

Thank you for taking my comments regarding police reform.

I acknowledge gladly both the response of Vermont State Police announcing they support the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and the response of the state legislatures to invite public comment on police reform.

I support the platform offered by VPIRG as a first step towards change in the hope of having a better society.

I also suggest that part of the problem we have in maintaining the safety of the community using a police force is that we train that police force to use strategies that are based on analysis of grouped data. We somehow leave out how to deal with people as individuals. Because every situation, when all is seen and done could well be dangerous then every situation must get dealt with as if it were dangerous.

And because of that training an armed response becomes the go to choice of action.

Fear breeds fear.

I suggest that the vicious cycle of fear based interactions with police could be interrupted if individuals in the community and in the police force could interact in a friendly way more often to get to know each other as individuals as opposed to a part of a data set. Secondly I think police need alternatives to using a forceful response. I think there should be a rethink as to how officers generally deport themselves when going about their duties. The general characteristics of the interactions are not the calming ones of say a person come to stabilize a situation or rescue you in your hour of need but of a bully who will set you back a few limbs. Is being threatening necessary to maintaining the safety of the community or even helpful to the real safety of the police force ?

If I were trained to see everything around me as mortally dangerous and everyone around me as a bad character and inferior I would be tempted to respond with overwhelming force.

Certainly I as an officer with such training I would be forceful not open or engaging. And as the person on the other end of forceful and often belligerent actions I would be scared and unable to think or respond appropriately.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments Regards Sue Latchem