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Alderman, 8th District

Hamilton shooting a tragedy all around, but war on cops needs to end

Police aren't the problem, they're part of the solution

Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan December 22, 2014

I've said from the beginning—Dontre Hamilton's death is a tragedy. But in the case of the decision not to charge Officer Christopher Manney, I believe the district attorney has made the correct choice. It's a choice that is based on facts—not on rhetoric, not on politics, not on protests, but on facts.

Having said that, it's worth reiterating, most especially in light of the DA's decision today, that Officer Manney's firing is an ill-conceived, politically-motivated attempt to placate protestors. It's clear to anyone who watched the news this weekend or tried to use the interstate on Friday night that, in that attempt, they failed.

The irresponsible behavior by some of these protestors needs to come to an end. Law and order must be maintained in our communities at all costs.

We find ourselves in the midst of an apparent war on police across the nation. Even as this tragedy continues to play out here in Milwaukee, my thoughts turn to the heinous and cowardly assassination of two NYPD officers this weekend. It's beyond belief that things have gone that far. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those victims in New York, and with officers nationwide who have to strap on their bulletproof vests this week.

My fear is that this violence could escalate and impact more lives. As a nation and as a community, I believe the time is now to step back, take a deep breath and realize that police officers are not the problem. They are a part of the solution.

These brave men and women put their lives on the line daily. Sadly, they are called upon to man the fine line that prevents our neighborhoods, both nationally and locally, from descending into

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utter chaos. And yet, many people consistently fail to recognize the sacrifices that our police officers make on a daily basis.

It's ironic that one of the most persistent chants we've heard throughout the course of these protests is, "No justice, no peace."

Where is the justice for the citizens who live in fear, clamoring for more police and quicker response times in their crime-ridden neighborhoods?

Where is the justice for children who are growing up in terrible environments, surrounded by crime and violence?

Where is the justice for *my* constituents and other residents of Milwaukee who are being told that the scarce police we *do have* are being diverted from their usual beats to babysit these protesters?

And where is the justice for these officers who are demonized, even as they take time away from their families during the holidays to do the best job they can at protecting and serving the very people who demonize them? Where is the justice for these officers, who face danger every day but, sadly, fear their command staff more than they fear the criminal element?

Keeping all of this in mind, I find myself in total agreement: no justice, no peace.

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