



City of Peoria

Police Department 542 S.W. Adams Street Peoria, Illinois Phone 673-41
May 17, 1973

Ms. Juliette Whitaker
2317 W. Seventh, Apt. #205
Peoria, Illinois

Dear Ms. Whitaker:

I, as Chief of Police, on behalf of the Peoria Police Department, wish to extend to you our heartiest congratulations and commendation for your actions at St. Cecilia School on May 1, 1973.

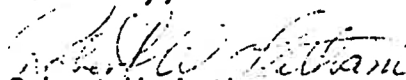
I personally had the honor of talking to you prior to and at the scene of the situation at St. Cecilia School and can honestly comment that you are a person who is and was at that time concerned with the welfare and safety of the persons of a community and not directing yourself toward race, creed nor color.

Your courageous and determined efforts on entering St. Cecilia School, knowing that you would be faced with at least two armed men with a number of hostages at gunpoint, certainly would force most people to give second thoughts to their own safety; yet, I did not notice a trace of fear in your attitudes or actions but did notice your concern for human life.

Certainly the situation did not go without tragedy; however, I hope that you realize that the actions of yourself and those of Mr. John Burch were the two most significant and instrumental aspects in preventing what may well have been a horribly tragic situation for many families in the community. I feel that I can speak on behalf of the parents of the children who were in St. Cecilia School and that they shall long remember both Mr. John Burch and yourself in their prayers and hopefully will establish a change in many attitudes that each of us are human beings not to be defined by our race, creed or color.

I find it difficult and perhaps somewhat impersonal in attempting to direct a letter that will emphasize my true expressions of gratitude, but again, on behalf of myself and the Police Department, I extend to you my heartiest expression of gratitude and again forward to you my personal commendation and thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,


Robert W. Latham
Superintendent of Police

RWL/bjb

cc Mr. James Peeples, Director, Human Relations Commission
Mr. Robert O. Wright, City Manager
Mayor Richard E. Carver
Police Honors Board