

## The Slaying of Two New York Police Officers

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014, according to a New York Times article on 12/20/14, by Benjamin Mueller and Al Baker, officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, were in their patrol 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. Mr. Brinsley shot several rounds into the heads and upper bodies of the officers, who never drew their weapons.

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. 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.

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.

While we are asking the question, “Do Black men’s lives count?” we are confronted with the larger reality that everyone lives should count—and that includes police officers. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere!”

I decry all acts of violence, as violence only tends to breed more violence.

I feel for and pray for the families of these officers as I do for the families of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and all who have lost their lives unjustly.