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ANDERSON CAMPAIGN: POLICE REFORM, HERE’S HOW…

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A peaceful society is a society of laws. Peace does not prevail if laws change too easily, at the whim of an executive, or a majority. The founders of this country wrote the Constitution for this purpose- so that certain principles and ideas that maximize human flourishing and prosperity would not be overwhelmed by reckless executives nor pandering legislators. The laws that do exist require a law enforcement presence to keep the peace, but in a truly Constitutional society, those laws would be relatively uncontroversial, and dare I say, supported by most.

Today’s reality, however, is that pandering legislators and reckless execs have led our country astray. We have laws on the books that should not exist- that run roughshod over human rights and violate the sanctity of people’s lives, families, and households. Many laws pick winners and losers, favor one group over another, and thereby create strife rather peace, injustice rather than justice. In this society, being a law enforcement officer is difficult, and the profession of law enforcement, like others such as teachers and clergy, tends to draw more than its share of people who are there for the wrong reason- to exert control over others.

We have arrived at a crossroads regarding the role of police in America, and the knee-jerk demonization vs. unconditional lionization of the police is not helpful. I propose the following reforms which, alongside my proposals for criminal justice reform, will help us reconstruct a happy, prosperous society, with equality under the law for all, and peace in our streets.
1) **End the racist war on cannabis.** The evidence is clear that this 'war' was racist in intent and result. Ending this fiasco will enable police to concentrate on violent crime, and crime with victims, rather than be instruments in a culture war.

2) **End no-knock raids and qualified immunity.** No-knock raids are unconstitutional, and create an environment where innocent victims, alleged criminals, and police officers are more likely to be shot and killed. If police officers or departments stray from what is constitutional or legal boundaries, they should suffer the consequences, and not be protected from true justice.

3) **Increase pay and training requirements for police officers.** Police play a vital role in keeping the peace, and apprehending criminals. They carry weapons, and have special permissions regarding the use of deadly force. Police should be paid and treated as professionals, with at least the same level of standards and ongoing testing with which we license doctors and lawyers.

4) **Policing should be a profession.** Initial standards, ongoing training, and something like malpractice insurance, will help support police departments and municipalities to work together, without the political influence of the police union. A statewide board could be created, composed of former law enforcement officers and other professionals to facilitate a process to vet and provide ongoing evaluation of standards and practices.

With these reforms in place, I believe we can get back to the proper role of police- that is, protection of residents and property, and enforcement of laws that support that protection. Law enforcement will have a healthier relationship with the public, and a proper relationship with government.

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