



"Representing New England's Finest"

NEW ENGLAND POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS
7 Technology Drive, Suite 102 – SILVACO Building
Chelmsford, Massachusetts 01863
www.NEPBA.org



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September 4, 2018

Mark Parker, Chairman & CEO
NIKE World Headquarters
1 Bowerman Drive
Beaverton, OR 97005

Dear Mr. Parker,

As the Chairman and CEO of Nike, Inc., I find your company and your spokesman Mr. Kaepernick to be both offensive and demeaning to those of us who served or continue to serve our communities as police officers. As both the President of the United Federation of Police Officers & Executive Director of the New England Police Benevolent Association, Inc., I find your anti-police "smelly sock" campaign nothing more than inflammatory and repulsive toward police officers.

As many US Military veterans will attest, this is not about Mr. Kaepernick's decision to "take a knee", but rather a result of these military heroes sacrifice which gave him the right to do so. Yet, it was your callous decision to utilize his alleged social injustice message along with NIKE's decision to honor a cop-hater whose "Smelly Sock" campaign depict police officers in a negative light. At a time, when police officers are being assassinated for simply sitting in their police cruisers, going to bogus calls for service or shot & killed as they are responding to domestic disturbance calls, your company (NIKE) decided to inflame this hate and bigotry toward police officers by honoring him with a contract, after he depicted the face of a pig in a police uniform as the design for your "Smelly Sock" campaign.

I find it ironic that the former QB who hasn't completed a pass in over two years and who was relegated to a back-up in the NFL, is the new pitchman for NIKE's "Smelly Sock" campaign. Yet, your recent Nike Ad utilized Mr. Kaepernick as some kind of heroic or iconic figure and someone who should be looked up to rather than scorned. However, The Colin Kaepernick Foundation donated in April \$25,000 to Assata's Daughters, a Chicago "direct action" resistance organization honoring Assata Shakur, who escaped prison and fled to Cuba after being found guilty in the 1973 murder of Officer Werner Foerster. Yet, this is the type of person your company saw fit to sign to a contract and utilize as the "New Face" of NIKE.

Apparently, you couldn't find enough victims who lost limbs at the Boston Marathon Bombing and who were rescued or resuscitated by police officers or maybe you couldn't find former Red Sox World Series Ace Curt Schilling with his "bloody sock" or was it perhaps because as a pro-police athlete he didn't fit your anti-police rhetoric or that your company's meal ticket for decades, the great Michael Jordan is also a well-known financial supporter of law enforcement and whose father was the victim of violence.

Where was Nike when the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund & Museum was honoring the over 20,000 heroes who gave their lives in the performance of their duties? In fact, Mr. Parker according to the NLEOMF police officers deaths in the line of duty have rose 20% in 2017.

Mr. Parker, unlike you, and Mr. Kaepernick police officers across this country didn't make \$47 Million last year and don't have endorsement deals - but perhaps that is a noble thought.

Imagine, a Street Cop in Chicago, LA or Philly wearing a pair of "Police Nike Sneakers" and giving a pair (worth \$200) to any kid who turned in a gun - don't you think that would save lives and not inflame hatred? Don't you think that would cause a positive and respectable interaction with police officers as well as the innocent youths and the communities they serve? Maybe, then gang violence would not be more prevalent than a pair of AIR JORDAN's.

Mr. Parker, don't you think Nike should be in the forefront of community activism with a powerful message of support of law enforcement rather than spewing racial hatred and division? As well as utilizing such a controversial figure that will be remembered on the field for what he didn't do; rather than what he did!

Mr. Parker, you had a tremendous opportunity to be the next great leader and a true supporter of a generation that has seen its youth die by gun violence on a daily basis, not as a result of police officers, but rather by other kids and rival gangs.

Mr. Parker, you had the unique opportunity to have potential customers live long enough to buy their first pair of Nike sneakers, instead of reading about how another kid shot a rival for that same pair of Nike Sneakers. Mr. Parker, You had an opportunity to change the course of history in a positive way, but instead you decided to look the other way.

Mr. Parker. . . Unlike, the NIKE slogan "JUST DO IT!" – It appears the NEW NIKE mantra has become we "JUST BLEW IT!"

Yet, perhaps you can see the errors of your ways and utilize this an olive branch, in which to reach out to the law enforcement community, so we can work together to ensure those wearing Nike sneakers are not dying in them. As a law enforcement officer/police officer for 33 years, and a local, regional and national law enforcement labor leader for nearly 40 years, as well as the father of a police officer – I would be happy to assist and/or help you in any way you see fit – but it starts with a conversation. SO, LET'S DO IT – before it's too late for another victim or another police officer!

Respectfully,

Jerry Flynn

Jerry Flynn, Executive Director

New England Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

7 Technology Drive - Suite 102 | SILVCO Building | Chelmsford, Massachusetts 01863

Office: 978-453-2500 (Ext. 2100) | Fax: 978-453-2555 | Cell: 978-771-7001

Email: gflynn@nepba.org | Website: www.nepba.org

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