

# Systematic Racist Violence in America: Minnesota National Guard and State Police Deployed in Twin Cities Rebellion

Third Precinct station razed while unrest spreads to St. Paul and other municipalities around the United States

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*A cell phone videotaped deadly encounter between African American **George Floyd** and several Minneapolis law-enforcement officers resulting in a brutal strangulation has proven to be a turning point in the long saga of systematic racist violence in the United States.*

For four straight days and nights, militant demonstrations have occurred in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and a growing number of municipalities around the country.

Reaching an intense level on the evening of May 28, demonstrators surrounded the Third Precinct police station pelting the structure with missiles. Later the building was evacuated by the city administration while soon afterwards people entered the station and set multiple fires.

**Mayor Jacob Frey** took full responsibility for the retreat from the Third Precinct noting that the situation was too dangerous for personnel inside and outside the building. Television coverage of the arson attacks on the police station was broadcast live throughout the world.



Minneapolis Third Precinct attacked by demonstrators protesting the police killing of George Floyd

Frey defended the lack of arrests for property damage and arson over the course of May 27 and 28 saying that his aim was to not further inflame the situation. With deployment of the Minnesota National Guard and State Troopers it appears as if they have taken charge of law-enforcement responsibility in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

By midday on May 29, there was an announcement that **Derek Chauvin**, the former Minneapolis officer shown in the video with his knee on the neck of George Floyd resulting in his death, had been taken into custody. The Hennepin County District Attorney Michael Freeman later announced that Chauvin was being charged with third degree murder and involuntary manslaughter.

Immediately, local and national activists said that the arrest of one officer was not enough to satisfy their demands for justice. The African American communities in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area are constantly reminding the public of the decades-long history of police brutality.

Within the charging document there is much to be concerned about as it relates to the potential case being brought to court against former police officer Chauvin by the prosecutors. The indictment alleges that Floyd did not die from suffocation. It claims that the victim had other health problems while having being intoxicated. These assertions are problematic because similar efforts are often carried out in other police killings in order to provide a legal angle for acquittal. (See [this](#))

Many former and current law-enforcement officials in numerous interviews over various television networks have condemned the use of such a method of restraint seen in the video which immediately went viral. Nonetheless, there are thousands of African Americans and others who are victimized by police violence every year. In most situations, the police are not held accountable and remain employed in the public service.

Meanwhile property destruction and arson attacks spread to neighboring St. Paul on May 28 where at least 200 businesses were impacted. Some of the same chain stores attacked in Minneapolis suffered an identical fate in the other twin city.

[A report](#) on the situation published by CBS Minnesota said of events that:

“St. Paul was spared from the chaos Wednesday night (May 27), but that all changed Thursday. The St. Paul Police Department said more than 170 businesses were looted or damaged Thursday, and dozens of fires were set. But there were no serious injuries reported in the city. Fires continued to burn in the city early Friday morning, with the largest one at Big Top Liquor near Snelling and University avenues, nearby Allianz Field.”

### **Demonstrations Spread Across the U.S.**

Protests soon erupted in many other cities where thousands have taken to the streets demanding an end to police violence against African Americans. In Louisville, Kentucky, 7 people were shot during the evening on May 28.



Minneapolis Rebellion after George Floyd police killing

The following night there were additional demonstrations taking place in the city. People are angered by the failure of the authorities in Louisville to file charges against the police officers that killed emergency medical technician Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African American woman, sleeping in her bed during a purportedly mistaken location raid in search of illegal drugs. There were no drugs in the apartment yet Taylor is dead at the hands of police.

According to [a news report](#) on events in Louisville there are:

“Groups of protesters demanding justice for Breonna Taylor, who was an African American woman killed in her apartment by police officers on March 13, are gathered on Jefferson and Sixth Street. Around 9 p.m., protesters pulled down the American and Kentucky flags in front of the Hall of Justice and set them ablaze. Moments later, some protesters threw objects at the building’s glass doors, more items were lit on fire and there were three loud bangs which went off. A group of more than 1,000 people were estimated to be gathering around the Hall of Justice where everything seems to be focused.”





Louisville demonstration demanding justice for Breonna Taylor

Demonstrations occurred in dozens of municipalities including Phoenix, New York City, Denver, Chicago, Memphis, Washington, D.C., Dallas and Detroit. In the city of Detroit thousands gathered at public safety headquarters downtown on the afternoon of Friday May 29. After listening to several speakers including City Council President Pro term Mary Sheffield, Charter Revision Commission member Joanna Underwood, Board of Police Commissioners Member Willie Burton, among others, the crowd began to march through downtown into the Midtown and Woodbridge District, chanting anti-racist and anti-police brutality slogans.

In Atlanta fires were set during demonstrations in the downtown area where police presence was extremely heavy. Later a small group gathered at the CNN Center where several people threw missiles and incendiary devices which broke windows. The police in riot gear launched teargas in an attempt to disperse the crowd.

The White House has largely been circumspect in regard to the nationwide unrest which has grown exponentially since May 26. President Donald Trump sent out a tweeted message during the early morning hours of May 29 suggesting that “looters” should be shot on sight. He later attempted to clean up the statement. However, the damage had already been done politically.

Trump is quite concerned with the deteriorating economic and social situation in the U.S. where 41 million people have applied for unemployment benefits since mid-March directly stemming from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the explosion in anti-racist protests where some are becoming more violent, the administration can only stoke fear and bigotry in an effort to build upon its existing base within the capitalist ruling class as well as significant sections of the white population which mistakenly view the nationally oppressed, immigrants and those harboring opinions differing from the president as their central enemies and adversaries.

### **Possible Outcome in the Present Conjuncture**

The unrest in the U.S. has drawn the attention of the international community. **Michelle Bachelet**, the former president of Chile and the current chair of the United Nations Human Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) made a statement on May 28 criticizing the police killing of George Floyd and other African Americans.

Bachelet said [in a statement](#) issued from the UNCHR offices that:

“This is the latest in a long line of killings of unarmed African Americans by U.S. police officers and members of the public. I am dismayed to have to add George Floyd’s name to that of Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, Michael Brown and many other unarmed African Americans who have died over the years at the hands of the police — as well as people such as Ahmaud Arbery and Trayvon Martin who were killed by armed members of the public. The US authorities must take serious action to stop such killings, and to ensure justice is done when they do occur. Procedures must change, prevention systems must be put in place, and above all police officers who resort to excessive use of force should be charged and convicted for the crimes committed.”

In addition to the UNCHR, [the African Union \(AU\)](#), representing 55 member-states on the continent and its 1.2 billion people, weighed in as well with a statement which read:

“The Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat strongly condemns the murder of George Floyd that occurred in the United States of America at the hands of law enforcement officers, and wishes to extend his deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. Recalling the historic Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) Resolution on Racial Discrimination in the United States of America made by African Heads of State and Government, at the OAU’s First Assembly Meeting held in Cairo, Egypt from 17 to 24 July 1964, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission firmly reaffirms and reiterates the African Union’s rejection of the continuing discriminatory practices against Black citizens of the United States of America. He further urges the authorities in the United States of America to intensify their efforts to ensure the total elimination of all forms of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin.”

These statements from both the UN and the AU reaffirm the legitimacy of the African American struggle for self-determination and full equality. Malcolm X (El Hajj Malik Shabazz) was present at the 1964 OAU Summit in July 1964 to lobby on behalf of the people of African descent in the U.S. His work in winning this resolution 56 years ago is a clear indication of the correctness of his position during the period.

National and international coordination of political forces is required in order to elevate the African American liberation movement in its efforts to secure the right to security and development unhindered by a racist system which is in rapid decline. As the economic crisis in the U.S. worsens the level of conflict and disorder will intensify requiring broader unity and solidarity aimed at ending national oppression and economic exploitation.

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