

## Civil Rights

### **A Highlight from the 2013 Congressional Pilgrimage to Selma Reverend Doug Tanner, Founder and Chief Advisor, Faith & Politics Institute**

Reverend Tanner describes an encounter between Representative John Lewis of Georgia and the chief of the Montgomery Police Department.

*Interview recorded May 15, 2013.*

And then, we got to Montgomery, to First Baptist Church, and we've always had the mayor greet us. Well, the mayor had to be out of town, and the deputy mayor, or some second person, I can't remember who it was, happened to be out of town. So, the minister there is the chaplain to the police department, and he invited the police chief to speak to us. Well, the chief, who looks like he's about 40, first he told us about how he makes sure that every policeman who comes on the force is oriented to this history, and to knowing this history. And they spend a day doing that in their training. And then, he apologized to John Lewis, on behalf of the Montgomery Police Department, for failing to protect him when he was a Freedom Rider, and got off the bus in Montgomery, and was beaten down. And then he handed John his badge, and we didn't know to expect that. So, when things like that happen, that corroborates that it's a pilgrimage, and the effect on people is profound. And I think there are a lot of people in town, Members of Congress, and others who go with us who say this is—many which say, "This is the best experience I ever had."