American analysts claim that US police are overly aggressive because they are focused on their own safety, instead of citizens’ protection.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 14 (Sputnik) – US police are overly aggressive because they are focused on their own safety, instead of citizens’ protection, American analysts told Sputnik amid ongoing New York City rallies against race-related police violence in the United States.

William Terrill, a former US military police officer and currently a crime expert at Michigan State University, joined the calls of some protesters for reforms to police training – which many say contributes to aggressive police behavior.

"Much police training is geared towards officer safety. But over the years it's become such a focus on the police that it's become..."
Too Much Focus on Police vs Citizens Safety in US: Analysts / Sputnik International

disproportionate and not enough attention on the empathy side of the equation," William Terrill, a former military police officer and currently a crime expert at Michigan State University, told Sputnik Saturday.

According to Terrill, the traditional US police culture encourages distrust among the officers towards the public, so policemen believe that "they need to be on edge the whole time".

"Officers with that mind-set actually are more forceful in their encounters with citizens, irrespective of what the citizen is doing," Terrill explained.

Meanwhile David Alan Sklansky, a former US federal prosecutor and now a Stanford Law School professor, told Sputnik that distrust is especially prevalent between law enforcement officers and ethnic minorities in the United States.

"We have decades-old legacy of distrust on both sides between ethnic minorities and the police," Sklansky said Saturday, stressing that it is "a long-standing problem" that undermines the protection of American minority communities.

"There’s resentment about overzealous policing and about under-policing, when they don’t do enough to protect minority communities from crimes," Sklansky said.

Debates over unjustified police violence and racial profiling in the US law enforcement system heated up after grand juries in New York and St. Louis decided not to indict white lawmen who killed African-American Michael Brown and Eric Garner in two separate incidents this summer.

On Saturday, tens of thousands of people rallied in New York over the grand jury decisions. The protest called the "Day of Anger" is one of the many held across the United States in connection with the Brown and Garner cases in recent months.

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James Reid | Last updated: 14 Dec 2014 11:16