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Defunding the police

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There has been a lot of criticism over the past couple of weeks about certain police services across North America.

Specifically the criticism focuses on their tactics when dealing with the public.

After the events in Minneapolis, that city council actually voted to disband their entire police force. That's a very serious decision. Obviously you can't eliminate the police.

The move doesn't mean the city will be without police protection. It means it will re-form as a new, hopefully improved, entity, most likely with a wider, possibly regional jurisdiction.

Just because they voted on this doesn't mean it's going to happen, however, it is an indicator that the city council has little faith in their police department.

The lack of faith in their officers probably doesn't come from one incident ? at least I certainly hope not.

Police officers are between a rock and hard place when it comes to dealing with some people.

A violent criminal who comes swinging at the cops or brandishes a threatening weapon won't be subdued by asking him to ?be nice and comply.'

Sometimes the police have to be physical to protect themselves and others. That's just part of the job.

If you have a violent person outside of your home threatening you and your family you don't pull out your hunting rifle and blast him into oblivion ? you call the police for help.

They are trained to deal with such a situation.

My own interactions with police in this region, Orangeville and Shelburne police, and OPP have been very favourable. They act professionally and carry out their duties accordingly.

They are also very engaged with the community.

Maybe the Minneapolis Police department have developed a closed culture that just isn't suitable for maintaining law and order.

Another incident involving a Minneapolis police officer resulted in the shooting death of a totally innocent woman in 2017.

The woman had called police for help, reporting a possible sexual assault taking place.

When the unarmed, unassuming woman approached the police car to speak to officers, the cop in the passenger seat drew his service pistol and shot her dead.

I have firearms training, both with hand guns and long guns, and can tell you with certainty that there are many things wrong with what happened that night.

The offending cop fired a shot from the passenger seat inside the vehicle over his partner who was in the driver's seat.

Wow, that's a major fail right there. He could have easily killed his fellow police officer, or at the very least injured his face or eyes from having a round discharged that close to your head. Also, having a firearm let loose that close could easily blow out your ear drum.

Firearms instructors tell you to know your target. You don't pull the trigger on what you think, may be a deer, hiding behind that bush during hunting season.

That deer may be another hunter. You have to be 100 per cent sure before you pull the trigger.

This cop obviously wasn't sure of his target.

His wild west, shoot from the hip, mentality cost an innocent woman her life.

The talk now is about ?defunding police.?

That is an unfortunate phrase ? it doesn't accurately portray what it means.

The phrase doesn't refer to eliminating police departments or cutting off all funding.

It refers to allocating some of the funds to other agencies or people that are trained for specific situations.

For example, if there is a person having a mental health crisis, then experts in mental health should be the ones that handle the situation ? not police.

There is a lot of merit to that.

Police aren't specifically trained to deal with some situations. Other people may be better at handling a situation based on their expertise.

However, everything must be dealt with in a realistic manner.

If a young social worker attends a call where a person is having a mental health crisis and that person suddenly turns violent, the social worker won't be calling the home office for back up and asking for more social workers to attend.

They would in fact call for police to quell a violent confrontation.

It's a tough situation for sure.

However, when it comes down to it, when a crime has been committed, or is about to be committed, who are you going to call for help?