# Police Backlash Disadvantage

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### Uq-Police being attacked now

#### Police being attacked and demonized now – compliance is on the brink

Schultz 20

Marisa Schultz is a reporter for Fox, “Police unions face harsh scrutiny in wake of Floyd death: 'We're being demonized'”, 6/15/20, Published by Fox, https://www.foxnews.com/politics/police-unions-scrutiny-floyd-death)//LED

In the days since George Floyd's death in Minnesota, long-influential police unions have been shoved into the spotlight, called out as the problem and abandoned by lawmakers who have rejected their campaign donations. After the horrifying video of an officer kneeling on Floyd's neck shocked the nation –­ and amid new unrest over a fatal shooting in Atlanta –­ politicians are plowing forward with policing reforms that previously had been rejected by unions. Collective bargaining agreements for police are getting renewed scrutiny for provisions critics say shield bad cops from accountability. And fellow unions have distanced themselves from the police and with one calling for the International Union of Police Associations to be expelled from the nation’s largest labor federation, the AFL-CIO. ATLANTA COP COULD FACE FELONY CHARGE The tensions with the police union were on full display in Minneapolis, ground zero for the unrest that has rippled throughout the nation. Mayor Jacob Frey called out the union that represented the officers now charged in connection with Floyd's death as an obstacle to police brutality reforms, while the Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo targeted the union contract as a starting place for reform, arguing police chiefs should have more control over which officers are on their force patrolling the streets. “The police union needs to be put in its place," Frey told protesters earlier this month before getting booed for not agreeing to defund the police. Police have widely denounced the conduct of Derek Chauvin who knelt on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes and the three other Minneapolis police officers who stood by. All four of them have been fired and criminally charged in connection to Floyd's May 25 death. Hundreds continue to gather at site of George Floyd's death in MinneapolisVideo Public anger toward police and mounting criticisms have put unions on defense, and while some powerful union leaders have acknowledged reforms are needed to combat police brutality, others have fought back and demanded respect. “Stop treating us like animals and thugs, and start treating us with some respect,” Michael O’Meara, the president of the New York State Association of Police Benevolent Associations, said in an emotional speech last Tuesday, arguing actions of one bad officer shouldn't stain the badge of good officers who protect and serve their communities. 'We're being demonized' The group that represents big-city police chiefs ticked off the police unions by putting out a statement after Floyd's death that targeted police union contracts as an obstacle to police accountability. The Major Cities Chiefs Association acknowledged institutional racism and police brutality and called for "bold and courageous action" to right the past wrongs. GEORGE FLOYD BROTHER SPEAKS OUT ON 'DEFUND' PUSH "We're being demonized," Joe Gamaldi, president of the Houston police union and vice president of the national Fraternal Order of Police, told Fox News. He ripped the police chiefs for "blaming police unions for all the ills of law enforcement." "Police unions don't do background checks," Gamaldi continued. "We don't investigate new recruits. We don't hire people. We don't train them. We don't set policy. We don't discipline them. And we don't fire them. That is all under the control of police chiefs. And it's just funny that they would blame us, when they really should be looking in the mirror." Police chiefs and local leaders, however, argue that unions have negotiated contracts and pushed for state reforms that make it harder for chiefs to boot out problematic cops and replace them with fresh officers who embrace policing reforms. The Center for Public Integrity found that police contracts typically include language to hide complaints against police officers from the public, arbitration clauses that sometimes force police departments to rehire cops and provisions to bar police departments from immediately interrogating or firing officers after egregious acts of misconduct, known as a "cooling off" period that critics pan as time for cops to get their story straight. Law enforcement officers weigh in on use of deadly force after Rayshard Brooks shootingVideo "Union contracts themselves often contain provisions that are antithetical to the kind of reform that you're seeking," Jonathan M. Smith, executive director of the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, told Fox News. Unions have benefited from political clout in Washington and with local elected leaders. Since the 1994 election cycle, 55 police union and law enforcement PACs have donated over $1.1 million to congressional campaigns, with sitting Democratic members of Congress being big beneficiaries, along with Republicans, according to the watchdog Center for Responsive Politics. In 2016, the National Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's largest police union, endorsed President Trump over Hillary Clinton. In the years since, he's remained close to police, famously telling a crowd of law enforcement officers in New York "please don't be too nice" when arresting people. While Trump has called Floyd's death a tragedy, he's largely stood by the police during the unrest -- and directed his fire toward rioters, Antifa and looters, repeatedly calling for "Law and Order." Trump is eyeing an executive order on reforms and now wants policing done in a more "gentle fashion." Meanwhile, Joe Biden has resisted calls from the left to "Defund the Police." But the former vice president who wrote the 1994 crime bill is facing blowback from police unions who were once close to Biden over his calls for police reform overhauls, the Wall Street Journal reported. Unions say Biden has not done enough to praise the vast majority of police officers who are acting properly. In New York, unions have spent big to ward off police reforms and -- until now -- thwarted multiple attempts to allow the public release of police misconduct records. From January 1, 2015, through May 13, 2020, the PAC for the Police Benevolent Association of New York City funneled $650,000 to New York politicians, according to records examined by THE CITY. The union also spent $768,000 from 2017-2019 on lobbying government officials and $320,000 on political ads in 2018, the report found.

### L-Plan goes behind Union’s back, ruins police-inclusive efforts to create best reforms

#### **DoJ action fails to account for local issues or compliance, localized discussions are key**

Driscoll 6/19/20

Bob Driscoll is chair of the White Collar and Government Investigations Group at McGlinchey in Washington, D.C., and a former deputy assistant attorney general for civil rights with the Department of Justice, “Police Reform Won’t Happen Overnight”, Published by The Dispatch, https://thedispatch.com/p/police-reform-wont-happen-overnight)//LED

The overwhelming majority of law enforcement officers in this country are local, governed by local law, supervised by elected state, local, or county officials. Federal law enforcement, such as the FBI, the DEA, and the like, derive their authority from federal law to enforce federal statutes and stop federal crimes. Murder, rape, robbery, drunk driving, domestic violence, theft, and most of the crimes we think need “policing” are state level or local crimes. So there is no inherent authority, under our federal system, for the federal government to control local law enforcement. Indeed, the Supreme Court has held in cases such as Printz v. United States that local law enforcement generally cannot be conscripted to enforce federal law. This doesn’t mean there is no role for the federal government, just that that role is not plenary—the federal government cannot regulate local law enforcement the way the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) might regulate workplace safety. Where the federal government does have a role is in enforcing constitutional standards. Although the Bill of Rights initially applied only against the federal government, the “incorporation doctrine” generally applies constitutional standards to state and local actors. Thus, regardless of the terms of your state’s constitution, local law enforcement can no more violate your due process rights or your right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure than the federal government can. Section 1983 of Title 42 of U.S. code provides individuals with the right to sue local officials for violations of their federal or constitutional rights. So a victim of excessive force, for example, will theoretically have a cause of action to recover money against a local policeman. (I’m leaving aside the judicially created “qualified immunity” doctrine that severely circumscribes that right for another day.) Congress, however, has also granted the DoJ the right to sue local law enforcement agencies in federal court and receive injunctive relief, via a federal consent decree, to remedy a “pattern-or-practice” of constitutional or federal violations. Legal nerds will immediately see the jurisdictional issue—DoJ cannot roam the country and impose “best practices” on local law enforcement whenever it feels like it. It can, however, get an injunction changing local practices when those practices have led to a pattern or practice of constitutional violations. Traditionally, Republican administrations have taken this jurisdictional limitation seriously, and Democratic administrations less so. Almost 20 years ago, I dealt with a department that had made a practice of pepper spraying detained suspects who were already in handcuffs if they mouthed off or threatened to spit at the officer. Officers disclosed that they did this on their use-of-force reporting, and supervisors signed off on the use of force as appropriate. This was a pattern of excessive force violations, and the DoJ had the statutory authority to change the policy via federal consent decree if needed. (The DoJ expert on the case also had the officers begin to carry painters masks to place on handcuffed suspects who threatened to spit on officers while being detained, which was often the event precipitating the unconstitutional capsaicin shot up the nose.) Narrow focus, tied to specific violations of constitutional standards. In contrast, Democratic Justice Departments, often invited in by Democratic politicians who are less concerned with jurisdictional issues, have imposed lengthy consent decrees covering virtually every aspect of a given local department’s policing practices—from use of force and officer discipline policies, to canine policies, to record keeping and data collection. Chicago and Baltimore would be examples. Mayors and police management often will not strenuously object to the DoJ imposing via consent decree wide-ranging reforms that they wouldn’t or couldn’t bargain for via collective bargaining with the local police union. But such decrees would be subject to legal challenge if not tied to a pattern or practice of constitutional violation. Moreover, as one might imagine, the rank-and-file union members often resent having work and discipline rules changed via such decrees rather than through collective bargaining, particularly if there hasn’t been a pattern or practice of constitutional misconduct established. The bottom line is you can write whatever policy you want, but what matters is what goes on in the street.

### I/l-Causes massive backlash

#### Police Backlash, anger that reform efforts ignore engagement

Q13 Staff 6/9/20

Local Seattle News, “‘You lost a good one’: Local officers question future in law enforcement amid intense backlash, civil unrest”, Published by Q13 Fox,https://q13fox.com/2020/06/09/you-lost-a-good-one-local-officers-question-future-in-law-enforcement-amid-intense-backlash-civil-unrest/)//LED

SEATTLE -- As protests continue over the killing of George Floyd and the death of Manuel Ellis here at home, calls for arresting officers and defunding the police have left local law enforcement questioning why they continue to protect cities that will "protest my funeral and cheer when I'm laid in the ground." Clashes between protesters and police have been escalating in Seattle and across the globe in response to the killing of George Floyd, most recently prompting city council members and activists to push for reducing funding to the Seattle Police Department by up to 50 percent. Mayor Jenny Durkan and Police Chief Carmen Best have sat down at the table with protest organizers and announced a wide range of proposals to address community concerns. Still, council members Kshama Sawant and Teresa Mosqueda have publicly called on Durkan to resign. Kshama Sawant @cmkshama If this happens, it'll be a victory for the movement, led by courageous young people! When we fight, we win! The building should be taken out of the hands of police & converted into a community center for restorative justice. Join us tomorrow at Cal Anderson 6PM! #DefundPolice View image on Twitter 1,179 5:47 PM - Jun 8, 2020 Twitter Ads info and privacy 358 people are talking about this Seattle Police Officer Josh Johnson has responded to the last 12 days of local unrest in a lengthy Facebook post that had been shared more than 2,000 times as of midday Tuesday. Johnson said he and his fellow officers were as angry and disgusted as the rest of the world over George Floyd's death. He said initially, he hoped that "something beautiful and good" could come from the tough conversations that need to be had about police brutality and racial injustice. "That hope has been extinguished," he said. "I am all about reform. I am all for accountability. And I am all about ensuring justice for all. And my department is a national leader in all of that. In the last years I've ... made a point to get to know the people in the area I work (a largely minority community), and worked ... to bring about better results when people need help beyond what I am trained to do. "But the actions of the last two weeks have shown me that does not matter," he continued. "Progress counts for nothing. Discussion is off the table ... I don’t know how to reckon with the fact that I could lose my life trying to protect a city that will protest my funeral and cheer when I'm laid in the ground. And it has made me consider leaving it all behind." Meanwhile, Tacoma Mayor Victoria Woodards has called for four Tacoma officers to be fired and charged in connection with the death of Manuel Ellis, a 33-year-old black man who died March 3 while he was handcuffed and restrained by Tacoma police. Like Floyd in Minneapolis, Ellis' death was ruled a homicide - respiratory arrest due to hypoxia caused by physical restraint. "The officers who committed this crime should be fired and prosecuted to the full extent of the law," Woodards said late Thursday after video surfaced showing the final moments of Ellis' life. The Tacoma Police Union offered a harsh rebuke to Woodards' calls for the officers to be immediately fired and charged. "This is not a time to sacrifice dedicated public servants at the altar of public sentiment, especially when that sentiment is almost wholly fueled by the uninformed anger of a theatrical politician," the union said in a prepared statement last week. Now, the union is asking the community to take a step back and let the Pierce County Sheriff's Office investigation - as well as an independent investigation by the state Attorney General's Office - run their course before directing so much vitriol at police. The statement from the union reads, in part: Know that our Union is fully committed to a thorough and transparent outside investigation by the Pierce County Sheriff’s Department and the Pierce County Prosecutor’s Office. Central to those independent investigations is the need for those investigations to be free from interference," the union said in a news release Tuesday. But our own City officials are interfering with the independent investigation by spreading inflammatory and false statements. The Mayor and the City’s Chief Equity Officer have called Tacoma police officers criminals, racists, and white supremacists who lynched a black man in the City of Tacoma. Those are awful, false words. We are not racists. We are not white supremacists. We did not lynch a man. We are mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons. We are Black, Caucasian, Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islander, and Biracial. We are gay and straight. We are proud military veterans and college graduates. We are humans. We are members of the Tacoma community. We call on our City leaders to cast aside their hateful, mean-spirited, and false words. Cast aside divisive rhetoric. Cast aside media soundbites. Allow the full and transparent investigation into Mr. Ellis’ death to remain objective and unbiased. The public, Mr. Ellis’ family, and our officers deserve untainted facts – the truth – to come out.

### Impact-emboldens unions and makes situation worse

#### Failure to integrate police into conversations creates a violent radicalization and backlash, other positions miss the point of revolutionary reform

Zambrano 6/18/20

OSCAR ZAMBRANO is a Counterpunch Writer, “Police Culture in the United States” Published by Counterpunch, https://www.counterpunch.org/2020/06/18/police-culture-in-the-united-states/)//LED

The call to defund the police ignores a fundamental structuring principle at work in the collective mindset of policing, and that is the culture of policing in the United States. Any call for reform that ignores this also risks ignoring the values and traditions that feed and legitimate police violence, and the silence from within their ranks regarding racist brutality. Ignoring this means that police culture, like any culture, will tend to persist. It won’t change just by defunding police departments, yet that sudden injury risks alienating them from the necessary service they provide to society. A recent and drastic historical example of cultural alienation is our illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003, when Paul Bremer defunded and “fired” the four hundred thousand trained soldiers from Saddam Hussain’s army. Many of those military men years later ended up joining the ranks of violently anti-American ISIS. So, the sudden “defund police” idea could be more troublesome than protesters may think. Their unqualified reaction to villainize all police is a mistake, because only a small minority of police officers is committing crimes. Without knowing it, what protesters are condemning is police culture, and changing that culture will take more than the blunt hammer of sudden defunding. Already we’re witnessing the angry pushback from various police departments around the country. And they have a point because most of them are good working people not engaged in killing or abusing black and brown citizens. So, changing police culture will require smarter and longer-term solutions. Instead of defunding police and portraying them all as criminals — bad branding — the better idea out there is that of making conditional some of their funding to new codes of conduct. Putting new strings on their budgets. And in that process also bringing new insights that will be at the foundation of better conduct going forward. The lynching of Mr. Floyd will forever remain the unspeakable act of racist depravity it was, and the perpetrators deserve everything I hope will come to them. But as a country, we cannot make lasting national policy from inarticulate national rage. We need a greater understanding. Again, it is crucial we recall Iraq and Bremer’s imperial arrogance which was ignorant of local history and culture. Instead of possibly recruiting Iraq’s military for good work on our side, his firing of Hussain’s entire army contributed to the eventual growth of ISIS. And to this day, Bremer still defends everything he did in Iraq. It is the acme of hubris never to admit one’s mistakes. And he sure made a catastrophic mistake when he said to that prestigious and trained army of almost half a million military men “You’re fired! Go find another job. We’ve taken over your country and now you’ll surrender your weapons and go away!” And so they did — only to see many of them reappear years later in the ranks of ISIS, an organization so specialized in anti-American sentiment that in 2014 it broke all ties with al-Qaeda for not being committed enough in that regard. This history suggests that whether it’s police or army troops, the generic humiliation and firing of weapons-trained people who have been serving society albeit imperfectly, risks making for more disorder down the road. Instead of the “defund police” drive pursued with so much energy, a smarter limit-setting for police needs to be done in a realistic, organized, and feasible way. Rage won’t bring lasting change. Rage may bring revolution, but violent revolutions are wild fires that burn everything equally, the good with the bad. The smarter ways to bring about a successful revolution require strategy and patience because culture dies hard. Throwing bricks at windows, setting fires, and demanding all police be abolished are counterproductive. Something to consider is that police exists mainly to protect private property. In other words, to safeguard the haves from the have-not’s. So a bigger fish to fry would be checking the greed of unregulated Big Banks which concentrate most of the private property in the world in the hands of very few people. That tiny hyper-propertied minority always buys police and security protection, a real necessity after trampling the vast majority of the working people around the globe. How so? A deal-breaker condition before financiers commit to making meaningful foreign investments is their preemptive requirement that those governments guarantee them no increase of the minimum wage in their countries over some a number of years. Changing THAT is indeed a bigger war we have to fight before we can have a better world. That war is bigger than the war against the police, important as that is. We need to keep both those wars in view at the same time, because the knee on the neck of the workers of the world is the top-down demand from Big Banks to perpetuate non-living minimum wages. This is the continued lynching of the little people by the mighty, and it’s been going on for so long that most workers no longer see it. They’ve normalized being in perpetual debt as part of life. Their indentured servitude to the banks has vanished from view. But they certainly feel the abuse, even if they have no language with which to articulate it. The chronic pain of non-living wages is a force of nature, and when that natural force combines with access to internet, it becomes the world-wide factory of rage and misery that we live in. Different from antiquity, today we have the technology and the resources to fix much of this unnecessary poverty and hunger, yet we don’t. The big players at the top are not fixing world hunger and squalor because they’re insulated from all that. So they have the time and the option to remain consumed by the pursuit of their own ever-greater self-enrichment. Their idea of world power also includes the agenda to stop the browning of America. The financial elites sometimes do “charity” because it can be a tax advantage, bring publicity and feel-good photo ops, and also for the pleasure of actually giving something back. But you can see none of their charity ever changes the structure of the rentier economy they keep gaming, as they sever themselves from all social cost and consequence. They dodge accountability and evade taxes. The financialized economic system they built for themselves has resulted in grotesque and unsustainable levels of social and economic inequality that require policing. Their rentier system of exploitation hails directly from our history of exterminating most Native Americans, and then buying millions of slaves over centuries. Slavery enriched our ancestors so much that they fought an utterly devastating Civil War trying to preserve it. This history remains either unknown or not accepted, and it is at the root of what’s happening today. The police works mostly to check transgressions against private property, so an important reason for its existence is protecting the haves from the have-not’s. Private property in itself is not the problem at all, but the excess of it is because it turns society into a zero sum game. So if people want to have at the police, let them also have at those for whom the police mostly works, so that as they push to defund the police they also remain aware about pushing to “defund” through taxation, the immense hidden loot the pirates of high finance keep stealing from the common good. Just recently they walked away with the first four-plus Trillion dollar rescue package under the cover of Covid-19. None of that went directly to the people who need it. Never mind their 1.8 Trillion dollar tax cut of 2017. Or the Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution which permits the slavery of felons behind bars, and the full-retail sale of their products, a silent sideline enriching many of our biggest and most proudly American corporations. The jailed felons are mostly black and brown people. If we’re out to defund the police, we should also be out to ban that horrible exception in the Thirteenth Amendment that hasn’t ended slavery for well over a million black and brown people doing forced labor behind bars. If we’re out to defund the police, we should also be out to tax the colossal financial gains of Wall Street which are now stashed away in tax heavens. This country made them rich, then they ran overseas with the money, killing American jobs for cheaper ones abroad. So much for the “job creators”. I doubt anyone will ever change the Big Bank culture of ruthless usury served with skin-deep gentility. They are well dressed and well-mannered cannibals devouring today the patrimony of the unborn generations of the 99 percent. If we’re out to defund the police, we should also be out to restore the progressive tax structure we had between 1945 and 1975, when proven regulations were still in place. Those regulations today would help curb the social carnage inflicted by the fraction of the one percent whose greed and racism have become overwhelming over the last forty years. If we’re out to defund the police, we should also be out to denounce the monarchs of finance who owning so much of society’s resources have now also co-opted police and other security to enforce over us their “law and order” culture. That culture mostly protects their kind, not the poor, not the black and brown, and not the forgotten ones who disappear every minute with no one watching. A wider context of history and culture could help clarify and make more effective the current drive to defund the police.

#### Police can be radicalized-white supremacy is rampant

Schulkin 6/1/20

Danielle Schulkin is a Junior Fellow at Just Security. JD, New York University School of Law, “White Supremacist Infiltration of US Police Forces: Fact-Checking National Security Advisor O’Brien”, Published by Just Security, <https://www.justsecurity.org/70507/white-supremacist-infiltration-of-us-police-forces-fact-checking-national-security-advisor-obrien/)//LED>

On Sunday morning, CNN’s Jake Tapper asked President Trump’s National Security Advisor, Robert O’Brien, whether he thinks “systemic racism” is a problem in law enforcement agencies in the United States. O’Brien responded: “I don’t think there is systemic racism. I think 99.9 percent of our law enforcement officers are great Americans,” said O’Brien. “But … there’s a few bad apples.” There are two flaws in O’Brien’s response. First, O’Brien ignores the well-documented support by law enforcement officers of alt-right extremist ideology throughout the country. Second, O’Brien misunderstands the nature of systemic racism—a term that means that institutions we have in place produce racially disparate effects on minority populations—in his discussion of individual officers. An FBI intelligence assessment—titled “White Supremacist Infiltration of Law Enforcement” and published in 2006 during the administration of President George W. Bush—raised alarm over white supremacist groups’ interest in “infiltrating law enforcement communities or recruiting law enforcement personnel.” The report, based on FBI investigations and open sources, warned, for example, that skinhead groups were actively encouraging their members to become “ghost skins” within law enforcement agencies, a term the report said white supremacists use to describe members who “avoid overt displays of their beliefs to blend into society and covertly advance white supremacist causes.” In 2015, a classified FBI Counterterrorism Policy Guide, obtained by The Intercept, stated that “domestic terrorism investigations focused on militia extremists, white supremacist extremists, and sovereign citizen extremists often have identified active links to law enforcement officers.” FBI Assessment 2006 White Supremacist Infiltration Law Enforcement by Just Security on Scribd In 2009, the Department of Homeland Security issued a report on right-wing extremism and its relationship to “violent radicalization” in the United States. The report’s principle researcher on the subject, Daryl Johnson, later told The Intercept: “Federal law enforcement agencies in general — the FBI, the Marshals, the ATF — are aware that extremists have infiltrated state and local law enforcement agencies and that there are people in law enforcement agencies that may be sympathetic to these groups.” This may not be a coincidence. An investigation published in 2019 by the Center for Investigative Reporting found that hundreds of active-duty and retired law enforcement officers are members of Confederate-sympathizing, anti-Islam, or anti-government militia groups on Facebook. Within these private groups, members often are openly racist. Police officers have also been linked to groups like the Oath Keepers and Three Percenters, who believe in defending white Americans from “enslavement” and are actively hostile to immigrants. The investigation identified active-duty and retired police officers as active members in explicitly racist Facebook groups such as “Veterans Against islamic Filth” (the group deliberately lowercases “Islamic” in its name) and “PURGE WORLDWIDE (The Cure for the Islamic disease in your country).”

## Extensions

### Uq

#### **Defund the Police movement has alienated negotiation and hurt reform, negotiation key to reverse**

Driscoll 6/19/20

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The protests that sprang up in the wake of George Floyd’s killing were a response to a horrific event, but people weren’t protesting over just Floyd. The video that showed Chauvin refusing to get off his neck, and his colleagues looking on without intervention, was a watershed moment and even united the country in some respects, at least temporarily. And now, nearly six years after Eric Garner told cops “I can’t breathe,” and nearly four years after Minneapolis police shot Philando Castile even as he told them he was not reaching for his gun, a consensus is emerging among a broad political spectrum that some sort of structural reform to local policing is necessary. South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott introduced the GOP’s police reform legislation, the JUSTICE Act, earlier this week, and the White House has issued an executive order broadly if vaguely encouraging (via funding) “best practices” by local law enforcement and sharing of information nationally on officer misconduct. On the Democratic side, civil rights groups and elected leaders tout the Obama-era Civil Rights Division’s “pattern and practice” consent decrees, which are entered into in federal courts against local police departments, as the kinds of federal intervention to be pursued. And of course, on the extreme left the “Defund the Police” slogan has taken hold, albeit without much clarity about what it means. I do have to admit to a bit of schadenfreude watching national Democrats scramble to explain that the words “Defund the Police” don’t mean what they say—that it is just shorthand for “reform the police”—only to be undercut by activists and local liberal politicians in Minneapolis and elsewhere who essentially respond “Hell yeah, that’s exactly what we mean—‘defund the police’ as in eliminate police departments!” But for practical purposes (and despite President Trump’s attempt to hang the “Defund the Police” slogan on Joe Biden, who has rejected it) eliminating police is going nowhere as a national strategy to deal with structural policing reform. As happens when any public policy issue jumps to the fore in the media, policing reform “hot takes” abound from all quarters. Fox News’s Sean Hannity recently proposed chokehold bans, dash cameras in every squad car, and body cameras on every officer. The Rayshard Brooks shooting at a Wendy’s in Atlanta has half the talking heads on cable discussing “proportionate” use of force policies and objecting to a firearm being used against a suspect who pointed “only” a “nonlethal” Taser at the officer. People with zero law enforcement experience are breaking down the various videos of the Brooks shooting like it is the Zapruder film and confidently opining that “there should be a rule” that at THAT point in the video the officer should have allowed Brooks to run away. I’m not going to critique the various takes that people have—I have my own as well but I am humble enough to know that I am not an expert in police tactics and that such experts exist. But I did help manage the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division’s “pattern and practice” program for a couple of years and so had some experience meeting with and hearing the concerns of police chiefs, rank and file officers, community members, and other stakeholders about police reform. I also have some idea of what issues are likely to arise and what issues will need to be confronted as the nation and individual cities try to distill its intuition about what needs to change down to concrete policies. Here are a few things to consider as you listen to the various proposals sure to come forward in the next weeks and months and consider what needs to happen in your city:

### Link

#### The aff ruins police-inclusive efforts, it’s time to engage Unions to create substantial reforms

Michaels 6/10/20

Samantha Michaels is a reporter at Mother Jones, “One Big Obstacle for Minneapolis Police Abolitionists: The Cops’ Union Contract” Published by Mother Jones, https://www.motherjones.com/crime-justice/2020/06/one-big-obstacle-for-minneapolis-police-abolitionists-the-cops-union-contract/)//LED

Not long after the Minneapolis police chief fired the officer who knelt on George Floyd’s neck and the other three officers who did not intervene, Lt. Bob Kroll, who leads the department’s police union, was scheming for a way to get the men’s jobs back. “They were terminated without due process,” he wrote in an email to the 800-plus rank-and-file officers in the union, leaked to the public on June 1. Kroll, who appeared onstage with President Donald Trump at a campaign rally last year, wrote that he was working with the four officers’ defense attorneys and labor lawyers to try to force the chief to rehire them. It wouldn’t be unheard of. In Minneapolis and other cities, fired officers are regularly reinstated to their jobs after a police union intervenes. Last week, Mayor Jacob Frey described Kroll’s union, the Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis, as one of the biggest impediments to disciplining cops who use excessive force. “The elephant in the room with regard to police reform is the police union,” he told the New York Times. The mayor described the union’s current contract with the city as a “nearly impenetrable barrier” to disciplining officers for racism and other misconduct, partly because of the protections it gives them after a firing. Often, he said, “we do not have the ability to get rid of many of these officers that we know have done wrong in the past.” That contract expired in January and is now up for negotiation, meaning that Minneapolis has an opportunity to reform how officers are treated after they injure or kill someone, and to rethink what other protections they get on the job. Putting even more pressure on the negotiations—and adding to the uncertainty—a veto-proof majority of the city council on Sunday promised to work toward defunding and dismantling the current police department, something no other major city has yet pledged to do. Advertise with Mother Jones Advertise with Mother Jones But that will take time. The council members, who control the police department’s budget and must approve any new union contract, said dismantling the department would not happen overnight, and that they would need to consult with community members as they reenvision how Minneapolis will approach public safety. They would also need to amend the city’s charter, which requires them to fund a police force with at least about 730 employees, based on the city’s population. And any amendment would require a public vote, or approval from the mayor and the entire city council, a few of whose members oppose the plan. “We might have to take it to the people to have a vote on it, but I think there are a lot of ways in which the council can move forward with the plan even if the mayor isn’t on board,” council member Jeremiah Ellison, who supports the plan, was quoted as saying. Negotiating with the police union could be a way to secure substantial changes in the short term as council members begin that lengthy process. And in some ways, their announcement about wanting to defund the department is a kind of opening offer to the bargaining unit—an indication that they are willing to veto any and everything short of a complete overhaul. “Our efforts at incremental reform have failed,” Lisa Bender, the council’s president, said Sunday in front of a crowd of hundreds of people. In a call with reporters on Monday, she added that the police union was “a clear barrier to change.” Frey, not the council, has direct control over the police department and its rules, and his administration sits opposite the police union during collective bargaining. And over the weekend, Frey said he’s not on board with a complete dismantling of the force—an admission for which protesters heckled him. But the mayor, too, has repeatedly said he wants to remove power from Kroll and other police union members, whom he has accused of creating a culture of impunity at the department. Over the weekend, Frey said that instead of completely defunding the police, he wants to see “deep structural reform of a racist system” by changing the police union’s collective bargaining process. Compounding the uncertainty around the negotiations, Police Chief Medaria Arradondo announced on Wednesday that he is pulling out of the union’s bargaining process. Arradondo, a Black man who sued the police department in 2007 for a culture of racism, will ask advisers and lawyers to examine how the union’s contract might be restructured in areas dealing with use of force and the discipline process, to improve accountability for officers who engage in misconduct. “History is being written now, and I am determined to make sure that we are on the right side of history,” he said. The move was widely interpreted as a suspension of negotiations, but the police department did not immediately respond to questions from Mother Jones about how the chief’s decision would affect the timeline of the bargaining process.

#### AFL-CIO, the biggest Union collective in the nation, backs engagement practices. Aff reverses that

Cunningham-Cook 6/18/20

Matthew Cunningham-Cook is a writer on pensions and the retirement crisis. He has written for The Nation, Al Jazeera, In These Times, Salon, and Jacobin, “THE AFL-CIO’S POLICE UNION PROBLEM IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK”, Published by The Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2020/06/18/afl-cio-police-labor-union/)//LED

AFTER THE NEAR murder of a 75-year-old man on a sidewalk in Buffalo, New York, the city’s police union, the Buffalo Police Benevolent Association, responded with organized demonstrations of support for the officers who shoved the elderly man to the ground. After the murder of George Floyd, the Minneapolis Police Officers Federation was defiant, with President Bob Kroll, who had recently defended his role in three police shootings, attacking Floyd as a criminal, and lashing out at local politicians for not allowing the police to be rougher on protesters. The Sergeants Benevolent Association in New York City, which has attracted reprobation for doxxing NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio’s daughter Chiara, has also moved to a furious war footing. The Louisville Metro Police Union in Kentucky rallied around the killers of Breonna Taylor, as the officers involved haven’t been fired, let alone charged. The reactionary intransigence has brought into focus the role of police unions in creating conditions for unchecked violence. On June 8, the Writers Guild of America East, a 6,000-member AFL-CIO affiliate that represents television writers and digital journalists (including at The Intercept), passed a resolution that urged its parent body to “disaffiliate” the International Union of Police Associations, the sole police-only union in the federation. “As long as police unions continue to wield their collective bargaining power as a cudgel, preventing reforms and accountability, no one is safe,” WGAE wrote in a statement. The resolution drew broad support inside the AFL-CIO but also opposition, and it has so far been rejected. Lost in the debate, however, is that the unions who were the immediate inspiration for the resolution would be untouched. Neither the Minneapolis, New York City, Louisville, or Buffalo unions are part of the IUPA or any other AFL-CIO union. Three are independent unions and one, in Louisville, belongs to the arch-reactionary Fraternal Order of Police. And, adding more complexity to advocates of disentangling police unions from the broader organized labor movement, the IUPA, with its 100,000 members, is far from the only union within the AFL-CIO that represents cops. Join Our Newsletter Original reporting. Fearless journalism. Delivered to you. I’m in Police have a small but politically and ideologically influential presence in some of the country’s largest and most progressive unions, like the United Food and Commercial Workers; the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; the American Federation of Government Employees; and the Communications Workers of America. All are major members of the AFL-CIO union federation. The Change to Win union federation, which broke away from the AFL-CIO in 2005, is home to the Service Employees International Union, which has thousands of law enforcement members in its International Brotherhood of Police Organizations/National Association of Government Employees chapter, as well as the Teamsters, which represents tens of thousands of police and corrections officers. Police unions, compared to others within organized labor, tend to be more rigidly ideological and are adept at organizing. Police unions, compared to others within organized labor, tend to be more rigidly ideological and are adept at organizing. That combination means police unions can often pull their coalition partners — particularly in corrections, probation, and the building trades — to the right on issues that go beyond strict policing concerns. Bill Fletcher Jr., a former education director at both the AFL-CIO and AFGE, and a leading expert on race and labor, said that he has witnessed past efforts at major unions to address issues related to criminal justice reform or racism, and seen them collapse in the face of internal police opposition. “The leadership of the overall union will cower in the face of this” law enforcement opposition, he said, “in part because they are afraid that the law enforcement units will leave. That has happened in every union that I’ve worked with and every union that I have observed.” And unlike other groups of union members, police in particular will often vote with their feet to join other unions, a practice that is very uncommon in the rest of labor — giving them additional leverage over internal union deliberations. “Having law enforcement units in other unions, whether it is AFSCME, UFCW or the Teamsters, has a very conservative impact on the union,” Fletcher said. “The law enforcement units tend to be very well organized and very conservative. They will intervene when there are union debates on anything that has to do with law enforcement, the movement for black lives or issues of immigration and detention.” Indeed, the AFL-CIO, which represents 12.5 million members in over 50 affiliated unions, swiftly rejected the WGAE’s resolution. “We believe the best way to use our influence on the issue of police brutality is to engage our police affiliates rather than isolate them. Many of our unions have adopted a code of excellence for their members and industries that could and should be applied to those who are sworn to protect and serve,” the AFL-CIO’s board wrote in a June 9 statement. “We believe the labor movement must hold our own institutions accountable. A union must never be a shield from criminal conduct.”

#### Cincinnati Proves-localized discussions can create powerful changes in collaboration with national standards

Driscoll 6/19/20

Bob Driscoll is chair of the White Collar and Government Investigations Group at McGlinchey in Washington, D.C., and a former deputy assistant attorney general for civil rights with the Department of Justice, “Police Reform Won’t Happen Overnight”, Published by The Dispatch, https://thedispatch.com/p/police-reform-wont-happen-overnight)//LED

My observation has been that, with respect to policing, culture and collaboration matter as much as, if not more than, specific policies and procedures. While I was at the DoJ in 2001, I negotiated a resolution of a Civil Rights Division pattern-and-practice investigation in Cincinnati, which had been beset by protests after several police-involved shootings. We did negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that required some policy changes by the police surrounding use of force and other practices, and thus required wrangling with police unions, the chief, the mayor, the ACLU, community groups, and others about what those changes would be and how they would be monitored. But that consultation and the MOU eventually gave way to what was known as the “Collaborative Agreement” pushed not by the DoJ, but to my recollection by the local ACLU’s lawyer, Al Gerhardstein. The collaborative process tried to approach community policing creatively, by placing all the stakeholders in a room to try to tackle the reasons for crime in certain neighborhoods and how best to fight it. The process required meetings every few weeks or months involving the police, the community, some advocates, legal pros, and others. Getting past distrust of each other and getting the police and community working together took many years—long after I was gone from the scene—but eventually police use-of-force rates dropped, crime rates fell, and police-community relations improved somewhat. I don’t think any police reform effort can be deemed an unqualified success because the issues are too thorny and complex for that, but whatever progress was made by Cincinnati (and it’s been regarded as successful) was made by Cincinnatians. It wasn’t whatever policies we from the Justice Department mandated in our MOU that did the trick, it was the process and eventual trust among the community members and police that built up over time. The federal presence from DoJ was probably most useful as a facilitator (by forcing the issue early on and letting the police know they weren’t getting a pass notwithstanding a friendly relationship with the president and the AG) or later as a looming presence of possible intervention if the process cratered. Recall that George W. Bush was president and John Ashcroft was attorney general when that Collaborative Agreement process got started—so no jurisdiction facing problems today should think it needs to throw up its hands and give up to wait for a more “civil libertarian” federal administration to address policing issues if they really want to. Rather, those cities looking at reform today would do well to talk with the participants in that process in Cincinnati and learn their lessons about building community, not necessarily their lessons about the text of the use-of-force policy, which they can research online. Unfortunately, given the political desire for a quick fix, I don’t think people will want to hear what Cincinnati already knows about police reform—that it is hard, that it takes commitment, that it takes money, and that it can take years. And maybe the best you can hope for from the feds is some money, some support, and some structure for your efforts.

### I/l

#### Failure to include Union discussion sets a precedent that destroys broader unionization, causes massive labor alienation-backlash

Cunningham-Cook 6/18/20

Matthew Cunningham-Cook is a writer on pensions and the retirement crisis. He has written for The Nation, Al Jazeera, In These Times, Salon, and Jacobin, “THE AFL-CIO’S POLICE UNION PROBLEM IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK”, Published by The Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2020/06/18/afl-cio-police-labor-union/)//LED

Ben Sachs, a labor and industry professor at Harvard Law who recently launched a project to reform police union collective bargaining to end police abuses, understands the concerns of union leaders and others that a push to reform police union collective bargaining could endanger a broader subset of workers. We can’t allow changes to police collective bargaining to become a stalking horse for those with a political agenda to undermine other public sector unions.” “It is absolutely critical that any reforms remain tightly focused on the actual problem here, which is police violence. Any changes to police collective bargaining law should apply only to collective bargaining practices that directly implicate police violence. We can’t allow changes to police collective bargaining to become a stalking horse for those with a political agenda to undermine other public sector unions,” Sachs said. “At the same time, this is an immediate and enormous crisis. That has to be dealt with in a robust way. If that means that being open to some changes to police collective bargaining laws, it’s incumbent on us to be open to that.” Veena Dubal, a University of California, Hastings College of the Law professor who resigned from the Berkeley police oversight commission due to its toothlessness, argued that demands to defund or abolish the police reflected the tension of attempting to address the ways that police collective bargaining agreements protect violent cops without infringing on public sector collective bargaining rights. “Rather than open the door to the de-unionization of public sector workers, a much better strategy is a social movement strategy

## Impact

#### **Delegitimized bargaining rights and crushes unions, which are key to protect worker’s rights**

Cunningham-Cook 6/18/20

Matthew Cunningham-Cook is a writer on pensions and the retirement crisis. He has written for The Nation, Al Jazeera, In These Times, Salon, and Jacobin, “THE AFL-CIO’S POLICE UNION PROBLEM IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK”, Published by The Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2020/06/18/afl-cio-police-labor-union/)//LED

THE CONVERSATION AROUND police unions often centers around their collective bargaining agreements, which typically make it difficult to terminate an officer for misconduct. Police unions also have a stable of friendly arbitrators jointly approved by management and union who typically issue decisions that are much friendlier to officers than arbitrators in typical public sector collective bargaining. In states with public sector collective bargaining, such agreements are made possible by laws that are friendlier to police and fire unions than others, allowing them “interest arbitration” to settle contracts, a process far friendlier to unions than typical collective bargaining. In major confrontations, police unions have already failed to show solidarity with other public sector unions. Union leadership is concerned that efforts to reform the police collective bargaining process could backfire and endanger public sector labor rights more broadly. AFSCME President Lee Saunders, who is African American, spoke to those concerns in an op-ed in USA Today, where he wrote, “Just as it was wrong when racists went out of their way to exclude black people from unions, it is wrong to deny this freedom to police officers today.” Conservatives, ranging from the Wall Street Journal’s editorial page to libertarian think tanks, have been making the argument that problems with police union collective bargaining justifies the elimination of public sector collective bargaining rights altogether, in violation of international labor law. In major confrontations, police unions have already failed to show solidarity with other public sector unions. In Wisconsin, where the notorious Act 10 revoking collective bargaining rights for public employees provoked mass demonstrations in 2011, GOP Gov. Scott Walker carved cops out of his assault, depriving teachers and other public workers of the political protection that could come from a broader coalition. The police unions did not stand with the other workers.

#### Worker’s rights are a moral imperative, failure to uphold them results in egregious human rights violations

Mantouvalou 14

Virginia Mantouvalou is Co-Director of the University College London (UCL) Human Rights Institute, and Reader in Human Rights and Labour Law in the Faculty of Laws at UCL(description from website), Workers’ rights really are human rights, Published by OpenGlobalRights, 10/21/14, https://www.openglobalrights.org/workers-rights-really-are-human-rights/)//LED

Most of us spend most of our lives working. This means that workers’ rights, such as freedom of association, the right to strike, the prohibition of slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour, and the right to fair and just working conditions, are vital. When employers treat their workers with respect, the workplace can be a place of self-fulfilment. When they treat workers with contempt, however, it turns into a site of exploitation and humiliation. But are workers’ rights really human rights? A few workers’ rights are codified in international treaties protecting civil and political rights, such as the right to form and join trade unions. Other workers’ rights, including the right to work, strike or have fair and just working conditions, are mentioned only in treaties dealing with economic and social rights. Yet since many view social rights treaties as weaker because they are not “justiciable” in a court of law, some say social rights are mere “aspirations”, rather than “real” human rights. Others disagree, claiming that all human rights are interdependent. You cannot protect some human rights and neglect others, because they are mutually supportive. Workers’ rights exemplify this connection. The right to work means little, unless there is also a right to decent work; one cannot claim that the right to work is protected when workers are exploited. Also the prohibition of slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour cannot be separated from the right to decent work. Bread for the World/Flickr (Some rights reserved) A migrant farm-worker carrying cucumbers in Virginia, USA. Human rights give workers a voice and offer political and moral space for the most vulnerable of groups, such as the unorganized, under-skilled, and undocumented. Still, classification of workers’ rights as human rights is controversial. Consider, for example, debates between proponents of rights of workers on solidarity and human rights, or on rights and workers’ power. Many of these debates focus on trade union rights, which are important because of the unequal bargaining power between employers and workers. Some activists use the law and courts to promote workers’ interests, while others use human rights language to emphasise the morally important nature of workers’ claims. Sceptics, however, believe human rights are individualistic and thus fundamentally different from workers’ collective rights. They fear that focusing on individual human rights, rather than group worker rights, will undermine worker solidarity. Making individual claims does not necessarily harm other strategies, however, and can sometimes complement them. Collective labour rights are framed as individual rights in human rights treaties, but are there in order to help people pursue collective, solidaristic goals. For example the European Convention on Human Rights protects the right to form and join a trade union for the promotion of workers’ interests. It is clear in the text, and has been supported by case law, that unionising is protected in order to pursue the interests of workers and to promote their collective goals. At the same time, trade unions can bring claims too—it is not only individual workers that can use the legal machineries in place. In fact, one of the most notorious cases on trade union rights in Europe was brought by individuals and unions together. Strategies, of course, vary on circumstances and context. In Europe, labour rights activists have recently been successful in taking cases to the European Court of Human Rights, which has ruled that the right to strike is essential for freedom of association and has issued rulings protecting migrant domestic workers. In Latin America, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has said that the rights of undocumented workers are indeed human rights, in a most insightful way, by arguing that workers’ rights depend on the status of being human, and not on someone’s status as a documented migrant. Outside the courts, activists have successfully presented workers’ claims as human rights. Human Rights Watch, for instance, recently issued a powerful report on migrant domestic workers in the UK. The report discusses workers’ rights (like minimum wage and maximum working time) as human rights, exemplifying how “human rights are also about social justice.” Beyond courts, legal entitlements for workers can give focus and impetus to campaigns of activists and ultimately award greater dignity. This can be exemplified by recent debates in the UK around new “modern slavery” legislation. These debates have empowered organisations and given focus to campaigns promoting workers’ rights and human rights. Connecting workers’ rights to human rights shows that workers’ rights are vital, and... in most cases, trump arguments of profit and efficiency. Connecting workers’ rights to human rights shows that workers’ rights are vital, and... in most cases, trump arguments of profit and efficiency. Human rights are, above all, moral claims about the normative standards towards which all decent societies should strive. As moral claims, rights are grounded in human dignity, citizenship and equality, all of which individuals must enjoy both outside and within the workplace. Both states and employers are bound to respect human rights principles for their citizens and their workers. Connecting workers’ rights to human rights shows that workers’ rights are vital, and must not be traded off casually. They should, in most cases, trump arguments of profit and efficiency. Human rights are valuable for workers. They give workers a voice and offer political and moral space for the most vulnerable of groups, such as the unorganised, under-skilled, and undocumented. They demand that the law protect workers, and that no one can easily do away with them. Finally, with human rights to back them, workers are able to refuse exploitation done in the name of efficiency.

#### White Supremacy accelerationism leads to a spiral of national violence

Byman 6/2/20

Daniel L. Byman is Senior Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center for Middle East Policy, Riots, white supremacy, and accelerationism, Published by The Brookings Institute, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/06/02/riots-white-supremacy-and-accelerationism/)//LED>

White supremacists are gleeful as police violence and the resulting rioting tear apart cities. Even if the unrest ends in the weeks to come, they may look back at the violence as a win for their side. Some delight in the killing of George Floyd and in police violence against African Americans—“a knee is the new noose!!” exulted one sign held up by white supremacists during protests. It is unclear how much organized white supremacist groups are involved in the violence, and it is easy to use them as an excuse for much broader societal problems related to police violence and systemic racism. For now, any white supremacist involvement appears to be more individual than collective, but even if the violence declines it may bolster an increasingly important white supremacist concept — “accelerationism.” Some white supremacists already see the riots and broader polarization as vindication of this idea, and law enforcement and civil society activists concerned about the growth of extremism should watch to see if this idea takes further hold within white supremacist groups and organizations in the coming weeks and months. Daniel L. Byman Senior Fellow - Foreign Policy, Center for Middle East Policy dbyman Accelerationism is the idea that white supremacists should try to increase civil disorder — accelerate it — in order to foster polarization that will tear apart the current political order. The System (usually capitalized), they believe, has only a finite number of collaborators and lackeys to prop it up. Accelerationists hope to set off a series of chain reactions, with violence fomenting violence, and in the ensuing cycle more and more people join the fray. When confronted with extremes, so the theory goes, those in the middle will be forced off the fence and go to the side of the white supremacists. If violence can be increased sufficiently, the System will run out of lackeys and collapse, and the race war will commence. Neo-Nazi ideologue James Mason, one of the concept’s chief promoters, argued in the past that the goal is not just to kill minorities but, rather, “to FAN THE FLAMES!” Brenton Tarrant, who slaughtered 51 worshippers at mosques in New Zealand in 2019, took Mason’s words to heart and enthusiastically promoted the concept in his manifesto. John Earnest, who killed a worshipper at the Poway synagogue in 2019 and wounded three others, wrote, “I used a gun for the same reason that Brenton Tarrant used a gun. The goal is for the US government to start confiscating guns. People will defend their right to own a firearm—civil war has just started.” Related The Twitter application is seen on a phone screen August 3, 2017. REUTERS/Thomas White - RC15389E4A90 How misinformation spreads on social media—And what to do about it Supporters of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden shout anti-American slogans, after the news of his death, during a rally in Quetta May 2, 2011. Bin Laden was killed in a U.S. helicopter raid on a mansion near the Pakistani capital Islamabad early on Monday, officials said, ending a nearly 10-year worldwide hunt for the mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks. U.S. officials said bin Laden was found in the million-dollar compound in the military garrison town of Abbottabad, 60 km (35 miles) north of Islamabad. REUTERS/Naseer Ahmed (PAKISTAN - Tags: CIVIL UNREST CRIME LAW IMAGES OF THE DAY) - GM1E75300AX01 Al-Qaida today, 18 years after 9/11 Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani pray near the coffins of Iranian Major-General Qassem Soleimani, head of the elite Quds Force, and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were killed in an air strike at Baghdad airport, in Tehran, Iran January 6, 2020. Official Khamenei website/Handout via REUTERS ATTENTION EDITORS - THIS IMAGE WAS PROVIDED BY A THIRD PARTY. NO RESALES. NO ARCHIVES Trump’s reckless Middle East policy has brought the US to the brink of war Although the white supremacist embrace of acceleration is relatively recent, capitalizing on, or even creating, polarization is not a new strategy. Those who call for violence to create political change, regardless of ideology, are more likely to thrive when the traditional political system is not working, and such people often try to use bloodshed to further the perception that the system is broken. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, for example, right-wing (but not white supremacist) terrorists conducted dozens of attacks in Italy, several quite bloody, to sow fear and panic. In December 1969, a series of bombings shook Italy, including one on the Banca Nazionale dell’Agricoltura (National Agricultural Bank) that killed 17 people. Neo-fascists sought to discredit their rival left-wingers with “false flag” attacks and make the government seem powerless. Their hope was that as order collapsed, the people would demand an end to the chaos and thus support an authoritarian regime. This backfired. It soon became clear that the right had orchestrated many of the bombings and that some authorities were complicit. Public order indeed suffered, and Italians became even more skeptical of traditional political parties. Communist and socialist parties stepped into the void far more effectively than did authoritarian groups. Today’s white supremacists may find that the unrest helps their enemies on the far-left or African American organizations rather than leads to a broader public embrace of their cause. In addition to the possibility that the “wrong” side might win from acceleration, it’s also important to note that accelerationism is an admission of weakness, no matter how frightening the concept. Its proponents are recognizing that, on their own, they cannot foment the revolution they seek or use the system to achieve their ends. Nor are they able to use the political system to achieve their ends, as leaders of the alt-right would endorse. Instead, they must latch on to existing societal problems and try to shape and exploit them. Unfortunately, even when President Trump does not openly embrace the white supremacists’ cause, he is often their ally due to the polarization in which he revels. His efforts to claim that the legitimate protesters are all Antifa, blame “liberal Governors and Mayors” for the unrest, and declare that “when the looting starts, the shooting starts” all exacerbate tensions. Such statements are likely to provoke strong and divergent reactions from across the political spectrum rather than bring Americans together in outrage over George Floyd’s murder and the need to reject violence in favor of genuine reform. Related Books Cvr: China 2049 China 2049 Edited by David Dollar, Yiping Huang, and Yang Yao 2020 Cover: Know Your Price Know Your Price By Andre M. Perry 2020 Cvr: Citizenship and Its Discontents Citizenship and Its Discontents By Thanassis Cambanis and Michael Wahid Hanna 2019 Accelerationism relies on a spiral of violence, and law enforcement must redouble efforts to ensure that white supremacists do not fan the flames. This involves increased efforts to disrupt white supremacist networks, monitor their activities to the extent the law allows, and ensure that resources and legal authorities are sufficient to confront the danger. It also requires educating law enforcement officers about white supremacist groups and making sure that the public is aware that white supremacist violence will not be tolerated—an important step toward reassuring communities that see Floyd’s death as yet another sign that the police cannot be trusted. The task, however, goes beyond law enforcement. For accelerationism to succeed, traditional politics must fail. Dialogue, compromise, and steady (if often too slow) progress are its enemies. Part of the answer is political leadership at the top, but it’s not enough (nor realistic) to expect the current president to try to bring Americans together. Local leaders, civic organizations and ordinary citizens must reject extreme answers and recognize that although the parts of the system need to change, it does not need to be rejected completely. Such steps, both local and national, can choke out the flames that fan accelerationism.