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Dear Editor, We Must Do Better

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Police Detectives and employees of the Medical Examiners office at the scene of a shooting, where 29-year-old Rique Ashby and 14-year-old Aaron Ashby succumbed to gunshot wounds. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dear Editor,

Over the last few days, I couldn't shake the thought of all the people in the Virgin Islands whose lives were taken, senselessly. The hundreds over the past 20 years.

Many so young, they were still breast feeding, so to speak. I began to feel the weight of knowing a number of them. Their families intersect mine: Some former coworkers, neighbors, acquaintances. Some were family of mine, whether by blood or marriage. All gone, just like that. BOOM. Lickidy Split ... Just Like That — GONE.

The raw truth of it all is that with all the words of condolences and offers sympathies, though well intended and sincere, the grief never really goes away. It's always present like mental, emotional and spiritual wounds, that reopen each time you hear of another senseless taking of life. Or every time you realize that we live amongst people who are never brought to justice to account for the lives that they have snuffed.

Or amongst some who wake on any given day, and proclaim in their souls that on this day that God has provided, they will take a life. And that life might reside in your household or the household of someone close.

We are in a tragic place, in so many ways.

Pray God for the strength and courage to take back our community. Despite all the talk about this or that program, in the end it requires strength and courage to fight back those forces that are hell bent on making us live in fear!

We Must Do Better!

Submitted by Moleto Smith, a St. Thomas resident

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