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USA

July 4 speech signals new stage in Trump's race war

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The "American Spring" of protests is changing that. The 50-state upsurge, declaring Black lives matter as much as white lives, has led millions of whites to look themselves in the mirror and begin to reject the revisionist history taught in schools and institutions.

The movement has also provoked Trump and his white nationalist supporters to go on the offensive. Many shout "White Power", and Trump embraces them as "patriots".

At the same time, many Democratic Party mayors have retreated from taking on the criminal cops, even as they continue to beat and kill innocent people of colour. Most police reforms proposed by liberals are modest and can easily be ignored or reversed.

As the Trump regime downplays medical science and states that COVID-19 will eventually fade away, the facts say otherwise. The US population is 4.25% of the world but 25% of those infected by COVID-19 and 25% of deaths, impacting disproportionately on African American lives.

Trump's race war

At a July 3 speech in front of four dead presidents carved on sacred indigenous people land in South Dakota, Trump went all in on his race war agenda.

He attacked the BLM movement as advocates of "far left fascism". Trump defended Confederate monuments as "American Heritage" and defended his Executive Order making it a felony to vandalise such symbols.

Trump called BLM a "symbol of hate". Former New York City Mayor and Trump lawyer Rudolph Giuliani said BLM is "a Marxist organisation".

Indigenous people protested outside the July 3 "Mount Rushmore" race war event. Secret Service and police pushed demonstrators back and arrested some, as pro-Trump white extremists shouted at Native peoples to "go back home". Only anti-Indian, anti-Black bigots could attend what was called a public White House event.

Trump has positioned himself as the political heir of segregationist (and former governor of Alabama) George Wallace, said Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian at Rice University in Houston. Brinkley told the *Los Angeles Times* that Wallace and former Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina both failed in their attempts to win the presidency on openly white supremacist platforms. [1]

"History will look at the Trump years as being a reactionary right-wing movement that saw America was becoming 60% nonwhite and panicked," Brinkley said.

"When the economy crashed and George Floyd was murdered, Trump had cement feet. He went back to a tired old playbook, and he lost the centre in America. If you were a conservative, centre-right voter, you're now looking to get rid of him."

Only 35% of voters have confidence in Trump's ability to "effectively handle race relations" and only 15% are "very confident", according to a Pew Research survey released on June 30.

A majority of those polled 55% also said Trump had "changed the tone of political debate in the US for the worse". Just 25% said he had changed it for the better and 19% saw not much change, either way.

Yet, it is not clear Trump will lose in November. Racism and defence of white grievance is his strategy to win and he doubled-down on white grievance in his July 4 speech at the White House.

Trump is threatening to veto the US\$740-billion Defence Authorisation Act, should it include a measure to rename military installations that honour Confederate figures.

Trump's defence of police "unions" (which are, in fact, cop cartels) and threats to deploy the National Guard against peaceful protesters are pressuring Democratic mayors and governors to weaken the mass movement.

Trump believes his white "silent majority" will win the election, stop the Democrats and the Black-led movement.

Many establishment liberals, while giving lip service in support of BLM demands, are retreating on the issue of defunding the police and moves to bring about fundamental changes.

There are four months until the presidential election. In politics, that is a lifetime.

Three examples of cities led by liberal Democratic mayors shows this. It was only six weeks ago on May 25 that George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis cops.

1. Occupy New York City Hall

In late June, activists in New York City pushed the City Council to cut the largest police budget in the country by US\$1 billion, and to redirect the funds to other socially needed programs. Mayor Bill de Blasio pretended support, but then deployed the cops to shut down the week-long protest and occupation.

"Shortly before 3am on Wednesday [June 1]," reported *The Nation*, "several hundred protesters gathered in the plaza

directly east of City Hall Park in downtown Manhattan. [2]

"A few were new faces, but many had been there on and off for a week, when activists set up an encampment and declared that they were occupying the space as part of the nationwide movement against racism and policing.

"The protesters had a lot going against them. Less than 24 hours earlier, the New York Police Department had staged a violent raid at the outskirts of the encampment, injuring several people. [3]

"Just hours before, those in the [protest] encampment [watched](#) as local legislators, while negotiating and voting on the city budget for the next fiscal year, brushed off their calls to defund the police."

De Blasio was elected in 2014 as a police force critic. Since then, he has solidly supported the cops in their anti-Black and violent actions. He preaches there are only a few "bad apples".

The Occupy City Hall campaign was aimed at defunding the police and making other fundamental changes as the city discussed its new budget. The new budget, however, turned out to be a sleight of hand.

For example, about \$400 million of the \$1 billion the city is said to be cutting from the Police Department's \$6 billion budget will be achieved by moving school safety officers under the Department of Education. But according to the city's Independent Budget Office, the Education Department already sends the Police Department \$300 million a year to operate the school safety program.

Activists are continuing their fight for real cuts in the police budget and transfer of funds to other programs.

2. Minneapolis mayor retreats

In Minneapolis, where George Floyd died after a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, the City Council with a veto-proof majority immediately pledged to defund the police department there. [4]

Amid a massive crowd of protesters, Mayor Jacob Frey was pressed on whether he would commit to defund the police. When he said he would not support the full abolition of the police, he was booed with chants of "Go home, Jacob!" and "Shame!". [5]

In an interview with National Public Radio, Frey expressed support for major structural reform, but reaffirmed his opposition to disbanding the police.

"We need to entirely shift the culture that has for years failed Black and Brown people. We need a full structural revamp," he told NPR. "But, abolishing the police department? No, I think that's a bad idea."

Leaders of the Minneapolis BLM movement are determined to keep pressing the City Council to move forward. As in most cities, the activist Black leadership has pursued this demand for years. Frey and the establishment liberals hope the mass upsurge will die down, but are willing to challenge it anyway.

3. Seattle's mayor sides with cops

According to local media, heavily armed cops swept into Seattle's police-free "autonomous zone" on July 1 and arrested dozens of people, after Mayor Jenny Durkan issued an overnight emergency order declaring the weeks-long gathering an "unlawful assembly".

The move to disband the Capitol Hill Occupied Protest (CHOP) and reclaim an abandoned police precinct nearby followed a series of violent crimes that included the fatal shootings of two teenagers. None involved peaceful demonstrators.

Durkan's order to clear the occupied protest area remains in effect. Customers and residents must check in with police as they enter and exit the cordoned-off areas. Many are waved through without delay. Others have reported run-ins with police and, especially at night, intimidation by heavily-armed police in ready mode for continued protests.

Durkan has also called for an investigation into socialist city council member Kshama Sawant, for allegedly violating her office. Sawant has been active in the protest movement.

Vanguard leadership by Blacks

The history of the US is one of thievery and national oppression. Whites rarely know the truth about the history.

The Black leadership of the current upsurge and the BLM organisations know the truth. Their vanguard political role has inspired other oppressed peoples to stand up.

The white backlash, led by Trump, is seeking to use more violence to suppress the movement and encourage liberals to protect the police institutions. In the past, that "law and order" message has worked.

History shows that Democratic elected officials and establishment liberals, including Africa Americans, have supported the police, the "law and order" agenda and mass incarceration. Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has already declared he will increase police budgets if he is elected president.

What next?

This is why the left wing of the protest movement is not shifting their focus away from peaceful street action to campaign for Joe Biden. The gains won so far are due to mass struggle and must continue no matter who is president and which party rules Congress.

The American crises cannot be solved by liberalism and electoralism.

Trump's race-war strategy can only win if the movement leaves the streets. As the examples in New York City, Minneapolis and Seattle show, protests will continue so long as killer cops are not prosecuted and put in prisons.

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A Third Radical Reconstruction (Revolution) is needed now.

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Source [Green Left](#).

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[1] Los Angeles Times, 1 July 2020 "[Trump, in a hole, digs deeper into racial incitement](#)".

[2] The Nation, 2 July 2020 "[New York's City Hall Encampment Is a Middle Finger to Our Elected Leaders](#)".

[3] Gothamist, 30 June 2020 "[NYPD Officers Rough Up Protesters Occupying City Hall In Show Of Force Before Budget Vote](#)".

[4] NPR, 7 June 2020 "[Minneapolis City Council Members Announce Intent To 'Dismantle' Police Department](#)".

[5] New York Times "[Minneapolis Mayor Booed Out of Rally](#)".