

Statement of Ald. Bob Donovan
September 30, 2009

Alderman Says People are the Problem – Not Guns

My prayers and full support go out to the brave Milwaukee police officer shot in the line of duty this morning on the north side. As the father of a Milwaukee police officer, I worry every day about incidents like today's, and I understand very well why our officers have one of the most difficult and dangerous jobs anywhere.

And, although the mayor and Chief Flynn are rightfully going after illegal guns and are also right to bring the heat on Badger Guns (or any other person or business) for straw purchases of firearms that end up in the hands of convicted felons and criminals, I believe that people are the real problem – not the guns.

The people that use the guns to kill, injure and maim other people are the real problem. They live in a twisted world where it's either kill or be killed, and if some bad things happen along the way – including a drive-by or a robbery or two – so be it.

But in many cases, those who carry guns in Milwaukee have been cut loose from jail or prison – or even slapped on the wrist with probation or community service – and afforded the opportunity to conduct criminal activities in our neighborhoods. The people who cut them loose – the judges, the correctional system, court commissioners and other court officials – are also to blame. Let's face it, the guns aren't paroling or giving probation to violent criminals.

The guns don't make excuses for violent criminals, either. We need to hold accountable public officials who blame society, television shows, music and lyrics, poverty and anything else they can think of for the actions of violent criminals. I say enough!

While we're blaming the guns, why don't we also take a long, hard look at the people?

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