

Should police officers be armed criminology essay



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In many countries around the world, crime is met by armed police forces that use firearms for suppression. But should Britain follow this policy. The topic of arming the British police force is a matter that the British government has been debating for a long while now. There are those that say that the amount of police officers killed in action is beyond comprehension and warrants better protection for those working to keep our communities safe while others believe that arming the force will merely entice more violence into our lives. Personally I believe that police force should be armed and that there are far more reasons to arm the force than not to but this view has come under heavy criticism.

There are a lot of people who believe that the Police force should be armed but many others criticize the idea. They believe that if we arm the force then that will be a prompt for criminals and gangs to bring out more and more firearms into society. Theresa May, the home secretary agrees with view believing that "Arming the police force will lead to mistakes such as innocent people being shot which will have communities up in arms against the police". A common view is that if we arm the police, it will create a gun culture within neighbourhoods and that that is no way to bring up the next generation of children. People with this view say that if the police start using firearms then it will entice more violence in the lives of the British people and that the police force would suffer more injuries and deaths than if they had been unarmed. However I strongly disagree with people who hold such views because I believe that the benefits of armed police far outweigh the consequences.

I strongly believe that the police force should be armed. Every day police officers safeguard our communities, deterring crime so that as a society we feel protected. These officers put their lives on the line and sometimes that life is taken. Since records began, a total of 1600 police officers have died in the line of duty, many fallen victim to attacks such as gun and knife crimes. This is down to the inability of these officers to defend themselves against people that possess such weapons. From 2009 42 police officers have been killed in line of duty , two of these were PC Fiona Bone and PC Nicola Hughes who were shot dead in London this year as they investigated a burglary. This disgusts me. Police officers should have the right to protect their lives and the fact that they are not equipped to protect that life is an absolute outrage! Does the government even care about our officers who on a daily basis put their lives at risk for our safety? Something has to be done about this issue, the statistics speak for themselves, and no police officers should have their life subject to danger because they are not equipped in the best possible way. The only way to tackle this issue is to arm the police force. Arming the police force would mean that officers would be protected from any dangers that would directly threaten their life. They would be able to enter situations knowing that their life is not in danger which is surely a right that every officer is entitled to. Paul Beshenivsky, a man who has experienced the tragedy of losing someone to armed crimes said “ I think police, in honesty, should be armed, walking into situations that they’re not totally aware of. You can’t have armed response at every situation, but I think, as an officer being armed makes them feel more comfortable, walking into a variety of scenarios, knowing they could directly respond”. I believe

that if you are going to protect the people then you must first protect our officers.

Throughout the world gun ownership is increasing, especially in countries such as North America. For United Kingdom this has led to many a problem with 28 gun crimes being committed every day. In 2007 there was approximately 60 gun related homicides an 18% increase on the previous year. These are frightening statistics that many people believed should be tackled head on. They believe that not only will the sight of an armed police officer prevent gangs from violence but introduce a community confidence that they are protected and safe within the place where they live. Gangs would think twice about causing violence if they knew armed police officers were around. I deeply believe that arming the officers creates an atmosphere of reassurance for communities and that they could safely live within their society without fear of attack.

In 2005 in England and Wales there were over 10, 000 gun related crimes including the shooting of 11 year old boy from Liverpool called Rhys Jones. The amount of gun crimes committed in London has tripled since 2001 while firearm related crimes in UK have doubled. Police have to respond to these statistics. In areas with a gun culture, when gun crimes are committed a special firearm unit are called as the regular officers are unable to go into the environment as it's too dangerous. This leads to deaths and injuries of innocent people as the armed units are normally too late to prevent the situation. This leads to more and more crimes being committed as criminals begin to take advantage of the slow response time of the firearms unit leaving innocent people at the hands of type of people that possess such

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weapons. So if we were to arm the ordinary officers, the response time to such situations would be quicker and thus the officers would be able to make a difference and save more lives. In cities like Bristol in England where the police are not usually armed, the disposal of police equipped with firearms in the city area subdued tensions between gangs and reduced crime to the extent that allowed the armed police to be removed again. However putting armed police in for short periods of time will only have a temporary impact, having a permanent presence of officers with firearms is the only way to keep this effect in place. A study in America showed that the permanent presence of armed police officers decreased the amount of crimes committed confirming that armed police officers do in fact make society a much safer place to live in.

Unarmed policing represents an naive perspective on criminals that stemmed from the ideas of a different generation. As armed violence has rapidly grown in parts of the world, the police need to adapt their part in society to deal with the increasing problems. In the parts of the UK armed violence has increased seven times over and the police have to be able to respond to statistics like this. Policing has to progress into the modern age to tackle the issues of the present times. Officers are armed already in a different number of scenarios such as airport security so the next objective is to have armed presences in the daily lives of the people.

No matter what people think about arming the police force, I firmly believe that if we were to arm our officers then it would create a more secure environment and a society that would prosper under the safety of armed police. I understand that arming the police may bring more guns into the

country but the fact that police officers lives would be saved and communities would feel much safer puts me in no doubt that armed police are needed if we want to live peacefully.

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