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By Defunding Police, LA Shows It Doesn't Understand Data

Hans Bader

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Hillary Clinton's former national press secretary, Brian Fallon, called for police departments nationwide to be defunded, reports *The Hill*.

Meanwhile, Los Angeles, which recently witnessed violence and looting, is planning to partly defund its police department. The staunchly progressive city plans to cut its police department budget by \$150 million. As Adam Ford notes:

"Mayor Eric Garcetti announced an enormous transfer of city funds at a press briefing Wednesday, with \$100 million to \$150 million being stripped from the Los Angeles Police Department's budget and reallocated to 'black communities and communities of color....It is time to move our rhetoric towards action to end racism in our city,' the mayor said.

L.A. City Council President Nury Martinez on Wednesday then officially introduced the motion, tweeting that it was "to cut funding to the LAPD, as we reset our priorities in the wake of the murder of #GeorgeFloyd & the #BlackLivesMatter call that we all support to end racism. This is just one small step.

The motion begins by condemning U.S. society as inherently racist, saying:

'American society is founded on a racial hierarchy, one that is born out of slavery, followed by Jim Crow segregation and corporate abuse of labor. As such, police departments are asked to enforce a system of laws that are designed to reinforce and maintain economic and racial inequality...we can begin by slowly dismantle [sic] those systems that are designed to harm people of color.'

Defunding a police department is a strange thing for a city to do right after it suffered vandalism and looting.

It will also harm minorities. Wealthy white people may be able to afford private security guards, but poor minorities cannot. They have to rely on the police for protection. That is why most people of all races oppose defunding the police in public opinion polls, even as Black Lives Matter activists have called for defunding the police.

"Only 16 percent of Americans favor cutting funding for police departments," notes the Cato Institute. A Yahoo/Yougov survey found that only 12 percent of whites, 33 percent of blacks, and 17 percent of Hispanics favor cutting funding for police departments.

It is disproportionately minorities who are victimized by violent crime, which is often black-on-black. The FBI's Uniform Crime Reports show that 45 percent of murder victims and 48 percent of murderers in 2018 were African-American, even though blacks are only 13 percent of the U.S. population (less than half of murder victims and murderers are white).

Cutting police funding will leave the police without the manpower needed to investigate and arrest many criminals. When that happens, it is disproportionately minorities themselves who will suffer. It is often harder and more time-consuming to track down and arrest murderers in poor minority neighborhoods, where witnesses may fear retaliation or being viewed as "snitches."

Police clearance rates are already disturbingly low for murders committed against blacks -- especially in progressive cities like Chicago that have under-manned police departments.

Chicago solves only 47 percent of cases when a murder victim is white, 33 percent when a victim is Hispanic, and a pitiful 22 percent of cases when the victim is black, according to NPR. That is a national disgrace.

Cutting police funding in Los Angeles does nothing to fix problems in Minneapolis, where George Floyd was recently killed by police. Defunding Los Angeles's police does nothing to fix Minnesota laws that have made it hard to get rid of bad cops in Minneapolis.

There is also no proof that the wrongful killing of Mr. Floyd was committed based on his race, and as a result, Minnesota officials have not even charged any of the police involved with a hate crime. Although the police officer charged with murdering him is white, two other officers arrested over his death are minorities.

Black people are much more likely to be killed by a criminal than by a police officer. As Peter Kirsanow, a black member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, noted, "In 2015, a cop was 18.5 times more likely to be killed by a black male than an unarmed black male was likely to be killed by a cop."

A majority of people wrongfully killed by the police are white, not African-American. While black people are overrepresented as victims of police shootings in relation to their proportion of the population, they are underrepresented when considering their overrepresentation in crime. A study by the black Harvard economist Roland Fryer found that police killings are not primarily due to racism, and racism does not play a significant role in police shootings nationally.