

## LETTER OF RESIGNATION \*

TO THE MAYOR.

New York, April 17, 1897.

*My dear Mr. Mayor:* I herewith tender you my resignation to take effect on April 19 in accordance with our understanding.

I wish to take this opportunity, sir, to thank you for appointing me, and to express my very deep appreciation of your attitude toward me and toward the force, the direction of which you in part intrusted to my care. We have been very intimately associated with your work, and I know, as all men who have been associated with you do know, the devotion with which you have given all of your time and all of your efforts to the betterment of our civic conditions and the single-mindedness with which at every crisis you have sought merely the good of the city. I have been able to work so zealously under you because you have never required of me anything but loyal service to what you conceived to be the best interest of New York City, and I well know that had I followed any other course it would have met with instant and sharp rebuke from you. I know also the almost incredible difficulties with which you have been surrounded, and the impossibility of your acting so as to please every one. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that people are now realizing that you have given us far and away the best administration which this city has ever had. In this department we, as well as you, have

\* Letter addressed to Hon. W. L. Strong, mayor of New York. *New York Evening Post*, April 17, 1897.

been hampered by unwise legislation, and the so-called bipartisan law, under which the department itself is administered, is of such absurdly foolish character that it has been impossible to achieve the results which would have been achieved had you had your hands free with reference to your appointees, and had your appointees in turn possessed full and proper power over the force.

Nevertheless, very much has been accomplished. For the first time the police force has been administered without regard to politics, and with an honest and resolute purpose to enforce the laws equitably, and show favor to no man. The old system of blackmail and corruption has been almost entirely broken up; we have greatly improved the standard of discipline; we have preserved complete order; and we have warded against crime and vice more effectively than ever before. The fact that we have come short in any measure is due simply to the folly of the law which deprives us of the full measure of power over our subordinates which could alone guarantee the best results. We have administered the civil-service law in spirit and in letter, so as to show that there is not the slightest excuse for wishing to get rid of it, or for claiming that it does not produce the best possible results when honestly enforced. About two-fifths of the patrolmen have been appointed by us under the operation of the civil-service law, and they make the best body of recruits that have ever come into the service. This is about four times the number of appointments that have ever before been made in the same period; and we have also made many more promotions. In promotions and appointments alike we have disregarded wholly all considerations of political or religious creed; we have treated all men alike on their

merits, rewarding the good and punishing the bad without reference to outside consideration. This was the course followed so long as the board had control over all promotions; and it has been followed in the promotions actually made. I have joined with Commissioner Andrews in refusing to take part in any offer to promote men or appoint them on other terms. I cannot resist expressing my appreciation of the high-mindedness, disinterestedness, courage, and fidelity to duty which Commissioner Andrews has brought to the performance of every official action.

During my term of service we have striven especially to make the police force not only the terror of the burglar, the rioter, the tough, the lawbreaker, and criminal of every kind, but also the ready ally of every movement for good. One of my pleasantest experiences has been working with all men, rich and poor, priests and laymen, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Gentiles, who are striving to make our civic conditions better, who are striving to raise the standard of living, of morality, and of comfort among our less fortunate brethren. We have endeavored to make all men and all societies engaged in such work feel that the police were their natural allies. We have endeavored to make the average private citizen feel that the officer of the law was to be dreaded only by the lawbreaker, and was ever ready to treat with courtesy, and to befriend, any one who needed his aid.

The man in the ranks, the man with the night-stick, has been quick to respond to our efforts, quick to recognize honesty of purpose in his superiors. You have in the police force a body of admirable men, brave, able, and zealous; under proper leadership they can at any time be depended upon to do the best possible work. I

have bitterly regretted that the law under which the force is administered is so bad that it has been impossible to make of this splendid body of men all that could be made, if the board had one responsible head with complete power and absolute singleness of purpose to do right.

Again thanking you for having appointed me, and for your treatment of me during my term of service, I am, with much gratitude and great respect, very faithfully yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

*Police Department,  
of the City of New York.*

*300 Mulberry Street,*

*New York,*

April 17th. 1897.

*Board of Police Commissioners:*

*Theodore Roosevelt,  
President  
Henry J. Andrews,  
Treasurer  
Frederick L. Grant,  
Andrew L. Barker.*

To the Mayor.

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I herewith tender you my resignation to take effect on April 19th. in accordance with our understanding.

I wish to take this opportunity, sir, to thank you for appointing me, and to express my very deep appreciation of your attitude toward me, and toward the force, the direction of which you in part entrusted to my care. We have been very intimately associated with your work and I know, ~~as~~ as all men who have been associated with you do know, the devotion with which you have given all of your time and all of your efforts to the betterment of our civic conditions, <sup>and</sup> the single mindedness with which at every crisis you have sought merely the good of the City. I have been able to work so zealously under you because you have never

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required of me anything but loyal service to what you conceived to be the best interest of New York City, and I well know that had I followed any other course it would have met with instant and ~~sharp~~<sup>sharp</sup> rebuke from you. I know also the almost incredible difficulties with which you have been surrounded, and the impossibility of your acting so as to please every one. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that people are now realizing that you have given us far and away the best administration which this City has ever had. In this Department we, as well as you, have been hampered by unwise legislation, and the so-called bipartisan law, under which the Department itself is administered, is of such absurdly foolish character that it has been impossible to achieve the results which would have been achieved had you had your hands free with reference to your appointees, and had your appointees in turn possessed full and proper power over the Force



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During my term of service we have striven especially to make  
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his aid. <sup>The man in the ranks, the man with the right to strike, has been quick to respond to my efforts, quick to recognize honesty of purpose in his superior. You have in the police force a body of admirable men, brave, able and zealous; men who have done their best possible work. I have bitterly regretted that the land under which the force is administered is so bad that it has been impossible to make of this splendid body of men anything more than a mere tool. The work of the force has no responsible head, with complete power, and absolute brightness of purpose.</sup>  
Again thanking you for having appointed me, and for your treat-

ment of me during my term of service. I am, with much gratitude and

greatest respect

faithfully  
Very ~~truly~~ yours,

Theodore Roosevelt