

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

DATE: 06/05/2020

SL: Defund the Police. Defund the Pentagon. Dismantle White Supremacy.

In recognition of the current moment, we have decided to eschew the usual short, summarizing analysis, and instead take the space to dig deeply into the intersections of police violence, white supremacy, and progressive foreign policy. We encourage you to read in full.

End State Violence, Everywhere

George Floyd was murdered by the police for being a Black man.
Breonna Taylor was murdered by the police for being a Black woman.
Tony McDade was murdered by the police for being a Black Trans man.

In the United States, state violence against Black people is not the exception — it's the norm. From Ahmaud Arbery to Tamir Rice to Rodney King, Emmet Till to Laura Nelson to Nat Turner, today's police murders are merely the modern incarnation of a legacy of white supremacy and violence that has haunted this country since before its inception.

But what we are witnessing today may be a unique time in this dark history. From the initial uprisings of Black communities in Minneapolis, sustained protests against police violence and white supremacy have spread like wildfire: to every major city in the United States, to every state in the country, to dozens of countries around the world.

In centuries of unrelenting Black struggle, there have been few moments so ripe for radical change as this. In this time of radical possibility, Black activists and organizers are remaking the world and seizing their liberation. We at Win Without War unreservedly join in solidarity, and follow their leadership, in this struggle.

Tanks in the Streets of Minneapolis?

The overwhelming response of local and federal governments to these protests against police brutality has been further brutality: beatings, tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets, and arrests. This week, in a [speech](#) that felt like a declaration of war on the people, Donald Trump vowed to intensify the violence. But rather than deter the uprisings, these attempts at violent suppression have only spurred the courageous protestors on.

WIN WITHOUT WAR



In threatening to invoke the [Insurrection Act](#) to deploy active-duty U.S. military troops to forcefully stamp out the protests, Trump is following in a long legacy of using the military to impose oppression at home. The Insurrection Act, which allows the president to use the military domestically under certain circumstances, has been abused throughout its existence. Though occasionally used for good — to [enforce](#) school desegregation in Little Rock, AK in 1957, and help break up the Ku Klux Klan in 1871— the Insurrection Act has [too often](#) been [called upon](#) to violently crush resistance against oppression: Black people rebelling against their enslavement, Indigenous people protecting their land from theft, and workers uniting in collective action. In Trump's case, there is no doubt: deploying the military to violently break up anti-racist protests is abhorrent.

Racist State Violence at Home. Racist State Violence Abroad.

We unequivocally oppose this militarized response to the protests. Tanks should not be in the streets of Minneapolis. Let us be clear: they should not be in the streets of Baghdad either.

Police violence at home and military violence abroad go hand in hand. In both cases, the state relies on lethal force to exert its will and protect existing injustice and hierarchies of power — rather than responding to the will and needs of the people. The police and the military operate from a bedrock foundation of white supremacy. It is white supremacy that enables the United States to bomb Black and brown people in other countries with impunity. It is white supremacy that cuts budgets for social services but deploys police in riot gear to protect private property. And it is white supremacy that shields both forces from accountability, allowing them to violently disregard the lives of Black and Indigenous people and people of color.

The link between police and military violence is not just theoretical. Police departments across the country have developed extensive arsenals by purchasing and [being gifted](#) surplus military weapons from the federal government — all to the benefit of the vast and powerful arms-manufacturing industry. The U.S. military and domestic police forces have also systematically [shared](#) training and tactics — both between themselves and with [other repressive forces](#) around the world — deepening militarization of local law enforcement and the military's post 9/11 expansion into a permanently-occupying global police force.

Deploying the military to suppress domestic protests is reprehensible. But the police and the military are already two parts of a whole. State violence is state violence wherever it occurs, and whichever agent of the state is doing it.

Defund the Police. Defund the Pentagon. Dismantle White Supremacy.

The problem is not merely the militarization of the police, nor the use of the military as police. The problems are in policing and militarism themselves. For this reason, our demand in following the leadership of others, is simple: *defund them*. Slash the budgets — of the Pentagon, of local police, of Customs and Border Patrol, of all institutions of state violence —

WIN WITHOUT WAR



divert the funds toward critical social needs, and completely reorient our approach toward law enforcement, unrest, and conflict.

As we make these demands for systemic and structural change, we must also look within. White people and non-Black people of color — including those in the progressive movement, and at Win Without War itself — must recognize and reckon with the white supremacy and anti-Blackness that exists in our movements, and the ways in which, through both action and inaction, those with power and privilege have allowed it to fester. Whether perpetuating gender norms and white cis-male dominance of policymaking circles, failing to center the voices of impacted communities, tokenizing coworkers of color, or remaining silent on racial justice issues until they can no longer be ignored, all white people and non-Black people of color are implicated. We must root out white supremacy and dismantle it wherever we find it.

As we witness [promising attitudinal shifts](#) in support of the [Movement for Black Lives](#) (M4BL), we must remember that today's uprisings are not about [winning platitudes](#) from brands or [empty promises](#) from politicians who have spent their careers working against racial justice. **This is a struggle to seize power, to enact radical change, for justice, and for Black liberation.** Beyond calls to defund the police and Pentagon, and our renewed commitment to dismantle white supremacy in our own spaces, Win Without War follows the leadership of Black communities, from the [local demands](#) of Minneapolis-based Black Visions Collective and Reclaim the Block, to the M4BL's national [policy platform](#) and the growing call for Donald Trump to [resign](#).

We Believe That We Will Win

These uprisings are not just expressions of justified rage. They are embodiments of the best of humanity — the beauty and legacy of people staring down oppression and rising up to build a better world. It is rare to recognize history being made before it is over, but we are all now living through such a moment. It's up to all of us to see this moment through: to end racist state violence, both at home and abroad.

Support Black-led Organizations, Donate Where It's Needed Most:

- [Movement for Black Lives](#)
- [Reclaim the Block](#)
- [The National Bail Fund Network](#)
- [Black Alliance for Just Immigration \(BAJI\)](#)
- [Black Immigrant Collective](#)
- [BYP100](#)

Global White Supremacy, Global Solidarity

WIN WITHOUT WAR



The United States holds a horrific position in the center of historical white supremacy. But racism is hardly a uniquely U.S. phenomenon. There is not a place in the world untouched by its tendrils. It's embodied in the oppression of Palestinians. It's found in the ongoing genocide of Indigenous people in Latin America. It lives in the enduring legacy of the colonial subjugation of Africa, the global failure to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people of color, and the ongoing economic exploitation of the Global South.

But in every one of these places, there is resistance, and in the wake of the uprisings in the United States, there has been an explosion of [solidarity: memorials](#) to George Floyd in Syria, Haka [performances](#) in New Zealand, the [defacing](#) of racist statues in Belgium, and [protests](#) across the world, from [Amsterdam](#) to [Brazil](#) to [Palestine](#). This is more than symbolic support — this is [solidarity](#) in shared struggle against a global phenomenon. White supremacy must be dismantled globally.

BURIED LEDES

[Dr. Kihana Ross explains](#) how **Black people in the United States face more than “just racism.” They face “anti-blackness,” the dehumanization of Black people that has made centuries of brutal, systemic violence against the Black community possible.**

In 2014, the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri pushed the Black Lives Matter movement into the national spotlight. This week, **Ferguson elected its first ever Black and first ever female mayor, [Ella Jones](#), as well as its first majority-Black school board.**

Policing as we know it was invented in the 1800's to [control](#) enslaved people. After the abolition of slavery, its purpose was redefined to uphold Jim Crow laws. **The system was never meant to ensure the safety of all,** but the privilege and dominance of its white citizens.

This week marked the 99th anniversary of the [Tulsa massacre](#). In 1921, Tulsa, Oklahoma was home to the most prosperous Black communities in the nation. But after a Black teen was accused of assaulting a white woman, the ensuing massacre by white residents and the National Guard left 36 dead, 800 injured, and the neighborhood in ruins.

In an ironic twist, **Iran [criticized the U.S.](#) government's response to protests this week and called out the systemic racism in American society.** (The Iranian government is certainly correct on those two points but seems to have conveniently overlooked its own violent response to protests, with estimates of hundreds of protestors being killed last November and many more in years prior.)

WIN WITHOUT WAR



While we imagine a [world without cops](#), let's also talk about a [world without prisons](#).

On Monday, DC resident Rahul Dubey [sheltered](#) about 70 protestors in his home as they **attempted to escape police brutality and arrest**. Police purposefully and vindictively sprayed pepper spray into Dubey's home, but the protestors were able to safely leave the next day.

And finally, a group of Texans in Houston protested [on their horses](#) this week, drawing the attention of celebrities (including [Lil Nas X](#)).