



### **You're choking us!**

Every once in a while you hear someone say something and your jaw drops because what they just said is so true or so false, it just stops you in your tracks. Chief David Brown of the Dallas Police Department absolutely nailed it, **“We’re asking cops to do too much in this country.”** Finally, someone said it, and the truth hurts. Thank you, Chief, I couldn’t have said it better myself. This country is asking way too much of its police. I didn’t come on the job to tell your kid to clean his room! (And that’s a true story, I almost quit that day, again).



**“We’re asking our cops to do too much.”**

OK, I get it. On top of finding murderers, burglars, robbers, rapists, child molesters, kidnappers, drug dealers, drunken drivers, etc., there are other tasks that you want us to do. Tasks that we can accept and even do happily, if given time. But until then, we are going to stick to a contract. You know, all the things I actually signed up for. The stuff we all signed up for. The stuff we actually think is important to you as a citizen. Not only that, we are willing to be killed doing it for you. Done! We have a deal. We only ask a few things of you, the citizen, in exchange for this potentially dangerous job you would like us to graciously accept, we would like a decent wage, good benefits and, one more thing, can you take care of my family if I should fall? We still have a deal? Great, I'm all in!

What? Now that we have a deal, you would like to add more to the contract? Somebody parked in your spot at your apartment building, your neighbor's trash cans are blocking your driveway, the dog next door is barking, there is a homeless guy standing by the freeway on-ramp asking for change, there are day laborers waiting for a job at the Lowe's, the gardener down the street has a loud leaf blower, and the list goes on. Any copper reading this knows, I'm being extremely nice. Those are just the everyday radio calls. OK, I will look into those things for you right after I'm done trying to stay within my job description of my original contract, listed in paragraph two, sentence one and two. What are you paying me for? You pay my salary? Your answer to that is in paragraph two, sentence one and two, like I just mentioned. That is what you pay me for. You're welcome, and I will send my regards on your behalf to the 140 law enforcement families that had a loved one killed in 2016 doing what was in our contract.

Wait, there's more? Your son is addicted to methamphetamine and he is now in the garage cutting his fingers off, one by one, with a pair of "tin snips?" You haven't heard from your grandmother in four weeks, she was supposed to visit you this July and you want me to go check her apartment and see if she's OK? Your cousin is visiting you at your home, but now he is sitting in the backyard spraying bug spray in his mouth and holding an idling chainsaw? OK, those seem pretty important, so we will add it to our original contract. But you still want us to handle those things previously mentioned, all of which we didn't actually agree on adding to our contract. You want me to handle that homeless guy by the freeway on-ramp, and if I don't, you're going to call your friend in the Mayor's office? Understood, I really don't want any more complaints made against me or I'm never going to win that toaster at the end of the month.

We are being asked too much. We as a police department have been tasked with so many ills of society that we have had to create additional units just to help out. Where are these officers found to fill these spots? You guessed it, from Patrol, and of course, those units are going to need a lieutenant, a couple of sergeants and a gaggle of officers (throw in a detective or two just for GP). Say goodbye to one whole watch at any given division (in theory).

What is the cost going to be? It probably won't cost much, unless the unit has "special needs," and I don't mean they will also need a captain or a commander. But they may need vehicles, an office, equipment and supplies. Those type of costs I can handle, especially if it's equipment. Equipment can be replaced. The cost I'm concerned about is human life, the irreplaceable loss of someone's father, mother, daughter or son. That cost will lay solely on the average citizen and the street cop. The more we are asked to do—tasks that are not in our original contract of

“protect and serve” where we become more “serve” than “protect—” we are going to have issues, and those issues are going to be the loss of life.

Chief Brown nailed it, “We’re asking cops to do too much in this country,” and now we are asking them to do it with less, again.

If you have questions, feel free to email me at [SteveGordon@lappl.org](mailto:SteveGordon@lappl.org).