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Edward A. Flynn
Chief of Police

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November 1, 2017

Alderman Khalif J. Rainey
Seventh Aldermanic District
200 East Wells Street – Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Rainey:

Recently you sent me a letter detailing concerns you had with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) documentary, *Dark States: Murder in Milwaukee*. I have reviewed your letter and certainly understand your observations. Some of them are concerns that I, too, share after seeing the broadcast version of the documentary.

The Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) strives to work with the media to further increase transparency of our activities with the public while enhancing community and police relations through open, honest communication. The Department has worked on other projects with local, national, and international media outlets in the past several years. The ARD German News, ITN British News, CBS Evening News, Associated Press, Washington Post and local outlets have partnered with us to create accurate, engaging and informative stories which reflect positively on the City of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Police Department, and Milwaukee residents.

In March of 2016, the BBC approached MPD and proposed a documentary about crime, policing, and criminal justice. They stated they would “sensitively and thoughtfully explore some of the issues around these subject matters.” They also informed me it was their goal to highlight the “invaluable and positive work of peace officers, community members and law enforcement officials in implementing policies and schemes designed to prevent crime, promote safety and security, maintain community relations.”

To accomplish this goal, the MPD entered into an agreement with the BBC and allowed ride-alongs with District Five officers and detectives assigned to the Metropolitan Investigations Unit. We worked with the City Attorney’s Office and BBC to create a document setting forth the

IN SOME JOBS, SUCCESS IS MEASURED BY WHAT DOESN'T HAPPEN.

terms and conditions of the project. During the filming, BBC personnel were escorted by MPD officers/detectives. Specific and continual direction was given to them to ensure that crime scenes and investigations were not compromised. This access is the same as has been given to many other news agencies and citizens alike participating in our ride-along program.

At the same time, the BBC informed us they were meeting with groups like Safe and Sound, Running Rebels, Safe Zones, the District Attorney's Office and Milwaukee County Courts. I felt confident and comfortable that a balanced, thoughtful and sincere documentary would be made highlighting the work of our officers in collaboration with community groups and organizations.

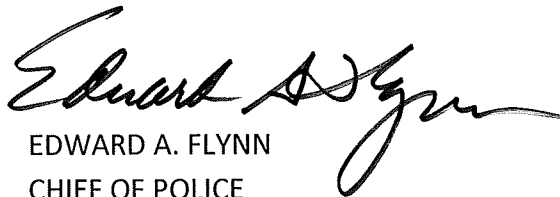
However, I am in agreement with you that the final version of the documentary presents an unfavourable and unfair portrayal of Milwaukee. Sadly, it casts a negative light on its residents, ignoring the efforts of the hard working, good people of this city, striving to improve the city and reduce crime.

Unfortunately, because of the rights, privileges and responsibility of journalists in this country and abroad, I was not able to dictate and ensure the editorial tone of project would be a positive one. Despite objections my Department made to the BBC during the editing phase, the final product was what you viewed.

My staff has contacted the BBC to express our dissatisfaction with the documentary and has even shared your press release with them. They responded to our correspondence and maintain they "feel the film adequately presented these different perspectives."

I hope this helps explain the process of how this documentary was made, the thoughtful planning that went into it and our desired outcome. Feel free to contact me with further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



EDWARD A. FLYNN
CHIEF OF POLICE

c: Mayor Tom Barrett
Common Council President Ashanti Hamilton
Fire & Police Commissioner Steven DeVougas, Chair