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Levick Today.

June 8, 2020 | Issue 151

Show Me, Don't Tell Me

“When you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize, and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity … then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.”

- Letter From Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

That same year, when I was almost six years old, I was listening to AM radio and on came the news. White political commentators debated the merits of Martin Luther King, Jr’s civil disobedience. It struck me at the moment because it was the first time, at that tender age, that I thought “How come everyone is not in support of these changes? Maybe adults don’t always know what they are doing?” Less than five years later I was struck by the outpouring of adulation of white pundits after the tragic assassination of Reverend King. Even at ten years of age, I thought, though I didn’t know the word, “Where were you before martyrdom?” Support, it seemed, was always safer after the fact.

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Richard Levick

Ask Richard

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