

13 Killed and 9,300 Arrested as United States Attempts to Halt National Unrest

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More than 20,000 National Guard deployed in 29 states along with thousands more local, federal and military troops cannot quell the anger of African Americans and their allies

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced in a press conference on June 3 that additional charges would be brought against the Minneapolis police officers involved in the brutal execution of 46-year-old George Floyd on May 25.

One of the central demands of the demonstrations which are continuing in cities and suburbs across the United States is that the third degree murder indictment involving former officer Derek Chauvin, be upgraded to first or second degree. In addition, the people in the streets wanted the other three former officers terminated by the City of Minneapolis in the aftermath of the killing, to also be charged in the case.

Attorney Benjamin Crump who is representing the family, called for the filing of additional charges by the time of the memorial for Floyd on June 4. Crump made this statement on June 3, the same day Attorney General Ellison confirmed that Chauvin has been indicted for second degree murder and the three other former officers involved were charged with accessory to second degree murder.

On June 2, 60,000 people marched through the streets of Houston, Texas led by the family of George Floyd. The African American Minneapolis resident was born in Houston and still maintained close ties to the community there.

Since May 26, demonstrations in response to the killing of Floyd have taken place in the majority of states and urban areas around the U.S. The movement domestically has fueled international solidarity with the struggle against racism. Rallies and marches are occurring in European and African countries. In Zimbabwe, the police had to prevent a crowd from engaging in protest activity outside the U.S. embassy in Harare on June 3.

In what appears to be a nationally-coordinated effort to halt the unrest, the level of state repression is being intensified. In Minneapolis and St. Paul riot police and National Guard engaged in widespread use of crowd control weapons and arbitrary detentions after the imposition of a curfew. These same restrictions on mass gatherings and the enactment of curfews are providing law-enforcement with broad discretion in utilizing weapons and making arrests in areas throughout the country. (See [this](#))

Image on the right: Louisville African American business owner David McAtee killed by police and

national guard during unrest



New York City police have been documented beating and falsely arresting demonstrators in complete violation of the right to speech and assembly. Police and National Guard killed a small business owner in Louisville on May 31 while he stood outside his restaurant. In Atlanta six police officers have been indicted after being shown on social media posts and television smashing the car windows and assaulting two students from Spelman and Morehouse Colleges.

Detroit police at the aegis of corporate-imposed Mayor Mike Duggan, have arrested hundreds of demonstrators for violating an unjustified citywide curfew imposed in an attempt to protect the property of the billionaire ruling interests which are based outside the city. Demonstrators, bystanders and members of press have been gassed and hit with rubber bullets fired by the Detroit police. On the first night of the demonstrations, May 29, a 21-year-old youth from suburban Eastpointe was shot and killed in downtown near the hostile police operations. The authorities claim the death had nothing to do with police action.

U.S. President Donald Trump has consistently demanded that governors and mayors, where mass demonstrations have occurred, to ruthlessly stamp out any unrest. He suggested that "looters" be shot by the police or vigilantes. Later the president said he was not aware of the historical and contemporary significance of the social media post amid a nationwide rebellion against racist violence.



Detroit cops attack anti-racist demonstrations

The evoking of the Insurrection Act of 1807 is a legal as well as symbolic gesture signally to law-enforcement and the Pentagon that aggressive actions taken to quell the manifestations in the streets are endorsed by the White House. Federal police are being deployed in Washington, D.C. along with military troops from Fort Bragg and Fort Drum. A staged gassing of demonstrators in Lafayette Park near the White House and the later photos taken in front of the St. John's Episcopal Church has been condemned by the hierarchy of the denomination.

A news release issued by the [Episcopal News Service](#) emphasized:

“‘Trump used a church building and the Holy Bible for partisan political purposes. This was done in a time of deep hurt and pain in our country, and his action did nothing to help us or to heal us,’ Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said in a statement. ‘I am outraged,’ the Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, bishop of Washington, told The Washington Post. ‘Everything [Trump] has said and done is to inflame violence. We need moral leadership, and he’s done everything to divide us.’”

[Trump said](#) on June 1 that:

“First, we are ending the riots and lawlessness that has spread throughout our country. We will end it now. Today, I have strongly recommended to every governor to deploy the National Guard in sufficient numbers that we dominate the streets. Mayors and governors must establish an overwhelming law enforcement presence until the violence has been quelled. If a city or a state refuses to take the actions that are necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, then I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem for them. I am also taking swift and decisive action to protect our great capital, Washington, D.C. What happened in this city last night was a total disgrace. As we speak, I am dispatching thousands and thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel, and law enforcement officers to

stop the rioting, looting, vandalism, assaults, and the wanton destruction of property.

Political Problems for Washington and Wall Street in Suppressing the Unrest

The international spotlight on the U.S. during this period is a cause for concern among some elements within the ruling class including the Pentagon. An exposure of domestic racism and national oppression is creating problems politically for the Trump administration. Some U.S. ambassadors stationed in several African states have spoken out about the Floyd police execution. Such gestures are designed to suggest that the murder of Floyd was an aberration and not reflective of law-enforcement policy as a whole.



Australian reporter attacked by US federal police

This trepidation within the highest structures of the security sector may have been reflected in the press conference held by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper on June 3 when he attempted to distance himself from the gassing of demonstrators outside the White House and the Trump proposal to evoke the Insurrection Act and deploy federal troops into the cities in an effort to restore civil order.

[Esper noted](#) at the Pentagon:

“I say this not only as Secretary of Defense, but also as a former soldier and a former member of the National Guard, the option to use active-duty forces in a law enforcement role should only be used as a matter of last resort, and only in the most urgent and dire situations. We are not in one of those situations now. I do not support invoking the Insurrection Act.”

The statements by Esper have not been well received at the White House. Other Republicans and Pentagon officials are expressing concern about the current direction of the administration in addressing the national unrest just several months prior to a presidential and congressional election. The anti-racist demonstrations and rebellions are coming at a

time of monumental healthcare and economic crises. Over 41 million people have applied for jobless benefits while already distressed businesses are being targeted in urban areas by enraged members of the community. Demonstrations erupting across the U.S. are multi-national and youthful in character.

A June 2 [article in the New York Times](#) reporting on these developments said:

“[T]he current situation may be the most volatile for Republicans yet, with Americans — already enduring the twin public health and economic calamities of the coronavirus pandemic — almost uniformly outraged at the case of Mr. Floyd, whose brutal death after a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes was captured on video. Many Americans in both parties are increasingly unsettled by both the violence stemming from the protests and Mr. Trump’s demands that governors and local authorities take a harder line.”

The Struggle Against Racism Moving Forward

Clearly the role of law-enforcement and the criminal justice system has been further revealed as a harbinger of institutional racism. If there had not been a national and global outpouring of militant opposition to the murder of Floyd, the officers involved may not have ever been arrested and indicted. The response by the African American people, the oppressed communities in general and their allies within the majority white population is decisive in raising the level of the demands and the response by the ruling class.

Nonetheless, there have been other instances where public pressure resulted in the indictment of police officers although the prosecutors and the courts failed to convict. The examples of this scenario are numerous from Charleston, South Carolina and New York City to Baltimore, Maryland. Therefore the indictments are a victory for the struggle even though the courts can pressure juries to acquit law-enforcement agents for murdering African Americans.

Members of the U.S. Congress are proposing legislation to address the proliferation of police misconduct stemming from racial profiling. However, such a bill would undoubtedly face severe opposition due to the strength of the security apparatus whose actual role is to protect private property and the capitalist state.

Police misconduct and racist vigilante violence is firmly embedded within the social fabric of the U.S. Only a revolutionary change in the existing system can effectively put end to these practices.

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