



Hope. A simple word that can elicit a variety of emotional and intellectual responses. A desire accompanied by expectation of, or belief in, fulfillment. Without it, the future can seem pretty bleak. However, to rely on hope that a situation will improve is very shortsighted. In our profession, we are well aware that we have an obligation to take action to improve any less-than-ideal circumstance.

I don't think anyone will argue against the fact that 2016 was a difficult year for law enforcement. We had a record number of officers killed in felonious assaults nationwide, with ambush and targeted attacks becoming all too frequent. The war on cops is not a myth and has escalated each year, with last year seeing the most devastating effects. As I see it, it began with the 2009 "beer summit" at the White House when President Barack Obama was quick to condemn the lawful actions of a Cambridge, Massachusetts, police sergeant. With no facts, Obama opined that race was a motivating factor, stating, "...there's a long history in this country of African-Americans and Latinos being stopped by law enforcement disproportionately." I am cautiously optimistic that the tide will turn in this new year. Our new president has been very visible and vocal in his support of law enforcement, and I hope that continues. Unfortunately, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti was publicly disparaging about Donald Trump, calling him a "caricature of a politician" and other unflattering terms. It will be interesting to see how this could affect our fair city.

The Mayor has now softened his vitriolic attacks on the president-elect, which is no surprise. Garcetti is not really in a position to throw down the gauntlet, as Los Angeles is slated to receive \$500 million in federal funding this year. However, with respect to immigration, incoming Chief of Staff Reince Priebus remarked, "The idea that a city would decide to ignore federal law and then want the federal government to help them anyway is an inconsistent position for those local governments to continue to engage in." To be clear, we've had Special Order 40 since 1979, when Chief Gates recognized the need to work within our immigrant communities to stem the violence. Since that time, we have never initiated any contact with the sole intention of determining someone's immigration status, and Chief Beck has reiterated that we will continue to follow that policy. However, many immigration advocates are calling for Garcetti to be more vocal in his support of their efforts. Garcetti has refused to refer to Los Angeles as a "sanctuary city," much to the consternation of those who believe we should take in every disenfranchised group out there. It will be interesting to watch our Mayor, who is notorious for his lack of action, attempt to play both sides of this issue. I have a tip for him.

Anything that makes the City of Los Angeles less safe is probably a bad idea. And to risk federal funding endangers us all.

We are at a critical juncture here, yet the lack of support from the Mayor has continued. We've had him stacking the Police Commission against us with folks who have well-documented anti-police agendas and biases of their own. After the national election, we had protests (I'm still not clear on what these protestors hoped to accomplish) in which streets and freeways were shut down. At what costs to the city and its law-abiding residents? Garcetti called the protests "beautiful," adding that "we have to make sure we don't break too many laws doing it." Which law is it OK to break, Eric? We are the ones out there on the front line, not you.

And now, we have our Inspector General Alex Bustamante who's accused of leaking confidential information to the press. In case you missed it, per the *L.A. Times* article from Dec. 6, a visitation log maintained by the Sheriff's Department that contained identifying information of sworn officers that visited gang member Rene "Boxer" Enriquez was shown to a reporter by Bustamante. It was of such concern that then-Chief of Detectives Kirk Albanese felt the need to send a letter to members of our Department and other involved agencies as well, advising them that information had been shared and that it was not the Department's doing. Of course, Bustamante's lawyer is claiming that the Department is attempting to discredit Bustamante because of his "oversight work." Here's a news flash for you. We don't mind objective oversight. But when we have the Inspector General accused of violating the very rules he is required to "oversee," we do have a big problem. And Police Commission President Matt Johnson's response? He considers the matter closed. It is now in the hands of the Ethics Commission, so it will be interesting to see how this unfolds. Stay tuned.

As we embark on 2017, it is my hope that some of these fractured relationships can be repaired. I, together with the other Directors, will continue to challenge and hold the policymakers, politicians and Department managers accountable for their actions. Just how this evolves remains to be seen. The national stage is being set now, and while the future effects have yet to be determined, you may rest assured that your League will continue to protect our interests and keep the hope alive.

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