

4/20/21 STATEMENT REGARDING VERDICT IN CHAUVIN MURDER TRIAL

I sincerely believe that a just verdict was delivered in the Derek Chauvin trial today. It is a step in the right direction towards the paradigms of "no one is above the law" and "equal justice under the law." I cried in anguish and fear for all of the Black men in my life when I first witnessed Mr. Floyd's suffering and death last May, and I cried in relief for all of those same folks -- AND for the entirety of our society -- when a just and proper verdict was handed down today.

Regarding the verdict's impact on (i) our town, (ii) police policy, and (iii) efforts to promote racial justice and equity, I believe the verdict is a small but meaningful step in the right direction on all fronts. To wit:

(i) As for the impact on our town, I think the vast majority of the citizens of our town share the relief that I am feeling today, and that relief signifies a collective growth of trust in the integrity of our justice system. In other words, I believe the town is relieved because it believes the system delivered the RIGHT outcome.

(ii) As for police policy, I believe the verdict -- and the strong and somewhat ground-breaking stance taken by the Minneapolis Police AGAINST Mr. Chauvin -- both INSPIRES and REQUIRES stronger scrutiny of police training tactics, stronger scrutiny of the character and biases of all active police personnel, and greater accountability and transparency regarding any wrongdoing by any officer. All cities and towns, including Westford, must experience this reckoning.

(iii) Finally, as to the promotion of racial justice and equity: the verdict validates a prominent racial justice/racial equity position: those who have the power of life and death in their hands -- which the police undoubtedly do -- must value BIPOC lives and rights, and can never be allowed treat BIPOC members of the public that they serve as "enemies" that must be "captured" or otherwise "defeated" at all costs.