Targeting American Policing: Rogue Cops or Rogue Cultures?

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Abstract

Saving the legitimacy of a democratic policing system from the outrages of rogue cops and rogue police cultures cannot be done just by recommending *what* policies police agencies should adopt. In the USA and many other countries, police reform requires a *realpolitik* vision of *who* can get the policies implemented and *how* they can accomplish that. In the USA, the most powerful political actor for police reform is the State Governor, followed by the State legislature. All 18,000 local police agencies are creatures of the state in which they are located. Minnesota has not just the Minneapolis Police, but some 400 other local police departments. The most important step to save lives from criminal policing is for states to create Inspectors-General of Policing (IGP), along the lines of HM Inspectors of Constabulary in the UK. This would work best if the IGP would be empowered to decertify both police officers and police departments after a documented pattern of abusive (“rogue”) policing. The precedents of both Camden, New Jersey, and Northern Ireland are not exact matches, but they do show the potential for reforming any police agency that has become bankrupt in the eyes of key communities.

Keywords Police legitimacy · Defunding police · Deadly force · Rogue cops · Regulation of policing · HM inspectorate of constabulary

The Killing of George Floyd

From May 25 to June 9, 2020—from the date George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin to the date of George Floyd’s burial—America was

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rocked by protests against the actions, and even the very existence, of the Minneapolis Police Department. The death of George Floyd became a shock heard around the world. The clarion call that Black Lives Matter has been taken up by thousands in London at the gates of 10 Downing Street, in the city center of Birmingham, England, in Paris, in Sydney, Australia, and elsewhere.

I, for one, am glad to see yet another “great awakening” of public awareness about fatal police-citizen encounters (Sherman 2018: 424), even as this global reaction has deepened the anguish over police conduct in hundreds of cities across the USA. Yet, what that means for the future of policing, let alone evidence-based policing, remains unclear.

Not since the era of Reconstruction after the American Civil War has the legitimacy of democratic policing been so profoundly challenged in America.

- Then, as now, Black Americans were frequently murdered by state and local police with apparent impunity (Chernow 2017: 690–711).
- Then, as now, Americans were deeply divided over issues of how to use the military to deal with protests.
- Then, as now, an impeached yet unconvicted President occupied the White House while failing to uphold a rule of law.

A century and a half since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the problems of American policing remain similar to those of the past. Yet, many dimensions of those problems are new. The range of possible solutions is also new. One of them is the unprecedented demand to eliminate or reduce funding for American police, framed by an argument against the very idea of a democratic, citizen-police institution. In his book *The End of Policing*, for example, Professor Alex Vitale (2017) has contended that America would be better off without any police at all, while using the police budget for alternative institutions to manage crime and community conflict.

Before even considering any proposals to abolish, or even partly “defund,” the police, we might recall a classic remark about solving problems, first published in a book on physics by Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld in 1938. The quote offers guidance to anyone who tries to solve problems. Here is the quote:

“The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires creative imagination and marks real advances....” (Einstein and Infeld 1938 [1969]: 39)

Framing the Problem

Thus, our ability to find and adopt solutions that work for improving policing may depend on how we *frame* these problems for analysis. If we are to heed another injunction—to “never let a good crisis go to waste”—we must be sure that we frame the question in a way that provides a *feasible pathway* to progress in this moment of opportunity. We can start by thinking through some of the most frequently used frameworks for police reform.

“Rogue cops?” For example, many have framed the problems in America as a failure to punish *rogue cops*. Others have denied that the killers are exceptions; they frame the problem as *rogue cultures* of policing. Solving both problems may be useful. But neither target for police reform offers a sufficient framework for implementing change. Even if we propose ways for police agencies to tackle both *rogue cops* and *rogue police cultures*, the success of those proposals may depend on broader changes in democratic governance for issues of crime and disorder. In order to target effective *solutions* to the current crisis, we need to think even harder about how to formulate the *problem* to be solved.

For many, targeting *rogue cops* is a just cheap way out of taking responsibility. We cannot accept the characterization of torture and murder as “unintentional”—or committed by the “rotten apples” that result unavoidably from placing many apples in a barrel—an “accident,” a random act of God. That formulation of the problem is being challenged by new and better research, such as the analysis by Zhao and Papachristos (2020) of 247,000 complaints against Chicago police officers. What they found by social network analyses is patterns of links among accused police that predict their future shootings. Growing evidence also suggests that people who would make bad decisions in American policing can be identified by testing even *before they are appointed* as police officers (Goff and Rau 2020). Other research finds patterns of *repeated disciplinary actions* that can predict which officers are most likely to kill people, both legally and illegally (Ridgeway 2020). How we can *apply* that research to stop *rogue cops*, however, requires a new framework for making and enforcing police policies.

Rogue Cultures? Many other observers have attacked the “rogue cop” framing, regardless of its potential to predict and prevent rogue actions. These observers point to a “rogue culture” of policing in some police departments. Whether driven by racism, or just by occupational solidarity, the “rogue culture” describes a police department that takes the law into its own hands. And with 18,000 local police agencies—the population-adjusted equivalent of over 3000 police agencies in the UK, which currently has only 45—the chances of some of the 18,000 US agencies going rogue are not small. A recent example is Ferguson, Missouri, with a population of 21,000 people, with 48 police officers in 2014 when Michael Brown was killed.

The classic example of a rogue culture is what sociologist William Westley described in his 1951 Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Chicago. Published under the title *Violence and the Police*, Westley’s (1970) work was the result of a 2-year participant observation study of policing in Gary, Indiana—an industrial community in the Chicago metropolitan area then with 133,000 residents. Among the many powerful findings he reported, the most memorable is found in a chapter called “The Public as Enemy.” Westley’s quotes and surveys of the police officers show their ongoing resentment of public criticism and their readiness to use violence illegally—if it serves a noble cause or if police authority is seen to be challenged. Racism and prejudice of all kinds are revealed in Westley’s view that police define the law by imposing their own morality. For the Gary Police in 1950, the law *was* police opinion, based on the personal morality of police officers.

A “Rogue Presidency”? Much has changed in Gary since 1950, as well as in New York, Los Angeles, and other cities small and large. What has not changed in America is the scarcity of references to “policing by consent.” This core principle of the British

policing is taken for granted in many other countries, but not in the USA. President Trump's response to recent disorders, for example, was to tell authorities to "dominate" any lawbreakers, just as he "dominated" many law-abiding people in front of the White House. His purpose was to arrange a photo opportunity of the President holding a Bible in front of a church damaged by protestors. Whether he broke the law in doing so is a contested question. Whether he called for "policing by consent" is not contested. He did not.

A speech at a recent Trump rally by Lt. Bob Kroll, President of the Minneapolis Police Union, gives the problem of a "rogue culture" in policing a new meaning. To the extent that a "rogue presidency" permits or encourages police to undermine a rule of law, we must adjust our problem-solving framework accordingly. If such a President can attract the support of a substantial portion of local police officers, the threat of a new kind of civil war in the event of a close election this November must be assessed. At the least, police union support for the President makes the concepts of rogue cops or rogue police agencies far too *narrow* to adequately frame the problem of police killings of citizens.

Yet, in framing that problem, we must be careful in straying too far from the police institution itself. The question of what is to be done is often framed too broadly to produce any meaningful change. For many people, for example, and for very understandable reasons, the framing of police misconduct should be all about race. In a country founded by accepting African-American slavery in its Constitution, the issue of race in policing will always be central. As former Vice President Biden said the week George Floyd was murdered, there is an ongoing battle for the "soul of America," and race is central to that battle (Martin and Glueck 2020).

Jon Meacham is the author of a recent book with the title Biden cited (Meacham 2018). As Meacham has argued, there have been many moments in American history when a battle has raged for the soul of America. Meacham quotes Abraham Lincoln to say that in such battles, "the better angels of our nature" have always won the day. Sadly, those victories came at great cost, and none of them has been permanent. Almost 150 years after the truce was signed at the end of the Civil War, there is evidence that the Civil War over White supremacy never really ended. As Joe Biden said, it may be that 10 to 15% of Americans are simply "not very good people." Many Americans would agree with that assessment, as well as with a related very broad point made by President Trump's former Secretary of Defense, James Mattis.

What Mattis said was that:

"Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people — does not even pretend to try. Instead he tries to divide us. We are witnessing the consequences of three years of this deliberate effort."
(Goldberg 2020)

Mattis was joined by his successor, the Secretary of Defense in office when the George Floyd protests began, Mark Esper, in resisting President Trump's leadership. Esper publicly challenged and, reportedly, stopped President Trump's plans to send the US Army into American cities to suppress the protests over George Floyd's murder by Minneapolis Police officers. For his own act of resistance, Mr. Esper may be sacked, but at a crucial moment, he gave the better angels another win.

Who Can do What?

What no Secretary of Defense can do, however, is to solve the problems of racism and excessive force in American policing. Neither can former President Obama, whose good faith efforts illustrated another risk in framing the question: the risk of framing the questions too narrowly. The limitations of framing the question too narrowly are sadly apparent in President Obama's speech the week after George Floyd's death (Greve 2020). His support for the protests against police crimes and his unifying language were refreshing and most welcome indeed. Yet, his proposals for police reform implicitly targeted a narrow question of what policies should police department adopt to control deadly force. What he did not target is the broader question of *how* to get these policies adopted, implemented, and complied with in 18,000 local police agencies across 50 separate states.

Citing the work of the Police Use of Force Project, President Obama urged police agencies to adopt these 8 specific policies:

1. Require officers to de-escalate situations, where possible, through communication, maintaining distance, slowing things down, and otherwise eliminating the need to use force.
2. Prohibit officers from using maneuvers that cut off oxygen or blood flow, including chokeholds or carotid restraints, which often result in unnecessary death or serious injury.
3. Require officers to intervene and stop excessive or unnecessary force used by other officers and report these incidents immediately to a supervisor.
4. Restrict officers from shooting at moving vehicles, which is regarded as a particularly dangerous and ineffective tactic.
5. Limit the types of force and/or weapons that can be used to respond to specific types of resistance and specific characteristics such as age, size, or disability.
6. Require officers to exhaust all other reasonable means before resorting to deadly force.
7. Require officers to give a verbal warning, when possible, before using serious force such as shooting, tasing, or pepper spraying someone.
8. Require officers to report each time they use force or threaten to use force (e.g., pointing a gun at a person).

Now, these are all great policies. My own research has empirically demonstrated the value of some of them. But it is also effective for your health to practice a habit of daily exercise. And if you want to adopt a habit of daily exercise, you can surely find a list of 8 great exercises. But for both policing policies and doing exercises, the operative word is "if."

So *if* we frame the problem of American policing correctly, the question is not "WHAT is to be done" or what policies should be adopted. The *realpolitik* of America forces us to ask two questions that are far more practical, questions that contain no "if" in them. Those questions are, firstly, "who" can get something done and, secondly, "how to get it done."

These questions can be framed on the basis of the evidence for three connected premises. The first premise is that American police reform requires legislation, not just

administrative action. The requirement for legislation is based on the second premise that local police agencies and governments currently have broad and largely unregulated powers to hire and dismiss—or not dismiss—individual police officers. The third and most important premise is that the level of government with the greatest power to change policing is not national or local, but in the 50 state capitols of the 50 United States.

The reason to target state governments for creating solutions to police problems is reminiscent of Willie Sutton's explanation of why he robbed banks. His answer was "because that's where the money is." When it comes to regulating police agencies, the states are the best target because that is where the power is—the Constitutional power to create, and destroy, police agencies and to license, or revoke, the power of any individual to serve as a police officer.

This fact is also true by default. Even if the federal government tried to take action on the police, the bitter partisanship of the Congress would make any action impossible. Similarly, even when a majority of American voters choose one candidate, the loser of that election may become president by winning in the Electoral College. In a nation that is so sharply divided, a nation where so few people of youth and minority status get out and vote, and a nation where conservative states hold far greater voting power per person than progressive states, there is a perennial threat to democracy at the national level.

But there is no time to reform the Electoral College. There is no time to change the political landscape. Police legitimacy is becoming a matter of party politics, rather than a transcendent element of the rule of law. Getting anything done must accept these brute facts and seek targets of opportunity. And like evidence-based policing, the targets must be selected on a principle of *triage*, aiming at places in which police reform can do the most good. The best place to do that is in a state government, one that is open-minded, at least for the moment, about new solutions to policing problems.

Targeting State Governments

For that reason, I address my questions to the 41st Governor of Minnesota, the Hon. Timothy J. Walz. I do so not just because my daughter and her family live there, less than 2 miles from a burned-out police station. I do so not just because I spent 10 years working in Minneapolis with a great police leader, Anthony V. Bouza, now age 92, who was and is a fierce defender of the rule of law. Tony Bouza fired rogue cops every chance he could. He also cultivated the many committed police officers who worked there in the 1980s. Since his departure in 1989, the department has suffered greatly. But Minneapolis, and Minnesota, is an excellent case study in not just what is to be done but who can do it—and how.

I address my question to Minnesota's Governor because he is in the position to do something that could set a national example. I do so because his actions could start a national movement and be replicated in at least several other states. I do so because under the US Constitutions—all 51 of them, with one for every state—each city and county police department is a legislated creature of the state. And if anything can be done about American territorial policing, it must be done at the state level.

Out of all 50 of the US states, Minnesota is the now one with the widest open window of opportunity. Its Governor and Speaker of the House are both Democrats. The Republican Party holds the Senate by a slim margin. Now in his second year as

Governor, he has over 2 more years in his term. He also has, as of today, the most political capital of any Governor in America to pioneer a new solution to the governance of policing.

Thus, my answer to the question of *who* can get something done in the USA is Governor Walz, as well as Governors of other states. The next question in this framework is *how* any Governor can get something done. The answer to that question, of course, must be tightly linked to answering the question of *what* is to be done. With this framework, I can build on our premise that the states have given far too much autonomy to local governments to regulate their own police forces.

It is relevant to note here that much the same can be said about prosecutors in the USA, who are almost always locally elected. It is relevant to note that the local prosecutor in Minneapolis was criticized in the week after George Floyd's killing for actions that were too little and too late. It is relevant to note that at the state level of government, Governor Walz took the extraordinary step of appointing the elected State Attorney General, former Member of Congress Keith Ellison, to intervene in a local criminal matter: the killing of George Floyd. The Associated Press (2020) reported that Governor Walz's "unusual decision to put Attorney General Keith Ellison in the lead was a win for local civil rights activists, who say the longtime prosecutor does not have the trust of the black community."

The fact that the State Attorney General almost immediately filed criminal charges against all four officers present and raised the seriousness of the murder charge against Derek Chauvin demonstrates to many the value of a system of police prosecution that is independent of local politics. In contrast to the 1 million residents of Hennepin County, there are almost 6 million voters at the state level in Minnesota. The county prosecutor has been elected and reelected by local voters for over 15 years, in which time he is said by critics to have been too lenient in his prosecutions of crimes by police.

State Takeovers of Local Police If Governor Walz were to frame the question of policing solutions more broadly as *state takeovers of local control of police*, he could build on the apparent success with the State Attorney General. He could even go on to ask whether the Minneapolis Police Department itself could be replaced, or supplemented by, a new institution. Rather than defunding the police, the answer to our *what* question could be to rebuild the Minneapolis police, from scratch, with a *parallel police force that would gradually replace the current department*.

There are several precedents for that approach in the USA. One is the simple takeover of local police agencies by statutory changes, making the governor the person who appoints a police chief. A century ago, this was done in Baltimore, Kansas City and St. Louis. Yet, in the current context, such a minor change would likely have little impact on the legitimacy of the Minneapolis Police Department.

As events in June of 2020 made clear, a majority of the Minneapolis City Council committed themselves publicly to abolition and replacement of the Minneapolis Police. From the standpoint of public perception, the Minneapolis Police appear to be morally bankrupt. Citizen surveys could test this hypothesis. But few American cities have ever seen police stations burned out by local residents enraged by police misconduct. Coming on the heels of international infamy for the killing of Justine Damond, an Australian who was shot by a Minneapolis Police Officer in 2017, there is a case to be made that it is time to retire the current culture of policing and start over again.

Something similar was done with great success in the city of Camden, NJ, in 2012, when a police force about half the size of the MPD was disbanded and the Camden County Police took over the policing duties for the city. One driving factor in this radical change was the financial bankruptcy of the city of Camden. In the case of Minneapolis, however, and perhaps many other American police agencies, the issue is not money, but morality.

An interesting precedent outside the USA is the replacement of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (with most of its officers having Protestant religious affiliations) with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (with close to half of the officers being Roman Catholics) in the aftermath of the 1998 peace settlement in Northern Ireland (Gordon 2008). After decades of conflict and killings, nothing short of closing down one police agency and starting over again seemed realistic.

As my colleagues Professor Sir Anthony Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) have written, police departments must gain their legitimacy—and keep it—through an ongoing daily dialog about the moral basis of what police do. Police must persuade the public, as well as themselves, of the moral rightness of their work, their decisions, and their systems for hiring and retaining individuals who make those decisions.

But what should happen when they fail? What happens when their moral capital offers insufficient liquidity to stay in business? In the case of a business, it goes bankrupt and is dissolved. This has happened not just for financial reasons but for moral reasons as well. In 2002, for example, the large American accounting firm Arthur Andersen “voluntarily surrendered its licenses to practice as Certified Public Accountants in the United States after it was found guilty of crimes in the firm’s auditing of Enron, an energy corporation which had filed for bankruptcy in 2001.” (Wikipedia June 2020).

The word “voluntary” in the demise of Arthur Andersen is relevant to the question of *how* the Governor of Minnesota could reconstitute the Minneapolis Police. In many public appearances, the Governor has acknowledged the current Mayor of Minneapolis, Jacob Frey, a fellow Democrat, who was elected in 2018 on a pledge to reform his City’s Police. Any mayor could be a powerful opponent to any plan to replace a city’s police department. Any mayor could be an equally powerful ally to a governor who sought to do so. If a mayor and a governor could work together to solve policing problems that would also set a national example, that might spread the idea beyond a single police force. [Note: 2 days after this paper was read to a large global webinar at Cambridge, the Mayor of Minneapolis told a large crowd seated near his home that he did not support complete abolition of the police; the crowd booed as he walked away].

Replacing One Police Agency With a Better One The critical issue for any plan to abolish one police force and launch another is how to avoid a *de facto* police strike, at least during a transition from one local police monopoly to another. A *de facto* police strike—working to rulebook, doing as little as possible, failing to arrest violent criminals—would not just threaten the success of a plan to rebuild local policing. It could also cause major loss of life, property, and security (Sherman 1992: 192-3). Abolishing the police is not an abstract hypothesis.

My proposal was first presented two decades ago (Sherman 2002), long before Ferguson or Minneapolis. My basic idea was to be very clear that no one’s job is threatened. Every police officer in the current department would be guaranteed their job until retirement. What would happen then, by retirement and attrition, is that the current culture of policing would gradually disappear, while a new team would slowly take

their place. A new and separate agency—call it, for example, a Department of Public Safety—could begin operating with a few core functions, such as managing dispatching and other responses to 911 or 999 calls or producing crime analysis to support proactive policing of the highest harm offenders.

The key point is that the new agency would offer a different system of recruiting, paying, training, disciplining, and retaining its officers, under the leadership of a different kind of public safety professional: perhaps someone with a background in both policing and public health, or mental health—the latter issue comprising a large portion of fatal police encounters with citizens. One suggestion of the “abolish policing” scholars, for example, is to redirect police funding to more and better mental health services. But since governments have spent the last half century disavowing responsibility for community management of the mentally ill, it may be easier to change the policing responses to mental illness than to develop a new mental health institution. That is what my proposal could do, and more.

The crucial idea here is to build a culture of problem-solving, rather than a culture of “dominance.” If by 2030 a Minneapolis Department of Public Safety can do most of the work currently done by the Minneapolis Police, it could do so with a very strong moral imperative for *policing by consent*. That does not mean that they would ask criminals for “permission” to arrest them. What it does mean is that everything the Public Safety officers do would be based on a smartphone video of their actions being seen around the world. Policing by *consent of the viewers of such videos* would be the key test: do most viewers, in Minneapolis or elsewhere, approve of what the Public Safety officers did? Should policing be bound by the moral sentiments of their populace even when they restrict police powers? That is what English policing has done for over 500 years. Perhaps it is worth a try after two centuries of American policing.

Such a change could also free policing from the tyranny of peer culture: the demand of American police (and their dispatchers) to resolve incidents quickly, even if that requires treating citizens abruptly or threatening the use of force (Sherman 2018). These are core principles of procedural justice training, which the end-of-policing scholars have scorned as worthless—most recently in a leading British newspaper this week. Their criticism may be accurate if taking time to provide procedural justice is not supported by all police systems and culture, including freedom from dispatchers (or peers) pressing officers to act too quickly. All these issues and more have been addressed by Professor David Klinger (2020) in the ANNALS volume on reducing fatal policing, writing with the authority of a former SWAT team officer in the LAPD.

The crucial transition would then be from a value system supporting police rights to practice “law enforcement” to a value system that values the Hippocratic Oath. This oath—to “first, do no harm,”—may never have been stated by Hippocrates, the famous physician of Greece in the fourth century BC. But the bust of Hippocrates in my study reminds me of the heroic leadership of Police Chief J. Scott Thomson, formerly chief of both Camden City and Camden County in New Jersey. The essence of that philosophy is that in policing as in medicine, the first duty is to inflict as little collateral damage as possible—to use the least possible amount of harm to stop or prevent other harm (See Sherman 2018).¹

¹ Also see the video clip of Hippocratic policing in action in Camden New Jersey on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtVUMT9P8iw&feature=youtu.be>

An Inspector-General of Police in Every State Thomson's philosophy of policing overlaps heavily with policing by consent. But it was not by philosophy alone that the British policing model cultivated those values. Since 1856, a mere 27 years after modern English policing was founded at Scotland Yard, the Government of England and Wales has appointed a Chief Inspector of Constabulary. This position was founded with the power to do exactly what many police critics are proposing today: to defund the police. While the power to withhold roughly half of the police budget in England has rarely been used,² the threat of that sanction, for a century and a half, has insured the attention of local police chiefs to site visits and document reviews by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. That provides a strong basis for an organizational culture upholding a rule of law.

As I recommended to President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (Sherman 2015), every state in the USA could establish an Inspector-General of policing. That recommendation did not make it into the task force report nor has any US state ever created such a position. But it is arguably a key element of any sustainable police reform in the USA.

If the question of "who can reform police and how?" is framed properly, then a Statewide Inspector-General of local policing is a very good answer. The more complete question would be this: *how can citizens be assured that every police agency in the state has adopted, and complies with, the best standards of practice for policing, including the Hippocratic commitment to minimize harm to citizens.* If an Inspector-General decertified a local police department, in most cases (i.e., smaller police agencies), it could be replaced immediately by the state police or a larger county police force. That state takeover of an inadequate local police agency could lead to redemption by improvements or a new plan for policing a community. It is certainly a powerful tool for dealing with any rogue police culture.

Predictive Policing of Police Crimes But what about rogue cops? How can a state answer the question of *what can be done to reduce the hiring and retention of police officers who consistently abuse citizens and run very high risks of excessive force or criminal actions?* A very new and high-tech answer to that question might be created within a Statewide Inspector-General's office. Using predictive policing on the police, a statewide database could be developed to use algorithmic forecasting to identify the developing or likely rogue cops, either before they are hired or after they demonstrate a pattern of poor treatment of citizens. Such a system could trigger a professional review of the officer's conduct, in light of the precise risk estimates of high harm by the officer. While the big data formula would not make the decision, it would inform the judgment of the humans who would do so, subject to judicial review.

Had such a system been available to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in 2008, it might have identified the London Metropolitan Police constable who pushed down Ian Tomlinson during G20 protests in 2009. The constable had an extensive record of losing his temper and disciplinary actions. Mr. Tomlinson died, and the constable was later prosecuted. Prevention would have been far better than prosecution.

² I am indebted to former Chief Constable Crispian Strachan, who cited a 1992 example of HMIC using its powers to defund an English police force.

Summary

In summary, my proposal to my fellow American citizens is to ask the right questions: questions that are neither too broad nor too narrow. My proposal is to focus on legislative responses at the state level and to craft that legislation so that it becomes feasible to be passed. Regardless of the merits of an end-of-policing strategy, for example, the *realpolitik* is that no state in the USA is likely to pass such legislation. Even if it did, it would encounter such turmoil of crime and disorder that it would be quickly abandoned; that is the evidence from many police strikes over the past century, both in the USA and the UK (Sherman 1992: 192–193).

As for the Governor of Minnesota, there are two key proposals to consider. One is to use state legislation to slowly dissolve any broken police agencies and replace them with a newer model. The other is to identify broken police agencies, and rogue police officers, by the proactively deployed powers of a Statewide Inspector-General of Policing, to whom the power to decertify a police department would be granted, subject again to judicial (not political) review. I am sure that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary would be happy to advise the State of Minnesota, or any state in the USA or abroad, on *how* they have managed rogue police forces and rogue cops in England and Wales since 1856. I am also sure that Dr. Geoffrey Barnes, a Pennsylvania native now working with New Scotland Yard would also be happy to help. As the developer of the Durham Police algorithms for identifying high-risk people,³ he or someone of his background could advise on how to use a similar system with the 9667 Minnesota police officers working in over 400 local police agencies in that state of 6 million people—or about one police force for every 15,000 people.

On the issue of too many small police agencies, my recommendation to reduce their number was also made to the Obama Task Force, which did include that idea in their recommendations (Presidential Task Force 2015: Recommendation 2.14). In the current US climate, however, I do not advise that any state tries to shrink its number of police agencies. That battle is unwinnable in a world threatening to defund the police; a small community can be guaranteed a choice if they can retain the small agency they already have. That consideration is part of a general principle of “feasibility first”. Our question should not just be what policies *would* work, if it were possible to adopt them. Our question must remain what is *possible* to do that would *also* work.

In a word, the policy that seems to at least have a chance is greater state powers to *decertify* police agencies and officers. That is our last best hope: for Minneapolis, for Minnesota, and for the USA.

As for policing in the rest of the world, the evidence suggests that what happens in America does not stay in America. The stigma of rogue policing in the US spreads rapidly to stain policing everywhere. Keeping a watchful eye on these developments in the US seems to be a wise advice for police professionals today in any democracy on earth.

³ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6ltsiBLEbU&feature=youtu.be>

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