

Everyone is distressed by what seems to be the clear and incontrovertible video evidence of three policemen beating and then shooting to death Ian Lloyd as he lay on the ground in Buckfield, St Ann. The policemen have been arrested and charged with murder. The action has been described as horrible but not surprising as this is expected, it seems, from the police. The Constabulary Communication Network (CCN) has been again discredited, as its early report on the incident bears no resemblance to the video evidence.

There is something even more appalling, if that is possible, than the cold blooded murder of Lloyd and it is that this shooting was done in the full view of several members of the public who were apparently encouraging the policemen in the criminal action. In other words, our indictment should lie not only against these three policemen but also against the people who encouraged and incited them.

What does this say about us as a people? What we have witnessed is not just the horrible behaviour of few rogue cops, but the barbarity of a society. We have grown accustomed to allegations of extra-judicial by policemen and we have grown accustomed to investigations of such allegations coming to nothing. But we are going further. Large numbers of persons are now accepting that that this is appropriate. We are witnessing mob rule, and the policemen are just members of the mob.

It is true that Lloyd was accused of having earlier attacked and killed Loveta Wilson, but that the public should so openly show support for actions of the policemen demonstrate that they too have no faith in our judicial system. The really appalling thing is that this is their belief of how they would see justice.

There are two lessons that should not be overlooked. First, without the TVJ footage nothing would have come of this. We can never underestimate the power of a free press to our freedoms and human rights. We call all promote that freedom by becoming citizen-journalists, by using our cell phones to photograph and made videos of incident such as these.

Secondly, as members of the public, we tolerate the abuse of other peoples' rights when we make them less than human. It is not surprising that people in positions of power often characterise their intended victims as cockroaches. Let us stop that. Let us always remember that fundamental injunction of our culture: Everybody is somebody.