

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**  
**DIVIDED WE STAND:**  
**Reflections on**  
**my reaction**  
**to "Ferguson"**

By Stephen L. Bakke  December 5, 2014



*Here's what provoked me:*

*I have been somewhat vocal about my opinions about the events in Ferguson, Missouri. As expected, not all of my friends agree with me, and have offered thoughtful challenges to what I have said and written. All I can say is: "Thanks, and that's a good thing!" Following is a summary of my "reevaluation."*

*Here's my response:*



### **Divided We Stand: Reflections on my reaction to "Ferguson"**

Challenges from friends have caused me to reevaluate my opinions about the Ferguson situation. First the challenge, then my reaction:

- **This was merely a cigar theft.** – This felony called for apprehending the thief.
- **This was profiling.** – Officer Wilson was advised of the robbery and identified the perpetrators based on the description.
- **Theft, yes – but Brown didn't deserve to be chased and killed.** – When challenged, Brown assaulted Wilson and tried to take his weapon. Shots were fired during the struggle and Brown fled. Only then was Brown chased.
- **Are you happy with what happened then?** – No! That's when the situation deteriorated badly.
- **Wilson should have been charged, tried and convicted of a lesser charge.** – Bringing charges would mean ignoring a valid, legitimate, and responsible Grand Jury conclusion.
- **The prosecutor has been criticized for his use of the Grand Jury?** – If the prosecutor had acted unilaterally to reach a decision about prosecuting, he couldn't win. He removed himself from the decision and gave all the evidence to the Grand Jury, which has been criticized. If he had withheld anything major from them, he would have been criticized. He did the best thing he could under "can't win" circumstances.
- **The perception of profiling justified demonstrations.** - I don't think the protests were that rationally arrived at. I see no evidence of profiling. That's where the ensuing civil rights investigation picks up.

In the final analysis the Ferguson community reaction is totally unwarranted! (But the events in New York City could be a different matter!)