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## An Open Letter to Captain Ronald S. Johnson

[Chief Ed Delmore](#) |

I have to call you out.

I don't care what the media says. I expect them to get it wrong and they often do. But I expect you as a veteran law enforcement commander—talking about law enforcement—to get it right.

Unfortunately, you blew it. After days of rioting and looting, last Thursday you were given command of all law enforcement operations in Ferguson by Governor Jay Nixon. St. Louis County PD was out, you were in. You played to the cameras, walked with the protestors and promised a kinder, gentler response. You were a media darling. And Thursday night things were better, much better.

But Friday, under significant pressure to do so, the Ferguson Police released the name of the officer involved in the shooting of Michael Brown. At the same time the Ferguson Police Chief released a video showing Brown committing a strong-arm robbery just 10 minutes before he was confronted by Officer Darren Wilson.

Many don't like the timing of the release of the video. I don't like that timing either. It should have been released sooner. It should have been released the moment FPD realized that Brown was the suspect.

Captain Johnson, your words during the day on Friday helped to fuel the anger that was still churning just below the surface. St. Louis County Police were told to remain uninvolved and that night the rioting and looting began again. For much too long it went on mostly unchecked. Retired St. Louis County Police Chief Tim Fitch tweeted that your "hug-a-looter" policy had failed.

Boy did it.

And *your* words contributed to what happened Friday night and on into the wee hours of Saturday. According to the St. Louis Post Dispatch, you said the following regarding the release of the video: **"There was no need to release it," Johnson said calling the reported theft and the killing entirely different events.**

Well Captain, this veteran police officer feels the need to respond. What you said is, in common police vernacular—bullshit. The fact that Brown knew he had just committed a robbery before he was stopped by Officer Wilson speaks to Brown's mindset. And Captain, the mindset of a person being stopped by a police officer means everything, and you know it.