

Where's the outrage over violence in minority neighborhoods?

At least 11 people were shot over the July 3-4 weekend, in eight different incidents around the city. According to the Boston Police Department, no arrests have been made and all the shootings are still under investigation. That same weekend, about 100 members of the white nationalist group Patriot Front marched through Boston. They carried Patriot Front flags and shields to the beat of a snare drum. The group is accused in the assault on Charles Murrell.

The response to these incidents from politicians and community leaders is drastically different: outrage over the Patriot Front, little for a weekend of gun violence. The take home: The lives of Black people are without value — unless they are targeted by white people.

The First Amendment safeguards both the best and worst of society, in-

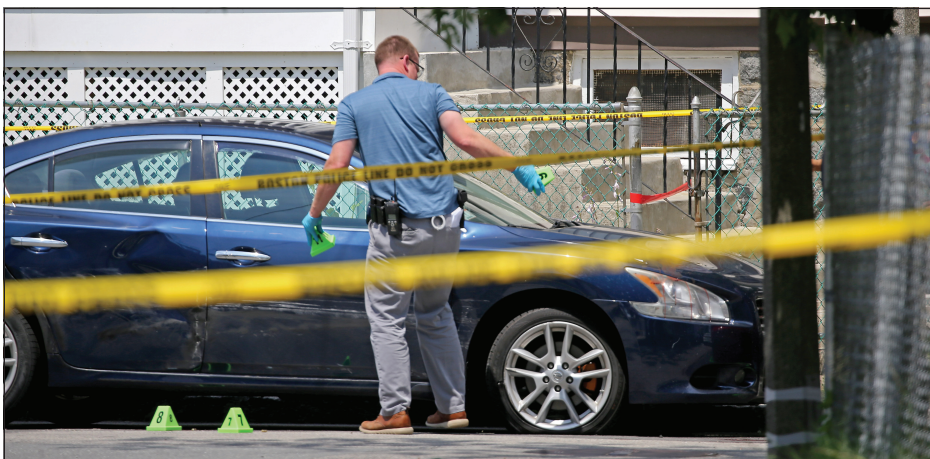


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Columnist

cluding the Patriot Front. All elected officials know this, including Mayor Michelle Wu, District Attorney Kevin Hayden and U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts Rachael Rollins. The opportunity to grandstand

presented by a white supremacist bogeyman is, however, too seductive to pass up. The police-hating, virtue signaling, affluent white progressives couldn't be happier with this distraction from the real problem of violence in minority neighborhoods.

Strong condemnations against the Patriot Front have been issued by practically every elected figure, but actions speak louder than words. The FBI and senior Boston Police brass held a press conference with city councilors and community representatives after Mayor Wu urgently requested federal aid. A tip line for reporting suspected white nation-



STUART CAHILL — HERALD STAFF

ALL TOO COMMON: Boston Police investigate the scene of a shooting at 15 Carmen St. in Dorchester last month.

alist activities was established by the U.S. attorney. The Black Boston clergy convened a meeting with Mayor Wu, D.A. Hayden and FBI representatives to discuss the white supremacist group's rally.

It's a sad fact that in many cities governed by Democrats, Black and brown neighborhoods have become killing fields. The United States Department of Justice found

that between 1980 and 2008, blacks accounted for 52.4% of perpetrators and 47.4% of victims of homicides, despite making up only 13% of the overall U.S. population. The FBI's Crime Data Explorer shows that between 2010 and 2020, African Americans made up 52% of murder victims (80,485) and 38% of murder offenders in the top category of perpetrators (68,972). The

Tuskegee Institute analyzed all documented Black lynching incidents from 1882 to 1968. About 3,446 African Americans were reportedly lynched in the 86 years spanning the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. Unfortunately, African Americans kill more African Americans each year than racist whites lynched throughout an 86-year

span.

Mayor Wu and D.A. Hayden have not provided an update on the July 4 weekend shooting incidents in any public forum. The silence of city councilors and other community leaders on the shootings continues. There were no community meetings, no calls to the FBI, and no action in response to 11 people shot on the streets were Bostonians live. Reactionary police reform and defunding threats continue to handcuff the Boston Police from doing their job. The law-abiding residents of Boston's Black and brown communities are still living in fear of violence, and their politicians, community leaders and clergy have all but abandoned them.

Rasheed Walters is an entrepreneur, political commentator and historian. He is a member of Project 21, and resides in Boston. Follow him on Twitter @rasheedwalters.

IMMIGRATION

Congress must act now on Dreamers policy

By Samuel Zelaya Rivas

When I was just 11 years old, my family brought me to the United States from El Salvador. It was 2001, and we were visiting family. I couldn't grasp then how permanent this trip would become or that we overstayed a visa.

Over the years, I could see the shame my family carried about our situation. I focused on making them proud through my involvement in school and church, and I didn't learn until I walked across the stage for my high school diploma of my limitations as an undocumented immigrant.

I was not eligible for financial aid for college so I sought out the U.S. Army when I turned 18. I walked

into the recruitment office with hope that it would be my path to citizenship by serving the country I was raised to love. Yet, I was turned away there too because I lacked a green card.

Ultimately, I worked hourly jobs, from the restaurant industry to landscaping, to pay course by course until I graduated with a bachelors in cybersecurity from the University of Maryland.

In 2012, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy arrived. I felt God had seen me. I could pursue more jobs, travel without fear of ICE and buy a house.

Every two years, I diligently renewed my DACA status. My card read "unknown" on my employment papers as DACA re-

ipients have no path for qualifying for H-1Bs, L-1s, OPT or other work-based visas. As a result, despite my skills, I wasn't hireable for the jobs I was credentialled in.

As of June 15, DACA has been in place for 10 years. It isn't a perfect policy, but it has created protections for people like me who moved to the U.S. as small children without choice or say. It's time for Congress to intervene for the more than 600,000 other DACA recipients, including roughly 5,000 here in Massachusetts, who love America and have put their best foot forward to be productive members of this society as nurses, teachers and other critical frontline workers.

Imagine what more we would unlock for the

American spirit and economy if my community had the ability to earn legal permanency!

Unfortunately, experts are warning that the courts could instead put an end to DACA as early as this year. If so, people with my similar story run the risk of unemployment and deportation to countries with no familiarity or connections.

I wish my story was enough to motivate elected officials, but the least they can do is listen to their voters. The National Immigration Forum recently published a poll showing a super majority want Congress to act on common-sense immigration policies in 2022 that include earned legal status for undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as

children. The Alliance for New Immigration Consensus has also emerged demonstrating this momentum represented by nearly 40 grassroots organizations across the faith, business, agriculture and national security communities.

My chapter took a turn in 2016 when my now wife and I fell in love. She is a fellow Spanish speaker, so we explored potentially moving to Mexico or Costa Rica to ensure we would never face separation because of my DACA status. After our wedding, we started with a family petition, and I was approved for a green card that has unlocked so many more ways for me to live fully in America.

Policymakers need more exposure to the significant impact it creates

when immigration status is clear and how hard it is to obtain. Had there been a "right way" when I reached the age to understand my circumstances, I would have done it immediately. I would have figured out how to pay any fee, earn any degree or serve in any capacity. I know I am not alone.

We love America. We grew up here. All we know is this incredible land of opportunity.

Congress has the ability to positively impact many lives by passing a solution such as the Dream Act, to include a pathway to permanent residency and eventually citizenship. The time to act is now.

Samuel Zelaya Rivas and his wife reside in Shrewsbury.