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True abolition of the carceral state is the goal; there are steps that can be taken to ensure that we reach it.

Open this zine and turn to the interior poster, which offers realistic and practical steps that can be taken to reduce – and ultimately, abolish – policing and the carceral state.

👍 “Reform” Proposals that DON'T Work 👍

Abolish the Police!

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Why Reformist “Reforms” Do Not Decrease the Power of Policing

This zine breaks down the difference between reformist “reforms,” which continue or expand the reach of policing, and abolitionist steps that work to chip away and reduce its overall impact.

As we struggle to decrease the power of policing there are also positive and proactive investments we can make in community health and well-being.

Please distribute this document widely. 

More Training:

- Increased funding to police to develop and run training, and that harm comes from lack of training
- Furthers belief that better policing comes from training, and that harm comes from lack of training
- Increases tools, tactics, and tech at police disposal
- Increase the scope of policing

Civilian Review/Oversight Boards:

- Can increase in funding to police or no change
- Presumes that excessive force, killing, lying, etc. are exceptional rather than ordinary occurrences
- Boards rarely have “teeth,” aka, power
- Further entrenches policing as a legitimate, reform-able system
- Some boards, tasked with overseeing police, become structurally invested in their existence



Prosecuting Killer Cops:

- Does not change funding (or, often, increases it) - Creates distinction between good cop / bad cop
- Reinforce the prison industrial complex and the idea that prosecution and prison serve real justice

Body Cameras:

- Increase funding to police (more money towards police budget, and away from community programs)
- Contribute to the idea that policing can be done correctly
- Give police another tool of surveillance
- Can be turned off
- Footage used does not often have the impact that community members want

Community Policing:

- Departments will have to hire more cops to be in the community
- Rooted in the false idea that policing keeps people safe
- Cops trained in additional tactics & approaches
- Scale of policing will increase, particularly in Black, Brown, poor neighborhoods where there is perceived “mistrust”



Paths to

Abolition



Suspend Paid Admin Leave for Cops Under Investigation:

- Can increase budgets for community initiatives
- Challenges the notion that policing violence, and the admin costs it incurs, are essential risks of creating “safety”
- Access to paid admin leave lessens the consequences of use of force (and presumes the right of police to use violence in the first place)
- Less financial support for police undergoing investigation for killing and excessive use of force means less support for policing



Withhold Pensions and Don't Rehire Cops Involved in Excessive Force:

- Can increase budgets for community initiatives
- Challenges the notion that killings and excessive force are exceptions, rather than the rule
- Reduces the ability of police to move around or re-engage cops known for their use of violence
- Reduces the scale of policing



Require Cops to Be Liable for Misconduct Settlements:

- Can increase budgets for community initiatives by divesting cash from policing's harm against community members
- Challenges the notion that policing and all its costs are essential components of safety
- Creates pressure for police to account for their actions financially and limits the legitimacy of policing violence as inevitable
- Reduces the scale of policing



Cap Overtime Accrual and Overtime Pay for Military Exercises



- Can increase budgets for community initiatives
- Challenges the notion that we need police to be trained for “counterterrorism” and other military-style action and surveillance in the guise of increasing “safety”
- Weapons trainings and expos are used to scale up policing infrastructure and shape goals for future tools, tactics, and technology
- Stops police from increasing their legitimacy, capacity, and skills as “the blue line” in order to expand their reach over our daily lives and community spaces



Prioritize Spending on Community, Health, Education, Affordable Housing

- Decreases resources for policing
- Creates space to imagine, learn about, and make resources that actually create well-being
- Decreases the amount of money used for policing tools and technology
- Decreases the size, scope, and capacity of systems of policing

Withdraw Participation in Police Militarization Programs:



- Can increase budgets for community initiatives
- Challenges the notion that we need police to be trained for “counterterrorism” and other military-style action and surveillance in the guise of increasing “safety”
- Weapons trainings and expos are used to scale up policing infrastructure and shape goals for future tools, tactics, and technology
- Stops police from increasing their legitimacy, capacity, and skills

Reduce the Size of the Police Force:



- Reduces funding to the police
- Challenges the notion that police increase safety
- Reduces tools, tactics, and technology that police have at their disposal
- Reduces the scale of policing