

Our Fascist Police State - The Police of the US has a Systemic Racism Problem & How The Legacy of the KKK Has Evolved to Modern-Day White Supremacist Groups

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Image 1 - 1859 Runaway Slave Patrol badge

There are a great many factors to why the United States has such a major issue with violence at the hands of the police. Factors that date back over a century, and are rooted in racism, oppression, and fascism. We will look to tie a few of these key factors together, as well as how the history and ideology of groups like the Ku Klux Klan relate to today's racist and white

supremacist organizations, as well as the deep influence these people and groups have had on our modern-day police state as a whole.

The history of the Ku Klux Klan spreads across the nation, and the “enlightened” Northern states, which Iowa, and other Midwestern states are often lumped in with, are no exception to that horrid, violent hatred that embodies the white supremacist group. In fact, as recent as 1991, there were about a dozen reported cases of cross burnings in the nearly all white town of Dubuque, Iowa. Dubuque at the time was home to roughly 57,000 white Iowans, and only a few hundred Black Iowans. Despite holding all of the power in the city, a certain group of the white residents still desired to scare away their Black and brown neighbors simply for the color of their skin. Rampant racism can be a major concern in small towns particularly around the country, which means Iowa is no exception. This very recent history of cross burnings in Dubuque, Iowa, is something to keep in mind, given that Donald Trump held one of his final rallies for re-election in said town.

The KKK came to be after the abolition of slavery, which was never truly abolished, considered the 13th Amendment allows for slavery as a form of punishment, which is a main reason police and prisons in this country routinely lock up and charge more heavily Black and brown citizens for even minor crimes or misdemeanors. Police forces as we know them today started out as “slave catchers” and the Pinkertons who were union busters, all of which were run and operated by white men prior to and after the American Civil War.

In the early 20th century, there were regular KKK rallies around the nation, there were fliers posted around towns for the public to come in and join the white supremacist festivities. Prominent people in high positions of power regularly attended, with some even boasting about their membership to the Klan; this even included some Presidents and candidates for the presidency, and of course a great number of police. Iowa is no exception, there are examples

throughout the state's history of KKK rallies, cross burning, lynching's, and terrorism. In Indianola, Iowa in 1924, there was a sect of the Klan that operated openly. Fliers from the time have survived the test of time to be kept for historical purposes; the Des Moines Register covered this earlier in 2020.

Even more than 100 years since the inception of the Klan, white supremacist groups still remain a major concern for Black and brown citizens in the country, as well as for whites who understand the threat these hate groups have on society as a whole. While the Klan is no longer as prominent as it once was, various groups with similar ideologies have sprang up in recent years. Such as the militant far-right extremist's groups like the Proud Boys, and Boogaloo Boys.

The FBI and other national agencies have reported that far-right extremists and right-wing terrorists, (polite way of saying Nazis, white supremacists, etc.), pose an immediate threat to all institutions of power in the United States. This text was later altered at the behest of right-wing political operatives to remove the phrasing of "white supremacists" and "far-right" to just "political extremists."

This is not some mild speculation either, even current President Donald Trump's - himself a well known and recorded racist with a fascist ideology - FBI and intelligence branches have been the ones to recently shed light on this danger. They have stated that white supremacists have infiltrated nearly every rank, and file of the police forces here in the states. All of which is going on with zero repercussions to anyone besides the most vulnerable of our society who suffer the brunt of their anger and hatred, which can be enacted again without any real repercussions. These people know and have seen that having a badge gives you immunity in the eyes of the law. Time and time again, murders, sexual assaults, torture, abuse, and an abundance of constitutional rights violated go unchecked, and unpunished in the two systems of "justice" we have in this nation.

Trusting in the FBI and the US intelligence agencies isn't easy for many, given they themselves are some of the worst offenders against Black and brown people, both domestically and globally. In fact the FBI coordinated with the Chicago police to murder prominent speaker, leader, activist, educator, and community organizer Fred Hampton, who was a member of the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party, and then worked with the AG & DA of the time to blame the Black Panthers and Fred himself over their murder of him, a coverup. This is just one such example. Despite that, it should be alarming to us all that even under a racist and fascist GOP run executive branch, and conservative judicial branch to report - and then brush under the rug their own reporting - over the danger posed by white supremacists in the violent police-state many live under, and should be taken seriously.

An occupying force is what the modern-day police have become known to many; as they crack down on civil, un-armed, and non-violent protests and marches with authoritarian abuses against the people they're meant to serve, while letting rallies of heavily armed terrorists like the Proud Boys and other "patriotic" groups of hatred go on unchecked. Even so much as letting them storm into the capitol building in Michigan while armed for war, to "protest" the lockdown restrictions put in place to slow the spread of the pandemic.

Now onto how racist movements and white supremacy centered groups have channeled the hate and fear-mongering tactics of the KKK to today's political landscape. Most notably, the anti-Black lives matter movement - called blue lives matter, and the thin blue line groups - which arose shortly after the BLM movement started and sparked a nation movement over the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and subsequent authoritarian, and highly-militarized crackdown on the racial justice protests by the police-state; that came to relevance during the time.

Their aim was and still is to completely diminish the Black lives Matter movement and other racial justice groups that sprang up nationwide during that tumultuous summer, and over the course of the next several years, peaking this past summer, 2020, after the video of George Floyd being murdered by Minneapolis police went viral. The blue lives matter group came to be a way to support the systemically racist and extremely violent nature of the US police forces, as well as to support further funding for an already highly overfunded system of policing, - which has been given literal weapons of war for free by the US government for decades now - and also to justify any and all murders and atrocities committed against Black and brown people in their over-policed communities and neighborhoods.

While they will never admit that is their aim, they consistently attack victims of police violence, counter-protest groups fighting for equal rights, and push false narratives about how systemic racism doesn't exist, and that no changes are needed in police forces; in fact they regularly push for more police and even greater funding. The blue lives matter flags, which is just a black and white version of the American flag, but with a single blue line colored in, in the middle, to signify the pretend "thin blue line" ideology that their supporters claim is the line between chaos and peace. Despite the chaos often being perpetrated by a fascist police-state under the guise of "law and order."

In regard to the weapons of war - like armed vehicles that are basically tanks - one weapon that the police-state regularly uses to enact punishment and fear onto protesters is tear-gas and other chemical irritants/weapons. Which came to prominence during World War I, and were banned from all forms of warfare under the Geneva Convention, making the usage of them an actual war crime, but as always, the police get away with these crimes against humanity.

This saying is a dog whistle of sorts, and the “law and order” line has been uttered countless times since President Nixon first brought it into the national spotlight during his “war on drugs” push. Later on, it was adopted by President Reagan, and again by Donald Trump in his run-up to his first term. Each of these presidents are well-known, and well-recorded to have held deeply racist and fascist beliefs against marginalized groups of people, and used this narrative as justification for less checks and balances in police departments, and the expansion of the police state.

The thin blue line flag itself has become a fascist symbol during the Trump era, as hate crimes have skyrocketed under his administration, leading to greater distrust and outrage at the police, and calls for defunding the police to divert resources back into the community. In some cities, the police budgets makeup over 50% of the entire federal budget, while schools, community resources and social programs continue to be cut in favor of more police funding.

These all need to be tied together, because each has helped shape the modern-day police-state, and the formation of new far-right militant hate groups. The Boogaloo Boys in particular have been credited with at least 5 killings in 2020 alone, and have been caught actively trying to start a civil war, The Boogaloo Boys in particular, were recently exposed for having of their members shoot an assault rifle into the police prescient that ended up burning down in Minneapolis, Minnesota shortly after the uprisings took place over the lynching of George Floyd at the hands of the police. This incident was first blamed on the protesters and Black Lives Matter, now proven to be false. There were members of alt-right terrorist groups that also attempted to kidnap and ultimately assassinate the governor of Michigan, Gretchen Whitmer. The governor of the same state where far-right extremists armed to the teeth occupied the capitol building mentioned earlier.

Everything mentioned above has been shown to be issues that plague Iowa's various police forces and sheriff departments, as well as the Iowa State Patrol. The tactics they have used to quell any dissidence against the systems that they uphold has been right in line with how the police nationwide have cracked down on the BLM and Defund the Police movements. Iowa, just like every other state in the nation has countless examples of racial bias, racial profiling, and locking up multiple times more Black & brown people than white people. This past summer and fall have shown us all that we must move towards citizen community review boards of the police here in the Hawkeye state, and adopt numerous proposals put forth by various equal and civil rights groups. To allow the current fascist system of policing to continue will only end up with more of the same failures, and continued brutalizations of people of color. This is a nationwide issue, and it festers right here in the Midwest especially. Attention is needed right here at home.

There have always been institutions built on and for the systemic oppression of Black and brown people, the country was founded after stealing the land and resources from the native peoples, countless indigenous tribes and people were slaughtered by colonizers from a distant land. We are a nation on stolen land, built by slaves, and founded on genocide. So in a way, these new hate groups and exposures of racism in our systems are nothing new, and are in fact, just carrying on that legacy of violence and unjust hatred on all people of color. The protests are a direct threat to that system of racism and hatred, and is why the crackdowns by the police state against BLM and other similar organizations are so extreme.

Please be sure to check the links below in the sources, for further insight on the Midwestern police state, cases of racial abuse by the police in various parts of Iowa, the disproportionate lockup of Black & brown Iowans compared to whites, the violent crackdowns

and assaults done to the protests for BLM in Iowa, and more history over the KKK and its dealings in Iowa. There's much to be learned about how these are not just big city problems, and that systemic racism is what is rooted in every police and white supremacist group in the state of Iowa, and the country. Far too much to be covered in just one article. Iowa and the Midwestern stereo-type of being mild-mannered hides behind it a dark, and deeply racist ideology that still lives on to this day.



Image 2- by John Pemple of Iowa Public Radio

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