

Injustice By Quota

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Let's say there are 100 murders – in a certain city in 2021. How many arrests for murder should there be in that city that year?

We can't know in advance. Setting lagtime aside, consider the other factors. Some of the killers may have killed more than once. Some of the murders may never be solved. Some honest arrests may prove to be mistaken. We can only say: "As many arrests as possible, so long as persons

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are arrested for murder only if and when there is good cause to do so."

Properly, one establishes sound criteria for making arrests and good investigative procedures. Not quotas. The same principles apply to every kind of arrest.

"Yes, Paul Jacob. But all this is bleedingly obvious. Why go on about it?"



Alas, what is really basic common sense to you and me apparently clashes with the desire of some within and without police departments for "proof" of effective results. Proof like total number of arrests. (Of course, in a police state, you might arrest half the population, far exceeding any quota, and still get lots of crime.)

The errant fondness for arrest quotas is at least being ended, almost, in Virginia, where the governor has signed legislation to prohibit Virginia agencies and police departments from using them.

I write "almost" because the legislation does not include a ban on quotas for traffic tickets, which are like being half-arrested. Tickets are one way municipalities make money.

Well, maybe we can all just stop driving.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.