

Florida's 'stand your ground' law inhumane, un-Christian and racist

Mario T. García | Jul. 22, 2013 NCR Today

I want to weigh in on the Trayvon Martin case that led to the acquittal of George Zimmerman. No need to go over the details since the case has been all over the news, especially since the end of the legal case, and everyone is quite familiar with the issues. More recently, President Barack Obama in a very moving and personal way added his views on Martin's death.

Much of the controversy has to do with the "stand your ground" law in Florida that permits people to kill others on the suspicion that their lives are in danger. This could involve nothing more than mere conjecture, but Florida law and that of several other states allow for this. This is madness and nothing more than legally sanctioned murder. It is also a racist law. Does anyone seriously believe that if Martin had killed Zimmerman because he believed his life was in danger that Martin would not have been charged with first-degree murder?

Race is at the very center of this case, and the African-American population has it right while others are in denial. Look at our prisons and see the disproportionate number of African Americans and Latinos in them and tell me race is not part of the judicial system. Racial profiling is a way of life in this country, whether it be a Trayvon Martin or a Latino male stopped by the cops in downtown Phoenix on suspicion that he is an "illegal alien."

I look at this case and lament the death of Martin, but I also ask, But what is new? People of color, such as African Americans, have been profiled from day one. Much of this goes underneath the radar because it involves personal fears by whites that African Americans or Latinos pose a danger. (This always involves men, so in addition to race, there is also a gender issue.) This could mean being in the same elevator with them or in a subway train or in a public bathroom, among many other venues. But it could also involve more public forms of profiling, such as in the "old days," when whites in the South accused black men of raping or desiring white women. This often led to lynching or brutal beatings or the notorious Texas Rangers accusing Mexican men of stealing or being "insurrectionist" and being killed for it.

No, race is absolutely central to the Trayvon Martin case, and the sooner we owe up to this, we can confront it and, among other things, do away with such inhumane and un-Christian laws such as "stand your ground" that is not only a form of legal murder but a racial form of murder.

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