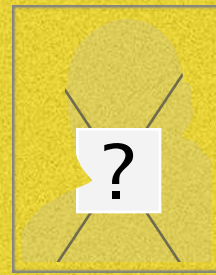


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



585 If Silence is an Action...

I was reading a story online about the George Floyd murder in Minneapolis when four words jumped right off the screen. Today's edition is not specifically about the Floyd case, or the nationwide riots, or how President Trump has dealt with the situation. There are mountains of information on that already written, with much more to come. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, I want to talk about those four words and why we need to care about them. That's up next on The Extra Point.

Yesterday, Minneapolis police chief Medaria Arradondo was addressing a community group and the media, answering questions about the murder of unarmed citizen George Floyd. In one response he stated that the three officers who stood by and watched Floyd become unresponsive and die, as officer Derek Chauvin put his knee on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes, are "complicit" — his word — and should be held responsible. In his opinion, they were accomplices in the crime.

The average viewer — whether happy or sad at the police chief's position — likely didn't understand the potential significance of his statement. They were either thrilled or upset that the three other policemen might also get charged. However, I'll bet every person in law enforcement was struck with what Arradondo's words meant for them. Here's where those four words come in. Before he dropped the term "complicit" he said, "Silence is an action." Let that sink in for a moment.

Silence is an action. Silence is not doing nothing. Arradondo believes that our silence in the face of wrongdoing is indeed doing something. It's allowing an act to take place when we could have attempted to stop it.

Think of what this means for police officers across the land. If these men are charged and convicted because they refused to publicly overrule the actions of another officer, then

every cop in America, including here in Guam, will have their operating procedures rewritten. Each of them will have to become the judge of when one of their fellow officers goes too far. Either that or they'll risk being held responsible.

And will this stop with law enforcement? If silence is an action, what does that mean when school administrators pass marginal kids through their system, even though they know they're not ready to advance?

If silence is an action, what would that mean for medical staff in hospitals when they disagree with treatment being given to a patient?

If silence is an action, how about the HR manager who sees qualified people passed over for promotion, while less talented but well-connected workers climb the ranks?

Are we getting ahead of ourselves a bit here? Sure. Arradondo's effort to spread guilt to the other officers as a result of doing nothing to save Floyd, is going to face a challenge from the police union at the very least. I've seen some opinion that Derek Chauvin will go to prison for killing George Floyd, but the cases of the three policemen who did nothing to help Floyd are more difficult to predict.

One final thought. If silence is an action, what does that mean for you and me and the things we encounter? Will we be expected to sometimes leave the ranks of spectators and get personally involved? How do you feel about that?

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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