

PUBLIC FORUM

Better government, not anger, is the answer

Outrage is only one of Sheriff Sherman Block's sentiments over apparent public indifference to Los Angeles County's growing murder rate as mentioned in the Daily News' Dec. 28 editorial, "When murder is routine."

In a speech at his recent oath-of-office ceremony, Block stated his conviction that, "We are seeing large cracks in those (fundamental) government and societal infrastructures, and that this is one of the underlying causes of the dramatic increase in our crime rate."

Then, in words that would be greeted with derision if they came from a "bleeding-heart liberal," Block located the source of the problem:

"Society has been asking its police to deal with the outgrowth of years of neglect of the more basic needs of education, health care, transportation and human resources."

Block concluded that "law enforcement is not the best answer for our social ills and it should not be used as an army of occupation in the streets of America."

Unfortunately, "getting angry," and "drawing our own lines in the sand," as you advise, is no substitute for a reversal of the neglect that Block so accurately pinpoints. If we do not heed his advice, an army of occupation is all we are likely to get — or deserve.

— Bill Becker
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