she said when told of the attack. She said she did not remember hearing her brother express anger at the police.

Mr. Bratton said that Officer Liu had been a seven-year veteran of the force and that Officer Ramos had been an officer since 2012. Officer Liu, he added, had been married two months.

The shootings seemed poised to cool the protests of recent months. The Rev. Al Sharpton, who has been an outspoken backer of the protests in recent weeks, condemned the attack.

"Any use of the names of Eric Garner and Michael Brown in connection with any violence or killing of police is reprehensible and against the pursuit of justice in both cases," he said.

The Brooklyn borough president, Eric Adams, worried that the attack would "tarnish" the campaign against police brutality that has swept the city.

"It's horrific to have someone intentionally shoot a police officer; it's the wrong message," he said. "And that is not the message that many have been calling on when they talk about reform."

The intersection where the shooting occurred, which is dominated by the Tompkins housing project across the street, is a spot where residents often see police keeping watch. The officers had been assigned to patrol the Tompkins Houses in response to an uptick in violence there this year, Mr. Bratton said.

The increased police presence had improved the neighborhood, some said. "It's changed and gotten better through the years," said Felix Camacho, 40, an airport ramp agent who has lived for eight years on the block where the shooting happened. But other residents worried that the episode on Saturday would inflame relations.

More than 100 officers lined the hospital's exit ramp as the bodies of Officers Liu and Ramos were driven out in ambulances.

Reporting was contributed by Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Matt Flegenheimer, Dan Glaun, J. David Goodman, Mike Isaac, Matt Krupnick and Ashley Southall. Jack Begg contributed research.

2 cops ambushed, fatally shot in car; gunman kills himself

By COLLEEN LONG and JENNIFER PELTZ (The Associated Press) — Sunday, December 21st, 2014; 7:34 a.m. EST

NEW YORK (AP) — A gunman who vowed online to shoot two "pigs" in retaliation for the police chokehold death of Eric Garner ambushed two New York City officers in a patrol car and fatally shot them in broad daylight before running to a subway station and killing himself, authorities said.

Ismaaiyl Brinsley, 28, wrote on an Instagram account before Saturday's shootings: "I'm putting wings on pigs today. They take 1 of ours, let's take 2 of theirs," two city officials with direct knowledge of the case confirmed for The Associated Press. He used the hashtags Shootthepolice RIPERivGardner (sic) RIPMikeBrown.

The officials, a senior city official and a law enforcement official, were not authorized to speak publicly on the topic and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Police said Brinsley approached the passenger window of a marked police car and opened fire, striking Officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu in the head. The officers were on special patrol doing crime reduction work in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn.

"They were, quite simply, assassinated - targeted for their uniform," said Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, who looked pale and shaken at a hospital news conference.

The sudden and extraordinary violence stunned the city, prompted a response from vacationing President Barack Obama and escalated weeks of simmering ill will between police and their critics following grand jury decisions not to indict officers in the deaths of Eric Garner in New York and Michael Brown in Missouri. Garner and Brown were black; the officers involved were white.

Demonstrators around the country have staged die-ins and other protests following the grand jury decisions. The New York police union head declared there's "blood on the hands" of protesters and the city's mayor.

Brinsley took off running after the shooting. Officers chased him down to a nearby subway station, where he shot himself in the head as a subway train door full of people closed. A silver handgun was recovered at the scene, Bratton said.

"This may be my final post," Brinsley wrote in the post that included an image of a silver handgun. The post had more than 200 likes but also had many others admonishing his statements.

Bratton said the suspect made very serious "anti-police" statements online but did not get into specifics of the posts.

The Rev. Al Sharpton said Garner's family has no connection to the suspect and denounced the violence.

"We have stressed at every rally and march that anyone engaged in any violence is an enemy to the pursuit of justice for Eric Garner and Michael Brown," he said.

Brown's family condemned the shooting in a statement posted online by their attorney.

"We reject any kind of violence directed toward members of law enforcement. It cannot be tolerated. We must work together to bring peace to our communities," the family said.

Most of the protests have been peaceful, particularly in New York. Bratton said police were investigating whether Brinsley had attended any rallies or demonstrations and why he had chosen to kill the officers.

Brinsley was black; the officers were Asian and Hispanic, police said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio said the killings of Ramos and Liu strike at the heart of the city.

"Our city is in mourning. Our hearts are heavy," said de Blasio, who spoke softly with moist eyes. "It is an attack on all of us."

Scores of officers in uniform lined up three rows deep at the hospital driveway. The line stretched into the street. Officers raised their hands in a silent salute as two ambulances bore away the slain officers' bodies. The mayor ordered flags at half-staff.

In a statement Saturday night, Attorney General Eric Holder condemned the shooting deaths as senseless and "an unspeakable act of barbarism." Obama, vacationing in Hawaii, issued a statement saying he unconditionally condemns the slayings.

"The officers who serve and protect our communities risk their own safety for ours every single day - and they deserve our respect and gratitude every single day," Obama said. "Tonight, I ask people to reject violence and words that harm, and turn to words that heal - prayer, patient dialogue, and sympathy for the friends and family of the fallen."

The tragedy ended a bizarre route for Brinsley that began in Maryland early Saturday. He went to the home of a former girlfriend in a Baltimore suburb and shot and wounded her. Police there said they noticed Brinsley posting from the woman's Instagram account threats to kill New York officers.

Baltimore-area officials sent a warning to New York City police, who received it moments too late, Bratton said.

But the posts were apparently online for hours, though it's not clear if anyone reported them. Bratton called on New Yorkers to alert authorities of any threats to police they see - even if they don't seem real. "That information must get into the hands of the police officers," he said.

Brinsley had a history of arrests in Georgia for robbery, disorderly conduct and carrying a concealed weapon. Bratton said his last-known address was in Georgia, but he had some ties to Brooklyn.

Meanwhile, the department grieved the sudden and violent loss of the officers.

"Both officers paid the ultimate sacrifice today while protecting the communities they serve," Bratton said Saturday night.

Ramos was married with a 13-year-old son and had another in college, police and a friend said. He had been on the job since 2012 and was a school safety officer. Liu had been on the job for seven years and got married two months ago.

Rosie Orengo, a friend of Ramos, said he was heavily involved in their church and encouraged others in their marriages.

"He was an amazing man. He was the best father and husband and friend," she said. "Our peace is knowing that he's OK, and we'll see him in heaven."

De Blasio and the president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, Patrick Lynch, have been locked in a public battle over treatment of officers following the grand jury's decision. Just days ago, Lynch suggested police officers sign a petition that demanded the mayor not attend their funerals should they die on the job. On Saturday, some officers turned their backs on de Blasio as he walked into the hospital.

"That blood on the hands starts at the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor," Lynch said. "After the funerals, those responsible will be called on the carpet and held accountable."

The last shooting death of a New York City officer came in December 2011, when 22-year veteran Peter Figoski was shot in the face while responding to a report of a break-in at a Brooklyn apartment. The triggerman, Lamont Pride, was convicted of murder and sentenced in 2013 to 45 years to life in prison.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire and Tom McElroy in New York, Juliet Linderman in Baltimore and Josh Lederman in Honolulu contributed to this report.

Two NYPD officers 'assassinated' while sitting in patrol car in Brooklyn by gunman who boasted on Instagram about 'revenge' killing cops

Ismaaiyl Brinsley fired at NYPD officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu in their squad car in Bedford-Stuyvesant sources said. Hours earlier, Brinsley shot his girlfriend in Baltimore and boasted in social media about wanting to kill cops. Both officers later died at Woodhull Hospital.

BY Tina Moore, Dale W. Eisinger, Rocco Parascandola, Thomas Tracy and Rich Schapiro — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Daily News'

Two NYPD cops were executed Saturday after a career criminal drove from Baltimore to Brooklyn to kill police officers in a twisted bid to avenge the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown.

"They were, quite simply, assassinated," a shaken NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton said Saturday night.

The shooter — identified as Ismaaiyl Brinsley — boasted about wanting to murder cops in the hours before he ambushed the officers outside the Tompkins Houses in Bedford-Stuyvesant about 2:45 p.m.

"I'm putting wings on pigs today. They take 1 of ours ... let's take 2 of theirs," Brinsley, 28, wrote on Instagram, alongside a photo of a silver handgun.

He also included three hashtags: ShootThePolice, RPERivGarner (sic) and RIPMikeBrown.

"This may be my final post ... I'm putting pigs in a blanket."

A second slay attempt on NYPD officers was narrowly avoided early Sunday when a gunman's weapon jammed as he took aim at two cops outside a Bronx housing project, sources said.

Investigators grabbed the wannabe cop killer after he dropped his gun and ran into the Millbrook Houses on Saint Anns Ave. in Port Morris, sources said.

Earlier, Brinsley made good on his sinister promise, firing several rounds into the marked patrol car parked on Tompkins Ave. near Myrtle Ave., cops and witnesses said.

The officers — Rafael Ramos, 40, and Wenjian Liu, 32 — were in the area as part of a push to beef up cops' presence near violence-plagued housing projects.

“The perp came out of the houses, walked up behind the car and lit them up,” a high-ranking police official told the Daily News.

His face tense and voice shaky, Bratton said the two cops “were shot and killed with no warning, no provocation.”

Mayor de Blasio, who has taken heat for showing solidarity with anti-cop protesters, spoke movingly about the officers and the role they play in keeping New York City safe.

“Our hearts are heavy. We lost two good men who devoted their lives to protecting all of us,” the somber mayor said at Woodhull Hospital, flanked by Bratton, **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito** and other city leaders.

De Blasio described the double murder as “an assassination” and a “despicable act.”

It “goes at the very heart of our society and our democracy,” he added. “When a police officer is murdered, it tears at the fabric of our society.”

Right after Brinsley fired the fatal shots, he sprinted around the corner to the G line subway station at Myrtle-Willoughby Aves., with cops in close pursuit.

Brinsley disappeared inside the station, then shot himself in the head on a platform, police said.

Paramedics carried Brinsley out on a stretcher and were performing CPR. But the killer, described as a drifter who hails from Georgia and has a recent address on Eastern Parkway, was later pronounced dead.

The same gun Brinsley showed off on his Instagram page, a silver semiautomatic Taurus, was found under his body, sources said. His car, with Maryland plates, was later discovered on Myrtle Ave. at Nostrand Ave.

The mortally wounded officers were rushed to Woodhull.

“Worst nightmare in the NYPD,” tweeted NYPD Captains Endowment Association President Roy Richter. “Incredible sadness as we mourn for our brothers and their families.”

The slayings capped a bloody daylong crime spree for Brinsley.

Hours before he showed up in Brooklyn, Brinsley shot his ex-girlfriend at about 5:45 a.m. in Owings Mills, Md., about 15 miles from Baltimore.

The 29-year-old woman, who was hit in the stomach, underwent surgery and was expected to survive, a family member told The News.

Brinsley stole the woman’s phone after the shooting — and headed for New York. At some point along the way, he posted a menacing update on Facebook.

“I always wanted to be known for doing something right ... but my past is stalking me and my present is haunting me,” it read.

“Why live if you don’t love to live,” he added in a second post, his last.

Brinsley also apparently bragged about shooting his ex-gal pal. On his Instagram account, he posted a photo of army fatigues with apparent blood stains. “Never had a hot gun on your waist and blood on your shoe ... N---a you ain’t been through what I been through you not like me and im not like you.”

Brinsley was known as a lifelong criminal with ties to Brooklyn. Baltimore County authorities, after learning he was on the run and had posted social media messages about killing cops, sent a wanted flyer to the NYPD, Bratton said.

But the warning didn’t arrive until 2:45 p.m.

“Tragically this was essentially at the same time as our officers were being murdered and ambushed by Brinsley,” Bratton said.

Later Saturday, Baltimore County cops offered a timeline that conflicted with Bratton’s account. Baltimore County cops say they made a phone call to the 70th precinct about 2:10 p.m. after learning that Brinsley’s phone was pinging at a nearby location.

The officers discussed the “threatening Instagram posts” — and around the same time Baltimore County cops faxed a wanted poster to the NYPD with information about the suspect. About 2:50 p.m., Baltimore authorities sent a teletype with the same information as the flyer to the NYPD’s real-time crime center. The NYPD could not immediately confirm the Baltimore County account.

Days before Saturday’s slayings, Brinsley exhorted his Instagram followers to “burn the flag” in protest of the recent police killings of black men. “Marching up and down the streets does little to nothing to bring awareness to serious matters,” he wrote. “So let’s ruffle some feathers and take it into our own hands and make them watch in horror as we burn what they represent.”

Ramos and Liu never had a chance, cops and witnesses said.

Like a trained assassin, Brinsley snuck up to their patrol car and started firing into the passenger window — striking both officers in the head. “Officer Liu and Officer Ramos never had the opportunity to draw their weapons,” Bratton said. “They may not have ever actually seen their assailant.”

Witness Courtney Felix, 23, said he heard a volley of shots, then saw the two officers stumble out of the patrol car and crumple to the ground. “They looked like they were really hurt,” said Felix who was at a friend’s apartment overlooking the scene. “They were struggling to get out of the car.”

Felix said the cop on the drivers’ side “was clutching his neck, catching himself and fading out” as he fell to the ground. The other cop was clutching his collarbone as he stumbled, Felix added.

Rescuers rushed to the aid of the mortally wounded officers. “They basically dragged two cops out their car,” said a witness who asked to remain anonymous. “I saw it. One was shot in the face. There was blood coming out of his face.”

Uriel Winfree, 30, said she was awakened by the sound of gunshots. Wondering what was going on, she went up to the roof to get a better vantage on the street. “There was a cop on the ground and everyone was around him,” Winfree said. “Someone was doing CPR on the cop. They put him on a stretcher and they ran him into an ambulance. They load him in and they hauled a--.

“There were like 75 cops here and a bunch ran toward the subway after the guy. There was a huge police presence there. Even undercovers were coming out of nowhere.”

Brinsley's criminal record stretched back to at least 2004 and included a string of arrests in Georgia and Ohio. In Georgia's Fulton County alone, Brinsley was arrested nine times over the past decade on charges including simple battery, criminal trespassing, carrying a concealed weapon, obstruction of a law enforcement officer and shoplifting, according to the Baltimore Sun.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, in a statement, said Garner's family was incensed the killer invoked his name on social media. "I have spoken to the Garner family and we are outraged by the early reports of the police killed in Brooklyn today," Sharpton said. "Any use of the names of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, in connection with any violence or killing of police, is reprehensible and against the pursuit of justice in both cases."

Garner died after NYPD Officer Daniel Pantaleo put him in a chokehold on Staten Island on July 17. Brown, who was unarmed, was shot dead in Ferguson, Mo. by Officer Darren Wilson on Aug. 9. In both cases, the victims were black and the cops were white. Grand juries did not indict either officer, sparking national protests and outrage over police treatment of minorities.

The Brown family released a statement condemning the "senseless killing of two NYPD officers."

"We reject any kind of violence directed toward members of law enforcement," it said. "It cannot be tolerated."

Following Saturday's bloodshed, President Obama joined city and state pols in denouncing the double assassination. "I unconditionally condemn today's murder of two police officers in New York City," Obama said. "Two brave men won't be going home to their loved ones tonight, and for that, there is no justification."

"This deplorable act of violence is the opposite of what New York is and what New Yorkers believe in," Gov. Cuomo said. "Tonight, we all come together to mourn the loss of these brave souls."

Councilman Robert Cornegy said "this couldn't be any worse. ... My prayers absolutely go out to the families of the officers."

In a tweet, Mark-Viverito said she was "truly horrified" by the crime.

Early Sunday, the NYPD sent out a safety directive to all commands, making it mandatory for officers to operate in pairs and urging officers on patrol to "maintain a heightened level of awareness."

The slain cops are the first two NYPD officers shot and killed in the line of duty since the Dec. 2011 murder of Peter Figoski, 47. The 22-year veteran, was gunned down after responding to a botched robbery in Cypress Hills. Figoski's killer, Lamont Pride, now 30, was sentenced to 45 years to life in prison in 2013.

With Mike Oates, Ben Kochman, Caitlin Nolan, Jennifer Fermino, Barry Paddock, Jan Ransom



Slain NYPD Officers Were Partners

Mayor Meets With Families Wenjian Liu, Who Was Recently Married, and Rafael Ramos, a Married Father

By Mike Vilensky and Adam Janos — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The Wall Street Journal' / New York, NY

One was a married father who joined the New York Police Department just two years ago. The other was a seven-year veteran of the force who had gotten married two months ago.

Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were identified as the victims of a brazen daylight shooting in their squad car in Brooklyn Saturday, a killing Police Commissioner William Bratton described as an “assassination.” The alleged gunman, Ismaaiyl Brinsley, took his own life.

“I ask that all New Yorkers pray for them, pray for their families,” Mayor Bill de Blasio said.

The officers were members of the 84th precinct in downtown Brooklyn but had been assigned to patrol the Tompkins Houses, a public-housing project in Bedford-Stuyvesant where there had been reports of violence, officials said.

Mr. Bratton said partners had been slain together on the job, “often in incidents such as this mindless assassinations without warning.”

Mr. de Blasio said he met with the parents of 32-year-old Mr. Liu and his wife, whom he married two months ago.

He also met with the family of Mr. Ramos, 40 years old, including his 13-year-old son “who couldn’t comprehend what had happened to his father.”

Mr. Ramos had worked as a school safety official until two years ago when he joined the NYPD, officials said.

Officers were stationed outside Mr. Ramos’s pale-green slatboard house in Cypress Hills, Brooklyn. A lit decorative Santa and snowman could be seen in the front window.

Reached by phone, Margarita Ramos, a relative of the officer, said: “We need our breathing space right now. Let me get my grieving space.”

Mr. Ramos’s neighbor, Steve Poplis, 44, described the officer as “very quiet.”

“Very nice family,” he said. According to Mr. Poplis, Mr. Ramos also lived with his father, and that he would watch the officer come and go to work.

“It’s a senseless loss,” he said. “A week before Christmas, it makes it that much more tragic.”

—Melanie Gracye West and Sonja Sharp contributed to this article.

Editorials

Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘The New York Post’ Editorial:

They gave their lives

It’s come to this.

Two NYPD officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, doing nothing more than sitting innocently in their car — murdered in cold blood, in broad daylight.

Officials say it was revenge for the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown. Hours earlier, the suspected gunman warned in an Instagram post, “I’m Putting Wings on Pigs Today.” His reasoning: “They Take 1 Of Ours. . . Let’s Take 2 of Theirs.”

Let’s stipulate upfront: The depraved, horrific actions of one crazed killer is not cause to revoke Americans’ 1st Amendment right to protest.

But words have consequences.

Clearly, the protesters — egged on by politicians and professional activists — have engaged in a warped campaign to fuel anger at cops. Even before Saturday’s slaying of these officers, some protesters had become violent and attacked cops.

“What do we want? Dead cops! When do we want it? Now!” some chanted last week.

Now they’ve got their wish.

Nor has it helped that Mayor de Blasio has called cops racist, invoking “centuries of racism” — as if that reflects today’s world. Or that President Obama, too, has lent support, even if indirectly, for the notion that cops need to be reined in. Just last week, he actually created a task force to find ways to “create accountability” and “transparency” among cops — as if none exists today.

Remember, these two slain officers were not resisting arrest when they were shot. They had not just robbed a store and fought with a cop. Indeed, they weren’t even attempting to make an arrest.

Yet, will the Rev. Al Sharpton now hold rallies in support of cops? Not likely.

It’s telling, too, by the way, how often people somehow wind up dead amid “protests” Sharpton’s involved with. Freddy’s Fashion Mart: seven dead. Crown Heights: two dead. Now, the Eric Garner-Michael Brown protests: two slain police officers.

New Yorkers of good conscience will mourn these good officers. They’ll think of their families, who instead of preparing for Christmas are now planning funerals.

And they’ll think of the tragic context in which these cops gave their lives — and of those who helped create that context.

Disgraceful Daily News Editorial: It's Still All About Defending De Blasio and Bashing Patty Lynch & Eddie Mullins

Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘The New York Daily News’ Editorial:

NYPD officers' deaths should bring New Yorkers to draw lessons that honor their ultimate sacrifice

Two cops murdered at a place that proved they believed black lives do matter — in a time when so many libel the NYPD with the accusation that police devalue the very existence of African-Americans. Now is the time for New Yorkers, in uniform and not, both critics and defenders of the NYPD, to far more wisely draw lessons that honor the ultimate sacrifice made by these two officers by pulling together with healing resolve.

They were executed. They were assassinated. They were ambushed and so they were defenseless. They were targeted for one reason and one reason alone:

They were deemed worthy for death because they had donned the uniform of the New York Police Department.

Two cops shot through the head. Two cops dead. Two cops murdered at a place that proved they believed black lives do matter — in a time when so many libel the NYPD with the accusation that police devalue the very existence of African-Americans.

“I’m putting wings on pigs today. They take one of ours . . . let’s take 2 of theirs,” he posted on the Internet.

Then he referenced both the deaths of Eric Garner on Staten Island and Michael Brown in Ferguson before concluding, “I’m putting pigs in a blanket.”

The murderer is dead, having taken his own life. He may have been affiliated with a prison gang that that has vowed revenge for the police killings of Garner and Brown. He had a long criminal record. Hours earlier, he is suspected of having shot and wounded a girlfriend in Maryland.

While the nature of his demons is unclear, it is certain that he perverted the meaning of the protests generated by the Garner and Brown cases.

Also beyond question is that the fringes of the demonstrations in New York have veered into violence and calls for anti-police violence.

Out on the edge, protesters have taunted cops as racist murderers, emerged from crowds to punch officers and, on the Brooklyn Bridge, swarmed and assaulted two lieutenants.

Still more, one marching crowd chanted, “What do we want? Dead cops,” while others changed the “Hands up, don’t shoot” mantra, into “Arms up, shoot back.” Giant graffiti declaring, “NYPD KILLS” appeared on the Manhattan Bridge.

In such a climate, for an inflamed mind with ready access to a gun, it’s a short step from calling for dead cops to killing them.

Officer Wenjian Liu had recently been married. Officer Rafael Ramos left behind a wife and 13-year-old son. Reassigned from anti-terror duty to beefing up security at a public housing development in Bedford-Stuyvesant, they were protecting the very population the NYPD is accused of victimizing.

Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Bill Bratton met with the Liu’s and Ramos’ loved ones at Woodhull Hospital and joined in praying over the two officers’ bodies. The mayor and commissioner were clearly shaken when they met the press.

“Our city is in mourning. Our hearts are heavy. We have lost two good men,” de Blasio said, calling the murders an attack on the entire city.

De Blasio declined for the moment to discuss the heated background in which the murders took place. Meanwhile, outrageously and irresponsibly, a Twitter feed of the Sergeants Benevolent Association declared that the mayor had “blood on his hands.”

Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association President Patrick Lynch and Sergeants Benevolent Association President Ed Mullins have sharply criticized de Blasio, dating to his attacks on the stop-and-frisk program and his embrace of enhanced NYPD oversight. We have our differences with the mayor on the same issues.

But Lynch and Mullins have gone further, painting de Blasio’s handling of anti-police protests as undermining law enforcement. Lynch has called for barring the mayor from the funerals of slain cops. He and Mullins have also veered dangerously into calls for job actions.

To put blood on de Blasio’s hands draws an **unjustified and wildly inflammatory** line between the mayor’s defensible policy positions — stances shared by Bratton — and the **murderous extremism** of the **hard-core career criminal** who killed Liu and Ramos.

Now is the time for New Yorkers, in uniform and not, both critics and defenders of the NYPD, to far more wisely draw lessons that honor the ultimate sacrifice made by these two officers by pulling together with healing resolve.

NOTE: Daily News Op-Ed / Commentary pieces by two faced, disingenuous sphincter muscles Mike Lupica and Al Sharpton not included in today's newsletter - *Mike*

Police turn their back on de Blasio

By Shawn Cohen, Kirstan Conley and Amber Jamieson — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘The New York Post’

A blue wall of silently seething police officers turned their backs on **Mayor de Blasio** Saturday night — literally.

As the mayor and his entourage snaked through a jammed third-floor corridor at Woodhull Hospital, where **two officers** had been pronounced **dead** just hours earlier, scores of grieving cops faced the walls — and away from the leader they believe has failed them.

Earlier, de Blasio approached a cluster of cops at the Brooklyn Hospital and offered, “We’re all in this together.”

“No we’re not,” an officer replied tersely, according to a cop who witnessed the icy scene.

The rank-and-file's anger at the mayor was palpable citywide.

“It’s f–king open season on us right now,” one officer said. “When is he going to step up?”

Speaking moments after the bodies of **Officers Rafael Ramos** and **Wenjian Liu** were driven away, as hundreds of cops stood at somber attention, Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association President Patrick Lynch said, “There’s blood on many hands tonight.”

“That blood . . . starts on the steps of City Hall, in the Office of the Mayor,” he said.

Just last week, cops began signing a “Don’t Insult My Sacrifice” waiver, distributed by the PBA, that warned the mayor and speaker to stay away from funerals of cops killed in the line of duty.

It is not known if the officers slain Saturday had signed the waiver, which singles out de Blasio and **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito** for their “consistent refusal to show police officers the support and respect they deserve.”

Many cops said they blame de Blasio for helping to create a climate of distrust in cops that has turned them into targets.

They pointed to Hizzoner just last week calling an assault by Brooklyn Bridge protesters on two NYPD lieutenants an “alleged” assault, even as dramatic video of the attack emerged.

De Blasio revealed in an ABC News interview earlier this month that he and **First Lady Chirlane McCray** had instructed their biracial son, Dante, about the “dangers” that police pose.

But just moments after the stunning cold shoulder in the hospital hallway, de Blasio wiped away tears at a press conference in which he spoke of meeting the families and praying “over the bodies of these two officers.”

“When a police officer is murdered it tears at the foundation of our society,” he said. “It is an attack on all of us, on everything we hold dear . . . Therefore every New Yorker should feel they too were attacked, our entire city was attacked, by this heinous individual.”

Answering a question about the politics at play in the wake of the tragedy, he said it was a “time to think about these families. I don’t think it’s a time for politics or political analysis. It’s a time to think about families that just lost their father, their husband, their son.”

Mark-Viverito, who accompanied the mayor to the hospital, tweeted earlier that she was “truly horrified” by the shooting and was praying for the officers and their families. Five minutes later, she tweeted: “Zero tolerance for any act of violence against police officers who protect & serve our city.”

Vernon Geberth, a retired NYPD homicide lieutenant who wrote what is considered the detective’s bible, “Practical Homicide Investigation,” was unmoved.

“De Blasio’s comments have given license to the anti-police activists and thugs to attack the police,” he said. “His comments have been absolutely despicable. Telling his son he should be afraid of the police? I’m not surprised these two police officers have been assassinated as a direct result of de Blasio’s comments.”

NYPD cops furious with Bill de Blasio turn their backs on the mayor as he enters hospital where officers died

The police unions have been ticked off by the support de Blasio has shown the legions protesting a Staten Island grand jury's decision not to indict a cop in Eric Garner's July 17 chokehold death.

BY Rocco Parascandola, Jennifer Fermino and Bill Hutchinson — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Daily News'

Believing City Hall has betrayed them, cops demonstrated their anger Saturday by turning their backs on Mayor de Blasio as he entered a Brooklyn hospital to pay his respects to two murdered officers.

A startling video shows a hallway at Woodhull Hospital filled with officers silently facing away from de Blasio as he walks a blue gantlet.

The demonstration, captured by WPIX11 News, included the presidents of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and the Sergeants Benevolent Association.

"Mayor de Blasio, the blood of these two officers is clearly on your hands," Ed Mullins, president of the sergeants association, said in a statement to his union members Saturday night.

"It is your failed policies and actions that enabled this tragedy to occur," he said. "I only hope and pray that more of these ambushes and executions do not happen again."

Patrick Lynch, head of the PBA, echoed Mullins' anger at the mayor.

"That blood on the hands starts on the steps of City Hall in the office of the mayor," Lynch said in statement. "When these funerals are over, those responsible will be called on the carpet and held accountable."

He added that the blame also goes to "those who incited violence on the street under the guise of protest that tried to tear down what NYC police officers did every day."

"We tried to warn," Lynch said. "It must not go on. It cannot be tolerated."

Former Gov. George Pataki also lashed out against the mayor, claiming the cops' deaths were a "predictable outcome of divisive anti-cop rhetoric of #ericholder & #mayordiblasio."

Shortly after the officers were killed, a MoveOn.org petition was formed demanding de Blasio's ouster.

"NYC residents demand the exit of Mayor Bill DeBlasio after 2 NYPD officers were shot and killed today 12/20/14," wrote the petitioners, who identified themselves as "The People of NYC." The petitioners said de Blasio was "unfit to lead this city" and "unfit to have a relationship with his police department."

"Accountability for his actions and words MUST be handed down," they wrote, demanding, "proper protocol to be followed to name a replacement before a special election."

More than 34,000 people had signed the petition by early Sunday.

Despite the protests at Woodhull Hospital and online, an emotional de Blasio praised the slain officers, Rafael Ramos, 40, and Wenjian Liu, 32, for making the ultimate sacrifice.

“These officers were shot execution-style, (a) particularly despicable act, which goes to the very heart of our society and democracy,” de Blasio said. “When a police officer is murdered, it tears at the foundation of our society. It is an attack on all of us. It’s an attack on everything we hold dear.

“We depend on our police to protect us against forces of criminality and evil,” the mayor said. “They are a foundation of our society, and when they are attacked, it is an attack on the very concept of decency. Therefore, every New Yorker should feel they, too, were attacked. Our entire city was attacked by this heinous individual.”

The police unions have been ticked off because they don’t think de Blasio has given them sufficient support after a Staten Island grand jury opted not to indict a cop in Eric Garner’s July 17 chokehold death.

“Ever since this mayor took office there has been a sense of lawlessness that is rampant in every borough,” Mullins said in his statement Saturday night.

Following the Dec. 3 grand jury announcement not to indict Officer Daniel Pantaleo, de Blasio said he was “astonished by the decision” and called it a “very painful day for so many New Yorkers.”

Lynch said de Blasio’s comments made cops feel like “they were thrown under the bus.”

The PBA began circulating a petition for cops to demand that de Blasio and **City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito** not attend their funeral if they die in the line of duty. The PBA would not immediately reveal if either Ramos or Liu had signed the controversial request.

“(This is) not the time for politics,” a PBA spokesman said.

De Blasio’s spokesman Phil Walzak said Saturday it was disappointing for leaders to bash the mayor in a time of grief.

“It’s unfortunate that in a time of great tragedy, some would resort to irresponsible, overheated rhetoric that angers and divides people,” Walzak said. “Mayor de Blasio understands this is the time when we must come together to support the families and friends of those brave officers New York City lost tonight — and the entire NYPD community.”

Some New Yorkers feared police will make them pay for the slayings committed by a cop-hating lunatic.

“If two cops got shot, what’s gonna happen to the neighborhood?” asked Lafayette Wells, 41, who lives in the Tompkins Houses in Brooklyn, where the officers were executed.

“I just don’t want my son to come out the door and just be stopped because he’s black or he happens to be walking behind a police car and they’re all nervous and itchy-fingered,” Wells said. “My nerves are shot just thinking about it.”



Police union declares war on de Blasio after murder of officers

By Sally Goldenberg, Gloria Pazmino and Azi Paybarah — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘Capital New York’ / New York, NY

Amid an outpouring of condemnation of the **slaying** of two NYPD officers, the city's highest-profile police union official focused his outrage on the mayor.

Following a somber press conference during which **de Blasio** and NYPD commissioner **Bill Bratton** recounted the facts of the **execution-style death** of the two police officers, Patrolmen's Benevolent Association president **Pay Lynch** **blamed City Hall for the double murder.**

"There is **blood** on many hands tonight. Those that incited violence on the street under the guise of protests that tried to tear down what New York City police officers did every day," Lynch said during a brief press conference outside Woodhull Hospital in Brooklyn Saturday night.

"That blood on their hands," he added, "starts on the steps of City Hall in the office of the mayor."

Lynch addressed the media moments after the bodies of the two slain officers—40-year-old Rafael Ramos and 32-year-old Wenjian Liu—were driven out of the hospital in police vehicles, as officers stood by silently and saluted them.

He vowed action after the officers' funerals.

"When these funerals are over, those responsible will be called on the carpet and held accountable," he said. "We ask every person in this city to bow their heads tonight and pray for our families."

A spokeswoman for de Blasio scolded Lynch for his remarks.

"It's unfortunate that in a time of great tragedy, some would resort to irresponsible, overheated rhetoric that angers and divides people," Marti Adams said in an email. "Mayor de Blasio understands this is the time when we must come together to support the families and friends of those brave officers New York City lost tonight, and the entire NYPD community."

Lynch and de Blasio have been at odds all year. The fight began in May, when the P.B.A. rejected City Hall's contract offer and began the process of binding arbitration to settle the dispute.

In the recent weeks since a Staten Island grand jury decided not to indict a police officer in the death of Eric Garner, with the police department taking a restrained approach toward containment of widespread protests, the union's animosity toward de Blasio reached a fever pitch, with Lynch encouraging members to sign a petition telling the mayor he is unwelcome at officers' funerals and de Blasio saying the union leader doesn't speak for his members.

As Capital reported, Lynch told delegates at a private meeting a week ago that in light of the lack of support they were getting from the administration, they should handle their jobs with "extreme discretion."

Several hours prior to Lynch's comments Saturday night, de Blasio and Bratton spoke to the media after meeting with the families of the officers.

"Today, two of New York's Finest were shot and killed, with no warning, no provocation. They were, quite simply, assassinated—targeted for their uniform and for the responsibility they embraced to keep the people of this city safe," Bratton said, appearing to be holding back tears.

De Blasio, standing next to Bratton at the podium, said he and the grieving families "prayed over the bodies of these two officers."

"It's a moment of terrible loss and it's a moment when we must all come together to support these families, to support healing and to be thankful that there are heroes among us, like Officer Ramos and Officer Liu," he added.

Neither the mayor nor Bratton ever mentioned Lynch, who did not attend the press conference.

In fact, as the mayor and the commissioner walked into the press conference in an auditorium inside the hospital, officers lining the hallway, including Lynch, turned their backs, as can be seen in video captured by WPIX.

The double murder took place shortly before 3 p.m. in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. The two officers were in their patrol car—Ramos in the driver's seat and Liu beside him—when the suspect, 28-year-old Ismaaiyl Brinsley, shot both officers in the head through the front passenger window, Bratton said.

Brinsley, who shot himself in a nearby subway station, is believed to have shot and "seriously wounded" his ex-girlfriend in her Baltimore home early Saturday morning, Bratton added.

He said Baltimore County detectives received information from the victim's mother that Brinsley posted on his ex-girlfriend's Instagram account. Baltimore authorities issued a "wanted flier" to the NYPD at 2:45 p.m., just as the shooting of the officers was taking place, the commissioner added.

Bratton said the NYPD is still trying to determine the motivation behind the attack. He referenced "very anti-police" content on the Instagram page of the killer's ex-girlfriend—postings that were "apparently" put online by Brinsley.

"Those are part of multiple investigations that are now underway to try and make sense as to what was his motivation—to come to New York and murder two New York City police officers," Bratton said.

Though he didn't speculate as to the reason for the killing, Bratton did address the growing tension between police and protestors throughout the country, following the killing of black men in Ferguson, Mo. and on Staten Island this year.

"Let's face it—there's been not just in New York but throughout the country, a very strong anti-police, anti-criminal justice system, anti-societal set of initiatives under way and one of the unfortunate aspects sometimes is people get caught up and go in directions they should not," he said.

Another vigil is slated to take place Sunday at 5 p.m. in Manhattan. The silent march will be sponsored by the Justice League NYC, the same group de Blasio met with on Friday to hear concerns about police tactics.

New York Shootings Come at Difficult Moment for Mayor, Police Department Police Union Lobs Blame at de Blasio

By Josh Dawsey — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The Wall Street Journal' / New York, NY

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio's already fraught relationship with the New York Police Department suffered another blow on Saturday night, as the city's biggest police union lobbed blame at the mayor after two officers were fatally shot.

The killings of Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, who were sitting inside a marked car when they were shot in broad daylight, shocked the city and marked the first on-duty deaths of a police officer since 2011.

Police said they are investigating social-media postings in which the alleged gunman, Ismaaiyl Brinsley, suggests he is going to kill police officers in retaliation for the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, unarmed black men who died in violent confrontations with police.

Mr. de Blasio had tried to strike a conciliatory tone with protesters after a grand jury declined to indict an officer involved in Mr. Garner's death on Staten Island, in hopes of avoiding the violence seen in Ferguson, Mo., after Mr. Brown died. But police unions interpreted the rhetoric as a lack of support.

Within hours of the deaths of Officers Ramos and Liu, union leaders appeared to be gearing up for a fight outside the hospital where doctors tried to save the officers.

"That blood on the hands starts on the steps of City Hall in the office of the mayor," said Patrick Lynch, head of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, at a news conference.

Former police officials took to cable TV, calling for the mayor to resign. State Sen. Dean Skelos, the New York State Legislature's leading Republican, and former Gov. George Pataki blamed the city's politicians.

"Sickened by these barbaric acts, which sadly are a predictable outcome of divisive anti-cop rhetoric of #ericholder & #mayordeblasio. #NYPD," Mr. Pataki tweeted on Saturday night.

The mayor has repeatedly called for demonstrators to be peaceful and also has made statements in support of the police.

"It's unfortunate that in a time of great tragedy, some would resort to irresponsible, overheated rhetoric that angers and divides people," the mayor's press secretary, Phil Walzak, said on Saturday.

The night showed how the relationship between the police and City Hall had soured since Mr. de Blasio took office in January. The tensions with police are a departure after 20 years under the administrations of Mayors Rudolph Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg, said several political observers.

At the core of Mr. de Blasio's campaign was reversing the tension over stop-and-frisk policies in Mr. Bloomberg's administration. However, according to a Quinnipiac poll released Thursday, 56% of New Yorkers say they don't approve of Mr. de Blasio's handling of police-community relations.

Even as the mayor has made progress in some of his goals—from enacting universal pre-kindergarten to beginning new affordable housing developments—his relationship with police has worsened.

"You haven't really seen it like this since the David Dinkins era," said Kenneth Sherrill, a political science professor emeritus at Hunter College.

At a news conference with Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, Mr. de Blasio, appearing shaken, was quick to praise the NYPD. He often deferred to Mr. Bratton, who talked in poignant terms about the deaths. Lost in much of the debate: The killer was from out of state, crime in New York City has dropped to historically low levels and Mr. de Blasio has frequently praised officers.

The mayor was quick to bat down political questions. "I don't think it's a time for politics or political analysis," he said.

Still, the police commissioner seemed to strike a note Mr. de Blasio hasn't, saying an "anti-police" sentiment had grown across the country in recent weeks. "Let's face it, there's been not just in New York, but throughout the country, a very strong anti-police, anti-criminal-justice system, anti-societal set of initiatives under way," Mr. Bratton said.

The mayor's relationship with the police worsened this summer in the wake of Mr. Garner's death, after Mr. de Blasio sat quietly by while civil-rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton criticized Mr. Bratton as all three men sat on a dais together..

Rank-and-file officers have chafed at several of the mayor's comments in recent weeks as protests have spiraled across the U.S. As police officers have been assaulted in recent weeks during protests that have at times closed bridges and roads, police have become increasingly angry.

Police unions have particularly blasted the mayor's relationship with Rev. Sharpton, who declined to be interviewed Saturday night but promised to speak Sunday morning in Harlem.

A spokesman for the mayor didn't immediately respond to questions about how Mr. de Blasio would spend the coming days, but he is likely to face a delicate balance.

Attending the funerals of the officers could prove tricky—earlier this month, the union posted a form on its website encouraging officers to call for Mr. de Blasio to not attend their funerals should they die. That drew cries of outrage from Mr. de Blasio and his supporters.

His administration is in tense arbitration proceedings with the union over a contract. His foes are likely to ratchet up criticism, and the perception—whether founded or not—that he is weak on public safety could grow.

"He's going to have to let some of the usual suspects decry the criticism that's coming at him," Mr. Sherrill said.

The unions had allowed their grief to inspire a response that seemed too explosive, Mr. Sherrill said. He said Mr. Bratton and Mr. de Blasio struck the right notes Saturday night.

—Sonja Sharp and Pervaiz Shallwani contributed to this article.

Email circulated among cops: 2 cars respond to every call

By Jamie Schram, Kirstan Conley and Ben Feuerherd — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Post'

The first assassination of an NYPD officer since the 1988 ambush of Edward Byrne has rattled the rank-and-file — and prompted cops to adopt drastic "wartime" policing tactics not seen since the 1970s.

"At least two units are to respond to EVERY call, no matter the condition or severity, no matter what type of job is pending, or what the opinion of the patrol supervisor happens to be," an e-mail widely circulated among cops advised Saturday night.

Doubling the number of cops responding to even minor 911 calls would effectively cut in half the NYPD's patrol strength.

The memo also pointed to potential slowdowns in arrest and ticketing activity: “IN ADDITION: Absolutely NO enforcement action in the form of arrests and or summonses is to be taken unless absolutely necessary and an individual MUST be placed under arrest,” the statement said.

“These are precautions that were taken in the 1970s when police officers were ambushed and executed on a regular basis,” the statement added.

“We have, for the first time in a number of years, become a ‘wartime’ Police Department,” the message concluded. “We will act accordingly. FORWARD MESSAGE IN ITS ENTIRETY TO ANY AND ALL [members of the service.]”

Police brass did not immediately comment on the communication.

“This is just the beginning,” one cop told The Post. “There are people out there who will want to be copycats. The tension out there is the worst I’ve ever seen it.”

Vernon Geberth, a retired homicide lieutenant considered a legend in the NYPD, said the assassination Saturday of Officers Rafael Ramon Wenjian Liu “brought me back to the days of the 1970s when cops were routinely being assassinated.” He blamed the rhetoric of Mayor de Blasio for putting cops in danger.

Cops told The Post they are under siege — in the streets and online. One pointed to a tweet that went out only hours after the tragedy: “Kill em all i’m on the way to NY now #shootthepolice 2 more going down tomorrow.”

Saturday night, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams announced he would hold a vigil Sunday night at 6 p.m. for “every New Yorker” at the scene of the shooting, at Tompkins and Myrtle avenues.

There is **blood on hands of those who **demand**ed ‘**dead cops**’**

By Bob McManus — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ‘The New York Post’
(Op-Ed / Commentary)

“What do we want?” drones the blood chant.

“Dead cops!” comes the reply.

Done.

Thus does rhetoric have consequences.

There may have been just a single shooter in Bedford-Stuyvesant on Saturday afternoon. But New York’s failure to denounce without nuance the bloodlust that’s been boiling out of the corners of the Eric Garner-Michael Brown demonstrations for weeks now boils down to this:

There is blood on many hands this morning.

Yes, First Amendment. Yes, redress of grievances. Yes, peaceful protests — even as clogged bridges and mobbed boulevards created, however temporarily, very real peril for tens of thousands of New Yorkers every night for a week.

The free-speech trope is so obviously true that it's a deflection even to raise it.

Here's the real issue: It was, and it remains, the responsibility of protest organizers — such as they may be in the face of ubiquitous social media — to directly address murderous incantations, to unequivocally condemn those who call down harm on the city's protectors.

And they didn't do that.

Moreover, when two of the six people who “allegedly” attacked two cops on the Brooklyn Bridge a week ago Saturday night turn out to be, respectively, a CUNY professor and an organizer for a union that placed five one-time senior union leaders in top de Blasio administration posts, it's clear that New York isn't dealing with bearded Bolsheviks living in caves.

Violence against cops has gone mainstream — that is, violent threats to society itself can manifest virtually without a soul among the city's elected leaders saying so much as boo. Pitiful.

The cops understand all this, of course. They get the threat. They are steeped in the department's institutional memories of other cops, executed from ambush in similar circumstances. They know its tradition of reflexive heroism under deadly threat — and they are proud of its record: Not perfect, of course, but better than anyone else's.

And now this.

Who would have thought that PBA President Pat Lynch's don't-come-to-my-funeral petition would have become so relevant, so prescient, so tragically right to the point.

So quickly.

There will be time to count the political consequences of Saturday's cowardly murders.

They will be substantial.

The city's cut-the-baby-in-half approach to the Garner-Brown protests — genuflect to the PBA, confer with the most rhetorically irresponsible of the protesting groups, rinse, repeat — lent an air of moral equivalence to the events leading up to Saturday's savagery.

Nobody knows what was in the shooter's mind, of course; happily, he relieved society of the responsibility of trying to find out with a well-placed bullet to his own head.

But anybody who thinks he wasn't emboldened by City Hall's placidity in the face of nihilistic, bloodthirsty incantations is delusional.

And anyone who believes that the city's decision not to draw a high-profile line — even if only symbolically — after the “alleged” Brooklyn Bridge attacks was not empowering to the shooter is equally wrong.

Was the shooter crazy? Define crazy. The city is full of crazies. And none of them needs to be encouraged in their psychoses — certainly not by the suggestion that official New York thinks they somehow may have a point.

It's wrong to blame the protests wholly for the actions of one person — up to a point.

That is, right up to the point when the protesters began to demand dead cops — and nobody put a stop to it.

Right up to the point where protesters began to drop full garbage cans 10 feet down on unsuspecting cops, and nobody took it for what it was: An escalation that culminated in yesterday's Bed-Stuy executions.

And now for the funerals — for the heartbreaking skirl of the pipes and the agony of the families; for the grim-faced officers from across America, lined to the horizon in silent tribute to ambushed brothers; for the folded flags and the endless motorcades to the cemetery.

You wanted dead cops, protesters? You got 'em.

Now live with it. If you can.

For de Blasio, Attack Comes Amid Tension Over Police

By MATT FLEGENHEIMER — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Times'

It is the sequence that every mayor dreads: the ominous report, the scramble to the hospital and the confirmation that, yes, an attack against the police has proved fatal.

But for Mayor Bill de Blasio, the tragedy on Saturday — when two police officers were shot and killed in an ambush in Brooklyn, according to the authorities — arrived at a particularly trying moment, amid an already fractious relationship with the police.

Police union leaders and officers could be seen turning their backs to the mayor and the police commissioner, William J. Bratton, as they walked past, in a video taken at the hospital where the two held a news conference on Saturday.

A written message from Edward Mullins, president of the Sergeants Benevolent Association, addressed the mayor directly. "Mayor de Blasio," it read in part, "the blood of these two officers is clearly on your hands."

For weeks, New York City has been the roiling epicenter of a national reckoning over the police and race, attracting nightly protests since a Staten Island grand jury declined to bring criminal charges against a white police officer in the case of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died after a chokehold in July.

Police union leaders have condemned the mayor for what they have called insufficient support of the police; they have circulated a letter allowing officers to request that he not attend their funerals in the event of a line-of-duty death.

At the news conference on Saturday, at Woodhull Hospital in Brooklyn, the mayor tried to deflect focus on the recent tensions. He said it was "a time to think about these families" and not "a time for politics or political analysis."

Asked on Saturday about the turned backs and union messages, Phil Walzak, the mayor's press secretary, said it was "unfortunate that in a time of great tragedy, some would resort to irresponsible, overheated rhetoric that angers and divides people."

During the briefing, Mr. de Blasio largely deferred to Mr. Bratton. The mayor recalled the emotional scene with the families of the officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, at the hospital. The 13-year-old son of Officer Ramos, the mayor said gravely, "couldn't comprehend what had happened to his father."

The murder of an officer, he said, "is an attack on all of us."

Even before the shooting, the mayor — who has staked his tenure, in part, on a pledge to reshape the Police Department, healing rifts between communities and their officers in the process — had been engaged in a high-wire act of sorts.

He has sought to express sympathy for the protesters, many of whom have placed their faith in the mayor to turn back what they see as years of overreaching by the police, and support for the officers, who remain wary, in many circles, of his designs.

Amid the protests, Mr. de Blasio had already been forced to confront the specter of violence against the police. Last Saturday, two police lieutenants were attacked during a demonstration on the Brooklyn Bridge.

Speaking at a police promotions ceremony on Friday, the mayor seemed to provide an unwitting preview of his Saturday remarks. "Any act of violence against our police officers," he told a packed auditorium at Police Headquarters in Lower Manhattan, "is an act of violence against our values."

Many lawmakers and protesters expressed sympathy and gratitude for the police on Saturday. Some advocates noted that mourning the deaths of officers and deaths at the hands of officers were not mutually exclusive.

Yet by Saturday night, it seemed clear that the dialogue over policing in the city remained fraught.

Among other grievances, the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, the city's largest police union, has in recent weeks criticized the mayor for invoking his biracial son, Dante, after the Garner decision. At the time, the mayor described his experience instructing Dante to "take special care" during any police encounters. Some union leaders suggested that Mr. de Blasio was conveying that police officers were to be feared.

Mr. Bratton has defended his boss, and both have taken pains to highlight the dangers of patrolling the city. "You put that blue uniform on," he said on Saturday, "and you become part of that thin blue line between us and anarchy."

Can Bratton Heal de Blasio's Worsening Relationship With the NYPD?

By Chris Smith — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'New York Magazine' / New York, NY

The two police ambulances had barely cleared the Woodhull Medical Center ramp, carrying the bodies of officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos. Then down the slope came Pat Lynch, the president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, taking up a position in front of the TV cameras and making this tragic night in Brooklyn even worse. "There's blood on many hands tonight," Lynch roared. "Those that incited violence on the

street under the guise of protest, that tried to tear down what New York City police officers did every day — we tried to warn it must not go on, it cannot be tolerated. That blood on the hands starts on the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor."

It was a stunning and awful moment. An hour earlier, Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, his eyes brimming with tears throughout a short press conference, haltingly said it was "hard to get your arms around" a tragedy this big. Mayor Bill de Blasio had visibly reddened as he described praying with the families of the murdered officers.

De Blasio was subdued, which seemed to make sense given the gravity of the situation. But then video quickly began circulating showing the scene in the hallway as de Blasio walked into the auditorium: Cops, including Lynch, had turned their backs on the mayor. Even after last Friday, when Lynch issued a call for cops to ban de Blasio from future funerals, this was an ugly escalation of hostilities. That entrance helped explain the mayor's off-balance demeanor.

The mayor and the police commissioner now have choices to make that could determine de Blasio's relationship with the NYPD for the next three years. Do they respond in kind, denouncing Lynch? Or do they try to take the high road and attribute his actions to the pain of the moment? Either way, the anger at de Blasio in the department is understandable and real — even among cops who know he had nothing to do with the evil of Ismaaiyl Brinsley. Whether de Blasio can defuse it will depend a great deal on Bratton's credibility with his cops. The commissioner appealed to their pride tonight, when he was asked about how they'll approach demonstrations in the next few days. "It's going to be tough for the men and women of this department," Bratton said. "But they'll do what we expect of them, protect the city. It's what cops do." On a night of raw emotion and rhetoric, those might have been the truest and most moving words.

Reaction to the fatal shootings of 2 NYC police officers

By Unnamed Author(s) (The Associated Press) — Sunday, December 21st, 2014; 8:10 a.m. EST

NEW YORK (AP) -- Reaction to the fatal shooting of two New York City police officers on Saturday by a gunman who, according to authorities, announced online that he was planning to shoot two "pigs" in retaliation for the police chokehold death of Eric Garner.

"They were, quite simply, assassinated - targeted for their uniform and for the responsibility they embraced to keep the people of this city safe."

- New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton

"We depend on our police to protect us against forces of criminality and evil. They are a foundation of our society, and when they are attacked, it is an attack on the very concept of decency."

- Mayor Bill de Blasio

"The officers who serve and protect our communities risk their own safety for ours every single day - and they deserve our respect and gratitude every single day. Tonight, I ask people to reject violence and words that harm, and turn to words that heal - prayer, patient dialogue, and sympathy for the friends and family of the fallen."

- President Barack Obama

"Our nation must always honor the valor - and the sacrifices - of all law enforcement officers with a steadfast commitment to keeping them safe. This means forging closer bonds between officers and the communities they serve."

- U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder

"There is blood on many hands, from those that incited violence under the guise of protest to try to tear down what police officers do every day. That blood on the hands starts at the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor."

- Patrolmen's Benevolent Association President Patrick Lynch

"As we continue to investigate these senseless acts of violence against two of our city's heroes, we pray for peace, support the men and women who bravely patrol our streets every day, and mourn for the loss of these two police officers who gave their lives to keep us safe."

- Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson

"These brave officers, along with the over 34,000 other uniformed men and women of the New York Police Department, put their lives on the line every day to keep our communities safe. They run toward danger when all of our instincts tell us to run away."

- New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo

"It is ... time for elected officials to stand by the men and women of law enforcement and end the demeaning of police officers and grand juries."

- U.S. Rep. Peter King

"We have stressed at every rally and march that anyone engaged in any violence is an enemy to the pursuit of justice for Eric Garner and Michael Brown."

- Rev. Al Sharpton

"Gun violence continues to plague our city and we remain committed to working with both members of the community and law enforcement to address it in a nonviolent, peaceful, and productive way."

- Brooklyn NAACP



Crime in NYC drops even as tactics draw criticism

By TOM HAYS and COLLEEN LONG (The Associated Press) — Saturday, December 20th, 2014; 4:16 p.m. EST

NEW YORK (AP) -- Even as New York's police department takes heat for its tactics in the outrage over the Eric Garner chokehold case, year-end crime statistics show two clear trends: low-level arrests are holding steady and overall crime continues to fall.

The numbers could be seen as an affirmation of Police Commissioner William Bratton's signature "broken windows" tactic, the idea that enforcing smaller crimes like fare beating and public drunkenness help prevent bigger crimes. It has come under intense scrutiny since the July in-custody death of Garner, who was stopped for the minor offense of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes.

Historic drops in crime that continue today "didn't just happen," Bratton wrote in a recent op-ed piece defending the strategy he pioneered as commissioner in the 1990s. "They resulted from thousands of police interventions on the street, which restored order and civility across the five boroughs."

Even NYPD arrests for selling untaxed cigarettes are slightly up from last year. Numbers from the state Department of Criminal Justice Services show there were 515 misdemeanor arrests for the offense through mid-November, compared to 463 over the same period a year ago. And the pace of those arrests continued unabated even in the weeks since Garner's death.

Overall misdemeanor arrests are on track to be about the same as last year, when there were 227,380, most for drug offenses at 58,714. Through October this year, there have been 194,844 arrests, including 51,783 drug busts.

Through Dec. 14, overall serious crime had declined 4.7 percent compared to the same period last year, continuing a downward trend that started in mid-1990s. The murder total stood at 305, a 5.3 percent drop. Reports of robberies were down 14 percent and those of felony assaults dipped about 1 percent.

"Because of the broken windows approach, we are the safest we've ever been," Mayor Bill de Blasio said Friday after attending an NYPD promotions ceremony. "I lived through the 1980s and early '90s in this city. I don't want to go back there. I don't think anyone wants to go back there."

The decreases come at a time when the NYPD has dramatically scaled back its highly-disputed strategy of stop and frisk. A federal judge ruled last year the tactic unfairly targeted minorities. The total stops peaked at an annual high of nearly 700,000 in 2011 and are expected to be less than 50,000 this year.

But with stop-and-frisk waning, critics now question broken windows.

To some, stop-and-frisk and broken windows "are the same thing with a different name," said Deborah Wright, president of the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys.

Another critic, City University of New York School of Law professor Steve Zeidman, calls broken windows an outdated and flawed theory. The NYPD takes credit for the declines in crime each year even though larger factors like an aging population play a more significant role, he said.

"Would crime still go down if you stopped arresting people for loose cigarettes? Undeniably yes," he said.

The tactic was one of the reasons officers were at the corner store on Staten Island where Garner died. In an episode captured on video, officer Daniel Pantaleo wraps his arm around Garner and wrestles him to the ground. He died at a hospital after his cries of "I can't breathe" went unaided. A grand jury decided not to indict the officer, prompting mass protests and a public war of words between the mayor and head of the police officer's union, who says the mayor is throwing cops "under the bus."

Zeidman argues that any strategy that unnecessarily increases contact between police and civilians is a threat to community relations.

"The more you increase interactions, the more you increase the likelihood that something can go wrong," he said. "I really thought the Eric Garner case would be the tipping point that would put an end to it."

Most days in criminal court in Brooklyn there's a parade of arrestees "where the only allegation is that they walked through subway cars and because they didn't have ID on them, they get put in the system," said a public defender, Elena Roberts, who participated in a protest last week. "That doesn't really seem right to us."

The suspected offenders "are disproportionately minority men," Roberts added. "I know as a white woman, I'm afforded a certain privilege in my life and my activities that would never put me at risk for even being questioned for something so minor."

Protesters' demands to **de Blasio are absurd: policing expert**

By Amber Jamieson — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'The New York Post'

The **10** "demands" presented to Mayor de Blasio by the ringleaders of **anti-NYPD** protests are "absurd," a policing expert has said.

Anti-cop agitators from the group Justice League NYC met with the mayor on Friday and insisted that Officer Daniel Pantaleo — whom they accuse of **killing** Eric Garner with a **chokehold** — **be fired immediately**.

They also want, among other things, a special prosecutor to investigate Garner's death and a new law requiring police officers to tell suspects they can refuse to be searched.

Eugene O'Donnell, a professor of law and police studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, said it will be much harder to attract cops if that if the city gives in to the "absurd" demands.

It will "make the police job harder and less desirable," said O'Donnell, who is also a former prosecutor and NYPD officer.

The summary firing of Pantaleo would deny him due process — and would encourage cops to quit the force in droves, O'Donnell added.

The call for a law requiring police to tell suspects they can refuse to be searched — known as the Right To Know Act and co-sponsored by council members Ritchie Torres (D-Bronx) and Antonio Reynoso (D-Brooklyn) — is "impractical" and "risky," since cops must often improvise in situations. Making them read from a script, he said, just wouldn't work.

The activists also want the mayor to end the "Broken Windows" policing tactic, which tells criminals that cops are not willing to ignore any infraction on the theory that "little" crimes lead to much bigger ones.

The cop haters "might be surprised how many people don't want someone on the corner selling loose cigarettes," the "minor" offense for which Pantaleo was trying to bust Garner, O'Donnell said.

The demand for US Attorney General Eric Holder to expedite a federal investigation into Garner's death is "outrageous," he added.

"This is not a viable criminal case in a federal courtroom," O'Donnell said. "This is agenda-driven rhetoric, trying to get a result, not an investigation."

O'Donnell noted that "there is some grain of legitimacy to some of the complaints," but says the focus should be on policy makers, since cops are just carrying out their decisions.

"It's a pity if a small group of people shout the loudest and replace the values of the people who live in the city and live in neighborhoods which have problems," O'Donnell said.

The Justice League guest list for the mayoral meet-up included Tamika Mallory, a former director of Al Sharpton's National Action Network, Linda Sarsour from the Arab American Association of New York and Michael Skolnik, political director to hip-hop magnate Russell Simmons.

New Jersey

After NYPD deaths, Newark pulls one-officer units off the streets, union says

By Brian Amaral — Sunday, December 21st, 2014 'NJ.Com News'

NEWARK — Owing to safety concerns, the **Newark Police Department** is pulling one-officer units off of the streets, according to the president of the police officer's union there.

"The Newark Fraternal Order of Police is primarily concerned with the safety of the officers in the street," James Stewart, the president of the union, said late Saturday. "In the climate we face today there is nothing more important. We are happy the Director agrees with our view and is putting the safety of the men and women in the street above all else."

The apparent move comes just hours after two New York City police officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, were shot and killed Saturday afternoon in a brazen ambush attack that the police commissioner there called an "assassination."

Eugene Venable, the police director in Newark, did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Stewart said that the "alpha" units, or one-officer cars, were called back into their precincts tonight in a department-wide broadcast, and paired up with other officers.

Tensions and concerns are running high in police departments nationwide. And New York City Police Commissioner Bill Bratton said authorities are investigating anti-police sentiments that the alleged killer, Ismaaiyl Brinsley, made on social media.

The Associated Press reported that Brinsley announced on social media that he "was planning to shoot two 'pigs' in retaliation for the police chokehold death of Eric Garner."

The Policemen's Benevolent Association in New Jersey blamed "hatred" of police officers in recent weeks for the deaths of the two officers.