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This episode is sponsored by 511, a company that I've used for well over a decade and continue to use to this day.

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And 511 is offering you guys, the audience of the Behind the Shield podcast, a discount on every purchase you make with them.

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Before we get to that code, I want to highlight a couple of products that again, I personally use today.

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One of the most impressive products they just released is their Rush Backpack 2.0.

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Now for many of you, whether you're going to the fire station, the police station, whether you're traveling with your family,

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whether you're taking training courses, we have to fly, we have to drive, we have to take trains.

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And I have to say, I own multiple backpacks, many of 511's different ones, but as far as a daypack, this one was the most impressive.

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There are so many different compartments. The way it sits on your back is incredibly comfortable.

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If you are a concealed carry person, there's also a spot for a weapon.

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So they've thought of multiple, multiple things that a man or woman would have to do on a daily basis.

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That is in addition to all of the products that I talk about a lot.

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Their uniforms fit for men or fit for women in the first responder professions.

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The footwear that they offer, whether it's the Norris sneaker or the Atlas system that is designed for foot health

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and therefore knees and back and hips and shoulders and neck.

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As a civilian, I live in a lot of their clothes as well.

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Their jeans stretch, you can actually squat down in them.

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We live in Florida here, so I wear a lot of their shorts, which again, very, very lightweight material.

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You can get it wet and it will dry almost immediately.

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And then moving to the fitness and tactical space, I used to have just a regular weight vest.

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Recently, I switched to a 511 vest and actually bought ballistic plates as well.

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My thinking was simply if I'm going to have a vest, why not have one that protects me as well?

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And that tack vest is trusted by law enforcement all around the country.

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So I mentioned they were going to offer you a discount code.

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So if you go to [511tactical.com](http://511tactical.com) and enter the code SHIELD15, S-H-I-E-L-D-1-5,

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you'll get 15% off not just that one purchase, but every time you visit their store.

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And if you want to learn more about 511, their mission, their products,

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then listen to episode 338 of the Behind the Shield podcast with the CEO and founder, Francisco Morales.

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This episode is sponsored by Bubbs Naturals, yet another company that I track down to bring on as a sponsor

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because I myself love their products.

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They are offering you, the audience of the Behind the Shield podcast, a 20% discount.

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But before we get to that, I do want to highlight a few of the products that I use myself.

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Firstly, collagen. I am about to turn 50.

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And so my hair, my skin, my nails, not really a big concern when I was younger, definitely a lot more of a concern now.

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However, where I've really seen the impact is joint health and gut health.

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And I've been blown away that when I'm consistent using collagen, Bubbs collagen in this case,

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I see a massive improvement in both.

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Another area, I drink coffee, love coffee, and in the morning I use the Halo Creamer.

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Now, originally I used the MCT Oil Powder, but now they have the Halo Creamer,

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which has also got grass-fed butter in it, a lot more creamy if you're not trying to go for the vegan option that they have as well.

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Now, it's important to mention as well the altruistic element of Bubbs Naturals.

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The origin story involves Glenn, Bub, Doherty, one of the two Navy SEALs killed in Benghazi,

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and a good friend of the founders, Sean and TJ.

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So 10% of every single sale goes towards the Glenn Doherty Foundation.

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Now, as I mentioned before, they are offering you, the audience, 20% off your purchase if you use the code SHIELD.

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That's S-H-I-E-L-D at [bubsnaturals.com](http://bubsnaturals.com).

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And finally, if you want to hear more about their products and Glenn's powerful story,

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listen to episode 558 with co-founder Sean Lake.

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Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast. As always, my name is James Gearing,

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and this week it is my absolute honor to welcome on the show former British armed police officers Tony Long and Mark Williams.

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Now, in recent years, our armed units in the UK and our police officers here in the US have had their feet held to the fires after a shooting.

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Now, in most cases, it was a justified shooting and it's tragic that they were put in that circumstance in the first place.

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However, of course, there are times where the police officer was 100% at fault.

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So what I wanted to do was give a voice to the British armed police who have been lauded through the press recently and discuss a myriad of topics.

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Now, I myself am not only here in the US now, even though I'm originally from the UK, I'm also not a police officer and certainly not an armed police officer.

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So I pulled from my friends in those professions to try and cover the topics and the areas that our police officers are facing at the moment.

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So we discuss everything from the British knife crime epidemic, organizational betrayal, diminishing training, standards, fitness, sleep and so much more.

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Now, before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say every week, please just take a moment.

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Go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback and leave a rating.

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Every single five star rating truly does elevate this podcast, therefore making it easier for others to find.

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And this is a free library of well over 900 episodes now.

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So all I ask in return is that you help share these incredible men and women stories so I can get them to every single person on planet Earth who needs to hear them.

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So with that being said, I introduce to you Tony Long and Mark Williams.

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Enjoy.

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Well, Mark and Tony, I want to welcome you to the Behind the Shield podcast.

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It is your afternoon in the UK, my morning here in Florida.

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For people listening, Tony, you are the guest on episode 424.

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So if people haven't heard that, you will hear Tony's full life story then.

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But I want to start initially anyway by welcoming you to the podcast today.

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So that's how important I am. I was number 424.

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I got 912 now, so you're falling below average as the weeks go on.

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All right. Well, I want to just kind of give an overview with you, Tony, because for people that haven't listened to that episode and then Mark will go to you and kind of lead you through your life story.

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And then obviously today we're going to unpack some of the challenges that face the British police and certainly the armed units that serve under them.

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So, Tony, if you want to just give us a kind of brief overview of your journey into policing, some of the areas that you ended up working and when you transitioned out.

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So I joined the police a matter of months after I left school. I was 18 and a half, very young, probably quite naive.

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Came up from a little town in Sussex on the South Coast to London because I wanted to be a big city cop.

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I got posted to a busy inner city, slightly deprived area called Lewisham, which was a good place to cut your teeth.

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Lots of street crime and lots of things to keep you busy. I did that for about five years.

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My intention was to be a detective because all the heroes in movies are detectives, right?

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So I wanted long hair. It was the 70s. I wanted to be chasing bad guys with a two inch revolver and getting in car chases and stuff like that.

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And then when I got in, I discovered that actually the detectives weren't all good young looking guys with long hair and flared trousers.

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They were middle aged fat guys sitting behind a tight rider and probably with quite a lot of alcohol in their system from the night before.

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And so I decided I didn't want to do that. So I went to a specialist unit, which was called the Special Patrol Group, which was a combination of plain clothes and uniform work.

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It was like the riot squad, for want of a better word. And I walked straight into the middle of the 1981 riots, which were probably some of the worst riots that the country had ever seen at that point.

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And while I was on the SPG, I got my basic firearms course.

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So now if you want to do the most basic course to carry a firearm, certainly in the Metropolitan Police, it's probably about five weeks in length.

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Mine was five days. It was four days on an indoor range, learning to shoot a revolver reasonably safely and then a day of tactics basically.

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So it was really, really crude. So crude, in fact, that I decided that I wasn't going to change things from the outside.

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So when they asked for volunteers for the training unit, which also had a SWAT role, I applied for that.

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And in 1983, I joined the unit. It's now called MO 19. Back then it was called D 11, D department being training.

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It's had various name changes over the years. And I served there for 25 years and retired in 2008.

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But I should have retired in 2005, in the summer of 2005. That would have been when my 30 years service was up.

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But literally a couple of months before my retirement date, I got involved in a fatal shooting of a guy called Azel Rodney, who was an armed drug dealer on route to get together with two accomplices to rob some Colombian drug dealers and kill them.

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So I ended up getting investigated. So the investigation in total took about a year.

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And then the job opportunity I was going to leave for had gone. So I stayed in the job for another three years.

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And then 10 years after the incident, so I shot Azel Rodney in 2005. In 2015, I was, or 2014 rather, I was charged with his murder and stood trial the following year.

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I'm not on the run. I was actually acquitted by a jury of my peers. And so as a consequence of that, and the way a lot of the stuff that was written about me in the press and in social media was pretty dramatically wrong.

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So I wrote a book to tell my side of the story called Lethal Force. And that's me pretty much up to date.

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While we're on that subject, because I've got so many things written down to talk about one thing I forgot to write down was media.

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So, especially from 2020 onwards here in the US between the George Floyd tragedy, which it was, that that man should still be with us today.

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Was he an angel? No, but should he have been killed? Also no.

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But the trial by media has just got worse and worse and worse here in the US.

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Talk to me and Mark, feel free to jump in on the subject as well.

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Talk to me on the impact of, would be the right word. Oh my goodness. Blanking on the word now.

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Irresponsible reporting on the lives of a civilian and or a police officer in this case.

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I think social media has affected all of us.

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There used to be an expression, you know, when I joined the police back in the 70s and probably right the way through the 80s and 90s,

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that criminal trends or trends generally that started in the United States would get to us, you know, ranging,

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depending on when you're talking about it, from like two years down to about six months.

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But now, of course, with social media, everything is instantaneous and you'll know that the, you know,

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the uproar over the death of George Floyd spread across the world within hours.

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And there were huge demonstrations in the United Kingdom and probably every other major capital in the world.

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And equally, rumour spreads and ill truths spread.

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So, yeah, we live in a totally different world to the, you know, when I joined the police force in the 1970s.

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And of course, the other thing is, is that there's no real way of verifying anything that's on social media as being genuine.

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And nowadays, you know, with AI, you don't even know whether the person you're looking at is a real person or, you know,

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or a bot or whatever the expression is.

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Interesting on that, James, we've pulled right away now the Police Farms Association from social media.

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You know, we've got a Facebook page and that's about it, but we're not on Twitter or all the other stuff, our Instagram and all that.

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We don't do any of that now.

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You know, we got trolled. We had lots of problems with that a couple of years ago.

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And, you know, I think what we all have to realise is that you can put something on Twitter that is completely the truth

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and displays exactly what happened and there will always be someone who disagrees with it or puts a steer on it in the opposite direction.

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And that's a big problem. We don't get involved with it now.

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There's no point really, because there's just some people out there that are pretty bored with their lives,

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they just want to get on their backsides and just want to criticise everybody and play the armchair critic, don't they?

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They've never done anything in their lives themselves.

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Well, I think what's made it even worse, and I'm interested in your perspective on this, I watched during the pandemic, for example,

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people that we paid a lot of money to be, air quotes, leaders, swear up and down that, for example, a vaccine was 100% effective.

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And if you take it, then you were a murderer. And how dare the ambulance people and the NHS nurses have the audacity to refuse it

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after being unprotected for a year and no one had a problem with that.

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And so even the mouthpieces of politics and the leadership in fire or police or whatever it was, we kind of sat and watched that they were wrong.

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And there was never any apology after, there's never any rescinding of jobs that were taken from vaccine mandates.

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And so you've got this media push and there's no accountability, even with some of these leaders.

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Like after all of that, don't get me wrong, at the beginning, everyone was scared around the entire planet.

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Everyone took it seriously. The most extreme right leaning people I know still said the same thing.

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The reality was there was only one truth that came out of the pandemic.

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The healthier the nation, the more likely they are to do well during a virus sweeping through their country.

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As we came out of this, there was almost no discussion on changing the food in schools, putting PE programs back in,

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supporting local farmers, all the things that will make people healthy, whether you choose to have a vaccine, whether you don't.

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That was the truth. And those people, the ones talking about that, were the ones lauded as heretics during the pandemic.

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How dare you say that my aunt died because she was 300 pounds. It was COVID. No.

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So this is the problem, I think, is there's been such a lack of trust, even with the people that we were supposed to trust,

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that it's created kind of anarchy in the media world where you can basically, they've shown you can say anything and get away with it.

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I think you're absolutely right. And, you know, I'm absolutely not a conspiracy theorist.

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Quite the reverse, but changing the subject slightly, but actually back to what we're here to talk about.

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You would be mistaken, you know, you didn't look at the way that police officers are treated and the way that the police are reported on in the press

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and not think that there was some undercurrent, that there was something sinister going on in the background,

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because it's almost, you know, just like it was in the States, you know, with defunding the police, it's almost as if there's a policy.

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And it's not just strident people with banners, you know, standing on a street corner and shouting about pigs anymore.

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You know, it's the language is different and it's a lot more subtle.

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But actually, there's been politicians of all sides of the House of Commons, basically just chipping away

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at an organization that they should be supporting because it's there to uphold the laws that they bring in.

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And of course, during the pandemic, I mean, that really didn't help the police case because we were seen as tyrants trying to uphold,



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you know, laws that were against people's liberty. So none of that has really helped.

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But I think one of the problems with the pandemic, if we go back to talking about that specifically, is we still don't actually know the truth.

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You know, I'm sure that a lot of the stuff that we were told at that time, they genuinely believed, you know, at some time or other,

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there was so much contrary information coming in from the scientific world.

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And what that's done is it's just bred a world of cynics and a world of conspiracy theorists.

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Up to that point, we had those that thought 9-11 was a conspiracy and they still exist.

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But for Christ's sake, we've even got flat earthers now.

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You know, where did they disappear in medieval times, for God's sake? Where did they come back from?

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You know, it's just bizarre.

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You got anything to add on to that, Mark?

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It's just a strange world. I think, you know, I'll just go on now thinking nothing really surprises me.

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But, you know, from a policing point of view, it beggars belief where we've got with policing, particularly in the UK,

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with people's attitude towards policing, the respect for police officers and the work they do.

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And I just wonder where it's all going to end up, you know.

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And, you know, we're getting old now. I mean, obviously I'm considerably younger than Tony.

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But joking, obviously. But I think, you know, we wonder where it's all going to end up, you know, in our lifetimes.

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And Tony and I have spoken quite a lot recently about where we see armed policing going in the UK

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and what it might look like in 10 years' time or whatever. But things are going to change.

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And I can't see it getting any better.

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No, I actually think that one of the cornerstones of British policing,

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and it's much misunderstood, but it's much talked about, is that the British police are unarmed.

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And of course, they predominantly are. You know, more officers have tasers now.

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But actually, when I started as an instructor in 1983, the Metropolitan Police consisted of about 32,000 officers,

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of which nearly 5,000 were trained in the use of firearms.

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Now there's 34,000 officers and we only train 2,500.

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So we train far less firearms officers now than we used to,

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but we train them to a much higher standard on a more effective range of weapons.

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So they have less lethal capability.

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They have weapons that can perform at far greater distances than the officers that we trained in the 80s just on a handgun.

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And they're better deployed.

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But the imagery has changed because of the fact that they're permanently deployed.

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00:19:42,000 --> 00:19:47,000

So now they do look much more like American cops, for instance.

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00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:52,000

And I've lost my track here a little bit.

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00:19:52,000 --> 00:19:59,000

But I think one of the issues is that we have always been very proud in this country in the fact that we are unarmed.

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00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:02,000

Personally, I think it's stupid and always have done.

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00:20:02,000 --> 00:20:07,000

And I think it's a bit of British arrogance that we can turn around to the rest of the world and go,

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00:20:07,000 --> 00:20:11,000

look how peaceful we are compared with our neighbors in Europe,

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00:20:11,000 --> 00:20:14,000

because even our police officers don't need to carry guns.

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00:20:14,000 --> 00:20:19,000

Well, actually, it's no more dangerous in Denmark or Iceland or, you know,

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Paris, well, perhaps not Paris, but, you know, parts of Europe than it is in the UK.

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But if it carries on going the way that it's going,

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our centuries old arrangement whereby the only people that carry guns have volunteered to do it,

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00:20:36,000 --> 00:20:38,000

you're not going to get any volunteers.

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Already this year, where we would normally get about 250 applicants,

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00:20:43,000 --> 00:20:51,000

typically for SO-19 or MO-19 when they advertise for it, they got six, six officers.

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Now, also, there's a huge line of people within our units queuing to leave to go to safer units

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00:20:59,000 --> 00:21:03,000

where they're less likely to find themselves having to shoot someone.

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00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:06,000

And so eventually, with no one coming in and people queuing up to go out,

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00:21:06,000 --> 00:21:09,000

or literally just handing their ticket in and saying,

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00:21:09,000 --> 00:21:13,000

look, I see the way my colleagues have been treated, I'm not going to carry a gun.

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00:21:13,000 --> 00:21:19,000

Ironically, all of the people that are anti-police, anti-police firearms and everything else

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00:21:19,000 --> 00:21:24,000

will force a situation where everyone coming into the police

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00:21:24,000 --> 00:21:29,000

will have to do so on the understanding that they have to carry a firearm.

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So we're going to go from having two and a half thousand volunteers

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00:21:32,000 --> 00:21:37,000

to 34,000 officers who don't particularly want to carry a gun,

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00:21:37,000 --> 00:21:41,000

or shouldn't be carrying a gun, and who will go back to five days training

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00:21:41,000 --> 00:21:45,000

instead of five weeks or eight weeks training.

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00:21:45,000 --> 00:21:50,000

So it's almost like, you know, that old expression, you'll get the police force you deserve.

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00:21:50,000 --> 00:21:53,000

You want to keep pushing, that's what you're going to get.

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00:21:53,000 --> 00:21:56,000

And I don't think that's what you want.

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00:21:56,000 --> 00:22:00,000

The numbers that you just gave really kind of highlights the recruitment crisis.

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00:22:00,000 --> 00:22:05,000

And obviously it's there in the UK as well, but it's here all over the US and fire and police.

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00:22:05,000 --> 00:22:09,000

And, you know, people are kind of getting by,

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00:22:09,000 --> 00:22:11,000

but they're missing the point exactly like you underlined.

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00:22:11,000 --> 00:22:15,000

When I tested for, for example, California, when I worked out west,

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00:22:15,000 --> 00:22:18,000

I was testing against about a thousand people.

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00:22:18,000 --> 00:22:21,000

And it wasn't a thousand civilians, a thousand people that had already gone through

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Fire Academy, EMT or paramedic school.

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They volunteered on ambulances, they worked as wildland firefighters.

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They've been in an explorer program.

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00:22:29,000 --> 00:22:33,000

I mean, an incredibly impressive resume for a brand new firefighter.

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And it was a thousand of them and there was 30 spots.

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And now fast forward, it's a fraction of that.

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00:22:39,000 --> 00:22:43,000

And the thing is, I think people miss that the average person that's not really kind of

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deconstructing what these politicians are telling them is that, yeah,

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00:22:46,000 --> 00:22:50,000  
you've got an 18 year old with a heartbeat now in a uniform.

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00:22:50,000 --> 00:22:55,000  
But before you used to be able to choose the top five, 10 percent of everyone that tested with you.

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00:22:55,000 --> 00:22:57,000  
Now you're taking all of them.

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00:22:57,000 --> 00:23:02,000  
So that means that the opportunity for mistakes, the opportunity for a bad apple in your group

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00:23:02,000 --> 00:23:05,000  
has just increased exponentially.

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00:23:05,000 --> 00:23:06,000  
Yeah, absolutely.

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00:23:06,000 --> 00:23:11,000  
And this lowering of standards in order to get in is already taking place.

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00:23:11,000 --> 00:23:17,000  
We've got police officers in the London Metropolitan Police where English isn't their first language,

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00:23:17,000 --> 00:23:23,000  
which is fine, but they can barely read and write English.

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00:23:23,000 --> 00:23:25,000  
And their communication skills are poor.



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00:23:25,000 --> 00:23:30,000

The only one thing you need is a police officer, armed or otherwise, is good communication skills.

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Now, I'm not saying that, you know, with the right training outside of the police service,

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00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:37,000

they couldn't become a good candidate to join the job.

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But if you're taking them before, they're even capable of performing a basic skill.

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00:23:42,000 --> 00:23:44,000

And the same with fitness.

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You know, we've now got a situation where they're so desperate to bring people in of all hues

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00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:52,000

and of all sizes and shapes.

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00:23:52,000 --> 00:23:57,000

They're talking about dropping the fitness standard even lower.

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00:23:57,000 --> 00:24:01,000

Well, trust me, you're not going to get much lower than it is already.

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00:24:01,000 --> 00:24:05,000

But some police officers are even talking about doing away with it altogether.

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00:24:05,000 --> 00:24:13,000

You know, so we're just on a road to a bad place.

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00:24:13,000 --> 00:24:14,000

Mark, question for you quickly.

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00:24:14,000 --> 00:24:20,000

There's a term that has come up over and over again when it's me looking at my profession, the fire service,

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and that is simply false economy.

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There are people that this budget year, oh, we're going to make cuts,

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so we're going to keep the budget where it is.

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But then you look downstream at the immense cost that it is of, like you said, hiring a police officer

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that then has a heart attack five months later because they're 350 pounds.

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Or insert whatever issue that we have when the standards aren't held high

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and there isn't training, rest and recovery put around these first responders.

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00:24:47,000 --> 00:24:52,000

Because what we're asking them to do is so much more than the average civilian does.

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00:24:52,000 --> 00:24:56,000

I mean, the fire service to wake up from a dead sleep and then get on a rig

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00:24:56,000 --> 00:25:00,000

and then drive to a fire and throw ladders and go into a burning building and find someone

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00:25:00,000 --> 00:25:04,000

and then start doing CPR, that's three in the morning.

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00:25:04,000 --> 00:25:05,000

You know what I mean?

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00:25:05,000 --> 00:25:08,000

So we are working our firefighters into the ground here.

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00:25:08,000 --> 00:25:11,000

And it's a false economy because the financial element of the retirements,

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00:25:11,000 --> 00:25:18,000

of the overtime, of the lawsuits far outweigh what it would be to just simply put the standards back up

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00:25:18,000 --> 00:25:21,000

and then actually fill all the vacancies properly.

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What, through your kind of unique lens, is the false economy in policing?

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What is the cost of one mistake by, let's just say, a bad officer?

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So let's just make it kind of black and white.

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The wrong candidate makes it into uniform.

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What can be the financial ramifications of that?

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Well, I mean, in armed policing, we've had a couple of officers recently,

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and I don't even want to mention their names on here, who are in prison at the moment for a long time.

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We'll spend the rest of their lives in prison because of what they've done.

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00:25:51,000 --> 00:25:53,000

And what they did was despicable.

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And I guess you know the case I'm talking about.

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And the damage they've done to armed policing themselves has caused untold damage.

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00:26:04,000 --> 00:26:06,000

It's probably damaged recruitment and everything.

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But I think the whole picture of funding for policing

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and where we're going with the quality of officers and things like that,

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a lot of this is down to the fact that forces, and this isn't just the Metropolitan Police Service,

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all the other forces are chasing targets.

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00:26:21,000 --> 00:26:26,000

They get penalized if they don't recruit enough people, so they lose more money.

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Funding, everything costs more money.

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We mustn't forget they still have to pay electricity bills, gas bills for police stations, things like that,

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as well as paying for the cops and their pensions and etc.

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So everything costs a lot of money.

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But one thing that they've lacked investment in, that I've seen personally, is welfare.

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Looking after officers and their welfare, but looking after when they're injured and things like that.

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And a lot of forces come up with, particularly firearms units, are quite innovative.

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Is that the word?

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00:26:58,000 --> 00:26:59,000

It is now.

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00:26:59,000 --> 00:27:01,000

Yeah, you know what I'm trying to say.

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00:27:01,000 --> 00:27:06,000

Over what they're trying to do to help people and, you know, like oxygen therapy and things like that,

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00:27:06,000 --> 00:27:09,000

and physiotherapy in the bases themselves.

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But there's no real investment and there's never really been any investment in post shooting investigations

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or the treatment of officers and how we train the officers to go through that procedure.

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So we kind of lack a lot of stuff there.

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And that's why we've got charities like ours, because there isn't enough support for officers.

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So the whole picture, the whole picture is looking rather bleak really,

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because perhaps we're not attracting the right people to join the police service.

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I don't mean armed policing, but the police service itself.

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We are putting people off joining the police service.

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00:27:44,000 --> 00:27:48,000

We've seen recent events in this country with officers being charged, etc.

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00:27:48,000 --> 00:27:50,000

It puts people off.

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And what we mustn't ever lose sight of, and particularly people like myself and Tony,

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is that we're older generations.

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You know, when we joined the police service, it was different to how it is now.

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00:27:58,000 --> 00:28:01,000

Young people think more differently than we did.

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00:28:01,000 --> 00:28:04,000

You know, the social media, Tony, you mentioned earlier, is a great example, isn't it,

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00:28:04,000 --> 00:28:07,000

where something can happen in this country in policing,

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00:28:07,000 --> 00:28:12,000

and a young lad or lass up in Cumbria can read about something that happened down in Devon and Cornwall

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00:28:12,000 --> 00:28:15,000

and straight away immediately about what's happening.

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00:28:15,000 --> 00:28:22,000

And it may put them off joining the police service, may make them think twice about even applying.

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So there's all these kinds of things we're up against at the moment.

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And I think unless politicians get behind policing,

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unless the public take a step back and think about how good and how lucky they've been over police service like they've had,

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then I'm not sure where it's going to end up.

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If we're talking about the question that you put to mark there about false economy,

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one of the things I think that's really crippled the police service

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is just to put it in context, when I joined the police in 1975,

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I had no aspirations to do anything for the rest of my adult life and be a cop.



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00:28:58,000 --> 00:29:02,000

I joined because I wanted to be a police officer and I had done for some time.

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00:29:02,000 --> 00:29:05,000

It was either that or I was going to be a soldier.

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00:29:05,000 --> 00:29:07,000

And back then, it was a bit of a thing, wasn't it?

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00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:13,000

It was like, you know, young boys want to be a, you know, drive trains or be a fireman, you know,

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00:29:13,000 --> 00:29:17,000

women, you know, want to be nurses or they want to be a secretary or something like that.

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That just doesn't exist anymore and it hasn't done for some considerable time.

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But what the government has done is they particularly for services like the police force,

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they don't want you to get a big pension.

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They can't afford to pay the big pensions that I'm getting and that Mark's getting.

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00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:38,000

And so they put them on these sort of shorter pension contracts.

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00:29:38,000 --> 00:29:44,000

And so when people join the police now, they don't join with an aspiration to make a career out of it.

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00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:49,000

They join just to tick a box, something they can say they do, they've done,

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00:29:49,000 --> 00:29:55,000

so that they can go on and get a degree in something else and go and get a job in some other.

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00:29:55,000 --> 00:29:56,000

I hear it all the time.

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00:29:56,000 --> 00:30:01,000

You know, I was only going to do five years and then I was going to sort of go down the legal route, become a lawyer.

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00:30:01,000 --> 00:30:03,000

And it would give me a little insight into police work.

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00:30:03,000 --> 00:30:05,000

Well, that did happen. It happened in 1975.

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There was a girl in my class. She went through 12 weeks of training.

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00:30:09,000 --> 00:30:12,000

And at the end of it, she said, yeah, I only did it to fill the summer in.

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00:30:12,000 --> 00:30:14,000

I'm off to university. I'm going to be a lawyer.

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00:30:14,000 --> 00:30:21,000

And now I know the way you think. You go, well, you don't because you've been in the fun factory for 12 weeks.

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00:30:21,000 --> 00:30:22,000

You know, you've been in.

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00:30:22,000 --> 00:30:28,000

I don't blame young people for thinking like that because they do think differently to how we did.

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00:30:28,000 --> 00:30:34,000

And I think, you know, if someone's thinking, you know, I'm going to join a police service and do 10 years in the police service and move on to do something else.

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I don't actually blame them for doing that because there's a lot more out in life now.

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00:30:38,000 --> 00:30:44,000

I mean, my background is I left school with no qualifications, joined the army, did five years and I'm enjoying the police.

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00:30:44,000 --> 00:30:46,000

And that is the only way I was going to get into police.

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But, you know, now young people are getting probably a better education on the whole.

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00:30:50,000 --> 00:30:54,000

You know, they can go to there's more opportunity to go to university and further education.

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00:30:54,000 --> 00:30:58,000

There's a lot more out in the world to see. They can get to countries easier.

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00:30:58,000 --> 00:31:02,000

I'm used to be able to go and work in Europe a lot easier than they can now as well.

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00:31:02,000 --> 00:31:05,000

But I think there's more for them. So I can understand.

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00:31:05,000 --> 00:31:21,000

But the other thing is, is and I know, you know, Tony, I've discussed this, the what they're subjected to on a daily basis as police officers, not just from being police officers out there policing, but internally is enough to put anyone off.

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00:31:21,000 --> 00:31:28,000

And it's funny because I think about any of my children because people always ask the question, what do you do if one of your kids, so they want to join the police?

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00:31:28,000 --> 00:31:33,000

Well, my late wife was a police officer. My granddad was a police officer. I was a police officer. I love policing.

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00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:42,000

I'm still involved in policing. But seriously, if one of my kids came to me and I said, I'm thinking about joining the police, I would probably say to them, don't.

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00:31:42,000 --> 00:31:49,000

And I never thought I'd ever say that. And it's not because of them being injured or getting involved in stuff like it's more about internally.

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00:31:49,000 --> 00:31:53,000

What can happen? You say the wrong thing, something out of context to someone.

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00:31:53,000 --> 00:32:06,000

And I've seen all this recently from the stuff we get through the PFOA, something out of context and your career is put on hold. And we've got our two colleagues from 19 who have now been going for is it five, five years, Tony?

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00:32:06,000 --> 00:32:08,000

Nearly six, five and a half years.

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00:32:08,000 --> 00:32:16,000

We've had another one eight years still ongoing. Why do I want to encourage my kids to do that? I'm not potentially getting involved in that.

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00:32:16,000 --> 00:32:18,000

That's sad, isn't it?

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00:32:18,000 --> 00:32:27,000

I agree with most of what you said, Mark. I kind of disagree on the education and the quality of education that people are getting.

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It may suit certain people that want to go into certain careers, but I think I think it's the Labour government that sort of introduced university careers for everyone.

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I went to a private school. I found out when I was in my late 40s that my dad wasn't actually my dad and that my mum had had an affair with her boss who was quite wealthy.

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He paid for me to go through private education and I wasn't I wasn't a good candidate for prep school.

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Trust me, I was as a wretch, you know.

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00:32:53,000 --> 00:33:03,000

But when I was at school, the people that went to university were people that really should have gone to university.

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You know, we're talking about Greek scholars or people that were absolute brain boxes when it came to physics and things like that.

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I think what we've done is we've watered down university career to the point where you can get a degree in progressive dancing if you want.

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00:33:18,000 --> 00:33:26,000

You know, and it doesn't really happen. What happens is it fills these kids with a sort of image in their head that they can do anything they want because they got a university degree.

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And when they get out in the real world, they find that it serves no purpose whatsoever. It's not going to get them a job.

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But there is an attitude, I think, when people come in the police that, you know, they can get promotion straight away.

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We've now got a ridiculous situation where three quarters of the senior management, a very senior management in the police force, have got literally years of police experience, literally a few years.

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I've heard of someone the other day that's gone from sergeant virtually to commander in about three years.

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Well, that would have been a 20 year track to get to commander from constable.

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You know, now it's three years. They've probably never set foot on the street or for the bare minimum amount of time.

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00:34:10,000 --> 00:34:16,000

So they're not sort of getting their education in the in the school of hard knocks.

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00:34:16,000 --> 00:34:19,000

You know, they're coming in really quite naively. A lot of them.

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I mean, I was naive. I came from a private school in Sussex straight into the police.

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But back then there was enough experienced guys. I mean, there were guys that I worked with at Lewisham that had gone to Lewisham police station in the 1950s.

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And 20 years later, they were still serving at the same police station.

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They knew the ground. They knew the streets. They knew the alleyways. They knew all the faces.

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00:34:41,000 --> 00:34:46,000

You know, they knew a kid that they'd arrested when he was 13 for burglary.

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00:34:46,000 --> 00:34:51,000

They knew his grandson, you know, and arrested him for burglary.

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00:34:51,000 --> 00:34:54,000

And that's what police work was all about. It was knowing your community.

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00:34:54,000 --> 00:35:00,000

Well, now what's coming? They don't get the benefit of more experienced officers.

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00:35:00,000 --> 00:35:11,000

They reckon the average age of a street duty police officer, sorry, the average service of a street police officer in the United Kingdom right now is about five years because it's so hard.

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And it's so they put up with so much shite that really anybody that's got the get up to go gets up and goes and they go to any organization within the police.

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They can where it's not going to be, you know, night duties, late shifts and early shifts and rolling around with some ungrateful member of the public in the street.

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And they can get a nine to five office job. That's that's why police service has gone and all the management, the people that oversee all of this.

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They understand that because they did exactly the same only sooner by taking promotion.

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So it's been a perfect storm. I mean, we closed Hendon. Hendon was world renowned as a police training college.

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That's where every recruit into the Metropolitan Police went through. And we've got rid of it completely.

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You know, it used to be residential. You get up in the morning, you'd be paraded.

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You'd be marched from one part of the compound to another. You do Fizz every day.

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You'd be in the gym getting thrashed or you'd be in the gym doing self-defense or you'd be in the swimming pool doing life saving, you know,

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proper stuff that police officers have to do. They don't do any of that shit anymore.



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I must admit, that's one of the things I think concerns me as well, because, you know, it's funny, I was at a reunion recently with some of my colleagues I joined the service with.

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And we were watching now passing out parade. There must have been 200 officers passing out, marching around the square.

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And I was thinking, God, you know, like, I remember when we all went into the theater, you know, you used to go to Hendon, Tony, you go into that theater area, you know, when you first joined.

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And there was hundreds of us, you know, and so I don't think they have that now. But also, when you're at training school, without a doubt, it weens out people that you don't really want or, you know, you think are a little bit unsavory, their characters, perhaps,

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and they weren't perhaps performing as they should do. And that's the time to get them, not let them go out in the street and do the damage and then we get rid of them.

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Yeah, so that we missed an opportunity there, I think, with a lot of that. And, and like Tony says, you know, just physical fitness, you know, doing training and stuff in the gym, the swimming pool, things like that, doing all those things.

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I don't know. How do they do a swimming test now? Do they do a swimming test now?

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No, probably not, you know, and, and, and then the other thing is, you know, we, you know, we're then sending these young people out there, dropping them right in at the deep end, literally.

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And they're then witnessing horrific things at work, you know, horrific accidents and violence, things like that. And that's one of the things that struck me, I think, over the last few years is the amount of violence that some of these officers witness and are

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subjected to and things like that, you know, on a weekly, if not daily basis. And it's the same all around the country, you know, where you hear of horrific attack on officers and things they witness and the barbarity of some of these criminals, you know, and the officers are going there and

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finding victims, you know, in appalling states and things like that. That's all part of this, you know, what goes on up there, isn't it? How they cope with these things. And if we don't train them properly, and they aren't the most resilient people that we can find because the procedures aren't there, you know, to recruit properly,

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they're going to suffer even more. You know, we do, you know, we get lots of every week, we get a phone call from somebody who's been injured on duty, who has literally burnt out. And it isn't just Met police, it's all around the country, we look after the whole of the country.

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And there's people burnt out all the time. And a lot of these guys and girls are doing their best. And they just and often the thing that tips them over.

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And this really I know gets me and Tony's got a little bit about this is the finger tips them over is people at work the way they're treated at work sometimes by people and it just tips them over the edge, where they're thinking, you know, they're dealing with everything that goes on the street and suddenly

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they're very own people are trying to shaft them. And I've said this so many times I'll say opening I'll say it's on blue in the face. The police service, the Metropolitan Police Service in particular what I served in is becoming a master at shaft and its own people.

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And that and I think that applies around the country. I can only talk for the Met because that's where I serve but it's a master at shaft and its own people because they're so easy to shaft.

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And some of these investigators and these people that go out for looking for evidence for their promotion and things like that. They're happy to tread and walk all over anyone they need to, to get there.

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That's terrific. It probably happens all around the world, James, I'm guessing. Yeah, well, I mean, just on that on that topic alone, what I've realized, I mean, I've been doing this seven and a half years now.

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So that's not almost a thousand conversations I've had getting close. And you realize that there's a lot of people that have seen and done some horrible shit in their life in their career. But it wasn't that wasn't the thing that really put them over the edge mentally.

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It was the organizational betrayal. I've had police officers hurt in uniform, you know, run over a shot, whatever, that were then discarded by their departments.

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You know, I've had just so many different areas and things. Sadly, you see this a lot in a lot of these posts, you know, you see someone died suddenly, which we all know now is code for either suicide or overdose.

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And, you know, you look at the back story and a lot of times there was some sort of, you know, termination or procedure because, you know, they pulled someone out of a building, burning building, but they didn't follow steps A through W.

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And so they get reprimanded for that, whatever it was. That is such a huge compounding element of what they call moral injury. You've joined this tribe, you joined this group, you

basically signed as a blank check, as they say, so that you will lay your life down for the people of London or whoever you serve.

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You know, you have the shared suffering through the academy, you put yourself through more as you level up and go to these different teams. You do everything that you were trained to do, and then they cut your legs from under you.

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And so if you think about ancient tribal civilizations, if you were shunned by your tribe, that was basically a death sentence. Well, you know, subconsciously, we still have that going.

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And what's nauseating is this has become a toxic culture. This isn't the job. And I had two firefighter spouses on the show recently, and one of them talked about her little boy used to play with all the firefighter stuff, the trucks, the, you know, the costume, all that.

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And he was now in his teens. And she said, you know, you could be a firefighter one day. And he was like, I will never be a firefighter. He said, daddy's never home.

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So it wasn't I'm worried daddy's going to get burned or daddy's going to get, you know, hurt in a car crash. It was daddy is never home.

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And so this is what's happened is it's not the job. It's not the policing. It's not the fire. It's this toxic culture that's been created around it. The lack of rest and recovery, the betrayal in uniform.

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These are the things that are causing so much so many issues, the understaffing, you know, during COVID, you know, vaccine mandates, all these elements are taking our first responders from their family.

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They're changing the first responders mentally. And that is what these children are seeing. So now you've got 20 years and sons of daughters of police officers of military veterans that see what that did to their family and go, no, I don't want to be a part of this.

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But it's not the job. It's the environment itself.

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You know, I mean, I've said this quite a lot. I haven't said it for a long time, actually. But during my 33 years service with the Met, I was on the tactical team for about 25 years and over a 20 year period, I became involved in situations where I've had to shoot five suspects.

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Two of those survived, although both seriously injured, and three, sadly, died. I have never lost a moment's sleep through having to do what I was essentially trained to do.

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You know, you spend hours on a range preparing for that one occasion where you might have to pull the trigger. And I did it. And for the best of my knowledge, hand on heart, I never lost a moment's sleep or suffered any psychological issues as a result of having to do that.

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But I've lost hours of sleep. And, you know, I've, I've worried to the point of exhaustion about the way I'll be treated and what the way I am or was being treated by the very people who you should be looking to for support.

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Your senior leadership, senior management, call them what you work, call them what you will.

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But it's interesting, I just finished doing a series of talks about post incident procedure and how those incidents I've just described, how I was treated after them.

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And when I, my first one was in 1985, and there was no setup whatsoever to deal with it. It was back in the, it was back in the 80s. It was like, here's a bottle of scotch, go and sit in the corner

and drink yourself happy, you know, or come on, job's finished, we'll go over the pub and have a couple of pints.

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And they'd have a laugh, a pat on the back and all manly shit. Second job I was involved in was about 18 months later, and they created an organization, a welfare branch in within the Met, which hadn't existed before.

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And so I was given a bit more support, I've probably given too much support, they sent my wife and I'm family to the States on holiday, to California.

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It's like, they must have thought I'd seen them coming, I think, but there's no one else got the benefit from that point on. But slowly but surely as other officers became involved in shootings, our post incident procedure developed and developed and developed.

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And you know, every time we made a mistake or every time something went slightly wrong, we'd learn from that mistake and we cut it off and make sure it didn't happen next time or put something in place to improve things.

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And to such an extent that when I started doing these lectures, I thought that I was giving them to SO19, I thought I was giving them to the firearms unit.

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And it transpired that almost all of my audience were actually senior officers from borough, from specialist units, nothing to do with firearms.

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But someone somewhere finally twigged that there ought to be a post incident procedure for every police officer that gets involved in something traumatic. It never happened. No one had seen it.

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Now that progression that I described within SO19, how we work to make sure that we are always increasing the way in which we cared for our officers after they've been involved in shootings or similar incidents, that all came from troop level.

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No senior manager ever walked into the crew room and went, lads, I've had a thought, we need to look after you guys better when you get involved in an incident.

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It was us sitting around the coffee table going, well, that couldn't have been right. What do we need to do to make that better next time?

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So for 20, well, for 30 odd years, nearly 40 years, the rest of the Met, the rest of senior management in the Met have done nothing, absolutely nothing to look after a young probationary police officer that goes to the aftermath of a fire where a baby's burnt to death.

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Or goes to the scene of an incident where a cyclist has fallen under a lorry and their head's now a pancake.

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No one has thought, oh, they need some looking after. And then suddenly somewhere about 10 years ago, someone went, I think the firearms unit had some sort of thing.

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And now the firearms unit, although it's nothing to do with them really, are responsible for post-incident procedure for every unit within the Metropolitan Police.

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And it's like, how do we get to this late stage of the game?

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You know, our first step into post-incident procedure was after my first shooting incident in 1985. And here we are, you know, nearly in 2005.

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And it's only in the last decade that they've learned from the people at troop level sitting around that coffee table, the way they ought to be looking after their officers.

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I think in fairness, Tyler, I wouldn't agree with you on all of that because I think in the background, the College of Policing, for a long period of time, we're working with the IPCC as it was then.

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And, you know, senior level trying to establish some sort of guidance around it.

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But did they achieve anything?

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Well, I think, yeah, but achievements, you know, you can say about anything. When you introduce something.

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Was there a procedure?

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Yeah, there was.

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How come I don't know about it?

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There was a procedure. Well, there was a procedure in place when you shot yourself on me because I went out to it.

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And there was, you know, criteria.



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You were my federate.

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Yeah. So I think, you know, I think what you're saying about other officers is true.

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But what happens is there is a thing called DSR, deaf and serious injury instance, that there is now a guidance around that that falls in line with the firearm side of things.

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So for any police officer involved in a deaf or serious injury investigation, there is a post-instance investigation.

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It's been a very long time in coming, isn't it?

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Oh, yeah, yeah, no, 100 percent. Because what it didn't do is that, James, for example, if you were in a collision in a car and someone died or you were, you know, someone seriously injured, they wouldn't have a particular, you know, a special post-instance investigation.

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So they do now.

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But Tony's right in another in another way, though, because what we haven't got is this thing where, say, for example, an officer is exposed to extreme violence or witnesses something really bad.

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There isn't actually a designated post-instance procedure for that. It doesn't fall within the guidelines.

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So it's only if a deaf or serious injury involving a police officer in execution their duty, you know, revealed failing to command that kind of stuff.

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So I think there is a reluctance to look after people. And I think maybe I don't know what happens out on borough, you know, out on divisions around the country where, you know, hopefully they get some sort of support wrapped around them.

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But I think the interesting thing is, is that senior management today, people that joined the job, say, within the last 20 years, would look back on senior manage my senior management when I first joined in the 70s and would label them as

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dinosaurs, uncaring, misogynistic, probably drinkers, probably uncouth.

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And for a large part, that was true. But just as one example, and I've got many, my chief superintendent was in charge of a police station of, I don't know, 200 plus officers.

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He knew every officer by their first name. He knew the names of their wives and their children.

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And he was the scariest man I ever met. If you walked in the front office at Lewisham police station in the early 1970s, and he didn't have a good reason for being there. And he was sitting there and doing his morning checking the books.

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He'd look up and he'd go, what the fuck are you doing in my front office, and like as a probationer, I was absolutely terrified of the guy, you know, your boots had to be polished.

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If you went up to see him and knock him on the door, even if it was for him to give you a slap on the back for a good arrest, he'd go, oh, tell me about that arrest you had.

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So I'd tell him about it and you go, good effort, keep that up. You're going in the right direction.

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And as you walked out the door, just as you're about to walk out the door, he'd go, come back here, get your fucking haircut and polish them fucking boots and iron those trousers and have fuck off out of my office.

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Now, if you said that to anyone nowadays, you would be gone. You'd be on the big bird out here because, oh, you know, you hurt their little feelings.

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But that man cared genuinely and was a genuine proper leader, 100% more than the majority of senior officers you've got now who have taken promotion for their own means and for their own progression and for no other reason.

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But things change, generations change.

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Well, they do change.

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If I went into the PFOA office and spoke like to the girls now.

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But you've got no dress code, have you? Perhaps you should introduce one.

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Well, I think, you know, I think, yeah, you know, I think we can all look back and think that it was great in our day and things like that.

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And it probably was better. But I think things have changed.

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You know, the society's changed, people have changed.

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And, you know, that's one thing I think we shouldn't lose sight of because it was good back in our days, but things were different, a lot different.

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There were things that weren't as good.

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There was a lot of bad behavior. There was a lot of issues with people.

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And I think a lot of people went under the radar that, you know, perhaps shouldn't have done.

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And how we dealt with those people is more difficult because, you know, calling them out.

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Unfortunately, we've gone completely the other way now.

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Yeah, and I completely agree with that.

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I think one of the problems is, is because we no longer have a hand.

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I mean, to be fair, you're absolutely right.

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You know, I'm painting a picture that everything was great.

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That particular governor I was talking about was a natural leader and there seemed to be more of them.

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But there was also bad governors. Of course, there were.

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But what I would say is, is that I think, ironically, going back to this issue, that if they don't do something about looking after volunteer firearms officers,

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they're going to find a load of themselves, a police force that is 100 percent armed, most of whom aren't really interested in carrying a gun or aren't safe around us.

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So you've got that issue, but this has been like a perfect storm brewing.

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We've got close with international terrorism, stuff that's happened in places like Paris and other parts of Europe.

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You know, the major terrorist attack on the streets of London, you know, that could just be the little thing that pushes it over the edge.

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And we'll have to have a fully armed police force.

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But besides the logistical, there's partly logistical reasons, like we've sold off all the police stations that had firing ranges in them and things like that.

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But we found a situation where we don't have a place where we can take new recruits from all walks of life,

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but predominantly young people from modern society and teach them discipline.

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You know, people in modern society have been brought up to, you know, to question absolutely everything.

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And that's fine in the right time and place.

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But when you're in certain types of situations like a serious public order event, you know, or a firearms incident or some other major incident,

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you need to have discipline. You need to have sergeants that go, shut up, go over there, do that.

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Yeah. And there's a reason behind having your haircut.

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You know, there's lots of reasons on that. You know, if you get in a fight and someone grabs your hair because you've got a ponytail as a bloke, you know,

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then you're going to have problems on you. And that's why, you know, the female officers used to put the hair up and things like that,

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because it looks smarter and it was obviously safer and things like that.

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You know, there's all sorts of different things about, you know, we talk about tattoos, you know, and I've got tattoos.

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But if you've got a tattoo on your neck and all down your face, is that really appropriate to be a police officer?

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Probably not, because when you're dealing with young kids and things like that, they might be frightened of you.

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You know, so you have to think about those kinds of aspects of it.

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So I think the whole thing has changed. But I think this all comes down to Tony.

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I think you're absolutely right about I think Hendon is one thing.

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But the biggest worry for me, and we've discussed this a lot, as you know, is about where I see armed policing in the next 12 months.

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And we're going to be doing a survey soon to ask officers, that are farms officers now, about how they feel about the job and where they see the future for themselves.

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Because I'll tell you, we are a pivotal point in our history with policing in this country.

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And it was only when you mentioned it to me, Tony, a few weeks ago that I thought, Jesus, you know, he's right.

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This could actually go completely the way that we didn't want it to go.

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And that is, if you can't get volunteers, it will become mandatory.

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Just like the police service in Orvan Island, civil nuclear constabulary, ministry, defense, police are all armed.

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It can be done. It would be a massive headache and it'd be a complete nightmare because you'll have loads more guns out there.

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There'd be loads of different incidents, accidents, guns being taken off officers, guns being lost, all sorts of things that we know happens all around the world.

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It could happen in this country. And ironically, the people, these pressure groups that are always saying, you know, a minute we shoot someone, they're jumping all over again.

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00:55:25,000 --> 00:55:28,000

Oh, they've shot an innocent member of the public again or whatever like that.

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00:55:28,000 --> 00:55:31,000

Yet they're going to get the police service they want as well, aren't they?

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00:55:31,000 --> 00:55:35,000

Because they're going to get, for example, in London, not two and a half thousand armed officers.

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00:55:35,000 --> 00:55:41,000

They get 30,000 armed officers running around London with guns as an example.

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Let me jump in there. I'm going to throw something else at you guys because I want to address the other side of the conversation.

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In the US, Pete, one of the criticisms is that our police officers, they go into war.

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They just came back from Fallujah and they do.

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They've got body armor and, you know, sidearms and, you know, AR in the vehicle and tasers and extra mags.

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00:56:00,000 --> 00:56:06,000

And yeah, I mean, you look like you're getting ready for some sort of firefight, but then you look at the streets of America.

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00:56:06,000 --> 00:56:08,000

And this is what no one fucking talks about.

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00:56:08,000 --> 00:56:15,000

And it pisses me off with the whole police conversation is why do we have so much violence on our streets?

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00:56:15,000 --> 00:56:19,000

Why do we have so much gang membership, et cetera, et cetera?

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00:56:19,000 --> 00:56:24,000

For me, you know, one of the things that I'm just I've sat down with the guy is spearheaded.

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00:56:24,000 --> 00:56:34,000

I think it's one of these solutions is the fact that we have sent addicts, not drug smugglers, not dealers, but addicts into the shadows, into the underworld.

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00:56:34,000 --> 00:56:36,000

That's where they get their drugs, where they get their fix.

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00:56:36,000 --> 00:56:44,000

And we've empowered guns. We've empowered so many, excuse me, we've empowered gangs, so many shitbags in the world through the prohibition of drugs.

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00:56:44,000 --> 00:56:46,000

So that's just James Gearing's opinion.

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00:56:46,000 --> 00:56:53,000

If we took addicts and brought them into the medical world, I think we'd cut the head off the snake of a lot of violence here in the US.

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00:56:53,000 --> 00:56:59,000

That aside, what is the landscape now in the UK?

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00:56:59,000 --> 00:57:03,000

Because no one I never hear this discussed, you know, all this police officer shot this person.

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00:57:03,000 --> 00:57:14,000

Well, how did that young boy that was a toddler once all he cared about was his toy car and a ball get into the point where he's a yardie or whatever, whatever he found himself in?

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00:57:14,000 --> 00:57:28,000

So what have you seen as far as the landscape of violence in the UK today? And are there any kind of common denominators that aren't being discussed that are creating violent offenders out of young children?

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00:57:28,000 --> 00:57:36,000

Can I ask Tony, before you come in, Tony, I think you're better to talk about the gangs criminal element.

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00:57:36,000 --> 00:57:44,000

One of the things that's always concerned me is the percentage and the amount of people with mental health issues that we engage.

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00:57:44,000 --> 00:57:56,000

So a lot of the incidents we're dealing with are people that have got mental health problems, which is sad in itself because then that's another issue altogether about what support they're getting from NHS and things like that in our case.

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00:57:56,000 --> 00:58:09,000

And that worries me. And of course, you know, they're they're more unpredictable people that have got mental health issues and, you know, results in often us shooting them and sadly in a lot of cases that they die.

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00:58:09,000 --> 00:58:23,000

So that that is a concern for me. And also it's a concern for me for the impact on the officers because, you know, I always thought of myself when I was an armed officer that, you know, I'd never have an issue shooting someone particularly because I know that I'll do I'll be doing the right thing because I had to.

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00:58:23,000 --> 00:58:29,000

Particularly a terrorist or in Tony's case, you know, gangsters, you know, gangs that have got guns in their cars and things like that.

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00:58:29,000 --> 00:58:37,000

You know, not an issue. But when someone's mentally ill and has a problem, then you subsequently find that out afterwards because of their actions, you have to deal with it.

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00:58:37,000 --> 00:58:42,000

That's quite hard to take as well because you realize that they perhaps could have been helped some way down the line.

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00:58:42,000 --> 00:58:49,000

And that young toddler you're talking about playing with their toys became poorly, you know, as they went on through their life and got all sorts of mental health problems.

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00:58:49,000 --> 00:58:56,000

And then this result of them being shot by police. That is a completely different thing to what I know Tony is going to talk about.

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00:58:56,000 --> 00:59:00,000

Well, I'm glad you know what I'm going to talk about because I'm racking my brain.

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00:59:00,000 --> 00:59:08,000

But if you look at gangs, if you look at the people you were involved with, Tony and terrorism as well, that's a completely different entity about what we're doing, isn't it?

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00:59:08,000 --> 00:59:18,000

And I remember one situation. Ironically, I never got a commendation for shooting bad people, but I got a commander's commendation for not shooting a guy.

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00:59:18,000 --> 00:59:26,000

And it was when AIDS was more prolific before, you know, suitable drugs had come out and a call came out.

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I was actually on the armed response vehicles at the time for my six week posting.

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00:59:31,000 --> 00:59:43,000

And it was on a Sunday afternoon, I remember, we were just going off duty and a call came into Islington, which was just up the road from where our base was, to say that a man had been seen in a pub with a handgun.

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And so we all rushed to the rendezvous point just off of Islington, the main street in Islington.

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00:59:48,000 --> 00:59:56,000

And there was a cordon's up and the local duty officer and local sergeant were there. They were directing people out of the zone and all the rest of it.

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I said, where's the pub? And they went, oh, it's just up to the corner, about 50 yards away to the left.

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01:00:03,000 --> 01:00:08,000

And as we're saying that, this guy comes up to me and he goes, I'm the guy that rang you.

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01:00:08,000 --> 01:00:14,000

And they went, right, he goes, I work in the pub. He said, it's a gay pub. And he went, I'm not gay.

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01:00:14,000 --> 01:00:20,000

I'm not gay. I went, OK, so what happened then? And he said, this bloke came up to the bar.

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01:00:20,000 --> 01:00:26,000

He said, and he overtly opened his jacket. For whatever reason, he asked me for something.

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01:00:26,000 --> 01:00:33,000

He said, he asked me whether the nearest minicab office was, but I saw the gun. My guess was he wanted me to see the gun.

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01:00:33,000 --> 01:00:39,000

He said, I'm ex-army and I can tell you it's a Browning Hypal. So that was all. That's changed the colour.

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01:00:39,000 --> 01:00:45,000

So where's he gone then? He's always gone to get a cab. So he's not in the pub anymore. No, no, no, he's left.

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01:00:45,000 --> 01:00:49,000

So I looked at the inspector and I went, where's the nearest minicab office here?

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01:00:49,000 --> 01:00:54,000

And he went there and about four foot to my left was the doorway to this minicab office.

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01:00:54,000 --> 01:00:58,000

And literally as he pointed to the door, people started running out.

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01:00:58,000 --> 01:01:05,000

Well, our tactic would be in that situation, certainly back then, would be to get all the innocent people out,

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01:01:05,000 --> 01:01:11,000

contain it from the outside and call in and go, hey, you in the building, come out.

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01:01:11,000 --> 01:01:18,000

But before I could do anything, this younger, more inexperienced ARV officer, he's gone.

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01:01:18,000 --> 01:01:23,000

He's like greased weasel shit. He's up the stairs in this minicab office, which is above the shops.

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01:01:23,000 --> 01:01:29,000

So we get to the top of the stairs and I give him some hand signals, which we used on the teams,

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01:01:29,000 --> 01:01:32,000

which clearly meant nothing to him as an ARV dude.

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01:01:32,000 --> 01:01:36,000

And I tapped him on the shoulder, not intending him to do anything other than hold.

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01:01:36,000 --> 01:01:40,000

He burst into the room and I thought, oh shit, I'm going to have to go in the room now.

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01:01:40,000 --> 01:01:43,000

So I come around the corner, there's a guy and he's sitting on a bench,

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01:01:43,000 --> 01:01:47,000

you know, like you get in a minicab office while you're waiting for your cab to arrive.

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01:01:47,000 --> 01:01:50,000

And he just looks up at me and he's got a Browning Hypal on his hand.

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01:01:50,000 --> 01:01:55,000

And he just turns like that and just very slowly turns it towards me.

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01:01:55,000 --> 01:01:59,000

And I didn't shoot. I know I would have been absolutely justified in shooting,

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01:01:59,000 --> 01:02:05,000

but I just screamed at him to stop and I pretty well stuck the gun in his face.

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01:02:05,000 --> 01:02:07,000

And he had a second thought and he dropped the gun.

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01:02:07,000 --> 01:02:11,000

And I was fucking angry. I've never been that close to killing somebody.

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01:02:11,000 --> 01:02:18,000

And it transpired that he was a gay man, that his partner had just died of AIDS

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01:02:18,000 --> 01:02:20,000

and he wanted the police to kill him.

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01:02:20,000 --> 01:02:26,000

And I've thought often about what you said, Mark, about how I would have felt about shooting that guy.

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01:02:26,000 --> 01:02:30,000

He was an artist, he was a talented musician transpired.

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01:02:30,000 --> 01:02:33,000

He was just a guy in a very bad, very dark place.

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01:02:33,000 --> 01:02:39,000

So, yeah, I mean, we've gone off your question now about drugs.

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01:02:39,000 --> 01:02:45,000

I've not long finished working for the London Ambulance Service driving paramedics.

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01:02:45,000 --> 01:02:49,000

And one of the things that I've noticed, interestingly enough,

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01:02:49,000 --> 01:02:55,000

is one of the first calls I took was about 20 miles through Kent and southeast London

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on a Friday afternoon in the rush hour to a man collapsed in the street,

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01:03:00,000 --> 01:03:05,000

blue lights and two tones, driving like a lunatic, wrong side of the road, up the pavement, down the pavement.

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01:03:05,000 --> 01:03:11,000

When I get there, there's two cops standing and the male cop is standing with his knee in this guy's back

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01:03:11,000 --> 01:03:16,000



and the guy is just sitting on the pavement, clearly off his tits.

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01:03:16,000 --> 01:03:18,000

And he's drunk, that's all he is.

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01:03:18,000 --> 01:03:21,000

And I looked at the cop and I went, seriously?

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01:03:21,000 --> 01:03:26,000

I said, this guy is drunk and disorderly, sorry, drunk and incapable all day long.

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01:03:26,000 --> 01:03:28,000

Why are you calling an ambulance for this?

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01:03:28,000 --> 01:03:33,000

And he's got a little cut on his head, look, you know, head injury.

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01:03:33,000 --> 01:03:36,000

He's going to have to go to... It's not a police matter, it's a medical matter.

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01:03:36,000 --> 01:03:42,000

And then I get this WPC, female police officer, lecturing me about, oh, it's not an offence to be drunk.

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01:03:42,000 --> 01:03:48,000

And I'm thinking, I'm pretty sure it still is, you know, it's an offence to be drunk in the street.

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01:03:48,000 --> 01:03:53,000

Anyway, we end up taking this guy to hospital and he was drunk and incapable when he put him on the ambulance.

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01:03:53,000 --> 01:03:56,000

But when we got halfway to the hospital and it's only me and my paramedic,

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01:03:56,000 --> 01:04:00,000

he decides that he's not drunk and incapable, he's drunk and disorderly.

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01:04:00,000 --> 01:04:03,000

So he starts giving my paramedic a hard time and I end up getting in the back of the truck

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01:04:03,000 --> 01:04:10,000

and rolling around on the floor with his boat and, you know, possibly breaking a finger at this guy.

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01:04:10,000 --> 01:04:15,000

And when I asked about it, the more I asked, it was like, no, we don't deal with drunks anymore.

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01:04:15,000 --> 01:04:17,000

It's not a police matter, it's a medical matter.

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01:04:17,000 --> 01:04:22,000

So if that's the case with drunks, you know, why aren't we doing the same like you quite rightly said?

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01:04:22,000 --> 01:04:25,000

Marijuana, everybody goes, oh, marijuana is really harmless.

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01:04:25,000 --> 01:04:27,000

Well, no, it's not.

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01:04:27,000 --> 01:04:29,000

You know, I've come across a lot of, on the ambulance,

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01:04:29,000 --> 01:04:36,000

came across a lot of people who had smoked particularly strong stuff and it triggered their paranoia.

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01:04:36,000 --> 01:04:42,000

They were violent, they were aggressive, all the things that you don't expect from, you know, the use of cannabis.

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01:04:42,000 --> 01:04:48,000

But they are. And that, again, has become more of a medical matter.

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01:04:48,000 --> 01:04:52,000

I'm not sure it's actually curing anything, to be honest.

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01:04:52,000 --> 01:04:55,000

If you think about your police career, and I've thought about it a lot,

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01:04:55,000 --> 01:05:00,000

I can't remember going to many punch ups involving people that were smoking a joint.

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01:05:00,000 --> 01:05:05,000

Well, yeah, things have changed, like you said, that, you know, it's not the same cannabis that you and I knew.

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01:05:05,000 --> 01:05:08,000

And that's the problem, it's a lot stronger, isn't it?

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01:05:08,000 --> 01:05:09,000

I mean, there's a lot stronger weed out there now.

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01:05:09,000 --> 01:05:13,000

But what I'm making is that one of the issues, and it's not really what we're here to talk about,

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01:05:13,000 --> 01:05:17,000

but if you're not going to arrest someone for their bad behaviour when they're drunk,

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01:05:17,000 --> 01:05:22,000

if all you're going to do is take them and add them to the burden of people in a casualty department,

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01:05:22,000 --> 01:05:27,000

or an accident and emergency, where they're already overrun,

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01:05:27,000 --> 01:05:32,000

and you're just going to let this guy wander, you know, like a cannonball around, you know,

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01:05:32,000 --> 01:05:38,000

tripping over elderly people with broken limbs, you know, you're not actually solving any problems.

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01:05:38,000 --> 01:05:41,000

All you're doing is diverting them, because sooner or later,

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01:05:41,000 --> 01:05:46,000

somebody that behaves like that on a regular basis needs to answer for their bad behaviour.

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01:05:46,000 --> 01:05:48,000

And that's what we're not doing in society right now.

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01:05:48,000 --> 01:05:51,000

So that's just made it worse, in my opinion.

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01:05:51,000 --> 01:05:56,000

So the false economy conversation to me, I think, goes into here as well.

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01:05:56,000 --> 01:05:58,000

And a perfect example is the NHS.

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01:05:58,000 --> 01:06:05,000

I think of the entire world, the philosophy of the NHS is the most beautiful,

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01:06:05,000 --> 01:06:07,000

altruistic healthcare system on the planet.

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01:06:07,000 --> 01:06:10,000

I really do. When funded properly and when staffed properly.

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01:06:10,000 --> 01:06:14,000

I know it's been sliced and diced and, you know, cut apart now.

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01:06:14,000 --> 01:06:17,000

But the beautiful thing about the NHS, if it's done properly,

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01:06:17,000 --> 01:06:22,000

is then there would be a massive push to make the British people as healthy as possible.

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01:06:22,000 --> 01:06:24,000

So you use as little taxpayers' money.

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01:06:24,000 --> 01:06:31,000

Conversely, when I go home every year, my beloved British people seem to get fatter and fatter and fatter.

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01:06:31,000 --> 01:06:33,000

So clearly there's a disconnect.

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01:06:33,000 --> 01:06:37,000

You talk about the mental health issues you respond to, the domestic violence you respond to,

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01:06:37,000 --> 01:06:40,000

the gang membership, the addiction, the drunks.

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01:06:40,000 --> 01:06:43,000

The nucleus, again, is mental health.

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01:06:43,000 --> 01:06:49,000

So to me, it's not so much that the substance is addressing the mental health crisis that creates addiction,

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01:06:49,000 --> 01:06:56,000

that creates violence, that creates, you know, searching for a mentor that ends up being a shitbag gang member

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01:06:56,000 --> 01:07:00,000

instead of, you know, a recruiting officer in the military or whatever it is.

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01:07:00,000 --> 01:07:04,000

So that's the kind of false economy is they keep sending our police paramedics,

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01:07:04,000 --> 01:07:08,000

fire to call after call after call and they fill our hospitals.

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01:07:08,000 --> 01:07:12,000

But we're not proactively addressing the issues, you know.

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01:07:12,000 --> 01:07:21,000

And so I didn't come here to talk about ambulance crews or paramedics or anything, but, you know, I'm here.

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01:07:21,000 --> 01:07:22,000

So I might as well mention it.

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01:07:22,000 --> 01:07:28,000

I mean, I used to have long conversations with my paramedic and the other paramedics were in the crew room.

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01:07:28,000 --> 01:07:35,000

And as you would expect, paramedics like cops, like firefighters, particularly paramedics and cops,

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01:07:35,000 --> 01:07:40,000

are as cynical as each other with the same dark sense of humor.

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01:07:40,000 --> 01:07:47,000

And I reckon if you were to ask any London ambulance member or the vast majority, you know, what the percentage was of wasted calls,

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01:07:47,000 --> 01:07:56,000

they'd probably say that 75 to 80, if not more percent, of calls that emergency ambulances go to aren't emergencies.

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01:07:56,000 --> 01:08:05,000

And the reason they the reason we go to them is because the National Health Service has said, yeah, you know, people just treat it as a service.

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01:08:05,000 --> 01:08:13,000

One of my last calls I dealt with, again, I drove a long distance on blue lights through heavy traffic to get to a woman with difficulty in breathing.

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01:08:13,000 --> 01:08:21,000

And when we pull up outside, she's leaning on a front gate, smoking a cigarette, takes one look at us and go, wow, you got here quickly.

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01:08:21,000 --> 01:08:23,000

You know, that in an emergency, is it?

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01:08:23,000 --> 01:08:24,000

You know, and that happens.

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01:08:24,000 --> 01:08:29,000

That's probably I would say a good 70 or 80 percent of the calls that they get called to.

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01:08:29,000 --> 01:08:31,000

And there's no financial consequence.

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01:08:31,000 --> 01:08:37,000

Now, we always talk about the NHS, like you said, it's altruistic, it's beautiful.

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01:08:37,000 --> 01:08:46,000

But it functioned fine when we had the population that we had back in the 1950s, 1960s.

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01:08:46,000 --> 01:08:48,000

It doesn't it doesn't operate now.

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01:08:48,000 --> 01:08:50,000

And there are other we kind of dismiss it.

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01:08:50,000 --> 01:08:55,000

We're very good in Great Britain of going, oh, look how all our policemen are on our wonderful NHS.

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01:08:55,000 --> 01:09:01,000

But we kind of ignore the fact that other places around the world have their NHS.

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01:09:01,000 --> 01:09:12,000

It's not run exactly the same, you know, but I know places in Europe, for instance, which have an NHS system where if you go into A&E with something that isn't an emergency,

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01:09:12,000 --> 01:09:17,000

you know, or you call an ambulance and it's not an emergency, you get you have to pay a fee.

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01:09:17,000 --> 01:09:19,000

Yeah, you get billed.

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01:09:19,000 --> 01:09:22,000



But the thing is, it's not the NHS that's necessarily broken.

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01:09:22,000 --> 01:09:24,000

It's a victim of its own success.

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01:09:24,000 --> 01:09:26,000

It's a bit like the M25. Yeah, yeah.

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01:09:26,000 --> 01:09:27,000

It's a success.

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01:09:27,000 --> 01:09:30,000

So everyone bombards it.

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01:09:30,000 --> 01:09:40,000

And of course, unfortunately, in our society nowadays, some people are pretty stupid and they ring up for stupid reasons, like they ring the police for stupid reason, the fire service for stupid reasons.

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01:09:40,000 --> 01:09:43,000

You know, they just panic or whatever like that, or they're badly educated.

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01:09:43,000 --> 01:09:46,000

But it's a victim of its own success.

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01:09:46,000 --> 01:09:54,000

And you could throw billions more into it. And I'm not sure unless it was managed correctly, it would ever be any better.

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01:09:54,000 --> 01:10:02,000

You know, I spoke to someone today, one of our members whose daughter was born with a cancer and nearly died.

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01:10:02,000 --> 01:10:08,000

She's now 18. She's got a recurrence of what they believe could be something to do with this.

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01:10:08,000 --> 01:10:14,000

I've been told a year, they probably have to wait until they get the proper scans a year.

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01:10:14,000 --> 01:10:19,000

This is a young person that was born with this condition.

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01:10:19,000 --> 01:10:24,000

And now they're going to have to wait a year potentially. So he's going private.

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01:10:24,000 --> 01:10:27,000

So, you know, what can you know?

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01:10:27,000 --> 01:10:31,000

And of course, that brings in all the arguments about, well, who's accessing all these services?

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01:10:31,000 --> 01:10:35,000

You know, are these people accessing it? Are they really allowed to be accessing it? Should they be accessing it?

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01:10:35,000 --> 01:10:37,000

What have they paid into the system?

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01:10:37,000 --> 01:10:43,000

There's a person who's given all his life to his country, working, paying his national insurance, his tax, things like that.

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01:10:43,000 --> 01:10:49,000

And now his daughter has got to wait potentially for a year to get looked after by the NHS.

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01:10:49,000 --> 01:10:51,000

It's complete.

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01:10:51,000 --> 01:10:57,000

It's the 30,000 cops with a gun instead of the two that are trained.

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01:10:57,000 --> 01:11:01,000

This is the problem, is that it should be focused on the people who really need it.

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01:11:01,000 --> 01:11:09,000

And I think that's the philosophy, is that everyone contributes so that, God forbid, one of you has a massive car accident and needs the help.

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01:11:09,000 --> 01:11:11,000

It's there. No questions asked.

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01:11:11,000 --> 01:11:17,000

And I saw the NHS, you know, with my granddad, who was 99 years old, riddled with cancer, get the most amazing treatment.

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01:11:17,000 --> 01:11:20,000

But this is the problem. It depends on where you live.

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01:11:20,000 --> 01:11:22,000

Very geographic.

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01:11:22,000 --> 01:11:24,000

Postcode lottery.

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01:11:24,000 --> 01:11:35,000

And the other thing is, I mean, if you look at, you know, going off on a tangent here, but, you know, you have to look at commercials on TV and all about full fat foods and crap that young kids are being encouraged to eat.

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01:11:35,000 --> 01:11:37,000

And, you know, I've got a sweet, I'm as bad as I know.

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01:11:37,000 --> 01:11:45,000

But, you know, but kids aren't getting in the gym. They're not they're not going outside anymore and doing stuff that we used to do when we were kids and things like that.

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01:11:45,000 --> 01:11:55,000

And I think there's a vicious circle of crap, isn't it, really, that's creating this perfect storm that's going to, you know, financially is going to cause us huge problems.

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01:11:55,000 --> 01:12:04,000

Of course, those financial commitments then that have to be addressed, i.e. for the NHS come out of policing, military, everything.

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01:12:04,000 --> 01:12:07,000

Everyone else has to pay towards it, don't they?

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01:12:07,000 --> 01:12:09,000

It has to be paid for somehow.

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01:12:09,000 --> 01:12:12,000

Well, I think it's an optimistic lens.

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01:12:12,000 --> 01:12:18,000

This could also be viewed as the tipping point where we have to actually start changing things for the better.

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01:12:18,000 --> 01:12:22,000

I mean, because like in the American Fire Service and we're fire and EMS, so I'm a firefighter and a paramedic.

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01:12:22,000 --> 01:12:25,000

We do it combined here. A lot of areas.

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01:12:25,000 --> 01:12:32,000

They're struggling to recruit. So either you finally fix the things that are broken or you just don't have fire and EMS anymore.

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01:12:32,000 --> 01:12:36,000

Your choice. And like you said about the police officers, I said this about the fire.

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01:12:36,000 --> 01:12:39,000

All we have firefighter is a serve for three, four years.

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01:12:39,000 --> 01:12:43,000

And then it's like a military service, one tour and then then you're out.

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01:12:43,000 --> 01:12:48,000

So you never get anyone responding to your home that has any more than four years experience.

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01:12:48,000 --> 01:12:51,000

Do you want that? And when your kids choke in or are stuck in a fire?

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01:12:51,000 --> 01:12:55,000

Is it cost effective to spend all that money training somebody?

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01:12:55,000 --> 01:13:00,000

We've had this internally within within UK policing, certainly in the Met, which is obviously a big force.

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01:13:00,000 --> 01:13:02,000

But, you know, I hinted at it earlier.

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01:13:02,000 --> 01:13:08,000

There were guys when I joined that had been on the same shift at the same police station for 20 years.

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01:13:08,000 --> 01:13:10,000

They knew everything. They knew everybody.

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01:13:10,000 --> 01:13:13,000

They had no aspirations to go anywhere else.

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01:13:13,000 --> 01:13:16,000

You know, they knew the route into work. They knew the route back.

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01:13:16,000 --> 01:13:21,000

It was just that they were quite happy, but senior leadership weren't happy with that.

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01:13:21,000 --> 01:13:23,000

They go, we're going to move you.

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01:13:23,000 --> 01:13:25,000

You know, we don't think it's right that you've been in this one place for all this time.

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01:13:25,000 --> 01:13:28,000

So they transfer them to the neighboring division where they don't know anybody.

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01:13:28,000 --> 01:13:31,000

They don't need to know the streets or anything like that.

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01:13:31,000 --> 01:13:33,000

And so you've lost all of that expertise.

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01:13:33,000 --> 01:13:35,000

And it was the same with us in the firearms unit.

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01:13:35,000 --> 01:13:38,000

I had to go back and do 14 months.

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01:13:38,000 --> 01:13:44,000

It should have been two years, but I can't wait for 14 months of, you know, back to street duty policing.

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01:13:44,000 --> 01:13:49,000

I actually quite enjoyed it, but it served no purpose whatsoever.

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01:13:49,000 --> 01:13:52,000

People were saying, oh, yeah, other people want your job.

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01:13:52,000 --> 01:13:57,000

They want to crack at your job. I used to call it fat bloke in in gold syndrome.

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01:13:57,000 --> 01:14:00,000

It was like, well, you know, you've been the goalie and you've saved all these goals.

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01:14:00,000 --> 01:14:04,000

But the fat kid over there that never gets picked, you know, he wants to go in gold.

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01:14:04,000 --> 01:14:07,000

Let him come and have a go. Well, is he not a goalkeeper?

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01:14:07,000 --> 01:14:10,000

Well, no, but you know, we'll be letting him have a go.

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01:14:10,000 --> 01:14:12,000

It's like, well, is that what you want?

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01:14:12,000 --> 01:14:16,000

Do you want an average, you know, it's his turn to do it?

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01:14:16,000 --> 01:14:19,000

Or do you want the right people in the right place doing the right job?

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01:14:19,000 --> 01:14:26,000

When I reapplied to come in, not one person from my borough, my division, applied for the unit.

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01:14:26,000 --> 01:14:31,000

Not one. So this perception that everybody wanted my job was a load of old bollocks.

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01:14:31,000 --> 01:14:41,000

But on a positive note, if there is one, I think as we know, there's an accountability review going on at the moment that the Home Office Commissioned or sanctioned.

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01:14:41,000 --> 01:14:43,000

And it's early doors yet.

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01:14:43,000 --> 01:14:50,000

But I think that is partly a way of us policing, saying enough's enough.

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01:14:50,000 --> 01:14:54,000

You know, we need to be judged differently to the average member of the public because of the work we're doing.

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01:14:54,000 --> 01:15:00,000

And we've had this conversation somewhere about we ask farms officers, we train them to a high standard.

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01:15:00,000 --> 01:15:07,000

We ask them to go out and on behalf of the state to risk their lives for us, for people they've never met before.

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01:15:07,000 --> 01:15:11,000

And then we treat them so bloody awfully and badly when they do something that we've trained them to do.

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01:15:11,000 --> 01:15:15,000

So I think this accountability review should have some sort of an impact on it.



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01:15:15,000 --> 01:15:27,000

But what also we need to do is people need to take a step back and bosses, leaders need to lead and support their men and women because that's lacking, sadly.

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01:15:27,000 --> 01:15:35,000

And there's not many governors out there have got the bollocks and wherever the female equivalent is to go and do make a decision to support their people.

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01:15:35,000 --> 01:15:43,000

And I don't understand that. And I can't understand how you can have a farm officer, for example, that shoots someone and yet the leader of the organization that they're in,

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01:15:43,000 --> 01:15:49,000

it doesn't have to be the Met, could be anywhere around the country, doesn't want to go and visit the officer and support them.

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01:15:49,000 --> 01:15:55,000

Yeah, who will visit the victim's family, you know, a young criminal that's got himself shot.

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01:15:55,000 --> 01:15:56,000

Yeah.

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01:15:56,000 --> 01:15:58,000

Or visit him before they visit their own officers.

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01:15:58,000 --> 01:16:00,000

That's disgraceful. That's disgraceful.

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01:16:00,000 --> 01:16:06,000

If you ask any business person in this country, hopefully that runs a business of any kind,

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01:16:06,000 --> 01:16:14,000

if one of their team, their staff was injured or risked their life or did something like that, they'd go and visit them. Why would they not come visit them?

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01:16:14,000 --> 01:16:19,000

What is the problem here? Now, what is this issue about going to talk to people when they've been involved in it?

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01:16:19,000 --> 01:16:26,000

And where is this innocent until proven guilty gone that we were born with, you know, innocent until proven guilty.

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01:16:26,000 --> 01:16:31,000

So therefore you give them the support. And you know what? If they're found guilty, what's going to happen to you then?

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01:16:31,000 --> 01:16:36,000

What? Because you showed them support. You're not going to get any problems with that, are you?

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01:16:36,000 --> 01:16:40,000

You just showed them support because they were innocent until proven guilty.

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01:16:40,000 --> 01:16:45,000

You know, so that beggars belief, I mean, Tom, we've discussed this so many times and we, you know.

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I think when you're talking about policing generally in the UK, not necessarily armed policing, but policing generally, I think, you know, we talked about it earlier.

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01:16:55,000 --> 01:17:14,000

I don't know where this anti-police sort of rhetoric is all coming from or why is that, you know, they never report on mainstream media about good things that the police do, you know, when somebody rescues a kid from a river or something like that, very rarely.

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01:17:14,000 --> 01:17:19,000

But all of the emphasis on what is wrong seems to be the police.

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01:17:19,000 --> 01:17:31,000

And of course, the police is just a cog in a wheel. And the other cogs are the Crown Prosecution Service, the courts, you know.

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I'm a long way away from, you know, courts and the judicial system now.

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01:17:37,000 --> 01:17:43,000

But I remember as a young police officer, I'd be in magistrates court two or three times a week.

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01:17:43,000 --> 01:17:49,000

You know, I'd be going to give evidence at Crown Court in front of a jury, probably four or five times a year.

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We've now got officers that have got, say, 10 years service.

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01:17:52,000 --> 01:18:00,000

And the first time that they appear in court as an armed officer will be, you know, as the defendant.

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01:18:00,000 --> 01:18:03,000

They'll never have given evidence in court before.

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So, you know, I actually think that the police service and the whole criminal justice service needs a review. And part of that would be the independent office of police complaints.

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The IOPC, which is the body that investigates police officers when they get involved in wrongdoing or shooting or whatever is brought to their attention.

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01:18:27,000 --> 01:18:31,000

And I think one of the reasons that morale is so bad within armed policing at the moment,

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01:18:31,000 --> 01:18:42,000

one of the reasons people aren't applying for roles and who are trying to get out of roles or go to a safer armed posting like close protection or diplomatic protection,

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01:18:42,000 --> 01:18:47,000

is because of the way that they're being treated by this specific organization.

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01:18:47,000 --> 01:18:50,000

I think it's broken. I think it's lost track.

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01:18:50,000 --> 01:19:00,000

I don't think it's got any experience or anyone that's investigating officers that have got any worldly experience that can put themselves in a position where they understand why someone has had to use lethal force.

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01:19:00,000 --> 01:19:08,000

But, yeah, I just think that there needs to be a complete review of that.

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01:19:08,000 --> 01:19:16,000

And if they're truly independent, then in addition to looking after the interest of the victim or his family,

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01:19:16,000 --> 01:19:24,000

they should also have a statutory obligation to look after the welfare of the police officer or the person they're investigating.

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01:19:24,000 --> 01:19:31,000

So if, for instance, we as a police force took as long as they did to investigate a crime,

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01:19:31,000 --> 01:19:39,000

you know, and that came down to incompetence, when it came down to, you know, something that was controllable,

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01:19:39,000 --> 01:19:48,000

then it would probably ironically be the IOPC that were investigating the police for not carrying out the investigation thoroughly or properly.

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01:19:48,000 --> 01:19:51,000

And yet there seems to be no time limits on them.

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01:19:51,000 --> 01:19:56,000

You know, police officers are traditionally not kept up to speed with what's happening within the investigation.

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01:19:56,000 --> 01:20:00,000

They have to constantly be asking.

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01:20:00,000 --> 01:20:08,000

And so I think, you know, if you're going to take a police officer, and most police officers in modern day times, because they're badly paid,

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01:20:08,000 --> 01:20:14,000

rely on overtime in order to pay their mortgage, you know, or their wife's going to have to go to work or get a better job or whatever.

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01:20:14,000 --> 01:20:26,000

If you're going to suspend someone for six and a half years, or, you know, eight years on basically basic pay with no opportunity to earn overtime,

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01:20:26,000 --> 01:20:30,000

then, you know, all the guy's done is done what he's trained to do.

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01:20:30,000 --> 01:20:32,000

And he's been punished because of that.

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01:20:32,000 --> 01:20:41,000

Like I said, you know, it might be, you know, nearly a quarter of your third of your of your pensionable service lost.

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01:20:41,000 --> 01:20:49,000

So I think that's one of the problems. If they think they're going to call themselves independent, then they should be as, you know,

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01:20:49,000 --> 01:20:54,000

required to look after the interests of police as they are the people that complain.

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01:20:54,000 --> 01:21:00,000

I think for me, what saddens me though, as well as I think about these guys and girls that are

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01:21:00,000 --> 01:21:06,000

have been off operational duty for so long, suspended or whatever, you know, when you wake up in the morning,

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01:21:06,000 --> 01:21:13,000

you know, hopefully we've all got something to look forward to and we're going to have a day ahead of us, whether it's work or with our families or doing sports or whatever.

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01:21:13,000 --> 01:21:23,000

And every single day, like the two guys in particular, Tony, that we're talking about from the 19 years for six years, they're waking up thinking about that.

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01:21:23,000 --> 01:21:31,000

What's going to happen to them? They don't know. They can't plan anything with their families, you know, and it's just the toll that takes on them.

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01:21:31,000 --> 01:21:40,000

But and also the other thing that's really sad is that, I mean, I had a really I had a very enjoyable police career and I had, you know,

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01:21:40,000 --> 01:21:50,000

I came out reasonably unscathed, but I speak to so many people now that are not and they're very bitter against the job and things like that saddens me because I wasn't, you know,

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01:21:50,000 --> 01:21:58,000

and so I can't really relate to that because I think, you know, I had a good career. I was very fortunate to go out unscathed.

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01:21:58,000 --> 01:22:06,000

But some people have been shafted by the organization itself so badly. They're so bitter and angry about it all.

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01:22:06,000 --> 01:22:11,000

And all they want to do is just get out and get on with their lives and do something else. But they'll never forget that.

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01:22:11,000 --> 01:22:15,000

It'll always be with them all the way through their lives. I mean, we don't have long lives, do we?

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01:22:15,000 --> 01:22:23,000

We have short lives and to be worrying about all that crap when you shouldn't be, you know, I don't know what you went through, Tony.

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01:22:23,000 --> 01:22:28,000

You were retired when you went through all that. I mean, Christ, mate, you know, I mean, you know, I look at my life.

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01:22:28,000 --> 01:22:33,000

I've had a few things happen, but I've had a really good time since I've been retired and done lots of nice things that I like doing.

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01:22:33,000 --> 01:22:45,000

I've got a good job. I like doing. But to have all that to worry about, like in your case, you know, been on trial at the Old Bailey for murder, you know, Jesus, you know, this is what we're doing to our people.

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01:22:45,000 --> 01:22:54,000

You know, it's just completely wrong and causing so much damage to people, not just them, their families as well, their kids, the impact it has on them.

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01:22:54,000 --> 01:22:58,000

You know, we pick up a lot of the collateral damage here. You know, we're officers.

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01:22:58,000 --> 01:23:07,000

It's their partners that are suffering because, you know, they're going through this and they're trying to support the kids around them, the family around them and things like that.

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01:23:07,000 --> 01:23:14,000

Because that's the other thing, you know, I think about my age now, but these people that have got all these problems are younger people that have got young kids, young families.

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01:23:14,000 --> 01:23:21,000

You know, when you think about Tony with your situation, because it was so long after the shooting, your kids would have been 10 years younger when they actually happened.

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01:23:21,000 --> 01:23:24,000

You know, so they were younger people, wouldn't they? You know, and things like that.

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01:23:24,000 --> 01:23:31,000

And it just affects people in so many different ways. And it saddens me that we put our people through this.

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01:23:31,000 --> 01:23:35,000

Well, that loss of autonomy is very detrimental and being in limbo is very detrimental.

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01:23:35,000 --> 01:23:39,000

And I think this is what people don't realize. You're dragging this on, dragging this on.

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01:23:39,000 --> 01:23:44,000

I mean, you know, like you said it perfectly. I think that's what people got a taste of in Covid.



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01:23:44,000 --> 01:23:47,000

Like stay in your house, shut the fuck up, we'll tell you when to come out.

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01:23:47,000 --> 01:23:48,000

People didn't like it very much.

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01:23:48,000 --> 01:23:50,000

I loved it.

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01:23:50,000 --> 01:23:52,000

The first lockdown was alright, wasn't it?

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01:23:52,000 --> 01:23:54,000

The weather was fantastic.

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01:23:54,000 --> 01:23:58,000

I spent the whole time in the garden doing all these things.

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01:23:58,000 --> 01:24:07,000

But that gave us a chance to reset in some ways, James. And it gave the environment a chance to recover.

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01:24:07,000 --> 01:24:10,000

Oh yeah, we learned that lesson, didn't we?

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01:24:10,000 --> 01:24:11,000

Yeah, yeah.

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01:24:11,000 --> 01:24:13,000

And we just drove twice as much.

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01:24:13,000 --> 01:24:19,000

And it gave certain people opportunities to millions and millions of pounds out of PPE contracts.

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01:24:19,000 --> 01:24:23,000

You know, there's always something going on in the background, isn't there?

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01:24:23,000 --> 01:24:26,000

Absolutely. Yeah, the mother nature thing was beautiful.

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01:24:26,000 --> 01:24:28,000

Everyone's like, oh my God, there's dolphins in the Nile.

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01:24:28,000 --> 01:24:32,000

And then it was like, ah, fuck it. And then I was completely disregarded.

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01:24:32,000 --> 01:24:34,000

Let's just go back to where we were, you know.

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01:24:34,000 --> 01:24:36,000

Exactly, let's learn nothing.

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01:24:36,000 --> 01:24:38,000

It just kind of reset everything, didn't it?

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01:24:38,000 --> 01:24:40,000

But, you know, and I don't know.

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01:24:40,000 --> 01:24:45,000

I mean, it was an odd time, but people got short memories and they forget about it now, don't they?

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01:24:45,000 --> 01:24:46,000

They do.

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01:24:46,000 --> 01:24:48,000

I want to throw a couple of questions at you.

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01:24:48,000 --> 01:24:50,000

So I've got a close friend of mine.

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01:24:50,000 --> 01:24:53,000

He was in one of the London armed units for a full career.

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01:24:53,000 --> 01:24:55,000

He's not obviously able to come on today.

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01:24:55,000 --> 01:24:57,000

So this is through his lens, not me.

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01:24:57,000 --> 01:25:03,000

I mean, they're going to be asking, well, how does an American firefighter paramedic have these questions about armed policing?

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01:25:03,000 --> 01:25:07,000

The first one he had, one of his concerns was tactics themselves.

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01:25:07,000 --> 01:25:12,000

I know he's done a lot of training with tier one units in the military side as well.

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01:25:12,000 --> 01:25:24,000

The way he was explaining it is sometimes some of the tactics, the armed officers are told to be very close on a vehicle, for example, versus staying back, using cover, that kind of thing.

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01:25:24,000 --> 01:25:35,000

What are your perspectives on the situations the tactics are putting the officers in and the increased likelihood that they are going to have to shoot in that case, if anything at all?

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01:25:35,000 --> 01:25:38,000

Well, I think it's I've got some really strong opinions on this.

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01:25:38,000 --> 01:25:44,000

So there's a type of stop that we that is carried out.

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01:25:44,000 --> 01:25:45,000

I'm not sure what they call it now.

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01:25:45,000 --> 01:25:48,000

They probably call it a type one or a type two or type three or whatever.

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01:25:48,000 --> 01:25:54,000

Originally, it was called an enforced vehicle stop or sometimes shortened to hard stop.

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01:25:54,000 --> 01:25:56,000

And I'll tell you how this tactic came about.

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01:25:56,000 --> 01:26:04,000

So below the radar, because we weren't officially allowed to do other jobs or earn money outside of police work in the 90s.

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01:26:04,000 --> 01:26:10,000

But for about a decade, I would go out to the states a little bit like Coles to Newcastle.

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01:26:10,000 --> 01:26:17,000

And I would help run SWAT schools or run my own SWAT schools in the states, mainly in Utah, bizarrely of all places.

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01:26:17,000 --> 01:26:20,000

But I helped out in other parts of the country.

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01:26:20,000 --> 01:26:31,000

And one of the other parts where I literally just helped out was a guy called Ward Stanley, who was the SWAT team sergeant for Hollywood PD in Brow County.

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01:26:31,000 --> 01:26:32,000

Is it Brow County?

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01:26:32,000 --> 01:26:36,000

Yes, not too far from where I am now.

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01:26:36,000 --> 01:26:52,000

OK, so so Walt very much like he'd been in the he'd been in the military, been in the Green Berets in his military service and as a Green Beret, his theater operations was and this was like Cold Warish sort of time was Germany.

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01:26:52,000 --> 01:26:57,000

So he'd been posted in Germany, spoke German quite fluently.

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01:26:57,000 --> 01:26:59,000

But he loved the whole European thing.

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01:26:59,000 --> 01:27:07,000

Proudly American, but he would love to have police officers from Europe on his SWAT course so that we could all learn from each other.

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01:27:07,000 --> 01:27:13,000

So he'd pay my way over there and I'd stay at his house and I'd help him run the course.

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01:27:13,000 --> 01:27:18,000

But I'd also do like a one hour lecture on UK police tactics.

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01:27:18,000 --> 01:27:24,000

And he also had a contact that used to come over on a similar basis called Manfred from Germany.

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01:27:24,000 --> 01:27:29,000

And Manfred was a blonde. He looked like a surfer.

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01:27:29,000 --> 01:27:39,000

In fact, he was called Sonny by his German mates because his one goal in life was to meet a good looking American girl and get a green card and then stay at the same thing.

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01:27:39,000 --> 01:27:42,000

He gave a lecture on German tactics.

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01:27:42,000 --> 01:27:46,000

And I remember one bit was quite funny because at the end of the lecture, he goes, Is there any questions?

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01:27:46,000 --> 01:27:54,000

And his big bodybuilding, like local cop says, Yeah, Manfred, I noticed you didn't mention you use gas at all.

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01:27:54,000 --> 01:27:56,000

Use gas in any tactical options at all.

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01:27:56,000 --> 01:28:03,000

And Manfred goes, No, in Germany, the use of gas is very political because I think in the past, we have gas too many people.

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01:28:03,000 --> 01:28:08,000

And all the British cops at the back of the audience were just looking at each other and biting our hand.

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01:28:08,000 --> 01:28:10,000

But he was just a funny guy.

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01:28:10,000 --> 01:28:14,000

Yeah, I know it's not very appropriate that this was in the 80s, well 90s.

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01:28:14,000 --> 01:28:24,000

But one night we were sitting in a strip bar in Florida and we're talking about tactics and we got some coasters, you know, the old beer coasters out.

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01:28:24,000 --> 01:28:27,000

And he's asking us about our tactics.

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01:28:27,000 --> 01:28:34,000

Now, our tactics at the time were basically stolen from an American felony vehicle stop.

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01:28:34,000 --> 01:28:38,000

You know, we pull up behind the vehicle, you angle your vehicle, get on the tannoy.

924

01:28:38,000 --> 01:28:41,000

Driver, put your keys on top of the car.

925

01:28:41,000 --> 01:28:42,000

Driver, let me see your hands.

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01:28:42,000 --> 01:28:44,000

Driver, open the door slowly, slowly.

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01:28:44,000 --> 01:28:45,000

Get out.

928

01:28:45,000 --> 01:28:46,000

Walk backwards towards me.

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01:28:46,000 --> 01:28:47,000

Turn around three times.

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01:28:47,000 --> 01:28:48,000

All that sort of shit.

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01:28:48,000 --> 01:28:51,000

Like we would do talking to a suspect out of a house.

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01:28:51,000 --> 01:28:53,000

And that was in our manual.

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01:28:53,000 --> 01:28:55,000

But do you think it worked in London?

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01:28:55,000 --> 01:28:56,000

No.

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01:28:56,000 --> 01:28:59,000

Because the little slag in the car just got out and walked up to you.

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01:28:59,000 --> 01:29:00,000

And we're most fucking problem with, mate.

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01:29:00,000 --> 01:29:02,000

We were flushing your blue lights.

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01:29:02,000 --> 01:29:04,000

So it never really worked.

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01:29:04,000 --> 01:29:10,000

So when I said this to Manfred, he goes, but Tony, those are ordinary police tactics.

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01:29:10,000 --> 01:29:11,000

You are the specialist team.

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01:29:11,000 --> 01:29:12,000

What tactics do you do?

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01:29:12,000 --> 01:29:14,000  
And I said, well, what do you do?

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01:29:14,000 --> 01:29:21,000  
And so they were from Hamburg, SEK or Special Einsatzkommando, which was, sorry, MEK,

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01:29:21,000 --> 01:29:26,000  
Mobilize Einsatzkommando, which was like a cross between a surveillance team,

945  
01:29:26,000 --> 01:29:28,000  
a public order team and a SWAT team.

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01:29:28,000 --> 01:29:32,000  
So they all had ponytails and earrings and beards and God knows what else.

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01:29:32,000 --> 01:29:36,000  
And he described this system whereby they only worked in covert vehicles.

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01:29:36,000 --> 01:29:40,000  
Covert vehicle did the overtake of the bandit car or the bad guy car.

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01:29:40,000 --> 01:29:42,000  
Slam the brakes on.

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01:29:42,000 --> 01:29:46,000  
And then normally the driver, there would only be one person in that lead vehicle

951  
01:29:46,000 --> 01:29:48,000  
and they get out of the car and they run across the street

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01:29:48,000 --> 01:29:51,000  
and they'd stop the traffic coming in the other direction.

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01:29:51,000 --> 01:29:56,000

In the meantime, the next car would come alongside a block, the Bravo car.

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01:29:56,000 --> 01:30:00,000

And then the Charlie car would basically gently ram the vehicle

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01:30:00,000 --> 01:30:02,000

and nudge the vehicle from behind.

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01:30:02,000 --> 01:30:04,000

They disrupt everyone in the vehicle.

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01:30:04,000 --> 01:30:09,000

And the guys that were in the side car, ballistic helmets, shields, and they would cover

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01:30:09,000 --> 01:30:12,000

and they would talk the occupants of the car out onto the sidewalk.

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01:30:12,000 --> 01:30:14,000

That was the way that they did it.

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01:30:14,000 --> 01:30:20,000

That was called a Lima because it had an L-shaped arcs of fire.

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01:30:20,000 --> 01:30:21,000

And then they had an Oscar.

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01:30:21,000 --> 01:30:26,000

And an Oscar was basically the same, but you gave enough room between the side blocking car

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01:30:26,000 --> 01:30:29,000

for the occupants to get out and you basically swarmed on the car.

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01:30:29,000 --> 01:30:33,000

You smashed the windows, you threw stun grenades under the car,

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01:30:33,000 --> 01:30:35,000

maximum aggression.

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01:30:35,000 --> 01:30:40,000

That was meant for hostage rescue where you had the element of surprise.

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01:30:40,000 --> 01:30:42,000

So we brought this tactic back.

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01:30:42,000 --> 01:30:46,000

And I described it to the guys in London using beer mats in the pub.

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01:30:46,000 --> 01:30:47,000

I mean, well, that's good.

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01:30:47,000 --> 01:30:52,000

So we documented it all and it became part of our, and we trained for it,

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01:30:52,000 --> 01:30:54,000

and we modified it, and we tweaked it.

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01:30:54,000 --> 01:31:02,000

And that became our primary tactic using covert vehicles with the element of surprise.

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01:31:02,000 --> 01:31:06,000

So in most cases, there would be a surveillance team alongside you,

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01:31:06,000 --> 01:31:10,000

and they would follow the suspect until it got to the point where you were going to do the hit

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01:31:10,000 --> 01:31:13,000

and then they'd peel off and you'd do your job.

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01:31:13,000 --> 01:31:19,000

Now, unfortunately, it's as sexy as fuck, loads of aggression, loads of shouting.

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01:31:19,000 --> 01:31:28,000

But it's not tactical in a marked vehicle where the suspects have seen you arriving.

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01:31:28,000 --> 01:31:32,000

And what's happened is one of the tactics that was open to the armed response vehicles

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01:31:32,000 --> 01:31:39,000

when they first started was the felony vehicle stop type, pull up behind, call them out.

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01:31:39,000 --> 01:31:41,000

But that never got used.

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01:31:41,000 --> 01:31:45,000

And they started doing this thing where they would block the vehicles in marked vehicles.

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01:31:45,000 --> 01:31:49,000

And 999 times out of 1,000, it's going to work because when you do it,

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01:31:49,000 --> 01:31:54,000

for the most part, criminals aren't as big and hard as they like to think they are.

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01:31:54,000 --> 01:31:59,000

And they'll normally fall when you give them a massive show of force.

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01:31:59,000 --> 01:32:03,000

But sadly, we've had incidents, and Azel Rodney was one of them,

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01:32:03,000 --> 01:32:06,000

where the suspects don't come to the briefing.

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01:32:06,000 --> 01:32:09,000

They don't know what your plan is, and they do whatever the fuck they want.

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01:32:09,000 --> 01:32:13,000

And when that happens, suspects get shot.

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01:32:13,000 --> 01:32:18,000

And so we've come under criticism for two specific ones, the Azel Rodney shooting

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01:32:18,000 --> 01:32:23,000

and what was it, the start of the riots, Mark? Mark Dunning.

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01:32:23,000 --> 01:32:27,000

And the Mark Duggan incident, where suspects have been shot by police.

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01:32:27,000 --> 01:32:32,000

On both occasions, they were armed, but we've come under criticism for it.

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01:32:32,000 --> 01:32:36,000

Armed response vehicles have had stops where shots have been fired,

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01:32:36,000 --> 01:32:38,000

and they've come under criticism for it as well.

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01:32:38,000 --> 01:32:48,000

So I'm not against the tactic per se, but I think there's different tactics for different jobs.

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01:32:48,000 --> 01:32:55,000

And I think there's also a situation where we like to make a lot of noise in police

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01:32:55,000 --> 01:32:57,000  
armed tactics in the UK.

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01:32:57,000 --> 01:33:00,000  
When we search in rooms, they like to do a lot of shouting and stuff.

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01:33:00,000 --> 01:33:03,000  
Whereas when I first did it, we did everything really quietly.

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01:33:03,000 --> 01:33:06,000  
We'd use mirrors to check behind doors. We'd use hand signals.

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01:33:06,000 --> 01:33:08,000  
We'd bring the dog up.

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01:33:08,000 --> 01:33:10,000  
Now there just seems to be this thing that you've got to shout.

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01:33:10,000 --> 01:33:13,000  
You've got to let everyone else know what you're thinking and doing.

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01:33:13,000 --> 01:33:19,000  
And actually, when you do these stops where you're in close proximity to the suspects,

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01:33:19,000 --> 01:33:24,000  
unless just one person is shouting, all you do is confuse the suspect.

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01:33:24,000 --> 01:33:27,000  
He's going to do something, and you're going to end up causing yourself,

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01:33:27,000 --> 01:33:30,000  
putting yourself in a situation where you have to shoot.

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01:33:30,000 --> 01:33:35,000

So I think there needs to be a look at vehicle tactics generally,

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01:33:35,000 --> 01:33:39,000

just like there should always be an ongoing look at all the tactics that we do,

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01:33:39,000 --> 01:33:43,000

whether it's searching for suspects in buildings or searching open countryside

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01:33:43,000 --> 01:33:47,000

for suspects or working with dogs or whatever it might be.

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01:33:47,000 --> 01:33:49,000

Tactics should constantly be under review.

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01:33:49,000 --> 01:33:52,000

My personal feeling, and it's been this way for a long time,

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01:33:52,000 --> 01:34:01,000

is I don't like to see marked uniform vehicles doing enforced vehicle type stops.

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01:34:01,000 --> 01:34:03,000

I think there's too much.

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01:34:03,000 --> 01:34:06,000

You haven't got the element of surprise, and there's too much can go wrong.

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01:34:06,000 --> 01:34:08,000

That's my personal feeling.

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01:34:08,000 --> 01:34:14,000

I've written down here, one's going to be a lot shorter answer, James.

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01:34:14,000 --> 01:34:21,000

I've written down here, one, two, three, four, five, six incidents in the last,

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01:34:21,000 --> 01:34:25,000

the longest one going back to eight years with a colleague of ours,

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01:34:25,000 --> 01:34:30,000

and five and a half of them are all unmarked cars,

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01:34:30,000 --> 01:34:34,000

because the most recent one was half and half unmarked.

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01:34:34,000 --> 01:34:41,000

Every one of them has resulted in a disciplinary or criminal action

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01:34:41,000 --> 01:34:44,000

against the police officer involved.

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01:34:44,000 --> 01:34:48,000

I've actually said to the head of armed police in UK Armed Policing,

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01:34:48,000 --> 01:34:51,000

and I'm no tactician, I've been out of the job for 10 years now,

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01:34:51,000 --> 01:34:55,000

I was an ARV officer, but from my observations as a Fed rep

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01:34:55,000 --> 01:34:59,000

and as a CEO of a charity that looks after officers,

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01:34:59,000 --> 01:35:03,000

we need to have a proper review of vehicle stops,



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01:35:03,000 --> 01:35:06,000

how we go about those stops, whether it's geographically or whatever,

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01:35:06,000 --> 01:35:13,000

but a country-wide review on stopping vehicles, armed stops on vehicles.

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01:35:13,000 --> 01:35:15,000

That's all I want to say on the matter,

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01:35:15,000 --> 01:35:20,000

because every one of them has turned into absolute grief for the people involved.

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01:35:20,000 --> 01:35:23,000

The problem is, what do you do?

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01:35:23,000 --> 01:35:25,000

Because I've thought about this long and hard.

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01:35:25,000 --> 01:35:29,000

Like I said, the tactic that I introduced as a result of talking to a drunk

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01:35:29,000 --> 01:35:34,000

and German bloke in a pub in Florida is still going strong,

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01:35:34,000 --> 01:35:39,000

and it hasn't really been reviewed, because 99% of the time it works.

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01:35:39,000 --> 01:35:42,000

It's those occasions when it doesn't work.

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01:35:42,000 --> 01:35:44,000

Some would argue that it did work.

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01:35:44,000 --> 01:35:49,000

I'll argue that Azel Rodney put himself in a position where he was shot,

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01:35:49,000 --> 01:35:53,000

and he had guns in the car, and we had to force that stop,

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01:35:53,000 --> 01:35:57,000

because if we'd lost them, he would have, you know,

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01:35:57,000 --> 01:36:00,000

and we'd lost them and they'd gone on and killed...

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01:36:00,000 --> 01:36:04,000

But playing devil's advocate, what if these guys had seen a marked car?

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01:36:04,000 --> 01:36:07,000

Their actions may have been different if they'd seen a marked car

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01:36:07,000 --> 01:36:09,000

rather than an unmarked car.

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01:36:09,000 --> 01:36:11,000

But they had guns on the wall, didn't they?

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01:36:11,000 --> 01:36:14,000

And they were literally minutes away from doing the robbery.

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01:36:14,000 --> 01:36:17,000

So if we'd let them go and they'd killed Colombian drug dealers,

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01:36:17,000 --> 01:36:19,000

of course, you know, the British being the British,

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01:36:19,000 --> 01:36:21,000

we have a duty of care to Colombian drug dealers,

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01:36:21,000 --> 01:36:23,000

and we mustn't see them hurt.

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01:36:23,000 --> 01:36:27,000

Yeah, I mean, felony-type vehicle stops, containment,

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01:36:27,000 --> 01:36:33,000

calling it away from a position just is very unlikely to work in the UK,

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01:36:33,000 --> 01:36:37,000

because what's happened is the American public have been educated

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01:36:37,000 --> 01:36:40,000

to do certain things when they get stopped by police,

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01:36:40,000 --> 01:36:43,000

and for the most part, they adhere to it,

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01:36:43,000 --> 01:36:47,000

although increasingly, you're getting these sovereign citizens

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01:36:47,000 --> 01:36:50,000

and other idiots that want to film the cops and wind them up

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01:36:50,000 --> 01:36:53,000

and get out of their vehicles and do all sorts of stupid things,

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01:36:53,000 --> 01:36:55,000

knowing that they might get themselves shot.

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01:36:55,000 --> 01:37:00,000

But for the most part, vehicle stops are conducted

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01:37:00,000 --> 01:37:04,000

in a much more disciplined way in the United States.

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01:37:04,000 --> 01:37:09,000

That's a very interesting point, because being a Brit now living in the US

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01:37:09,000 --> 01:37:14,000

for 22 years, I think I've been here now, you do learn that.

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01:37:14,000 --> 01:37:17,000

And I've got a firearm, I've gone through training

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01:37:17,000 --> 01:37:20,000

with actual training groups run by Green Berets,

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01:37:20,000 --> 01:37:23,000

and not that I'm a great person with weapons, I'm not,

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01:37:23,000 --> 01:37:25,000

I'm still very much a white belt,

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01:37:25,000 --> 01:37:27,000

but I have an understanding of the danger of a firearm,

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01:37:27,000 --> 01:37:31,000

I have an understanding of the danger of the sleep deprived, overworked,

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01:37:31,000 --> 01:37:34,000

maybe having PTSD caught that's going to be walking over,

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01:37:34,000 --> 01:37:37,000

and so my hands are nice and clear on the steering wheel,

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01:37:37,000 --> 01:37:41,000

and I'll let them know, hey, there's a firearm, it's here,

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01:37:41,000 --> 01:37:43,000

I'm going to keep my hands here, do you want me to step out?

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01:37:43,000 --> 01:37:46,000

Because it's not about the color of your skin.

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01:37:46,000 --> 01:37:48,000

And this is one of the things I think is so ridiculous,

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01:37:48,000 --> 01:37:51,000

is that a police officer wakes up hoping to kill someone

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01:37:51,000 --> 01:37:53,000

that doesn't look like them that day.

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01:37:53,000 --> 01:37:56,000

I mean, that fucking narrative is just so ridiculous.

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01:37:56,000 --> 01:38:03,000

One of your first questions was about looking at it from a UK point of view,

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01:38:03,000 --> 01:38:06,000

and something that's become really apparent recently,

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01:38:06,000 --> 01:38:10,000

and it's actually been voiced on TV programs,

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01:38:10,000 --> 01:38:13,000

and I've certainly mentioned it on radio shows and things like that,

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01:38:13,000 --> 01:38:24,000

but there was a study done fairly recently by a black guy,

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01:38:24,000 --> 01:38:28,000

he was a Harvard educated doctor or something,

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01:38:28,000 --> 01:38:31,000

and he did a study in Texas about stocks.

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01:38:31,000 --> 01:38:34,000

I think, by the way, you're nodding, I'm guessing that you know the one I'm talking about.

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01:38:34,000 --> 01:38:38,000

I literally just shared the video of him talking a few weeks ago,

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01:38:38,000 --> 01:38:39,000

I know exactly who he's talking about.

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01:38:39,000 --> 01:38:44,000

And so he got closed down because he published his statistics,

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01:38:44,000 --> 01:38:49,000

and what he found was that actually a white police officer was less likely

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01:38:49,000 --> 01:38:53,000

to shoot a black suspect than he was a white suspect,

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01:38:53,000 --> 01:38:56,000

and actually the statistics kind of bear that out.

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01:38:56,000 --> 01:38:59,000

And certainly over here in the UK,

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01:38:59,000 --> 01:39:07,000

I've heard a female officer that was involved in a shooting say publicly,

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01:39:07,000 --> 01:39:10,000

my first thought was thank God he's white,

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01:39:10,000 --> 01:39:14,000

because it will get dealt with differently by the OOPC,

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01:39:14,000 --> 01:39:16,000

there is no doubt about it.

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01:39:16,000 --> 01:39:19,000

We had a situation the other week where a stalker,

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01:39:19,000 --> 01:39:24,000

with the previous intelligence about stalking or convictions, I'm not sure,

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01:39:24,000 --> 01:39:28,000

turned up at a woman's address with a crossbow and knives and a sword, I think,

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01:39:28,000 --> 01:39:32,000

and he was shot dead by police, and it was just like it never happened.

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01:39:32,000 --> 01:39:35,000

It was mentioned on the news, and that was it.

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01:39:35,000 --> 01:39:38,000

Yeah, but you know, genuine suspect, that's it.

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01:39:38,000 --> 01:39:42,000

If you shoot somebody of colour, then there's a very good possibility

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01:39:42,000 --> 01:39:47,000

it will be investigated in a very, very different way.

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01:39:47,000 --> 01:39:55,000

And I think that is an issue, and it's one that you can't keep avoid in talking about.

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01:39:55,000 --> 01:39:59,000

There's always been concerns about community impacts, isn't there,

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01:39:59,000 --> 01:40:01,000

when there's a shooting going on?

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01:40:01,000 --> 01:40:06,000

We all get that, but it shouldn't be to the extent where it colours

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01:40:06,000 --> 01:40:09,000

the decision-making process of an officer.

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01:40:09,000 --> 01:40:12,000

No, the investigation should be the same, absolutely 100%.

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01:40:12,000 --> 01:40:15,000

And I think a lot of it, I've criticised in the past

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01:40:15,000 --> 01:40:18,000

how we engage with the communities after a police shooting,

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01:40:18,000 --> 01:40:21,000

because there's a reluctance to engage sometimes.



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01:40:21,000 --> 01:40:25,000

The flip side of that is they go and visit the families of the people we shoot,

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01:40:25,000 --> 01:40:28,000

but the community engagement is so important,

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01:40:28,000 --> 01:40:31,000

and hopefully they're getting it right now around the country.

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01:40:31,000 --> 01:40:34,000

But I still worry about some forces that don't have an awful lot of shootings,

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01:40:34,000 --> 01:40:36,000

how they're going to react to it.

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01:40:36,000 --> 01:40:41,000

The other thing is if you are able to attach the label terrorist

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01:40:41,000 --> 01:40:45,000

to somebody that's shot by police, then again the investigation,

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01:40:45,000 --> 01:40:54,000

the two young black men that killed the guardsman, Lee Rigby,

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01:40:54,000 --> 01:40:58,000

were shot by police.

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01:40:58,000 --> 01:41:01,000

If you were to look at those officers' statements,

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01:41:01,000 --> 01:41:03,000

there were three officers in the armed response vehicle,

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01:41:03,000 --> 01:41:06,000

I think two of them fired, one of them deployed a taser.

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01:41:06,000 --> 01:41:10,000

If you were to read their statements, you'd think that they were lying,

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01:41:10,000 --> 01:41:12,000

because the incident happened really quickly,

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01:41:12,000 --> 01:41:16,000

but all three of their statements contradict each other to a certain extent,

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01:41:16,000 --> 01:41:23,000

and that was all because of stress, tunnel vision, tunnel hearing,

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01:41:23,000 --> 01:41:26,000

all those sorts of things.

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01:41:26,000 --> 01:41:28,000

But the suspects were shot and wounded,

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01:41:28,000 --> 01:41:35,000

and literally the next day the Prime Minister is sending the officers Harrods...

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01:41:35,000 --> 01:41:37,000

Hampers, weren't it? Yeah, yeah.

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01:41:37,000 --> 01:41:39,000

What did you call it? Harrods?

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01:41:39,000 --> 01:41:41,000

Hampers. Yeah, Harrods Hamper.

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01:41:41,000 --> 01:41:44,000

You should know that, shouldn't I go into public school?

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01:41:44,000 --> 01:41:46,000

So Harrods Hampers, yeah.

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01:41:46,000 --> 01:41:53,000

And the commissioner and the mayor were queuing up to shake their hands.

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01:41:53,000 --> 01:41:57,000

No one was queuing up to shake my hand when I shot Zell Rodney.

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01:41:57,000 --> 01:42:01,000

No one was queuing up to shake the hands of the officer that shot Mark Duggan,

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01:42:01,000 --> 01:42:03,000

because we were the problem.

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01:42:03,000 --> 01:42:08,000

We had created for them a problem because we had shot a young man of colour,

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01:42:08,000 --> 01:42:13,000

whereas the officers in the Lee Rigby case, they were the knights that...

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01:42:13,000 --> 01:42:16,000

The problem was the fact that Lee Rigby had been killed.

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01:42:16,000 --> 01:42:19,000

The problem was that the public were having to do the job of the local police

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01:42:19,000 --> 01:42:22,000

and trying to convince these criminals to put their knives down

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01:42:22,000 --> 01:42:25,000

because the unarmed police officers, because they're held from safety,

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01:42:25,000 --> 01:42:27,000

weren't allowed to approach.

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01:42:27,000 --> 01:42:30,000

So when the ARV turned up and shot the suspects,

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01:42:30,000 --> 01:42:34,000

they were the knights on white charges that came along and slayed the dragon,

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01:42:34,000 --> 01:42:36,000

and they were always going to be heroes.

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01:42:36,000 --> 01:42:42,000

So like you said, you could be dressed in a Ronald McDonald costume,

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01:42:42,000 --> 01:42:48,000

and if you were a terrorist and got shot, well, no one's going to worry about it.

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01:42:48,000 --> 01:42:52,000

Just want to do a different lens again from my friend in the armed unit.

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01:42:52,000 --> 01:42:57,000

He mentioned about the high esteem that the British armed units are held

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01:42:57,000 --> 01:42:58,000

throughout the world.

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01:42:58,000 --> 01:43:00,000

So talk to me about that. How will you receive?

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01:43:00,000 --> 01:43:03,000

You talk about going to Utah and coming here to Florida

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01:43:03,000 --> 01:43:06,000

and helping with the training and the knowledge sharing,

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01:43:06,000 --> 01:43:09,000

and I love the fact that there's an American member of law enforcement

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01:43:09,000 --> 01:43:11,000

who has the humility to go,

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01:43:11,000 --> 01:43:14,000

let's invite other countries, let's knowledge share, let's all help each other.

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01:43:14,000 --> 01:43:16,000

I think we need so much more of that.

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01:43:16,000 --> 01:43:21,000

But talk to me about how the British armed police are viewed from the rest of the world,

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01:43:21,000 --> 01:43:23,000

because again, it's criticism.

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01:43:23,000 --> 01:43:26,000

All we get from inside is criticism usually.

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01:43:26,000 --> 01:43:28,000

What is the reception overseas?

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01:43:28,000 --> 01:43:33,000

I think a lot of it is just curious interest, if I'm honest.

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01:43:33,000 --> 01:43:37,000

One of the first things I used to do when I ran my own training in Utah

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01:43:37,000 --> 01:43:42,000

was do a presentation of what our capabilities were,

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01:43:42,000 --> 01:43:46,000

what our equipment was like, what our training facilities were like,

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01:43:46,000 --> 01:43:48,000

what our personal equipment was like,

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01:43:48,000 --> 01:43:53,000

because back then, certainly in the late 80s, early 90s,

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01:43:53,000 --> 01:43:57,000

our equipment was better than American equipment.

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01:43:57,000 --> 01:44:00,000

And the reason for that is, and it still exists in the States to a degree,

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01:44:00,000 --> 01:44:04,000

is you just have so many different law enforcement agencies,

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01:44:04,000 --> 01:44:08,000

even within one geographic, let's say a state in Utah,

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01:44:08,000 --> 01:44:11,000

you're going to have state police, you're going to have various county sheriffs,

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01:44:11,000 --> 01:44:13,000

you're going to have small police departments

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01:44:13,000 --> 01:44:19,000

that maybe range anything from three officers to 20 officers to 200 officers.

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01:44:19,000 --> 01:44:23,000

I think in Salt Lake Valley, there was probably about eight or nine police departments

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01:44:23,000 --> 01:44:25,000

just in the Salt Lake Valley area.

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01:44:25,000 --> 01:44:27,000

And when people talk about Salt Lake police over here,

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01:44:27,000 --> 01:44:31,000

Salt Lake City Police Department, they don't realize you're talking about downtown Salt Lake.

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01:44:31,000 --> 01:44:34,000

That's what you're talking about. You're not talking about a big geographical area.

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01:44:34,000 --> 01:44:40,000

So, you know, we found all sorts of things whereby we set up an exercise,

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01:44:40,000 --> 01:44:45,000

and the guys from one county swore blind

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01:44:45,000 --> 01:44:47,000

that they were able to speak to the officers from another county,

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01:44:47,000 --> 01:44:49,000

but then when they actually did an exercise,

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01:44:49,000 --> 01:44:52,000

they discovered that their radios weren't compatible.

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So it highlighted a lot of problems.

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01:44:54,000 --> 01:44:57,000

I think a lot of it was just cultural.

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01:44:57,000 --> 01:45:01,000

They paid more attention because they were listening to a British accent.

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01:45:01,000 --> 01:45:04,000

So they had to try a little bit harder.

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01:45:04,000 --> 01:45:08,000

I mean, I remember talking to one course,

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01:45:08,000 --> 01:45:10,000

and I said we were doing CQB, and I said something like,

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01:45:10,000 --> 01:45:16,000

so remember when you enter the room, you know, light up the corners with your torch.

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01:45:16,000 --> 01:45:19,000

And after about three days, this guy came up to me and he goes,

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01:45:19,000 --> 01:45:24,000

Tony, when you say torch, you mean flashlight, right?

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01:45:24,000 --> 01:45:27,000

And I went, yeah, and he said, geez, we thought you guys were fucking serious.

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01:45:27,000 --> 01:45:31,000

You had claim throwers on your MP5s.



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01:45:31,000 --> 01:45:34,000

There's always that little language barrier that you had to kind of get around.

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01:45:34,000 --> 01:45:37,000

And I think as a result of that, people were more likely to ask questions,

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01:45:37,000 --> 01:45:40,000

and they just liked our sense of humor as well.

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01:45:40,000 --> 01:45:46,000

I mean, one course I ran, an Israeli training team had run a course the week before,

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and all they'd done is thrash these poor cops.

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01:45:49,000 --> 01:45:53,000

These cops had paid like \$800 to \$1000 a head.

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01:45:53,000 --> 01:45:58,000

They locked them out of their own pocket just to get kicked and have gravel thrown at them

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01:45:58,000 --> 01:46:00,000

and shouted at by Israelis, you know.

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01:46:00,000 --> 01:46:05,000

So they quite liked our British way, I suppose.

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01:46:05,000 --> 01:46:10,000

So, but yeah, I think, you know, I've spoken to cops all over the world,

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01:46:10,000 --> 01:46:13,000

and they don't really know what to make of us.

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01:46:13,000 --> 01:46:17,000

I spoke to some French cops who just thought we were, it was just,

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01:46:17,000 --> 01:46:22,000

I was out in Nice at the time we had a terrorist attack in the UK,

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01:46:22,000 --> 01:46:29,000

and I think it was the time the officer was murdered at the Houses of Parliament.

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01:46:29,000 --> 01:46:33,000

And I ended up talking to some Nice police officers,

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01:46:33,000 --> 01:46:37,000

and two of them had been on the promenade when the lorry drove down the promenade

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01:46:37,000 --> 01:46:42,000

and killed all those people, and one of them had opened fire with his revolver.

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01:46:42,000 --> 01:46:45,000

And he said, you know, I've been to London, you know,

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01:46:45,000 --> 01:46:49,000

if none of your police officers have guns, or very few of them,

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01:46:49,000 --> 01:46:52,000

I don't know how far would that lorry have gone before,

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01:46:52,000 --> 01:46:56,000

that truck would have gone before an armed officer was able to stop it.

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01:46:56,000 --> 01:46:58,000

So, yeah, it's a mixture.

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01:46:58,000 --> 01:47:03,000

I think there's a respect for doing the job unarmed, you know, definitely.

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01:47:03,000 --> 01:47:04,000

There's definitely a respect.

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01:47:04,000 --> 01:47:08,000

I think it was stupid, but they admire the fact that their officers are prepared

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01:47:08,000 --> 01:47:12,000

to do the same job as they do effectively, but without a gun.

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01:47:12,000 --> 01:47:14,000

I mean, interesting from my perspective.

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01:47:14,000 --> 01:47:19,000

I think I'm going over to Eurocop next week.

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01:47:19,000 --> 01:47:21,000

So, you know, the European forces get together,

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01:47:21,000 --> 01:47:24,000

and there's the federations and the force themselves.

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And we've been asked to present on post-instance procedures.

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So what happens after, you know,

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How come I haven't got an invite?

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01:47:33,000 --> 01:47:37,000

They want to speak from the 2020s. That was all.

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01:47:37,000 --> 01:47:39,000

OK.

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So we're going over there with a view to we're running a workshop with them, Eurocop,

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01:47:45,000 --> 01:47:46,000

to discuss a lot of post-instance procedures.

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01:47:46,000 --> 01:47:49,000

So obviously they look at our country and look at what we've got now.

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01:47:49,000 --> 01:47:50,000

You know, it's all right.

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01:47:50,000 --> 01:47:53,000

I'm saying we don't do enough, but compared to other European forces,

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01:47:53,000 --> 01:47:57,000

because we talk a lot about America here, obviously that's miles and miles away from here.

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01:47:57,000 --> 01:47:58,000

We're in Europe.

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01:47:58,000 --> 01:48:03,000

And, you know, there's a lot in Europe that they could learn from us as well,

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01:48:03,000 --> 01:48:05,000

in particular, you know, maybe not so much tactically,

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01:48:05,000 --> 01:48:08,000

because I think they've got it pretty well, sort of most countries there.

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01:48:08,000 --> 01:48:12,000

But I think certainly the way our procedures are and things like that,

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01:48:12,000 --> 01:48:15,000

how we look after people, because there's also always an assumption

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01:48:15,000 --> 01:48:16,000

they look after people better than we do.

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01:48:16,000 --> 01:48:19,000

Everyone does it better than us because we don't look after our people,

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01:48:19,000 --> 01:48:20,000

but we probably do.

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01:48:20,000 --> 01:48:24,000

At least we've got some sort of guidance around what we do when someone does get injured

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01:48:24,000 --> 01:48:28,000

or we do kill someone or seriously injure someone as well.

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So, you know, there's an example there that they've come to us

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01:48:31,000 --> 01:48:36,000

to go and help out in this workshop for Eurocop around post-instance procedures,

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01:48:36,000 --> 01:48:38,000

which is a nice thing to be asked to do.

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01:48:38,000 --> 01:48:40,000

Yeah.

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01:48:40,000 --> 01:48:41,000

The last place I work.

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01:48:41,000 --> 01:48:43,000

No, go Tony, please, go.

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01:48:43,000 --> 01:48:45,000

I think there's one thing that the Brits are really good at,

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01:48:45,000 --> 01:48:50,000

and that is, you know, overthinking shit.

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01:48:50,000 --> 01:48:56,000

So, you know, because we've got the time sometimes to sit back and look at a problem

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01:48:56,000 --> 01:49:01,000

and come up with a really interesting but totally overcomplicated solution to it.

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01:49:01,000 --> 01:49:06,000

And I think one of the reasons that, you know, we're perhaps good at post-incident

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01:49:06,000 --> 01:49:11,000

is because we have taken the time to look at the subject and do it.

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01:49:11,000 --> 01:49:15,000

I'm sure, you know, when I go to the States,

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01:49:15,000 --> 01:49:19,000

it seems to be so fragmented because there's so many different law enforcement agencies

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01:49:19,000 --> 01:49:23,000

that try to get, you know, the bane of police officers' lives in the UK

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01:49:23,000 --> 01:49:25,000

is the College of Policing.

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No one's got much good to say about the College of Policing,

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but the reality is that it does set standards that are adhered to pretty much

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by all the 43 police forces in the UK.

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I don't put myself in that category.

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01:49:38,000 --> 01:49:40,000

I've got to say about the College.

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Oh, you're in favour of the College, aren't you?

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Well, I run a company that's got a contract with the College to deliver post-incident.

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I wouldn't do it.

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I won't put you on the spot.

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So, this is from my perspective is that, you know,

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they will liaise with different police forces

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01:49:58,000 --> 01:50:01,000

and they'll come up with a concept of how to deal with a particular problem.

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01:50:01,000 --> 01:50:03,000

It doesn't have to be firearms or anything.

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It could be absolutely anything.

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01:50:04,000 --> 01:50:08,000

It could be, you know, how we go about managing crime scenes or anything else.

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01:50:08,000 --> 01:50:13,000

But at least the advantage of that is that you can go anywhere in the UK

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01:50:13,000 --> 01:50:17,000

as a police officer, whether it be as a detective or an armed officer

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01:50:17,000 --> 01:50:20,000

or anything else, as a surveillance officer,

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and you can work with officers from all over the country.

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01:50:22,000 --> 01:50:27,000

And for the most part, your practices and procedures will be the same.



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Whereas in the United States, ironically, I think there's actually quite a lot good to be said

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for smaller police departments in the States.

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It quite annoys me that we've capitalised in Great Britain on community policing.

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01:50:40,000 --> 01:50:43,000

Oh, yes, yeah, British probably on the beat.

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01:50:43,000 --> 01:50:44,000

Well, we don't do any of that shit anymore.

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Actually, there's plenty of places in the States you can go to,

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01:50:47,000 --> 01:50:54,000

small police departments, you know, not in suburbia or out in the countryside,

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01:50:54,000 --> 01:50:58,000

where the population is quite small and the chief of police knows everybody

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01:50:58,000 --> 01:51:00,000

and everybody knows the chief of police.

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01:51:00,000 --> 01:51:02,000

And he's only got four officers and a dog handler.

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01:51:02,000 --> 01:51:07,000

And actually, they're better at community policing than anywhere in the UK

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01:51:07,000 --> 01:51:11,000

because they have that community, that small community that's manageable.

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01:51:11,000 --> 01:51:16,000

And we don't have that anywhere in the UK, to the best of my knowledge.

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01:51:16,000 --> 01:51:20,000

You use the word fragmented and that's a phrase I use all the time.

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01:51:20,000 --> 01:51:23,000

And obviously, my world is fire and EMS, not law enforcement.

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01:51:23,000 --> 01:51:26,000

But I know that we share the exact same problem.

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01:51:26,000 --> 01:51:29,000

And the small departments, I think, are great.

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01:51:29,000 --> 01:51:33,000

The problem is when those small departments and large departments aren't talking to each other.

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01:51:33,000 --> 01:51:36,000

And it's crazy because every single one will reinvent the wheel,

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01:51:36,000 --> 01:51:39,000

a peer support programme, a fitness programme.

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Someone will want to start a non-profit because of mental health,

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because they lost one of their people.

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01:51:43,000 --> 01:51:46,000

There are already people doing amazing jobs in all those areas.

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01:51:46,000 --> 01:51:49,000

And all we have to do is band together and unite.

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01:51:49,000 --> 01:51:53,000

But in the fire service specifically here, we have a union that beats its chest

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01:51:53,000 --> 01:51:56,000

and tells everyone how great they are.

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01:51:56,000 --> 01:51:59,000

But the name union means bringing people together.

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01:51:59,000 --> 01:52:02,000

And they haven't been a voice for that collective department.

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01:52:02,000 --> 01:52:07,000

So, like you said, you could have – and I've seen this – you could have such fragile egos

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01:52:07,000 --> 01:52:09,000

that a county and a city won't even talk to each other.

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01:52:09,000 --> 01:52:10,000

Oh, yeah.

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01:52:10,000 --> 01:52:13,000

And they'll work against each other at fires or scenes.

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01:52:13,000 --> 01:52:16,000

And then obviously now you fast forward to some sort of school shooting,

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01:52:16,000 --> 01:52:18,000  
that ends up with dead children.

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01:52:18,000 --> 01:52:19,000  
Yeah.

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01:52:19,000 --> 01:52:20,000  
No, it's really, really true.

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01:52:20,000 --> 01:52:24,000  
And I think there's – I've certainly come across the expression,

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01:52:24,000 --> 01:52:29,000  
you know, give me a 14-man police department and I'll show you a 14-man SWAT team.

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01:52:29,000 --> 01:52:34,000  
You know, in the Metropolitan Police, you've got 34,000 officers.

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01:52:34,000 --> 01:52:39,000  
So you've got a huge gene pool to select the very best guys for your SWAT team.

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01:52:39,000 --> 01:52:42,000  
You know, I've worked with small police departments where the guys were very enthusiastic,

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01:52:42,000 --> 01:52:48,000  
but one guy was a homicide detective, another guy was a school's liaison officer,

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01:52:48,000 --> 01:52:50,000  
another guy was a traffic cop.

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01:52:50,000 --> 01:52:53,000  
And they came together every Wednesday night and did a bit of training.

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And, you know, once a year they'd have a get-together and they'd have a week of training and stuff.

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01:52:58,000 --> 01:53:01,000

But they weren't talking to the neighboring police department.

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01:53:01,000 --> 01:53:04,000

And quite often the chief of police would have a SWAT team, but he wouldn't fund it.

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01:53:04,000 --> 01:53:09,000

He just wanted to be able to say, my department's big enough to have a SWAT team.

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01:53:09,000 --> 01:53:12,000

But that's why it's important that we've got a college of policing,

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01:53:12,000 --> 01:53:15,000

because whether or not you think you're doing a good job,

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01:53:15,000 --> 01:53:18,000

at least we've got something in place that tries to make sure that everyone's doing it the same way.

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01:53:18,000 --> 01:53:21,000

No, I get that.

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01:53:21,000 --> 01:53:24,000

If we didn't have the college, then it would be carnage, you know.

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01:53:24,000 --> 01:53:32,000

And I think, you know, we have to have certain levels of consistency around all different aspects of policing.

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01:53:32,000 --> 01:53:35,000

And it's such a, you know, wealth of different things to be able to do.

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01:53:35,000 --> 01:53:39,000

But I think, you know, on the whole, at least we've got that in place.

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01:53:39,000 --> 01:53:43,000

But obviously European forces don't have that luxury that we've got.

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01:53:43,000 --> 01:53:46,000

And it may not be perfect, but it's better than nothing.

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01:53:46,000 --> 01:53:52,000

No, I mean, if you look at most European police forces, they're not actually that dissimilar to the United States.

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01:53:52,000 --> 01:53:58,000

So in Spain, for instance, you'll have the Guardia Civil, which is like a national paramilitary police force.

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You know, then you'll have city police, you know, then you'll have, you know, township polices and police.

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So it's very much the same in Italy as well, as I understand, probably France.

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So it's not, you know, the American system isn't unique.

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01:54:15,000 --> 01:54:22,000

I think we're probably more unusual in point of fact, because effectively, even if you're a member of a different constabulary,

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01:54:22,000 --> 01:54:26,000

the police force is sort of national, isn't it? Sort of.

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01:54:26,000 --> 01:54:32,000

Yeah. So another area I want to get to that my friend asked me to ask you guys, and I'll give a personal example.

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01:54:32,000 --> 01:54:37,000

I've worked for arguably one of the best fire departments in America and one of the worst.

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01:54:37,000 --> 01:54:39,000

And the worst should be one of the best.

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01:54:39,000 --> 01:54:46,000

But what's happened in that particular place is that all the people at the top have never actually done the job.

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01:54:46,000 --> 01:54:54,000

So all the way from the EMS chief up to the operations chief, who's supposed to be in charge of all the things that we do.

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01:54:54,000 --> 01:55:05,000

And then the chief chief, you know, they came up either through dispatch, answering 999 calls, 911 calls here, or fire prevention, checking outlets and fire extinguishers.

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01:55:05,000 --> 01:55:10,000

And so what I have seen personally is there's a lack of operational understanding.

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01:55:10,000 --> 01:55:12,000

And then you add a fragile ego in.

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01:55:12,000 --> 01:55:17,000

Now, when you've got the boots on the ground, going to them and saying, hey, this is the problem.

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01:55:17,000 --> 01:55:21,000

We're more than happy to get together and put training on and fix it.

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01:55:21,000 --> 01:55:25,000

There's a shut up, don't you tell me what to do. I'm a chief kind of mentality.

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01:55:25,000 --> 01:55:27,000

And it creates massive resistance.

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01:55:27,000 --> 01:55:32,000

My friend was asking the tactical firearms commander position.

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01:55:32,000 --> 01:55:41,000

He in his eyes has seen a woeful lack of actual field experience in many of his own personal kind of experiences with that.

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01:55:41,000 --> 01:55:51,000

And what worried him was if you haven't actually been in that role and now you're offering tactical advice to a scene that could be very dangerous.

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01:55:51,000 --> 01:55:53,000

What is your perception of that?

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01:55:53,000 --> 01:55:56,000

Well, I won't comment on this because I don't think it's fair to comment.

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01:55:56,000 --> 01:56:01,000

OK, so I mean, I've been retired 10 years. I don't want to give examples or so.

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01:56:01,000 --> 01:56:09,000

I'm not going to give any examples as such, but I actually share your concern about leadership that's never actually done the job.



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01:56:09,000 --> 01:56:20,000

One of the things that frighten me most is that we were talking about, you know, Mark introduced the subject about, you know, kids being better educated and university educated and everything else.

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01:56:20,000 --> 01:56:36,000

I think in the last couple of decades, there's become a sort of thing that's crept in from university graduated officers that you don't need shop floor experience

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01:56:36,000 --> 01:56:42,000

in order to be working on the shop floor, you know, to be a manager. Sorry.

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01:56:42,000 --> 01:56:50,000

And I think that's wrong. I'm sorry. But, you know, if you're talking about budgets and things like that, yes, I kind of get it.

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01:56:50,000 --> 01:57:02,000

But when somebody comes into the department in a very senior position with a fragile ego, perhaps I've just seen so many things go wrong over the years.

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01:57:02,000 --> 01:57:08,000

So when I joined my unit in 83, it was much smaller. There was only about 40 of us in total.

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01:57:08,000 --> 01:57:15,000

But the superintendent, who became our chief superintendent, had joined the department 10, 15 years earlier as a sergeant.

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Then he'd gone out on promotion as an inspector and come back as an inspector and then a chief inspector.

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And now here he was as a superintendent in charge of the unit. He knew the subject inside out, police use of firearms.

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01:57:27,000 --> 01:57:32,000

He'd been involved in projects to select new weapons and ammunition. He'd helped develop new tactics.

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01:57:32,000 --> 01:57:39,000

He'd been to visit GSG 9 and the other specialist units around the world. His expertise was second to none.

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01:57:39,000 --> 01:57:46,000

And everybody at troop level looked up and went, yeah, he's our boss and he knows what he's talking about.

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01:57:46,000 --> 01:57:54,000

And then slowly as the years went by, we found ourselves in a situation where we were recruiting people that didn't come from that degree of knowledge.

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And that's not always possible to do that. You can't constantly promote from within.

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01:57:59,000 --> 01:58:03,000

But people would go, I'll come in. But I've never been a firearms officer before. So I'll tell you what I'll do.

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01:58:03,000 --> 01:58:11,000

I'll put myself on a firearms course and I'll take two weeks and at least then I'll be able to speak with some knowledge.

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01:58:11,000 --> 01:58:16,000

I'm not a SWAT team guy, but at least I've been a shot. Oh, the lads are abseiling.

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01:58:16,000 --> 01:58:22,000

Let me go up on the roof and see if they'll put a harness on me and chuck me off the roof and all that sort of stuff, which to me would be good leadership.

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01:58:22,000 --> 01:58:34,000

But increasingly, what I've found is that you've got people that come in and not only do they have no knowledge, but they're not really interested in gaining any knowledge.

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01:58:34,000 --> 01:58:38,000

They just want to tick a box on their CV.

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01:58:38,000 --> 01:58:43,000

That's not the question. The question was about people in TFC.

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01:58:43,000 --> 01:58:48,000

Yeah, I know. But I'm talking generally. That's a different thing altogether, isn't it? Because I think we've got to be careful.

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01:58:48,000 --> 01:58:59,000

No, it's not. So let me finish. So what you're getting is you used to get, so for argument's sake, the floor that I worked on was on the third floor and above us was the manager's floor.

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01:58:59,000 --> 01:59:04,000

And so what you get is you get a new senior officer come in the department and they would come in now.

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01:59:04,000 --> 01:59:10,000

Some of them might actually go on the third floor, stick their head around the corner and go, hey, I'm the new boss. You know what's going.

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01:59:10,000 --> 01:59:13,000

Now, they're going to get a load of shit on that first encounter, aren't they?

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01:59:13,000 --> 01:59:19,000

Because they're going, oh, we've got a set of ears that will listen to us now. Come in, have a cup of coffee.

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01:59:19,000 --> 01:59:25,000

And then they'll get their ears chewed off. If they come back and do it again a second time, the ear chewing won't be so bad.

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If you come back the last time, you'll be treated as one of the one of the guys and girls.

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01:59:29,000 --> 01:59:34,000

And, you know, the coffee will be pre-made for you and everyone will give you 100 percent respect.

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01:59:34,000 --> 01:59:41,000

But I see so many people used to come in and go straight to the floor and avoid any contact with the people under them.

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01:59:41,000 --> 01:59:48,000

And it was as if they, you know, they went in and they got that first ear bashing and I'm not doing that again.

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And so what they would then do is they would, as they became more knowledgeable in their role, they would go to meetings at Scotland Yard where something would be discussed.

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Whereas in the past, it would have been passed down the tree.

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They're not going to pass it down the tree now because this gives me a bit of power and a bit of strength that I wouldn't otherwise have because I feel threatened by people of a lower rank who have been doing the job for 20 years and know it inside out.

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So I think that, you know, that generally and I'm talking about SO-19, but I think that's generally an issue throughout management.

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I'm not going to talk about tactical firearms advisors and things, but to be honest, I'll get confused by the lettering now.

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You know, there seems to be so many levels of tactical advice, but I think, yeah, I have a concern about this this impression that you can just go into a specialization as a manager and not need to really know much about that specialization.

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I think that's wrong.

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02:00:42,000 --> 02:00:44,000

Mark, you don't want to talk about specifically, you don't need to.

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I mean, this is a question from a friend.

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He was just working up until very recently.

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I think if someone's trained to be a TFC or an SFC or OFC, they've done a course, they've been accredited, they've been, you know, they've done an exam or whatever.

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And if they've passed that and they've met the criteria, then they do the role.

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So, you know, and whether they, however much experience they got, these are all different individuals.

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There's hundreds of them.

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Yeah, maybe someone's got more experience than someone else.

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02:01:12,000 --> 02:01:15,000

I don't think we can generically say, oh, well, that's wrong.

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02:01:15,000 --> 02:01:18,000

You know, they haven't got enough experience because no one ever, ever have a chance to do anything.

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02:01:18,000 --> 02:01:21,000

Well, no, I'll get that, Mark, but I'll give you one example.

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I'm not even going to use the terminology because I don't know what terminology was at the time.

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But just after I'd left, they introduced, so whereas when I was in, if a customer, let's say the flying squad ran up the inspector's office for the SFO teams and said, right, we've got a job bubbling for tomorrow.

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We've got this robbery team going to rob a bank, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

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They would have a meeting with the officer that picked up the phone.

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02:01:45,000 --> 02:01:58,000

It would normally be of inspector rank and they would come up with the tactics and decide on what the options were and what resources we could, we could give them to assist them with that.

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And all of those inspectors had all gone through the SFO course.

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So they had just as much knowledge as anyone else on the teams.

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And so we're in a position to give good advice because they'd actually been out there and done it.

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And then they introduced this thing where they brought in outsiders. They gave them a brief course, which was I think about three weeks, two or three weeks.

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And when you bear in mind that the SFO team guys will have done like probably an eight or nine week course, you know, just to get onto the teams and then would take quite some time to develop that expertise and knowledge.

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They put these people in a three week course and then they were giving the tactical advice.

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So the same flying squad detective would would ring up and they go, oh, yeah, we can do that.

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02:02:36,000 --> 02:02:38,000

There was no consultation with the team.

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02:02:38,000 --> 02:02:40,000

They just tell the team, you're on a job tomorrow.

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02:02:40,000 --> 02:02:43,000

When they get to the scene, they go, oh, we weren't told.

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02:02:43,000 --> 02:02:48,000

Oh, we need this to we would have brought that with us if we'd have been told, you know, or someone.

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One of the one of these new guys said to a team leader, yeah, there's no need to do a recce of Google Earth.

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Well, you don't rely on Google Earth because the photographs taken on Google Earth might be four years old.

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You got sent someone out and do reconnaissance.

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But because he'd never done it himself, this guy thought it was perfectly adequate just to get on Google Earth.

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02:03:09,000 --> 02:03:11,000

So that's what I'm talking about markets.

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You know, yes, you can train someone, but they're never going to gain that sort of experience by going straight into a role that they've never done.

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I'm not going to comment on each individual instant because I think that's unfair.

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02:03:25,000 --> 02:03:32,000

But, you know, I mean, that's you have to see that you have to admit, at least if somebody's just coming and done three week course with no firearms background whatsoever.

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And they're now giving tactical advice on jobs that they've never done.



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They won't be giving it to SFO teams, will they?

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Because you've got your own tactical advisors.

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Well, no, but they were. This was it.

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02:03:42,000 --> 02:03:44,000

They would decide on what the allocation was.

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I don't know. But I mean, you know, they'll ask the question, why did the team go underground then?

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And so without even getting a proper briefing then about what equipment they needed.

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Well, no, it didn't get to that.

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It didn't get to that point because they queried it.

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But they, you know, it's not very well, there is.

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There's loads of examples, but everything you've given there.

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But there is going to be less examples if somebody's experience.

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And I don't know what goes on now.

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It's not my problem anymore.

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So I think I think this is this is pulled out a common theme, though.

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I think if you expand back out, which is, you know, like we talked about with universities back in the day,

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it used to be the smartest people that went to university and that would be a route to medicine, law.

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You know, now I'm a huge fan of the trade schools. That's what I went through.

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I wasn't super successful in school and I have a college degree.

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And honestly, it was worth next to nothing.

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I did it in sports science. Didn't really give me any any training experience whatsoever.

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It just taught me how to be in a lab measuring people jumping pretty much a very expensive piece of paper.

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But, you know, so you've got that track.

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And it's the same here in the U.S. Well, if you're going to be a lieutenant, you need to get a bachelor's degree.

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Well, what is that really doing?

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If you've just thrown up the ladder now and you've only got three, four or five years as a firefighter.

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Now you've got your piece of paper and your office of course is now you just got promoted and you've only seen five years

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and now you're three or four.

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And now you're in charge of a, you know, of a scene of, you know, an engine of four people and maybe a scene of, you know,

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20 people and all their welfare and you just don't have that experience.

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So, you know, expanding out from that one role.

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What about an army officer then? What about an army officer? Where do you think they get their experience from?

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Well, there's a difference with army officers.

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First of all, they go through a very substantial training.

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But then when they go out, you know, and I know that they're not in charge of the platoon, are they?

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They're not in charge of the troop, are they?

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It's actually an unwritten, but actually very well established thing in the British Army that it's the NCOs that run the troop or the platoon.

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And until that young officer has got some experience, he doesn't really run it at all.

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But he has to make some decisions because otherwise they wouldn't bother with it.

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02:06:04,000 --> 02:06:07,000

He or she has to make decisions.

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So what I'm saying is, you know, everyone has to learn their trade.

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You can't just get people that are 100% experienced.

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Where do they come from? You've got to, people have got to be given time to, you know, and if they are making...

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And some would argue what was wrong then with everybody coming in as a constable and doing a period of time as a constable before they took promotion.

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You know, my attitude with it nowadays is that I think, and I always have thought, that there's a missing rank within the British police force.

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I think that there should be something, you can call it a corporal, you can call it senior constable, you can call it a junior sergeant.

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I don't care what you call it, but you shouldn't be allowed to sit promotion until you have demonstrated.

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And that rank can be on Velcro so that if you don't perform well, they can fucking rip it off.

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But you should be put in charge of a group of people because you've been selected because you seem to have something about you.

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You seem to have some leadership potential. You're intelligent, you're bright. People seem to get on with you.

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You're then given the responsibility of doing what we used to call section sergeant roles, which was being out on the street and supervising officers out on the street.

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And then if you prove your worth there, we don't expect you to study in your own time to become a sergeant, which is absolute nonsense.

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We actually send you to a sergeant's training course, whether it be five weeks or six weeks, like a junior command course or a senior command course.

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They've got the money to do that.

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02:07:31,000 --> 02:07:32,000

Well, they can't do that.

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02:07:32,000 --> 02:07:37,000

They haven't got training school, let alone a sergeant's, you know, junior.

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They could do it if they wanted to do it.

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You don't have to have a college in a hotel and run it in a hotel.

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02:07:43,000 --> 02:07:47,000

That's how you do stuff, isn't it?

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So basically what you've got in any any establishment like the police or whatever is you've got a pyramid.

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And at the top, you've got the commissioner or the chief of police or, you know, the chief constable, call it what you will.

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02:07:58,000 --> 02:08:02,000

And down at the bottom of the pyramid, you've got the troops.

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02:08:02,000 --> 02:08:12,000

If you don't get that first step off the foundations onto the first floor, which is sergeant rights, you know, before you do is promote someone as we do in this country,

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02:08:12,000 --> 02:08:17,000

simply because they want to be a sergeant and wake up one morning and nothing else at sergeant's exam.

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No one says, no, you can't.

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02:08:18,000 --> 02:08:20,000

You're not good enough.

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02:08:20,000 --> 02:08:26,000

If you pass the sergeant's exam, which has got nothing to do whatsoever with your ability as a sergeant.

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It's just got something to do with your ability to learn a certain amount of facts and figures and to be able to quote, you know, current policy.

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02:08:33,000 --> 02:08:35,000

Then you get on the next rank.

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02:08:35,000 --> 02:08:44,000

That is not a good basis, because all you've done is you promoted someone that shit is going to then become a shit inspector, a chief inspector and so on and so forth.

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02:08:44,000 --> 02:08:48,000

Well, we don't speak generically because you're saying that everyone.

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No, I'm not saying that at all. What I'm saying is, if you want the original foundation, the promotion is based on you wanting to be a sergeant, but without demonstrating any leadership skills.

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But there are some good people.

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But there are some good people.

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Of course there will always be some decent people that slip in through the net.

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02:09:05,000 --> 02:09:17,000

I can honestly say absolutely open hearted that every single senior officer that I've ever had dealings with, that I've had respect for and have gone, yeah, he's a leader.

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02:09:17,000 --> 02:09:19,000

I would follow him. Yeah.

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02:09:19,000 --> 02:09:23,000

Yeah, he gives a big briefing with confidence. He stands up.

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02:09:23,000 --> 02:09:27,000

He's the sort of person that you or she is the sort of person that you would follow.

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02:09:27,000 --> 02:09:33,000

The only reason that they've got where they've got is because they just happen to be a natural leader.

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02:09:33,000 --> 02:09:38,000

No one has actually mentioned leadership to them or tried to teach them leadership.



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02:09:38,000 --> 02:09:40,000

A lot of natural leaders don't want to take promotion.

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02:09:40,000 --> 02:09:42,000

No, exactly my point. And exactly.

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02:09:42,000 --> 02:09:44,000

You're going back to your military thing now.

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02:09:44,000 --> 02:09:46,000

My son's a color sergeant in the Royal Marines.

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02:09:46,000 --> 02:09:48,000

He would have never been a color sergeant in the Royal Marines.

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02:09:48,000 --> 02:09:52,000

He would have been quite happy to stay as a Marine, kicking in doors and shooting Taliban.

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02:09:52,000 --> 02:09:54,000

He didn't want promotion at all.

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02:09:54,000 --> 02:09:56,000

But someone said to him, you're going to take promotion.

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You've got to take promotion.

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02:09:58,000 --> 02:10:02,000

There is no future for you in this organization unless you take promotion.

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So that's why you get leadership in the military and you don't get leadership in the police.

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It's an interesting conversation.

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This is what I love about this.

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02:10:10,000 --> 02:10:11,000

This isn't about, you know, bitching.

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02:10:11,000 --> 02:10:16,000

This is about pulling problems out of the shadows and then discussing solutions.

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02:10:16,000 --> 02:10:20,000

And it sounds to me again, excuse me, complete layman's perspective.

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I'm a firefighter and I'm in America and I'm talking about English policing or British policing.

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But some of the things that you guys talk fondly about in your early career seem to be the solutions to some of the things.

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So putting the standards back up, having a more comprehensive training.

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But then you say about the money.

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This is the thing I've seen in here.

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We have exams that we take to promote in the fire service.

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But I mean, so many people in my profession have come on here have said, but it doesn't teach you how to be a leader.

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So you get the piece of paper and you learn, you know, skill A, B and C, but you're not actually taught leadership per se.

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And then so if we kind of go around to the false economy, you guys are being asked to do more with less.

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You know, stations and gun ranges are being closed down.

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So let's play devil's advocate for a second.

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If we had or you had a progressive leader that said, look, we're going to reinvest into the into the law enforcement community in the UK.

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What initiatives would you put to the front so that you could actually turn turn the tide and get a better environment for the police officers,

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raise the fitness standards again and then bring back all those people into the teams that want to be there?

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I think I mean, my focus would be on welfare and mental health, you know, really, and encouraging healthy diets, fitness and things like that.

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You know, we're you know, we're getting people to think about what they're eating and how they're looking after themselves and, you know, peer support and things like that.

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You know that because if you invest in the people to look after themselves, they'll last longer.

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It's like a car, isn't it? If you service your car regularly, it lasts longer.

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In fact, some cars last for a lifetime.

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And that's what we need to do with people. We need to invest more in people.

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And, you know, taking away the side of, you know, supervision and leadership and things like that.

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That's a whole different subject that we could talk about for the rest of the day and tomorrow.

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But, you know, if you're looking at ways of investing and changing policing and changing how people feel, if you've got a healthy workforce,

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if you've got a person, a young man, a woman that feels good, looks good in themselves, are eating well,

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just looking after themselves in all sorts of different ways, then I think you're going to get a better police officer at the end of it.

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You know, someone who's a bit more switched on because we all know and particularly from the sort of, you know, the work you do, being fit helps you stay switched on

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because you're making life or death decisions potentially going into a smoke-filled environment, flames, heights, all the other dangers, you know, vehicles exploding, that kind of stuff.

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You have to make really split-second decisions with life-changing consequences.

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And if you're healthy and you're fit and you look after yourself, those decisions will be a little bit easier and hopefully make the right decision.

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So I think investing in people, but their mental health, their wellbeing, just everything about them, you know, how they look, their appearances,

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keeping some standards up there where, you know, there's a reason why soldiers ball their shoes, why they iron their trousers and their shirts and things like that.

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And, you know, why we have discipline and marching and things like that.

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March isn't just because, you know, we want to march, it's because we want to get a body of men and women from one place to another in a smart and orderly fashion, not like a rabble.

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That's why we do things like that. There's a reason behind, the method behind all the man-ish, you know.

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I'm an ex-guardsmen. You know, I still have things I did as a guardsman wherever I, you know, look at, you know, for example, if I was going to a meeting tomorrow,

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I would wear a collar and a tie probably. I'd make sure I don't shave, make sure whatever hair I've got left is looking smart. It's smart in appearance, isn't it?

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And I think we need to look at that in policing and there are things that we can easily do. But again, it needs investment.

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Absolutely. And again, it's that false economy. It's funny. I just interviewed a lady, Tulsi Gabbard, who I hope is going to be the president of the US one day.

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But you look at everything, you know, homelessness, addiction, gang-mode, it's always the same. It's a reactive response over and over and over again.

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And we need a courageous leader to say, look, it's going to cost a little bit more money. Let me tell you why.

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Let me tell you, you know, five years from now what it's going to look like. It's going to be so much better.

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You know, you're going to be safer. You're going to be happier. But we need to reinvest. We've been cutting and cutting and cutting.

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Prevention or cure, isn't it? Prevention. Prevention is probably right. Let's prevent these things happening before we need to get a cure, really.

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Let's prevent it happening and have a bit of, you know, because some of the, you know, the stuff, you know, becomes very cost effective and actually saves huge amounts of money in the long term if we invest in the short term.

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And we know that, you know, so if you educate people to cast themselves and give them the tools they need for all of that, that investment short term when they start will last throughout their career.

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You know, and hopefully we'll maintain them throughout their career. You know, fitness is a massive thing. You know, it's, you know, it does so much good for people, you know, just to get some training in and have time to do it and have a facility to do it as well.

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Not all people do that because some people do let themselves go. They're not interested in doing it or they're tired. Tiredness is a massive thing, isn't it?

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You know, how do we do that? And also, you know, from our point of view as a charity, you know, one of the things we have always been really keen to do is impress upon our members that we look after their families as well because if they've got a problem at home and it's because one of their family members, we need to help them as well because it helps the officer.

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And then he or she can get back to some sort of normality, you know, so our families are important. Our loved ones around us, you know, so, you know, there's a whole load of different things, but it comes down to money, doesn't it? A lot of it.

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It does. But it's again, it's a false economy and it's that community coming together and, you know, being part of the solution and, you know, whether it's addressing why we have mental health issues, why, you know, more and more kids are finding themselves leaning in the gangs, why, you know, some of them picking up knives more than ever.

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But, you know, so we as a nation have to adjust that. But then we also have to support our men and women so that when we're asleep, you know, God forbid something happens to our teenager or whatever it is that our men and women that are protecting our communities in uniform are able to deliver the best, you know, service and make the right decision under a huge amount of stress.

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And, you know, people like yourself running towards a danger when other people are running away, you know, people going into burning buildings, getting people out of cars, you know, out of rivers, all sorts of things, you know, risking their lives for people they've never met.

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That's just to me, you know, I look at that, I think, crikey, you know, like, thank God we've got people like that.

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I could drive down the road, get in a collision somewhere and end up in a river. And some cop will drive along or firefighter or an ambulance crew will drive along and probably enter the water to try and save me.

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They've never met me before, they don't know who I am or anything, do they? It doesn't matter what religion you are, what color you are, when you're in that position, does it really? It's just like everyone just goes to try and save someone's life, don't they?

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And, you know, sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't work tragically, you know, and it's, you know, so I think that's another thing that, you know, we should never lose sight of.

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And I never want people, the people that do the job. So I look at all our members, you know, the police officers, and I always want them to remember.

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And that's why I need to be, need to be positive about a lot of this is that we need them to do what they're doing.

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We don't want to put them off doing what we're doing. I mean, you know, my personal opinion about my children is my own personal opinion.

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But those that have stepped up to do it need to be supported. Because they may well have gone against their parents wishes, what aren't they, these young people?

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You know, they told me I shouldn't join the police because it's a complete nightmare and I'm going to get f\*\*ked over by the job or whatever like that.

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And actually, they need to be supported even more, don't they? Because they took that decision, didn't listen to their parents, perhaps, and thought, no, I want to do this because I feel that passionate about it.

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We need that passion. You wouldn't do what you did unless you were passionate about it.

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No, no. And I think this is what I've said, you know, there's a lot of conversation with the Gen Z's like, oh, you know, they don't want to work and all these kind of ridiculous examples that people give that, yeah, of course, there's a group that, you know, doesn't maybe, you know, want to enter a uniform anymore.

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And we've got to give them grace, too. There's a massive group of children that graduated into COVID. So they didn't go into the workforce because they couldn't go into the workforce.

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So we've got to give them some grace, too. But, you know, I think this is where we're at now is when you and I, you know, you start your career before me, but, you know, roughly that time when you looked in what's it like to be a cop?

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What's it like to be a firefighter? It was, oh, this looks fun. This looks, you know, courageous. This looks like a life of service. I'm going to go do this.

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But now when you look into what is it like to be a British police officer or American firefighter, all the good stuff comes up. But so does all the bad because we have the internet and you can see everything.

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You can see the court cases that lasted six years after a police officer did exactly what he was trained to do.

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Or you can see the suicides and divorces and overdoses and, you know, all these other things. And so it's all there.

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The beautiful thing, like I said before, is that this is an opportunity to fix it, because if we fix the things around the work itself, people will flock to the jobs again.

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Then you'll be able to take that top 10 percent like you used to. But if we, you know, don't change it, what is that message to, you know, not only the uniform professions, but the civilians in general?

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Like, yeah, we're not really supporting them. We just hope, you know, hopefully they'll show up.

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But if you actually finally see this as a sign to truly proactively invest in the first responder professions, you will have, you know, a line out the door and you will have a group of people selflessly serving,

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you know, training themselves, you know, doing extra course, just like I did through my whole profession.

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So this, I think, is an opportunity for us to really make a difference, to really turn the tide now, because we have got to a critical mass.

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Yeah, let's be positive about it. You know, there's always a few bad apples in any organization, any set up.

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And those bad apples, unfortunately, in our occupations, and I include firefighting here and ambulances, you know, NHS, whatever, let us down terribly,

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because we all get told by the same brush and it's completely unfair, completely unfair.

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You know, those two police officers are on police officers rotting away in prison.

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They're nothing to me. They mean nothing to me. I'm only interested in investing in the people that are out there doing a great job, looking after people and being brave and doing it on a daily basis.

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So a few bad apples, same in every occupation, every occupation.

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Absolutely. All right. Well, speaking of that, I started this podcast seven and a half years ago after basically going to six of my friends' funerals in two years, firefighters.

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I've had some of the guys from or the ladies from the Firefighters Charity.

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Again, the origin story of that is just wanting to help the fire service. And that's not the government. That's a nonprofit.

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What kind of what were the events that led you to create in the PFOA and having served all those years in uniform, want to do even more for the men and women that you serve with?

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Well, I mean, you know, my background was military, so I left school with no qualifications, joined the army. I joined the Grenadier Guards, served five years, left two weeks after leaving the army, joined the police, went to Hendon, struggled at Hendon academically.

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I didn't mind the practical stuff, but I was always always wanted to be a cop, always wanted to be a police officer, went to Wandsworth, served nine years at Wandsworth.

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I loved driving, so I wanted to be an advanced driver, which I did, and then always wanted to be on the armed response vehicle.

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So I went to SO-19 as it was then. And really, I never looked back. I had a fantastic career and I enjoyed myself immensely.

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But around about 2000, 2001, I got involved in the police federation aspect of our work. So looking after the interests of the officers, their welfare, legal support, that kind of stuff.

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But most importantly, in our department, being involved in the police shooting. So when our officers discharge their firearms, I was getting involved from a legal, from a federation point of view.

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And of course, that went on and on for a number of years. And through, again, you know, victims of our own success with our department, we got involved in more firearms operations.

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More firearms operations meant we were going to get involved in more shootings. And that's where I think was my fault.

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I got asked to do a lot of presentations around post-institution procedures, how we looked after officers following the police shooting.

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And but I was still not particularly happy about the way some of our colleagues got treated. It was appalling in some cases, depending on the circumstances of shooting.

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And in 2009, I decided to get together with a colleague of mine and said, look, we need to do something to support the families, but also the officers, but more importantly, the families in this case, because they get left behind and they didn't sign up like we did.

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So we started the PFA, the Police Firearms Association. We became a charity in 2010. And it's funny because I often laugh, the day one I literally walked around the corridors at our base and I bumped into a mate of mine, Adam, who's still a member now.

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He's member number three, me being one and my colleague being number two. And I said to Adam, look, what do you think of this? I'm going to start an association that supports you and your families if you're involved in stuff.

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Doesn't have to be shootings, anything. And he went, yeah, yeah, I said sign there. And he just signed it, you know, and and we're sort of ten and a half thousand strong now, all these years later and and families.

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And, you know, since then, we've we've provided over four and a half million pounds worth of support to officers and their families direct support.

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And we do lots of different things. We've got a 24 hour phone support line. We have a GP line so that they can go into a doctor over here is a complete nightmare now so they can access a GP.

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But most importantly, the phone line gives an opportunity for officers if they are members feeling not good in a bad place, they want to speak to someone they can do 24 seven and that's prevented people

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from completing suicide, which is vitally important, obviously, and something I'm passionate about because, you know, like you have had a number of my colleagues that have passed away through various different reasons, but some through suicide.

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And it's not particularly pleasant for them or their families.

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So, you know, we can do something about it. So that's where that came about really. And it's just sort of grown and grown and, you know, we've got a fantastic team and we are every day, we are providing support to officers in one way shape or form every

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single day, whether it's counseling, NLP coaching, physiotherapy, respite breaks, hampers, financial support, anything we do anything if it's outside the box as well we do it.

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And you mentioned about suicide. I mean, this is something that we are seeing more and more and more often whether it was just kind of kept in the shadows before I mean, like I said, you know, sadly when I see that we've lost someone and we just lost someone

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in LA recently, you know, the died suddenly usually means, you know, suicide or overdose and overdose, I think is still the stigma that still people don't want to acknowledge yet, but it's still part of the same mental health crisis as is the alcoholism in our profession.

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But what we're realizing now and this is just, you know, what we call line of duty death is just, you know, simply when we are wearing the uniform and I would argue that a lot of our retirees are suffering way more because that's when it really starts to manifest.

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But the law enforcement here they've lost twice as many to suicide than they have law in a line of duty deaths like the other line of duty deaths.

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What are you seeing in British police is policing as far as the impact of the mental health side.

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I think, actually on the subject of suicide.

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If you look to tip there's no actual statistics recorded in this country for police suicides.

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For some reason, though, you know, obviously, each force will know who and how their people died.

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But one of the common denominators for suicide and attempted suicide policing is people under investigation.

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Organizational betrayal.

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Organizational shaft in their own people again, you know, and whilst it would be inappropriate to mention someone's name but there was an incident where an officer was involved, had an altercation with the police,

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went into work the next day, got his gun, shot himself.

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Three in one year three police officers in this country shot themselves with their own service weapons.

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And like literally on duty going in and then go to the toilet and shoot themselves.

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You know, it's just just incredible when you know, I don't know, Tony, you must know people that have taken their own lives throughout your service as well.

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For whatever I know, I'll be honest, I've never known someone sort of personally, if you like.

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Obviously, no one has.

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But, you know, we work in an organization as big as the Met, you know, the likelihood that you might know, you know, there were three or four people come to have an ear for it.

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So the likelihood of you knowing would be quite, quite remote.



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But, you know, certainly consciously, it happens.

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And of course, we go back to the subject that we were talking about earlier about the potential of, you know, if you push the volunteer aspect of firearms much further, you're not going to have any volunteers.

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You can multiply that suicide rate with at least a handgun a year.

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You know, we'd be issuing people with handguns in order to prevent them being killed on duty and they would actually be giving them the means of killing themselves.

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And I know, James, I know it sounds a bit sensationalist, but I totally agree with Tony. I think inevitably if you put, you know, 30,000 guns out there or people who have access to firearms that weren't before, something's going to happen.

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You know, something that I've thought for a very long time, back in the 80s when I first became issued interested in the police use of firearms, a friend of mine got hold of the New York's annual

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Use of Firearms Report and it was about that thick.

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And it basically at the back or the front, it had loads of pie charts and it showed literally everything, you know, how many rounds were fired in your average confrontation.

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What distance were those shots fired at? What were the light conditions?

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You know, was it a male officer? Was it a female officer? All this sort of stuff. And then what they did is they went through and they itemized each individual incident

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so that you knew what the background of that incident was. And there must have been well over 100 in this thing.

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But one of those circles was, you know, death by suicide.

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And I remember one distinctly where a couple of officers, male and female, they'd obviously been having an affair or something of that nature.

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And they both had a suicide pact, drove into a back alleyway in their patrol car and they both shot each other.

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You know, so, you know, if you've got a call for that size.

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It's so sad, you know, when you hear stuff, you know, I think through the PFOA, I think we've had seven of our members complete suicide since we started.

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One of them I knew quite well.

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And, you know, just like you say, Tony, some people, the others I didn't, you know, but sometimes you knew the names or whatever.

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But it just, you know, it's just awful. But, you know, there's, you know, there's police officers that get cancer, all sorts of problems, you know, that people get ill,

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people get, you know, they get killed on duty, you know, as we know from injuries and, you know, so on weight to and from duty.

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Yeah, badly, you know, too many. And but there's a lot of us and I suppose, you know, that happens inevitably when you've got a lot of people, you know, as the PFOA is growing in size, we get more people get cancer.

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You know, we get more people that get injured. And that's the way it goes.

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And if there was 500 of us, we wouldn't probably, you know, but, you know, it's just one of those things.

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But, you know, I look back now and it's it's never grown list. And one of our colleagues died recently, Tony, Glenn, Glenn Powell.

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Yeah, today. Yeah. So he was a terrific guy. And he's a retired guy.

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You know, I remember him on my rifle course. I did. And top instructor. Good. I think he was an ARV level two, was he going?

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And I'm level two. So I think, you know, I think he had cancer.

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So very sad, you know, but but people pass away, don't they? It's just life, isn't it?

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Well, another is that you speak in a. Well, another area that you don't hear people talking about that is a contributor to cancer,

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that is a contributor to mental ill health is also sleep deprivation.

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So the shifts that our people are working on, you know, those in themselves are bad enough.

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But then you factor in, like you said, mandatory overtime, which is huge in the fire service here at the moment.

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You're you know, every night that you don't sleep, you're massively increasing your chance of cancer risk.

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You know, you're massively decreasing all your health.

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The British Fire Brigade don't seem to have that problem. They seem to. I think they actually issue with pajamas.

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Well, the thing is in America, to be to be fair, the US counterparts, like I said, we do fire and EMS.

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So they're running like all the time. And the UK, they do 12, 12 or 10s and 14s shifts,

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which actually, ironically, isn't isn't good to flip flop from days to nights. But the US, we're doing 24 hour shifts.

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So we work a lot more hours per week than our British counterparts. So that's another thing why it's even worse here.

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Well, there's quite there's quite a few memes on Instagram between British police,

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ambulance service and the fire brigade. And it's like, you know, you've been busy.

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Yeah, we played volleyball and then I cook the cook lunch.

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Therefore, what might I can only imagine if you added the paramedic requirement to it, just how busy they would be.

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Because, like I said, having worked with the London Ambulance Service, it's literally back to back calls.

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And ARVs. I was at our base a few months ago and I was saying about arm response vehicles in London

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responded to some like 800 requests for defibs and immediate first aid.

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That's a really it's a really interesting one. In fact, it's like you will hear from if an ARV member or an SFO member shoots somebody,

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you know, we all know the consequences of that. But no one mentions something like 400 occasions last year

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where the ARVs were first on scene and arrest and were able to do, you know, very efficient CPR.

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Obviously, guns, everything. Yeah, particularly knife, knife, knife, knife, and gunshot wounds.

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I've had LAS personnel say to me, wow, you know, I was really impressed because they've got access to things like

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eye gels and things that even junior members of the LAS aren't authorized on.

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So, but we've got to also look after these people because if they're exposed to that on a daily basis,

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you know, those things that we just need to make sure it's monitored and that supervision

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in that end of the day that they're looked after as well. So we don't get burnout. We don't want burnout.

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Absolutely. I actually just got exposed to an eye gel. I was in Heathrow. Sorry, my dog's barking now.

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I was in Heathrow just waiting to leave in November, come back to the US and the guy had a cardiac arrest on the plane.

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I ended up doing CPR and then fire got there and then ambulance got there.

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But they handed me an eye gel and I've been a medic and or an EMT for almost 20 years now,

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but I wasn't familiar with that. But the cabin. What is it? I don't know what it is. It's an airway.

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Yeah, BLS airway. All right. Yeah. So you're not intubating.

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You're not looking down the actual windpipe. You're just literally slipping it in blind and then, you know, hopefully oxygenating.

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But, you know, so that was yeah. So even even when you're because I don't work in uniform anymore.

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I transitioned out five years ago. But, you know, when people say they're retired or I used to be, I disagree.

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Like you're always a firefighter, always a paramedic, you know, because you never know when you're going to have to help.

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You mentioned knife wounds. I want to throw one more kind of area at you and then we'll wrap up.

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I know we've been talking for a while now. The the knife crime epidemic that seems to be, you know,

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so much worse than I remember in the UK. Now, when I was growing up, there was football hooliganism

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and a lot of deaths and a lot of murders and stuff then. So I'm not pretending that the 70s and 80s were this glorious utopia.

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But what are you seeing as far as that knife crime? And then paralleling that with less and less armed officers?

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What is the danger not only to the civilians, but the police officers responding to some of these?

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I mean, there used to be a you can't really have this conversation without talking about stop and search

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because the two things go together hand in hand. Stop and search has always been a topic.

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When I joined in the 70s, you know, we were told, you know, there's too many young black kids getting searched.

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There's not enough white kids being searched. I always thought that was kind of nonsense, to be honest.



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I'd worked in areas, you know, where there was a large Afro Caribbean population.

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And, yeah, you did a lot of searches because actually in that particular area, you know,

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most of the violent crime or most of the crime where you're going to find knives or whatever were being committed by black kids.

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But equally, if you went out and patrolled, you know, somewhere further south, you know,

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like Croydon or somewhere like that or, you know, Addington, Bromley, then all the kids you stopped were white

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because they were the ones committing the crime in that area.

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But it's always been topical in areas, you know, with a high ethnic amount of people residing there.

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And but you can back me up on this, Mark. You never saw exotic weaponry.

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And the reason you didn't see exotic weaponry, you know, might have a lock knife or a kitchen knife or something like that,

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was because they knew there was a very good likelihood they were going to get stopped by the police.

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And they weren't going to spend 50 odd quid on a knife.

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They were going to have to throw in a stream or throw in a fence.

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But now they know that stop and search is yet again, it's pinnacled and it's gone down in troughs and peaks and troughs all the way through my lifetime, my adult lifetime.

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And the reality is they've made it so difficult now for police to stop and search that these kids clearly know that they can get away with carrying not just a lock knife,

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not even just a big kitchen knife, but machetes and what they call over here. I mean, there's a specific law now for what we call zombie knives.

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I don't know if you're familiar with them or what you might call them in the States.

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But there are these things that you can get online that look like they come out of a zombie movie.

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You know, they're quite often they're bright green or whatever, but they'll have, you know, teeth on one side.

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And, you know, you're talking about a small sword and they're carrying them with impunity.

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I mean, I live in in South East London. There was an attack on a train in South East London where I used to live actually just last week or the week before.

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And it was absolutely horrendous.

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I mean, this guy is just got a guy pinned down on a train in front of commuters just stabbing the crap out of this this this kid.

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I mean, he might be a rival gang member. He might be just as bad as the person who's doing the stabbing.

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But the reality is, you know, it's a very real part.

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And they're doing it with impunity. They don't care that there's all these witnesses.

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This guy's attempting to murder someone on a train and he's completely, you know, he's got his hood up.

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But other than that, he's completely oblivious to the fact that there's witnesses in the train just doesn't care.

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I think I think for me as well, if you look at that, that was awful.

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It was on a Becketham train, I think. Yeah.

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And, you know, how we would have dealt with that.

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So police officers turned up that because there is this, you know, this sort of, I don't know, it's just happening all over the place.

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And they don't seem to give a shit. These people.

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So when they're confronted by police, you know, our cops are turning up.

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If they're lucky enough to have taser would probably have to taser that person.

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But if he doesn't if he doesn't work, they're going to be facing some.

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I mean, the way that guy was going about it, if you didn't taser him, it didn't work.

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02:38:49,000 --> 02:38:53,000

He's going to stab you and you are going to get seriously hurt as a police officer.

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We don't have a firearm to resort to ordinarily.

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Our cops, you know, in other countries, you know, if there's two of you, one would cover with a firearm.

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The other one with a taser probably. But I mean, I've done if you've seen that footage.

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But if I'd have been there with a handgun, he would have been shot with insects.

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100 percent. Physically, you know, attempting to kill someone in front of you.

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02:39:12,000 --> 02:39:15,000

So you could never the taser would never work with that guy.

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He would have been out. He would have been on your stabbing your head, wouldn't he?

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Before, you know, you could rely on it working, could you?

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That's the problem. You know, so, you know, I mean, yes, it is a very, it's a very real problem.

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A very real problem. And unfortunately, you know, there's been periods in time where, you know,

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the relevant communities have got behind policing to try and resolve it because it's their kids that are dying.

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But unfortunately, you still see you see a search, you know, all over YouTube,

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02:39:46,000 --> 02:39:51,000

you'll see British cops doing a stop in the street and there's an angry crowd saying, leave him alone.

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02:39:51,000 --> 02:39:54,000

He's only he's only a kid. We you know, why are you searching him?

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And I think that's one of the things that really concerns me about social media.

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This I've got what you call it now. I know you have a similar thing in the States

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where you're actually getting people going out deliberately confronting police about every little thing.

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You know, it might be, you know, the way they parked or the fact that having a coffee on duty or, you know,

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you know, there's a big thing in the UK right now where they're filming police station entrances

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or or military establishments because they know they're going to get stopped

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02:40:21,000 --> 02:40:28,000

just so they can humiliate the officer and, you know, get likes on YouTube.

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You know, it's it's a crazy situation.

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You know what? They're the people, these people that are doing this for their own self, bloody whatever.

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If they walk down the road and get mugged or they have a heart attack or whatever like that,

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they'd be screaming out for an ambulance. They'd be screaming out for a police officer to support them.

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You know, if their car burst into flames, they want to fire service as well.

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02:40:48,000 --> 02:40:52,000

These people want these people to help them when and yet they go out their way to do that.

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That's what they do. I mean, they've got nothing better to do in their lives.

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They just sat fucked up in the head that they do things like that. It's infuriating.

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02:40:59,000 --> 02:41:05,000

It makes me honestly I look at stuff like I just think I give up.

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What is there for any of us? You know, you can go down the street here, you know, kids are getting stabbed,

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you know, innocent kids are getting caught up and stuff.

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It's become a fashion thing over here as well. So you're you're are you familiar with the expression road man?

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No, educate me. So road man basically means I don't name some nicknames for gang members in the States.

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You know, I mean, like the different types like Crips and Bloods and MS-13.

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Well, yeah, it's not really Crips and Bloods. It's it's it's more of a description of street.

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Like a G or kind of some slang almost like a hoodie or yeah.

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So road man is the latest kind of thing. And you'll see kids of all of all Hughes sort of adopt this style.

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Now, basically, it's like, you know, high street sports goods store, you know, baseball caps, tracksuits.

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02:42:01,000 --> 02:42:09,000

But hoods up, always hoods up, you know, on a hoodie and invariably now, even if it's the middle of August, wearing a balaclava,

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02:42:09,000 --> 02:42:14,000

like a full face, like ski mask, like armed robbery, like armed robbers.

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02:42:14,000 --> 02:42:19,000

And they wear that all the time. And, you know, and it's clearly to intimidate.

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02:42:19,000 --> 02:42:23,000

I mean, back in the day, they'd have been arrested for going equipped to steal, wouldn't they?

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02:42:23,000 --> 02:42:25,000



But now, yeah, but it's a fashion.

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And it's such an extent that one of the big high street sports stores are actually putting kids on their big advert boards,

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wearing balaclavas with hoods up and basically the exact profile of somebody that's cutting around with a zombie knife stuck down the trousers.

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I mean, I don't know. I don't know how they actually hide those knives.

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02:42:45,000 --> 02:42:51,000

You see them being searched and it's like it's like a cartoon, you know, where it just keeps coming out of their trousers, you know,

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02:42:51,000 --> 02:43:00,000

I don't know how they walk properly. And you see some of the battles, you know, when it's captured on CCTV and stuff and it ends up, you know, on social media or whatever.

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I mean, they're full blown, you know, sword fights in the street.

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02:43:04,000 --> 02:43:08,000

What is it that they're actually fighting over? Like you said, these are children.

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And again, going back to the root of so many of the problems that are causing danger.

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02:43:12,000 --> 02:43:18,000

I think there's a danger with this. It's like you'll hear this all the time. You'll hear, you know, why are they stopping these children?

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02:43:18,000 --> 02:43:27,000

Well, I'll tell you why they're stopping these children. It's 13 year olds, 14 year olds, because it's 13 and 14 year olds that are killing each other, you know, 16, 17, 18 year olds.

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I mean, but a lot of it's a lot of it's turf. A lot of it's my gang versus your gang.

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A lot of these gangs are affiliated to different types of music, you know, music videos, and they'll they'll challenge another gang from another neighboring area with a rap, you know, threatening violence or, you know, whatever, using their street language.

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And yeah, you know, it's become it's become a sort of an acceptable look to walk down the street with a balaclava.

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It's a lifestyle, isn't it?

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02:44:06,000 --> 02:44:09,000

Yeah, it is. Exactly what it is.

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02:44:09,000 --> 02:44:15,000

That's their lifestyle. Do they grow out of it? I don't know. You know, maybe they don't. Do they live to grow out of it?

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Well, they haven't grown out of wearing their trousers down by their knees, have they? That's a fashion that's never gone away, is it?

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It's like every time flares come back, I wore flares. I went I went to a nightclub once where they were doing a 70s like revival night, and they nearly didn't let me in because I wasn't wearing flares.

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02:44:32,000 --> 02:44:41,000

And I said, mate, I'm in the mid 40s. I went through the whole the 70s. But you know, flares come and go, don't they?

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02:44:41,000 --> 02:44:48,000

But when people wear flares for about a year and then they go, this is ridiculous. I look like a complete melt and they take them off.

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02:44:48,000 --> 02:44:54,000

But that wearing you wearing your jeans so that you can see all of your underpants, that's never gone away, is it?

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That fashion is here forever.

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02:44:56,000 --> 02:45:00,000

I like watching the pursuits when they're running from someone with the jeans like that.

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Doesn't matter what you look like, what your skin color is, just anatomically, it is a bad choice when you're trying to run from someone.

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The thing is, you know, there's a lot of good kids out there as well.

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02:45:10,000 --> 02:45:15,000

There's a lot of good people out there. And sometimes we can be a bit stereotypical people and things like that.

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02:45:15,000 --> 02:45:23,000

We've got to be careful of that. But I think we all have a good gut instinct as cops, ex-cops or whatever we do in emergency services of a good and a bad.

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And but I think there are, yeah, there's a lot of decent people out there.

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02:45:27,000 --> 02:45:35,000

I think what concerns me is that, you know, yeah, I'm sure there are decent kids amongst them who are just trying to be cool and all the rest of it.

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But when you are basing your fashion, I suppose the same could be said for skinheads in the 70s and the 80s.

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Yeah, mots, lockers. I had a crombie and loafers and what's it, but it didn't mean I was going to go out mugging people.

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02:45:51,000 --> 02:45:59,000

But when you're walking around with a balaclava on and a hoodie, it just seems wrong.

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02:45:59,000 --> 02:46:03,000

People think that's better than being law abiding.

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02:46:03,000 --> 02:46:09,000

Yeah. So one more proactive question, then we'll go to where we can find each of you guys.

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02:46:09,000 --> 02:46:19,000

You're king for a day. You get all the funds, all the tactical decisions as far as everything from mental health counseling to policing.

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02:46:19,000 --> 02:46:25,000

How do we reverse this growing trend of violence in the children on the streets of the UK?

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If I had all the money, I would open more youth centers where we get them where we get them interested in stuff, car mechanics, whatever people want to do.

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02:46:37,000 --> 02:46:46,000

More drug rehabilitation centers. So we get people controlled and things like that and give them some support and but engage with young people.

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Proactive. Yeah. Brilliant.

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02:46:51,000 --> 02:46:55,000

You just stole the words out of my mouth in terms of youth.

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Definitely. There needs to be more for kids to do.

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02:46:59,000 --> 02:47:08,000

But the other end of the scale, you know, if you know, people are getting pathetic sentences for carrying these knives, well, the prisons are full.

1873

02:47:08,000 --> 02:47:20,000

Well, I'll tell you what, then let's get some more of those barges made up of shipping containers in a disused harbor that used to hold 400 ships and now holds, you know, rubber dinghy and an old broken yacht.

1874

02:47:20,000 --> 02:47:23,000

And we'll stick them there. You know, I don't care.

1875

02:47:23,000 --> 02:47:30,000

If there aren't enough prisons, make some more and people should know if these kids that were cutting around with these knives knew that they weren't going to get slap on the wrist.

1876

02:47:30,000 --> 02:47:34,000

They will get five years minimum sentence just for carrying it.

1877

02:47:34,000 --> 02:47:37,000

Absolutely. Absolutely. They will carry it.

1878

02:47:37,000 --> 02:47:41,000

So that would be one of my fundamental massive deterrent massive.

1879

02:47:41,000 --> 02:47:45,000

And having gone to a prison recently to visit someone there.

1880

02:47:45,000 --> 02:47:53,000

It ain't a pleasant place to be where anyone thinks you ain't pleasant. We need to build more of them and get more people in there if that's the case and then it will stop it.

1881

02:47:53,000 --> 02:47:59,000

Yeah, absolutely. Or just look at, you know, what sends people there in the first place and address that stem the leak.

1882

02:47:59,000 --> 02:48:05,000

Yeah, get more interest. More for kids. I live in a village. It's nothing from the do here.

1883

02:48:05,000 --> 02:48:12,000

There's nothing there's nothing for me. You know, and then, you know, people moan and go on about manging around the street corners because there's nowhere for them to go.

1884

02:48:12,000 --> 02:48:26,000

You know, but if you if you had a dirt track at the bottom of the back here and they could build some motors and go around in a private track and get these young lads and lasses involved in stuff they want to do, you'd see completely different people, completely different people.

1885

02:48:26,000 --> 02:48:29,000

But boxing.

1886

02:48:29,000 --> 02:48:31,000

Yeah, boxing. Yeah.

1887

02:48:31,000 --> 02:48:43,000

That sort of stuff. Martial arts. Absolutely, Tony. Fitness. Get them in and then it goes back to what we're talking about, James, about mental health, well-being, eating, dieting, things. Yeah, people, they suddenly get a lot of boxing.

1888

02:48:43,000 --> 02:48:54,000

It makes me feel good. I look better. Things like that. All those kinds of things that creates a better person. We know that from boxing anyway and martial arts.

1889

02:48:54,000 --> 02:49:02,000

Absolutely. Well, it has been an amazing conversation. Mark, before I let you go, tell everyone where they can find the PFOA and learn more about it.

1890

02:49:02,000 --> 02:49:18,000

Well, we've got a website [www.pfoa.co.uk](http://www.pfoa.co.uk) and that explains everything about what we do and it's got phone numbers on their contacts and if officers are allowed or, you know, firearms officers are involved in armed police and they can join via the website as well.

1891

02:49:18,000 --> 02:49:24,000

Beautiful. And Tony, where are the best places to find you and your book?

1892

02:49:24,000 --> 02:49:35,000

Amazon, I'm guessing, for the book. I mean, it was published in 2015. I still occasionally see it when I'm just about to board a plane somewhere in W. H. Smith. So it's still about.

1893

02:49:35,000 --> 02:49:52,000

And actually that brings us on to a little bit of a rival podcast because Mark has decided that the PFOA should have its own podcast and I'll be hosting it. So we've we've interviewed our first person, our first customer and that will be coming out shortly.

1894

02:49:52,000 --> 02:49:57,000

And we're going to interview you, James. That'd be amazing. Yeah, good idea.

1895

02:49:57,000 --> 02:50:06,000

I'll put James down for doing one. That'd be great to have you on there, James. Honestly. Thank you. Well, for people listening, where can they find yours?

1896

02:50:06,000 --> 02:50:13,000

Well, it's going to be on YouTube and it's going to be called Top Cover PFOA Podcast.

1897

02:50:13,000 --> 02:50:18,000

We're not as sophisticated as you, James, getting it rigged up from over there.

1898

02:50:18,000 --> 02:50:20,000

I've had a little bit more time though.

1899

02:50:20,000 --> 02:50:30,000

But James, seriously, thanks for inviting us and what you're doing is great because it does help get the word out there and gives people an alternative view.

1900

02:50:30,000 --> 02:50:34,000

But thanks for the invite. I really appreciated it.

1901

02:50:34,000 --> 02:50:51,000

And let us know when you're coming back to Blight.