



# A major blow to racial profiling

OPINION

Re: "Legault urged not to appeal ruling on random police stops"



(Montreal Gazette, Nov. 3)

It did not take long for Premier Legault and police forces to react negatively to the 170-page transformational judgment of Justice Michel Yergeau striking a major blow to the "driving while black" racial profiling phenomena.

It is hardly surprising that a prime minister who continues to deny systemic racism exists in Québec states that this judgment will prevent the police from doing their job.

Nor is it surprising that police departments attempt to incite fear in the public by claiming this judgment will compromise public security.

These same Québec police forces promise action on systemic racism yet continue to refuse to equip police officers with body cameras.

More than two years after the killing of George Floyd, and promises by mayor Plante that body cameras were coming to Montréal police, the devices have still not been mandated here.

Body cameras protect both the police and the people who come in contact with them especially racialize persons and enhance public security and police transparency.

They've become standard police equipment in numerous forces in populous cities across North America, including Toronto, and yet police departments in Québec successfully resist them.

From my experience as a lawyer, I can say police culture has not changed in Québec since the 1970s, nor do I expect it will ever evolve from within. We need a new type of police officer and police leadership in 2022. Politicians seem incapable of making this happen and their efforts to date at reforming the police have been anemic at best.

Lawyers successfully pleading a charter challenge in court have achieved in 2 years what politicians have not been able to accomplish for decades- take real action that will put an end to "during while black" police interceptions.

It seems change is finally at hand.  
It's about time.

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