

People Over Profit: Rejecting Corporate Egoism

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I learned many important lessons about life as a Detroit Police Officer. I learned that there is a lot of good in the world. I witnessed a goodness that stems from a collective spirit of togetherness. Detroiters are resilient. In the face of poverty, institutional racism, classism, violence and a crumbling educational system, Detroiters find a way to persevere despite odds that might appear to be insurmountable (at least on the surface). Inscribed on the flag that represents the city of Detroit is a Latin saying that I believe captures the true spirit of the city of Detroit: *Speramus meliora; resurget cineribus*, we hope for better things, it shall arise from the ashes. Detroit is a resilient city, a city that has seen race riots, violence, collapse of the automotive industry, bankruptcy and a football team that has been the laughingstock of the National Football League. I am a proud Detroiter and I am happy to say that the city is my home.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has also taught me a great deal. The pandemic has allowed me to see suffering on a scale that shook (and continues to shake) me to my core. As a police officer, I was responding to calls from citizens who were on the verge of death, looking for help in the face of chaos during a time of negligence on behalf of the president of the United States of America. As a lifelong philosophy student, I began researching some of the critical questions relating to meaning, human nature, critical race theory, and social and political philosophy. During the quarantine, I began reading everything related to social justice and philosophy that I could get my hands on as a kind of therapy for what I was witnessing on a daily basis. I recall the FEMA coolers that collected the remains of the citizens that I served stationed just outside of the hospitals. I also

recall the countless hospital gurneys filled with patients coughing and fighting for every breath lining the hallways of Sinai-Grace Hospital, located in Detroit's Westside. I had never seen human suffering on such a large scale. I came face to face with violence, a pandemic, poverty, substance abuse and mental illness on a daily basis. I loved and continue to love the people of the city of Detroit. My love for the city caused me to raise my right hand and take an oath to protect the citizens of the city. I saw myself in the people that I served. I was passionate about serving them with dignity, courtesy and respect. I began to question my career decision when I saw the systemic ways that the city made money from targeting and criminalizing the poor. I found that what once stood in a shining light to me had been corrupted, tarnished and lacking luster. The targeting of poor, predominantly black people by police is both corrupt and morally reprehensible. I decided to leave my career as a police officer behind for several reasons. Ultimately, I could not continue to do harm to the people that I love. The job of a police officer is a difficult and dangerous job. Although it can be uplifting to save the lives of people that need help, it is deeply disturbing to enforce statutes and laws that are unfair and criminalize the poor. So how did it get this way? More importantly, what lies at the root of environmental injustice? How are the people of so many cities like Detroit (Flint, Michigan comes to mind) allowed to suffer due to racism and corporate greed? What are the moral implications of urban suffering, corporate egoism, pollution, and systemic institutional racism?

In what follows, I take a look at Vandana Shiva's answer to some of the questions posed above. How can we solve some of the problems that befall citizens of urban, predominantly black, communities? I investigate some of the root causes of environmental injustices. Finally, I look at some of the implications that environmental injustice has had on the city of Detroit. What is critical to the liberation of those who are marginalized is to be empowered and equipped to understand the teleological relationship between the agent and environmental injustices. This is how we overcome what I call corporate egoism.

In *Principles of Earth Democracy*, Vandana Shiva (2005) sheds light on some of the global injustices that relate to the suffering that I bore witness to as a police officer. Shiva argues:

When economic dictatorship is grafted onto representative, electoral democracy, a toxic growth of religious fundamentalism and right-wing extremism is the result. Thus, corporate globalization leads not just to the death of democracy, but to the democracy of death, in which exclusion, hate, and fear become the political means to mobilize votes and power. (Shiva, 2005, p. 6)

I can bear witness to what Shiva posits as the “democracy of death.” The democracy of violence, fear and death is a direct consequence of democracy being hijacked by corporate interests. The disparity between the violence that is contained within the local Detroit city neighborhoods contrasted to the lack of violence in the downtown area are night and day. The resources of law enforcement and security in place to protect business assets downtown are, to put it lightly, disproportionate. The violence disparities are designed to function this way. For instance, in Detroit, the Tactical Services Section is routinely on hand for crowd control in the summer months in the downtown area. Downtown Detroit is a key element to the money-making infrastructure of the city of Detroit; thus, it has a lower crime rate. While the majority of the city is plagued with violence on a scale that resembles a war zone, downtown is secured and kept clean safe for patrons who visit the city from out of town. The former is an example of environmental injustice on behalf of the city. The city does much more to protect its “assets” than what it does to protect its *true* assets: the people.

Through gentrification, the city has privatized a better quality of life for its more affluent citizens while the majority of the citizens feel left behind and taken advantage of. The *regular* police precincts are mostly under-staffed and over worked. Ultimately, in my view, the people of the city of Detroit are being under-served. When I reflect upon my brief tenure in Detroit, the work of Shiva resonates well and speaks to the situation that continues to limit the overall quality of life for the people of a great city. Although Shiva is writing of the plight of global injustice, her work relates well to the struggle for democracy and a better way of life for many people a bit closer to home: Detroit. Shiva writes:

Living democracy enables democratic participation in all matters of life and death-the food we eat or do not have access to; the water we drink or are denied due to privation or pollution; the air we breathe or are poisoned by. Living democracies are based on the intrinsic worth of all species, all peoples, all cultures; a just and equal sharing of this earth’s vital resources; and sharing the decisions about the use of the earth’s resources. (Shiva, 2005, p.6)

At the time that I am writing this paper, the people of Flint, Michigan are still without clean drinking water due to the repressive and reprehensible actions by Michigan’s past Governor, Rick Snyder and others of his administration. The city of Detroit routinely over charges its residents for clean drinking water. The most polluted Detroit neighborhoods are often the poorest neighborhoods where out of towners routinely come to dump trash in vacant lots and run down, dark streets. If you were to drive through Detroit’s Brightmore neighborhood, you will see trash dumped in vacant lots as if this area was a public landfill. Businesses travel to

Detroit's Brightmore to dump tires and hazardous waste, poisoning the citizens who live in the neighborhood. Also, most of the streetlights do not work. The streets are dark, filled with trash and generally unsafe.

Shiva's argument is both plausible and valid. The privation of resources is not only morally reprehensible, but it actually harms those that impose inequality. In the following pages, I discuss the implications that the privation of resources has on the urban environment. As Shiva has argued in her work discussed above, I hope to extend her critical conversation to the lives of Detroiters. Though both Detroit and Flint, Michigan are excellent case studies by which we can examine the impacts that capitalism, colonialism and racism has had on the environment and peoples of color, I will, however, focus the majority of my efforts on the city of Detroit.

I argue that the commodification of nature leads to a democracy of death and destruction. More specifically, the death and destruction as evidenced in the city of Detroit has a direct correlation to the commodification of the environment as has been argued by Shiva (2005) and others. The teleological orientation or ethic will be my grounds for my paper. Equal consideration must be given to the most marginalized of society. The overall well-being of a community and the environment must be equally considered by legislatures. The overall well-being consists of a democratic society united by the equal distribution of resources for self-sustainability and environmental sustainability. In order to illustrate my thesis, I investigate some of the injustices that have recently surfaced in the Detroit community. We are all in this together. Detroit will rise from the ashes if and only if the people and the environment are put first. The commodification of resources and exploitation of people are the root causes to the demise of what was once one of America's most affluent cities.

The notion that nature can be owned is non-sensical to most indigenous people. Most indigenous people have a teleological understanding of the interconnectivity between nature and humans. In fact, humans *are* nature. Shiva writes:

We are connected to the earth locally and globally. Living cultures based on the recovery of our earth identity create the potential for reintegrating human activities into the earth's ecological processes and limits. Remembering we are earth citizens can help us recover our common humanity and help us transcend the deep divisions of intolerance, hate, and fear that the corporate globalization's ruptures, polarization, and enclosures have created. (Shiva, 2005, p.7)

Corporate and colonial greed have been the cause of lack of sustainability and living in commune with nature on many fronts. There is a deep assumption that lays at the

foundation of corporate greed. Some corporations posit that it is not in the best interest of the corporation to limit their carbon footprint, for example. In contrast, Shiva's Earth Democracy takes into account how we can collectively thrive and work for harmony, peace and an overall better quality of life.

The notion of ownership over what cannot be owned had its genesis in the colonial mindset. To the colonist, ownership of the land was an essential element of self-sustainability (even if it meant pillage by stealing the land from natives). Conquest through domination and violent means allowed one to have the means to sustain themselves. For example, in order to justify the destruction of the earth and ownership of other humans through slavery, the colonist had to justify the conquest by the *might makes right* ideology. That is, through the utilization of manifest destiny and religion, the colonizer was able to justify his conquest of terror. Native Americans and Africans were seen as "savages" and less than human. The role of the upright and just colonizer was to civilize the so-called savage with both the lash and bible.

The colonial, anthropocentric view, has surfaced in the work of Ayn Rand. For Rand's egoist ethic, the right action tends to help the agent and the agent alone. Although, to be fair, Rand's argument is not an inherently racist one. Her argument does favor what lies at the heart of racism and oppression: narcissism. In fact, the agent has a duty to foremost herself and not to the other. An act is given moral consideration on the grounds of how much the consequences of an act weigh in the favor of the agent. Rand calls her view *The Virtue of Selfishness* (1964).

Rand's reasoning is erroneous on several grounds. First, ethics are other regarding. That is, ethics is the study of how we treat others. A myopic ethic fails to give consideration to something fundamental to human sustainability: relationships. We cannot survive alone. We rely on the environment and other people to sustain ourselves. We have evolved to help one another because we are stronger in this way. Also, Rand's work relies on a false dilemma. Namely, Rand assumes that altruism is self-sacrifice. Rand sees two alternatives for an agent, altruism (more akin to *agapic* love and thus supererogatory, in her view) on the one hand and egoism on the other hand. Rand fails to give consideration to the many different forms of altruism. Rand dismisses the necessity for empathy in ethics also. Likewise, corporations, politicians and business leaders make decisions that have a tendency to protect their interests more than what might be a better for the society. Rand's egoism relates to privation and unequal distribution. Free market fundamentalism and greed lead to human suffering and an overall lack of empathy for others.

Matthieu Ricard's work, *Altruism* (2013) constructs a pithy, scientific and very thorough account of human relational ethics. Selfishness and virtue are contradictory entities. Given the teleological framework, a more cosmopolitan and macrocosmic scope becomes necessary. Everything is aimed at the good.

Everything has a purpose, design or function. Each part contributes to the overall harmony of the other. We have evolved to be altruistic, not selfish. Ricard writes:

Understanding interdependence notably allows us to destroy the illusory wall that our minds have raised between self and other. This makes obvious the mistaken foundations of pride, jealousy and malevolence. Since all beings are interdependent, their happiness and their suffering concern us intimately. To want to build our happiness on others' suffering is not only immoral, but unrealistic. Universal love and compassion are the direct consequences of a correct understanding of this interdependence. (Ricard, 2013, p. 34)

Ricard's argument sheds light on the necessity of love and empathy toward others. Ricard's argument is not limited to the love of other human beings, he argues for love and empathy being at the core of our being. Love and empathy, in his view, should be extended to all sentient beings. Teleologically, everything is reaching toward the good. If I were to interfere with the well-being of the other, then I am limiting what is good on a macrocosmic level.

Ayn Rand's work is completely shrouded with ignorance with respect to understanding cognitive science, human nature and morality. It is counter-intuitive to be selfish. In fact, one must work harder to be selfish. We have evolved to act in cooperation with one another because of interdependence (or at the very least, as some have argued, to act in accordance to a kind of reciprocal altruism). If I never cooperate with others, I place myself in unnecessary peril. As the seventh Dalai Lama wrote: "If there is a way to free ourselves from suffering/We must use every moment to find it. / Only a fool wants to go on suffering. / Isn't it sad to knowingly imbibe poison?" (37) Selfishness is poison. To be selfish is to willfully ignore the suffering of other beings in the quest for happiness. A mark of psychopathy is the lack of empathy for others. Rand's moral philosophy is suitable for a psychopath because of the lack of capacity for empathy. Ayn Rand (1964) writes:

If a man accepts the ethics of altruism, his first concern is not how to live his life, but how to sacrifice it...Altruism erodes men's capacity to grasp the value of an individual life; it reveals a mind from which the reality of a human being has been wiped out. (Rand, 1964, pp. 27-32)

Here it is evident that Rand's understanding of altruism is incomplete. She posits that the true altruist is one who sacrifices their life or puts themselves in harm's way. Rand's understanding of altruism is mistaken and her argument rests upon a sophomoric hasty generalization. Rand asserts that to be altruistic is somehow to

do more harm to an agent. Although Rand's version of egoism is not the only version of egoism, it is probably the weakest. Rand's argument fails to give a concrete reason why we should be egoists. Her argument ultimately fails. Rand's argument has been used to support conservative accounts of oppressive economic systems that are exclusory of the poor. Rand's argument can be used to support racism, classism and sexism. Selfishness can quickly turn into racism, classism and sexism. Selfishness endorses the privation of happiness. One only has a moral obligation to act in accordance with the better consequence for one's-self. Not only should an ethic be other regarding in its dynamics, it should also be non-anthropocentric.

Paul Taylor (1981) argues for a life-centered theory of environmental ethics in *The Ethics of Respect for Nature*. Much like Ricard, Taylor endorses a kind of reciprocity and harmony in his ethic. Taylor writes:

Every organism, species population, and community of life has a good of its own which moral agents can intentionally further or damage by their actions. To say that an entity has a good of its own is simply to say that, without reference to any *other* entity, it can be benefited or harmed. One can act in its overall interest or contrary to its overall interest, and environmental conditions can be good for it (advantageous to it) or bad for it (disadvantageous to it). What is good for an entity is what "does it good" in the sense of enhancing or preserving its life and well-being. What is bad for an entity is something that is detrimental to its life and well-being. (Taylor, 1981, p. 2)

Taylor gives credence to the overall good of biodiversity. There is a kind of reciprocity for all beings. An act is good to the degree that it has a tendency to sustain life. If I am only ever concerned with my own life, I am either directly or indirectly contributing to the suffering of others. In Detroit and Flint, the suffering of others has been silenced. That is, the underclass has been underserved and exploited for the gain of the more opulent of society for many years. The privation of proper nutrition and education for example are hallmarks of the disparities that are prevalent in both Detroit and Flint respectively. For instance, grocery stores are not plentiful in the city of Detroit. However, in the *New Center* area, *Midtown* and *Downtown* residents have access to fresh, whole foods. Farmer's markets are common and more access to a variety of food is more than plentiful at the Eastern Market.

As I mentioned above, I saw mass suffering during the COVID-19 outbreak in the city of Detroit. Steve Neavling writes in the Detroit Metro Times on April 2, 2020:

Black people make up 12% of Michigan's Population-and at least 40% of Its Coronavirus Deaths... 'There is no question that the COVID-19 outbreak is having a more significant effect on marginalized and poorer communities, particularly communities of color,' Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Michigan's chief medical executive, tells *Metro Times*. 'While COVID-19 can infect anyone regardless of race or class, African Americans have historically been more likely to have higher rates of chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer in the United States. We know that people with these underlying medical conditions are more likely to become severely ill from COVID-19.' (Neavling, 2020, Metro Times)

Health disparities and environmental factors contribute to a public health crisis in Detroit. Marginalized and poor communities routinely forgo medical expenditures due to lack of income and resources. Poor nutrition, and access to quality healthcare contributes to health disparities. As notes in the *Metro Times* article, the city of Detroit's rate of COVID-19 infection made up at least 40% of the state of Michigan's Coronavirus deaths. This is an environmental injustice!

In order to build a more free, democratic Detroit, it is necessary to challenge systemic racism, classism and environmental injustice. A change must also occur through environmental education. The hallmark of a free and just society is a quality system of education. Economic, social and environmental education must be introduced in schools at an early age. Environmental education should be a strong part of the curriculum in K-12 schools, especially in marginalized communities.

Environmental Education

Education is a means to affect change in the lives of students. Knowledge is power. Education liberates. Education challenges. Education is the bridge over the troubled waters of dogmatic thinking and oppression. Environmental Educator David Orr (1991) gave a compelling, uplifting and erudite commencement speech to a group of college graduates. In his speech, Orr gives his account for the purpose of an education. Orr suggests that ignorance is a part of the human condition. Orr also suggests that we cannot manage the planet, but primarily ourselves. Teleology is the underpinning of this argument. Orr also dispels the myth that education's purpose is to give upward mobility and pecuniary wealth. Orr notes "[t]he plain fact is that the planet does not need more *successful* people. But it does need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every shape and form...It needs people of moral courage willing to fight to make the world more habitable

and humane.” (Orr, 1991, pg.4) Orr argues that environmental education is all education. A true education is not dismissive of the environment. Nature is reflected in everything that we do. Orr argues:

...I would like to propose that *the way learning occurs is as important as the content of particular courses*. Process is important for learning. Courses taught as lecture courses tend to induce passivity. Indoor classes create the illusion that learning only occurs inside four walls isolated from what students call without apparent irony the “real world.” Dissecting frogs in biology classes teaches lessons about nature that no one would verbally profess. Campus architecture is crystallized pedagogy that often reinforces passivity, monologue, domination, and artificiality. My point is that students are being taught in various and subtle ways beyond the content of courses. (Orr, 1991, p. 4)

Orr closes his remarks by urging students to work with nature and not against it. In order to work with nature, it is necessary to understand the interconnectivity of nature. Deep Ecology, Earth Democracy and *Paideia* are imperative to human development. Understanding nature and understanding one’s-self is a principle that has died within most educational systems. If education does not teach us how to learn, think and research for ourselves, what good is education?

Educators have a responsibility to share their findings with society. I agree with Orr. *All education is environmental education*. As Shiva and others have argued, education is political. Education plays a role in shedding light on the truth (*veritas*). After encountering the truth, there is a responsibility to share the truth for the betterment of society. It is the role of the educator to contribute to bettering and furthering society. Educators should cultivate society. Education, like nature, is not a commodity.

In *Not for Profit: Why Democracy needs the Humanities* (2010) Martha Nussbaum has argued that:

The cultivation of sympathy has been a key part of the best modern ideas of democratic education, in both Western and non-Western nations. Much of this cultivation must take place in the family, but schools and even colleges and universities also play an important role. If they are to play it well, they must give a central role in the curriculum to the humanities and the arts, cultivating a participatory type of education that activates and refines the capacity to see the world through another person’s eyes. (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 96)

Education, as Nussbaum has argued is a powerful tool. An environmental pedagogy can help students understand the role that they play in the sustenance or destruction of the environments they inhabit. Just as Ricard noted earlier, Nussbaum's discussion of the role of empathy in education is critically identified. To increase education through the arts and the humanities is to become a citizen of the world through the exploration of diverging experiences. Through education, we can cultivate an experience of unity and togetherness. Environmental educators shed light on the teleological thread that ties ecosystems together. Although the family, or home environment, plays a critical role in supplementing the lessons learned in the classroom, the most effective schools reinforce their role through staying consistent.

The implications of a non-democratic education that considers the environment are grave. If we are to continue on our course, it will lead to a catastrophic end for our posterity. In *The Source of Self-Regard* (2019) Toni Morrison warns us of what is to come. Morrison writes:

When our fears have all been serialized, our creativity censored, our ideas "marketplaced," our rights sold, our intelligence sloganized, our strength downsized, our privacy auctioned; when the theatricality, the entertainment value, the marketing of life is complete, we will find ourselves living not in a nation but a consortium of industries, and wholly unintelligible to ourselves except for what we see as through a screen darkly. (Morrison, 2019, p. 16)

I hope that we heed the warnings of Morrison and so many other truth tellers. Morrison is perhaps one of the best of the truth tellers in my view. Morrison's words about the implications of racism and fascism speak to what is going on in our schools and predominantly black cities. Creativity is being censored and discouraged. Liberal Arts education is seen as a waste of an education. Again, education has been changed to be a means to pecuniary wealth and upward social mobility. The very fabric of our nation has been hijacked by greedy politicians and corporations. We no longer value freedom of thought and the intellectual has been chastised (especially by conservatives) for "turning our youth into Marxists and socialists." Morrison continues:

If education is about anything other than being able to earn more money (and it may not be about any other thing), that other thing is intelligent problem-solving and humans relating to one another in mutually constructive ways. But educational institutions and some

of our most distinguished scholars have considered the cooperation among human beings and mutually constructive goals to be fourth- and fifth-rate concerns where they are concerns at all. The history of the country is all the proof one needs that it is so. (Morrison, 2019, p. 44)

Just as Shiva reminds us of a kind of death democracy earlier, Morrison parallels this argument above. Cooperation and unity are not on the to do list of oligarchs and oppressors. Rather, for the oligarch, the goal is to divide and polarize society and anesthetize individuals with entertainment. Intelligent, problem solving humans are more difficult to take advantage of. Environmental educators, like Orr, incorporate cooperation into the curriculum. Understanding one's place in the environment and the role that can be played to help sustain the environment is imperative for our longitudinal and collective well-being. To look into the depths of the mind and begin to ask the critical, engaging questions that matter relate to the notion of *paideia* as discussed above.

Just as the environment is not a commodity, education and people are also not commodities. Shiva's notion of a death democracy has an implication that extends beyond here and now. We owe those who come after us a world that is sustainable. Just as educators cultivate and inspire minds, citizens must cultivate the earth in order to ensure our collective survival.

Conclusion

The people of Detroit are under served. Politicians fight for the corporate elite and not for the poor and minorities. Cash rules everything in the city and the most valuable asset of the city, its citizens, are failed by the systemic oppression and racism that keeps them in their respective places. You can hear the echoes of anti-city rhetoric by many conservative politicians. They promote law and order, state's rights and other coded language that is derived from meaning 'good for whites' and 'bad for non-whites.' Jason Stanley (2018) has written about the plight of urban American people in *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. Stanley explains:

Many areas that in the 1970s and 1980s were the paradigm of blighted urban ghettos, such as Harlem, had experienced, for good or for ill, tremendous gentrification and steeply escalating housing prices. Despite this, U.S. president Donald Trump, during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign and afterward regularly spoke of American cities as sites of carnage and blight. For example, in a tweet on January 14, 2017, then president-elect Trump spoke of

“burning and crime-infested inner cities of the U.S.” Despite remarkable gentrification in American cities, Trump regularly speaks of cities as containing ghettos filled with black people (who, he implies, are likely criminals)... Trump’s rhetoric about cities makes sense in the context of more general fascist politics, in which cities are seen as centers of disease and pestilence, containing squalid ghettos filled with despised minority groups living off the work of others. (Stanley, 2018, pp. 148-9)

Trump’s message of fear, inequality and terror are the dog whistle that resound in the ear of his most racist and xenophobic supporters. Trump’s coded language is music to the ears of most of his supporters. Race and class disparities are deeply woven into the fabric of American society. Trump’s fascist words have become a battle cry for American’s who feel their bedrock being shaken by the work of progressive more teleological expressions of togetherness and inclusion. Shiva’s Earth Democracy, if applied could lead to a more cosmopolitan pedagogy and a brighter future that respect’s the dignity and well-being of our planet as a whole.

I have argued that the commodification of nature leads to a democracy of destruction and death. To illustrate this thesis, I discussed some of the injustices that I saw first-hand as a police officer in Detroit. Detroit has long been impacted by a democracy that caters to corporations and the more affluent citizens. The city of Detroit is much more than downtown Detroit.

I sustained my argument by looking at Ayn Rand’s egoist ethic. Rand ultimately fails. Rand’s notion of altruism being detrimental to the agent is not valid. Ricard’s work on altruism offers support against Rand’s thin view of altruism. Versions Rand’s view has been used by corporate entities to justify their practices of exploitation and destruction in the communities they inhabit.

Environmental education is imperative. Education is the key element to destroy the status quo. A more teleological, other regarding pedagogy (such as the introduction of environmental education pedagogy) can be a solution to Detroit’s corrupt infrastructure. Environmental education supports a theoretical framework that could diminish or dismantle oppressive, fascist politics. Cultivating citizens who see themselves in nature. Cultivating citizens who understand the interconnection in all things. Cultivating citizens who work with the environment and not against the environment.

Although I have traded in my badge for books, I will never forget the hardworking people of the city of Detroit. I won’t forget their resolve. I won’t forget their struggle. I won’t forget their love and their words of encouragement. I was inspired to write this essay by the people of the city I served. I hope that somehow, someday, through my academic work, I allow suffering and injustices to come to light. I hope that the people who are underserved get what they deserve: *justice*.

The environment is for all of the people. All of the people can and should be able to have a better quality of life. The police department is not an entity that should be used as a private security force to protect business interests while shunning the safety and security of the citizens. There is much work to be done. I will continue to labor in love. *Speramus meliora, resurget cineribus!*

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