



## **“All For One”**

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I was speaking to a longtime client and customer last week about business in the current climate. We were discussing how we had never seen the geopolitical environment so unsettled. I repeated a line to him that I’ve been using often of late.

“I could use a little *less* job security.”

The fact is that in tumultuous times like these, qualified private security services are so in-demand that the real challenge is simply keeping up. I am fortunate to work with a truly skilled and exceptional set of operators and trainers, yet we are all stretched incredibly thin. In many ways, even grizzled veterans like me have not seen a sustained demand such as this in our careers.

A literal example: as I sat down to type this brief essay, I received two separate requests for active threat/active shooter training and education sessions within a six-minute span. That tempo is absolutely commonplace these days.

The fact is that violent crime is down across the United States and has been trending that direction for at least three years. But for many people it doesn’t *feel* as though it is safer – and those perceptions should not be dismissed by security professionals. Rather, we should be engaging in that conversation, determining what factors or observations are causing a sense of unease.

Widespread deployments of masked and heavily armed federal immigration agents into American cities are ongoing and fill our computer and television screens nightly. Protests and demonstrations in response are also ongoing and appear to be getting more widespread. Media outlets seem all too eager to drum up reports of unrest or criminality – especially if a celebrity is involved or rating are involved.

These conflicting facts and statuses leave public perceptions torn. Our role as security professionals is thus truly two-fold at this point: to provide a safer and more secure environment *and* to empower all our stakeholders to make them feel more at ease. In fact, one of the most valuable things we can bring to the table right now is teaching others to act as force multipliers for our collective safety. We must be the voice of reason.

This means educating non-security folks to be aware of their surroundings, to be cognizant of what is normal behavior and what is not, to know how and to whom suspicious activity should be reported – all without becoming paranoid. The fact is that given the multi-faceted and rapidly evolving challenges facing security professionals, we need all the help we can get. Extra sets of trained eyes and ears would be a gamechanger in the current muddled threat environment. If the limited number of law enforcement and security personnel out there can be reliably pointed in the right direction to deter, prevent, or rapidly respond to genuine issue of safety, everyone will be both at legitimately lower risk and *feel* at lower risk.

It is a fine line to walk, to be sure. Yet the longest journey begins with but a single step. Time to lace up those boots.