



I just heard that 86% of the nation's police departments are "understaffed." That's great news! Of course, it raises the question, CAN a police department really be "understaffed"? The term is subjective and value-laden, obviously, since few of us would ever use it in reference to, say, a great reduction of active members and applicants to a baby-boiling syndicate or the local kitten-kicking guild. But I digress.

So, there's understaffing at 86% of police departments (and... what an oddly specific number, no?), while reports say that cop-shoppers across the country are struggling to find anyone at all to fill the shiny black shoes of retired public mercenaries. Um, servants. Whatever. The article I read attributes the shortage of prospective piggies to heightened public awareness of the evils of coppism, following years of large-scale anti-cop protests. IF true, then it sounds like all that activism might've done some good after all. That's encouraging.

All of this brought two thoughts to mind, for me. One, ~~these~~ unsuckled nipples at the public teat are unlikely to remain open for long; and two, why not try to fill as many of the vacancies with anti-authoritarians while we can? So, yes, I'm speaking to you, anarchist friend... go sign up to be a cop! It sounds absurd, I know, but... who better?

Think about the implications. There's an opportunity to remove some of the rot of these institutions from the inside, to take a power position that would otherwise be filled by some power-worshipping fascist who can't wait to try out his new gun and other human-reducing hardware, and put in a lover of liberty and respecter of dignity instead. Wouldn't you feel much safer to know that the driver of the pignobile next to you comes from an artists' collective? IF anti-authoritarians begin to fill police stations, maybe people can stop being afraid to call 911 when they genuinely need help. Corrupt cop cultures might be remade from the inside, through the influence of ~~decent~~
~~human beings~~ filling the vacuum caused by excess and abuse. We can occupy ~~the~~ pig sty, and even acquire capital while doing it, which of course can then be put to whatever good use one wants.

Yes, I'm aware that this all sounds pretty crazy, and also of the ~~well-known~~ danger that "power corrupts." I'm not saying it wouldn't be distasteful to cover your ~~A~~ patch with a tin star... I'm only saying that if you don't, then imagine who eventually will. And there's a

precedent now for this kind of radical usurpation of oppressive machinery... look at Larry Krasner in Philadelphia, the cop-suing public defender who ran for and won the city's District Attorney position. As far as I know, he and the like-minded reformers he installed in the ~~DA's~~
Death Star have not turned to the dark side themselves, yet. Instead, he and they continue to clean up the previously unrestrained crime family that is — or was — the City police department and office of the ^{also}prostitutor. It seems to me that even if a few people of goodwill get a bit drunk on the toxins of power, much good can still be done before any real character damage sets in. Remember, the alternative is that these positions of power are occupied only by those with massive character defects to begin with... rarely are those who are naturally attracted to pushing people around ^{also}notⁿ people who are quite disturbed themselves.

So, if you are someone who chafes at authoritarian abuse, please at least consider the value and validity in doing your part to keep the tools of that abuse out of the hands of real sociopaths; go take up a vacant cop job. Let's not let all the hard work that helped open these positions up in the first place get completely undone, as it surely will once the law & order legions gradually get comfortable again with the idea of wearing their oppressiveness on their sleeves... and chests, and hips....