

**Red Teaming:**

**A Critical Look into the Cultural Phenomenon Calling for the Defunding of the Police**

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## **Introduction**

The killing of George Floyd on May 25th, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota started nation-wide riots and the cultural phenomenon and political movement to “defund the police” (Bruno 2021). These riots and calls for defunding the police have caused many debates on what that term really means. Some say that it means to “abolish” the police, while others state it simply means to relocate resources to other departments that help the public. This idea can be summed up in an article by Howard Henderson and Ben Yisrael that states, “the movement seeks to demilitarize police departments and reallocate funding to trained mental health workers and social workers to reduce unnecessary violent encounters between police and citizens” (Yisrael 2021). The reducing unnecessary violent encounters between police and the citizens is definitely a worthy cause. In response to this call, 13 major cities across the nation, including San Francisco, CA, Seattle WA, Austin, TX, and New York, NY, have opted to “defund” their police and cut the police budget down in some cities as much as 50 percent (McEvoy 2022). Therefore, I will break down the movement and give a critical analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, as well as delve deep into the opportunities, both negative and positive, it provides our nation and its enemies.

## **Inside the Movement**

### *Strengths*

Some claim the heart of the movement is not the defunding of the police, but the relocating funding towards other social programs like education, social services, and mental health. The supporters of the movement state the need for improvement in these areas. They list research that

shows the direct link between education and crime. This link has been proven by countless studies showing that as education increases, crime decreases. Henderson and Yisrael state, “Data supports the position that individuals that receive a quality education are less likely to become involved in the criminal justice system” (Yisrael 2021). This is a strong and valid point. As is the demand for better mental health services. Studies have shown the overwhelming majority of individuals who have interactions with police have some form of mental health issue. This is another undisputed fact. It is well documented that many 911 calls that deal with someone in a mental health crisis end tragically. In addition, research has shown that “64 percent of jail inmates, 54 percent of state prisoners, and 45 percent of federal prisoners” (Community Policing Dispatch 2022) have one or more mental health concerns. Those are staggering numbers that should raise concerns that show a desperate need for a stronger mental health system. All these factors do give credit to the movement and highlight the need for improvement in these areas. However, is pulling the funds from the police the way to fund these changes? Let’s delve a little deeper to find out.

### *Weaknesses*

On the opposite side of the cultural movement to “defund the police”, you have a rallying cry against this movement. They list many reasons why defunding the police is a bad idea. Henderson and Yisrael break down these rebuttals into 7 myths of the movement and then the reasons these myths are not true (Yisrael 2021). These are all very interesting and well written statements. However, they do not delve into the weakness of the movement. It has now been over a year since many of those cities have defunded their police and the movement was born. It is arguable to state that it is still too early to accurately gauge the results. However, some things can

have immediate and long-term results. One of the immediate results was an apparent media outcry of demonizing the police. This greatly impacted the morale of those serving in this law enforcement (L.E) capacity. The results of this lack of morale? A nationwide officer shortage in cities and towns that did not even defund their police. There was a nationwide two-year 23.6 percent increase in officers retiring from 2019 to 2021, a drastic 42.7 percent increase in officer resignations, and a 3.9 percent decrease in the number of officers hired (Police Executive Research Forum 2019-2021). These losses have brought about a nationwide shortage of police officers. Each city and town have a set number of required officers needed to safely police their population and cover all aspects of the job. Some cities have been impacted far more than others. Some cities are short over 1000 officers while others are lacking only a hundred or two. While still other small towns have seen the complete abandonment of their law enforcement agencies, like what happened in Kenly, N.C., and had every officer quit because of the political leadership's lack of support for L.E. and creating a hostile work environment for them.

In addition to this police shortage, there has also been a rise in crime over the years. A dramatic increase in murders, some cities have seen as much as a 30 percent increase in murders, and disappearances of children and young women (Police Executive Research Forum 2019-2021). Human trafficking, drug use, property crimes, and murder have all been on a rise and have reached the highest they have seen since the 1990s. Is this a result of the “defund the police” movement? Statistics say it is still too early to tell. However, the decrease in morale, the lack of adequate pay for the level of risk and stress L.E. Officers face, the lack of political support by many Democratic

party members, and the vilifying police in many media reports has been a result of the weaknesses of the movement.

Another weakness of the movement would be the lack of responsibility placed on the individuals that choose to fight the police or resist arrest. By placing all the blame on the L.E. Officers and none of the blame on the behavior of the individuals that led up to the violent police encounter, you are ignoring half of the equation. This fact was brought up by the defense attorney Eric Nelson during his defense of ex. Police Officer Derik Chauvin, who was found guilty of killing George Floyd. Nelson stated, “jurors needed to consider a variety of factors, including Floyd’s health history, drug use, stress and the possibility of excited delirium in determining what caused the man’s death.” and “It’s not the proper analysis because the nine minutes and 29 seconds ignores the previous 16 minutes and 59 seconds, it completely disregards it” (Bruno 2021). The cameras tend to start once the action is already well under way. As the popular saying goes, hindsight is 20/20. It is incredibly easy to critique and condemn the use of force an officer used from the safety of your home; especially given all the information that has already been given like drug use, mental illness, or health problems. In the moment of arriving on scene, and officer is not privy to any of that information. It is all a judgment call based on their training and split-second assessment of the suspect that impacts their decisions in the moment.

Another unforeseen side-effect of the “defund the police” movement has been to the impact of the 911 operators and the financial burden of lawsuits to the city in a few of the cities that defunded their police. By cutting their police budget, they had to reallocate certain sections of the

police department to other departments, like the 911 dispatchers and parking enforcement office. A prime example of this is the city of Seattle, Washington. After their decision to defund their police department, they reallocated 17 percent of the police budget to other departments. This caused them to relocate the 911 operators away from the L.E. department to decrease the number of 911 calls being answered by “officers with guns” (Westneat 2022), It also caused about 400 officers to leave the Police force and a surge in crime causing new sexual assault cases to go uninvestigated due to the lack of staffing (Westneat 2022). The moving of the parking enforcement department removed the power of the parking enforcement officers to write tickets. This means that they had to cancel and refund some 100,000 parking tickets the officers wrote. This also has left the city of Seattle open to lawsuits for the nearly 10,000 vehicles towed off the city streets, which includes some 1,700 that were auctioned off without the proper authorization (Westneat 2022). Drastic budget cuts bring about spur of the moment decisions that can have lasting unforeseen consequences.

### *Opportunities*

Now that the basics of the movement have been covered, it is time to get to the significant issues with the policies to “defund the police”. The state of chaos it has left this nation in leaves us vulnerable to outside forces like our enemies. Though it is not the sole instigator in the issues, the political unrest has definitely increased the vulnerability as well. A nation that is full of unrest, crime, and lacks an adequate defense system, like the police forces, is a prime target for enemy agents and sleeper cells. The way the United States is set up, you can look at each state as a separate country with a “United Nations” unified government established to link them all and deal with

foreign affairs, protect the states from foreign interference, and deal with matters that crosses state lines. This means that an enemy, such as a Chinese invasion or an Islamic terrorist organization for example, can treat each state separately; a divide and conquer strategy. Using my understanding of Islamic history and culture, I will seek to explain how an Islamic takeover of this country would be possible and how they could possibly use the civil unrest and movements like the #defundthepolice to bring about a hostile takeover of the United States of America.

### *Challenges*

The challenges this movement and those who could seek to utilize it as a means of organizing a hostile takeover would be the still existing police force, the Constitution of the United States, and the heavily armed civilian population. Many of the calls to defund the police have resulted in failures and the next year's budget reinstated the funds back to the police force in many cities that defunded them in the first place, like Los Angeles (Goodman 2021), California for example. However, the damage has already been done, the police forces across the nation have been dramatically negatively impacted and are experiencing a crisis level staffing shortage. Despite this, the police are still a challenge to be overcome. The Constitution of the United States of America is also a challenge to achieving the end goal of turning the nation into an Islamic State. The Constitution prohibits any religious laws from being established and forced upon everyone. Therefore, under the Constitution, Sharia law could never be enforced culturally and can only be observed voluntarily as any other religious laws practiced in America. In addition to those challenges, the fact that a large percentage of the civilian population of the United States is heavily armed. The percentage of armed civilians varies by state. For example, you will have a greater

percentage of armed civilians in Texas than you will have in Illinois or California due to their strict gun laws. However, all these things can be countered given time.

## **Analysis**

### *Policy*

The #defundthepolice movement has spurred on several policy attempts across many cities and states. The city council of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for example, tried to outright dismantle the police department entirely. They put forth a proposal to dismantle the police department and move their funding to establish a “public health-oriented Department of Public Safety and removed a minimum staffing requirement from the city charter” (Bates 2021). This minimum staffing requirement is roughly 900 of which only 560 positions were filled as of August of 2020 (Bates 2021). Strategy, Planning Assumptions, Motivation, Security Dynamics, and Cultural/Economic Factors

Going along with how policies like these can make the nation vulnerable, let's look at some aspects of Islamic policy. Author Mark A. Gabriel, Ph.D. explains in his book *Islam and Terrorism* how Muslims exist in three stages of jihad: the weakened stage, the preparation stage, and the jihad stage. He explains that when Muslims live in a non-Islamic society, they are in the weakened state due to their minority status. Gabriel, Ph.D. explains how the Quran has Muslims in this stage “submit to the law of the land, but they work to increase their numbers (Gabriel 2002, 85). Gabriel, Ph.D. then quotes a large section of the Quran and explains it as saying that Muhammad was telling his followers to “be responsible for yourselves. Do not worry about the infidels around you. You

and they will all go before Allah one day and be judged by your works" (Gabriel 2002, 86). In essence, obey the laws of the land, and leave the unbelievers alone, because they will still face judgement. Then the next stage is the preparation stage starts "when the Muslims reasonable influential minority" (Gabriel 2002, 86). Gabriel, Ph.D. quotes several verses of the Quran, like Surah 8:59-60, to explain how Muhammad called his followers to prepare for war by making themselves ready in every possible area such as "financially, physical, military, mental and any other area" (Gabriel 2002, 86). Once this preparation stage is complete, Gabriel, Ph.D. explains the next stage of Jihad. In this stage, "Muslims are a minority with strength, influence and power. At this stage every Muslim's duty is to actively fight the enemy, overturning the system of the non-Muslim County and establishing Islamic authority" (Gabriel 2002, 87). He explains that the Quran calls Muslims to fight infidels "wherever you find them" which removes any geographical limit. This mentality can be seen in the video titled *Enemies at the Gate and Global Jihad* during an interview with a captured ISIS soldier who was asked about their resolve and goals. He stated,

Our goal is that it is possible for an Islamic Caliphate to rise. A state, I mean a superpower. I mean, establishing something for the future. Not a confined state, within a geographical framework like Iraq and so, not like that. It is bigger. Bigger than [Iraq]. [It's] on a world level. The world. Yes. We will rule the world (, 25:45).

This clearly shows the motivation behind the Muslims that have been deemed "radicals". However, given the fact their position can be directly supported by the Quran and the examples left by Muhammad, are their goals truly radical? Have they immigrated around the world to escape

the hostility of the warring Middle East, or is their motivation a part of their global domination goals of spreading Islam around the world? As Muslims have immigrated to the United States, they have started establishing Mosques and getting involved in our government elections. Then in 2022, the United States as seen their first all Muslim government elected in Hamtramck, Michigan. This is just one small town in Michigan, but from there it can grow as they progress in their growing their numbers in stage one. As a nation established on immigration and freedoms, we accept people from around the world which has established the United States as the great melting pot of cultures. This makes it incredibly easy for sleeper cells to be established. Where the people quietly grow their ranks and gather their strength. Jihad is not all war and obvious hostile takeover. It is also a slow and methodical takeover to convert and use the laws of the land in their favor. Place Muslims in higher and higher places of authority in the government and slowly make small changes. Start with small town governments and work your way up to placing Muslims inside the judicial system, then congress, then the presidency. Make small changes like inserting the teaching of Islamic law into the schools. This will slowly indoctrinate the children. Then once enough of the government and future generations are converted, enact Sharia law and convert the government into and Islamic state (Smith 2015). It would take generations...a slow and methodical takeover. However, as you can see, it is entirely possible by utilizing our own system of government against us.

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