

# INSURRECTIONAL ABOLITIONISM

Part 1 – *tearing down icons,*

*tearing down institutions* /// *smash apartheid*

*Chicago*





TO BE CONTINUED...



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P.O. Box 408197  
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*THOUGHTS AND IMAGES FROM  
AN ONGOING DISMANTLING PROJECT*



*saw a lot tonight at the  
decolonize zhigagoong/  
defund cop protest tonight.*

*I saw firsthand how the  
police used their weapons  
against protestors. several  
(including a friend) bled at  
the hands of the police. even  
more were pepper sprayed*

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ABOLITION IS  
A REALISTIC  
VISION

*True Leap Press is a radical publishing collective. We support the intellectual struggle and advocate for the building of mass-based projects for antiracist, anticapitalist, and antipatriarchal political education. Our collective encourages any-and-all forms of revolt and insurrection against global anti-blackness, white supremacy, colonialism, capitalism, and heteropatriarchy. We also aim to facilitate the growth of a revolutionary abolitionist consciousness that is deliberately antipatriotic and against all oppressive forms of nationalism.*



# Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence

## LAW & JUSTICE

Issued on: June 26, 2020

*by fascist Amerkkkan president, Donald Trump*

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### ALL NEWS

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Purpose. The first duty of government is to ensure domestic tranquility and defend the life, property, and rights of its citizens. Over the last 5 weeks, there has been a sustained assault on the life and property of civilians, law enforcement officers, government property, and revered American monuments such as the Lincoln Memorial. Many of the rioters, arsonists, and left-wing extremists who have carried out and supported these acts have explicitly identified themselves with ideologies — such as Marxism — that call for the destruction of the United States system of government. Anarchists and left-wing extremists have sought to advance a fringe ideology that paints the United States of America as fundamentally unjust and have sought to impose that ideology on Americans through violence and mob intimidation. They have led riots in the streets, burned police vehicles, killed and assaulted government officers as well as business owners defending their property, and even seized an area within one city where law and order gave way to anarchy. During the unrest, innocent citizens also have been harmed and killed. These criminal acts are frequently planned and supported by agitators who have traveled across State lines to promote their own violent agenda. These radicals shamelessly attack the legitimacy of our institutions and the very rule of law itself.

Key targets in the violent extremists' campaign against our country are public monuments, memorials, and statues. Their selection of targets reveals a deep ignorance of our history, and is indicative of a desire to indiscriminately destroy anything that honors our past and to erase from the public mind any suggestion that our past may be worth honoring, cherishing, remembering, or understanding.

In the last week, vandals toppled a statue of President Ulysses S. Grant in San Francisco. To them, it made no difference that President Grant led the Union Army to victory over the Confederacy in the Civil War, enforced Reconstruction, fought the Ku Klux Klan, and advocated for the Fifteenth Amendment, which guaranteed freed slaves the right to vote. In Charlotte, North Carolina, the names of 507 veterans memorialized on a World War II monument were painted over with a symbol of communism. And earlier this month, in Boston, a memorial commemorating an African-American regiment that fought in the Civil War was defaced with graffiti.

In Madison, Wisconsin, rioters knocked over the statue of an abolitionist immigrant who fought for the Union during the Civil War. Christian figures are now in the crosshairs, too. Recently, an influential activist for one movement that has been prominent in setting the agenda for demonstrations in recent weeks declared that many existing religious depictions of Jesus and the Holy Family should be purged from our places of worship.

Individuals and organizations have the right to peacefully advocate for either the removal or the construction of any monument. But no individual or group has the right to damage, deface, or remove any monument by use of force.

In the midst of these attacks, many State and local governments appear to have lost the ability to distinguish between the lawful exercise of rights to free speech and assembly and unvarnished vandalism. They have surrendered to mob rule, imperiling community safety, allowing for the wholesale violation of our laws, and privileging the violent impulses of the mob over the rights of law-abiding citizens. Worse, they apparently have lost the will or the desire to stand up to the radical fringe and defend the fundamental truth that America is good, her people are virtuous, and that justice prevails in this country to a far greater extent than anywhere else in the world. Some particularly misguided public officials even appear to have accepted the idea that violence can be virtuous and have prevented their police from enforcing the law and protecting public monuments, memorials, and statues from the mob's ropes and graffiti.

My Administration will not allow violent mobs incited by a radical fringe to become the arbiters of the aspects of our history that can be celebrated in public spaces. State and local public officials' abdication of their law enforcement responsibilities in deference to this violent assault must end.

Sec. 2. Policy. (a) It is the policy of the United States to prosecute to the fullest extent permitted under Federal law, and as appropriate, any person or any entity that destroys, damages, vandalizes, or desecrates a monument, memorial, or statue within the United States or otherwise vandalizes government property. The desire of the Congress to protect Federal property is clearly reflected in section 1361 of title 18, United States Code, which authorizes a penalty of up to 10 years' imprisonment for the willful injury of Federal property. More recently, under the Veterans' Memorial Preservation and Recognition Act of 2003, section 1369 of title 18, United States Code, the Congress punished with the same penalties the destruction of Federal and in some cases State-maintained monuments that honor military veterans. Other criminal statutes, such as the Travel Act, section 1952 of title 18, United States Code, permit prosecutions of arson damaging monuments, memorials, and statues on State grounds in some cases. Civil statutes like the Public System Resource Protection Act, section 100722 of title 54, United States Code, also hold those who destroy certain Federal property accountable for their offenses. The Federal Government will not tolerate violations of these and other laws.

(b) It is the policy of the United States to prosecute to the fullest extent permitted under Federal law, and as appropriate, any person or any entity that participates in efforts to incite violence or other illegal activity in connection with the riots and acts of vandalism described in section 1 of this order. Numerous Federal laws, including section 2101 of title 18, United States Code, prohibit the violence that has typified the past few weeks in some cities. Other statutes punish those who participate in or assist the agitators who have coordinated these lawless acts. Such laws include section 371 of title 18, United States Code, which criminalizes certain conspiracies to violate Federal law, section 2 of title 18, United States Code, which punishes those who aid or abet the commission of Federal crimes, and section 2339A of title 18, United States Code, which prohibits as material support to terrorism efforts to support a defined set of Federal crimes. Those who have joined in recent violent acts around the United States will be held accountable.

(c) It is the policy of the United States to prosecute to the fullest extent permitted under Federal law, and as appropriate, any person or any entity that damages, defaces, or destroys religious property, including by attacking, removing, or defacing depictions of Jesus or other religious figures or religious art work. Federal laws prohibit, under certain circumstances, damage or defacement of religious property, including the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996, section 247 of title 18, United States Code, and section 371 of title 18, United States Code. The Federal Government will not tolerate violations of these laws designed to protect the free exercise of religion.

(d) It is the policy of the United States, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, to withhold Federal support tied to public spaces from State and local governments that have failed to protect public monuments, memorials, and statues from destruction or vandalism. These jurisdictions' recent abandonment of their law enforcement responsibilities

with respect to public monuments, memorials, and statues casts doubt on their willingness to protect other public spaces and maintain the peace within them. These jurisdictions are not appropriate candidates for limited Federal funds that support public spaces.

(e) It is the policy of the United States, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, to withhold Federal support from State and local law enforcement agencies that have failed to protect public monuments, memorials, and statues from destruction or vandalism. Unwillingness to enforce State and local laws in the face of attacks on our history, whether because of sympathy for the extremists behind this violence or some other improper reason, casts doubt on the management of these law enforcement agencies. These law enforcement agencies are not appropriate candidates for limited Federal funds that support State and local police.

Sec. 3. Enforcing Laws Prohibiting the Desecration of Public Monuments, the Vandalism of Government Property, and Recent Acts of Violence. (a) The Attorney General shall prioritize within the Department of Justice the investigation and prosecution of matters described in subsections 2(a), (b), and (c) of this order. The Attorney General shall take all appropriate enforcement action against individuals and organizations found to have violated Federal law through these investigations.

(b) The Attorney General shall, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, work with State and local law enforcement authorities and Federal agencies to ensure the Federal Government appropriately provides information and assistance to State and local law enforcement authorities in connection with their investigations or prosecutions for the desecration of monuments, memorials, and statues, regardless of whether such structures are situated on Federal property.

Sec. 4. Limiting Federal Grants for Jurisdictions and Law Enforcement Agencies that Permit the Desecration of Monuments, Memorials, or Statues. The heads of all executive departments and agencies shall examine their respective grant programs and apply the policies established by sections 2(d) and (e) of this order to all such programs to the extent that such application is both appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

Sec. 5. Providing Assistance for the Protection of Federal Monuments, Memorials, Statues, and Property. Upon the request of the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the Administrator of General Services, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, personnel to assist with the protection of Federal monuments, memorials, statues, or property. This section shall terminate 6 months from the date of this order unless extended by the President.

Sec. 6. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

- (i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or
  - (ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.
- (b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.
- (c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.
- (d) This order is not intended to, and does not, affect the prosecutorial discretion of the Department of Justice with respect to individual cases.

# DECOLONIZE ZHIGAAGOONG!

We struggle toward decolonization of Zhigaagoong. All land East of Michigan Avenue is unceded Niswi-mishkodewinan territory. It is occupied only by white supremacist entitlement and a collective delusion of ownership. We demand that the City of Chicago decolonize and:

- Rematriate unceded Native lands!
- Officially recognize First Nations Garden as a permanent space and open more green spaces in the city!
- Abolish C\*olumbus Day, denounce of the Doctrine of Discovery, and honor all treaties!

## DEFUND CPD! FREE THEM ALL!

We struggle toward complete abolition of police in Chicago. Policing, incarceration, and punishment exist as tools of racial violence against Black, Indigenous people. We promote strategies that defund, disempower, and disband the Chicago Police Department. We demand that the City of Chicago:

- Immediately cut CPD's budget — reinvest in non-carceral social services and community programs; fire cops with multiple complaints; stop new hiring and buying weapons!
- Terminate plans to build police academy in West Garfield Park! #NoCopAcademy
- Remove CPD from CTA, CPS, and all other public institutions!
- Close Homan Square and all other CPD black sites!
- Pass CPAC to ultimately disband CPD!
- Decommission the gang database!
- Cease negotiations with the FOP!
- Stop all asset forfeiture!

**BLACK INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY RALLY  
FRIDAY 5PM, BUCKINGHAM FOUNTAIN**



New Video Surfaces Showing  
Violent Protests In Grant Park

10:02 88°



# Joyous Black and Indigenous Rally Against Racist Columbus Statue Attacked by CPD- Causing Injury, Trauma, and more Fervor to Abolish the Police State

JULY 21, 2020 BY LOVEYLUCHA

#DecolonizeZhigaagoong, #DefundCPD, #BlackLivesMatter  
Chicago, IL

“After a powerful Black and Indigenous Solidarity Rally and March, the biggest gang in Chi Town shows who they serve, and what they’re here to protect. Lightfoot can say what she wants to #45’s people, but don’t lie and tell us you care about Black and Brown people in Chicago” -Black Lives Matter Chicago ( <https://twitter.com/BLMChi> )

On July 17th, 2020 at the Black and Indigenous Solidarity Rally in Chicago, more than 1000 people gathered. They were Black, Native and Brown folks, white allies, immigrants and more. The crowd consisted of youth, workers, artists, teachers, lawyers, femmes, mothers, families. Many community members from all over Chicago came together in solidarity with one another against Racism, Police Brutality, and Colonization.



It was a beautiful collaboration between more than 15 grassroots organizations and autonomous groups, concerned individuals, groups of friends and families. Everyone met in downtown Chicago at the Buckingham Fountain followed by a march to a symbol of genocide, slavery and colonialism, the Christopher Columbus Statue.

An invitation to the event read, " Chi-Nations Youth Council, Black Lives Matter Chicago, and BYP100 ( <https://twitter.com/byp100> ) —among others— call for the abolishment of police and the redistribution of funds to the people of Chicago.

In 1830, during the Indian Removal act, the Chicago Police Department was founded—three years before Chicago was official. These overlaps are often seen as coincidental, but the history of police in the United States shows a clear mission to remove Native peoples from our land and enslave our Black relatives. All land East of Michigan Avenue is unceded Niswimishkodewinan territory. The city of Chicago has no rights to this land—through treaty or sale. It is occupied only by white supremacist entitlement and a collective delusion of ownership.

We are gathering and celebrating ourselves as Black and Indigenous peoples. We are tired of having to say "we are people." We are tired of having to say "we matter." We built this country as Black and Indigenous peoples. Our knowledge and labor has been exploited for too long. Let's dance, sing, party, and celebrate ourselves. Bring drums, flags, music, and food. Wear a mask"



DECOLONIZE ZHIGAAGOONG  
DEFUND CPD



During the solidarity rally black brown and indigenous people took the stage and spoke to the crowd, songs were sung, and performers energized. Most present there was Love. People chimed in with the speakers, hollered in agreement, laughed with one another, cheered, danced, and prayed. The smell of sage whirled around the gathering. A vocal Dakota activist spoke (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3146155698774324> )” I’ve come from the Dakota homelands and I greet each one of you with a good heart. I’ve dedicated my entire life to indigenous rights, for the land to get back... to see the liberation of indigenous peoples on turtle island, for the dismantling of white supremacy. And I know that my fight is not whole unless I’m also advocating for the liberation of black people. If I don’t understand that my struggle is connected to the struggle of my relatives, then we are gonna fail. So that’s why we are here to connect our struggles. I wanna recognize the land we are on. The original territories of the three fires confederacy Oglala, Anishinaabe, Potawatomi, Miami, Meskwaki and more all gathered here to trade... We are collectively casting our voice out to each of the 4 directions and asking the ancestors to be with us here.”



A member of the Chi Nations Youth Council ([https://twitter.com/chi\\_nations](https://twitter.com/chi_nations) ) shared a song, accompanied by his drum, for “all those brothers and sisters protesting who have lost their lives. For all the rights we deserve. ”

The energy was high and uplifting at this beautiful solidarity rally. A BLM Chicago (<https://www.blacklivesmatterchicago.com/>) member spoke, "We're here to remind this city that we are not separating. That we are not backing down. Not giving up since may 30th when they beat us up with batons. We will continue to be out here. Today we are demanding not only that they defund cpd. We are also demanding that they decolonize Zhigagagong (Chicago)." The crowd of more than 1000 people roared in applause.

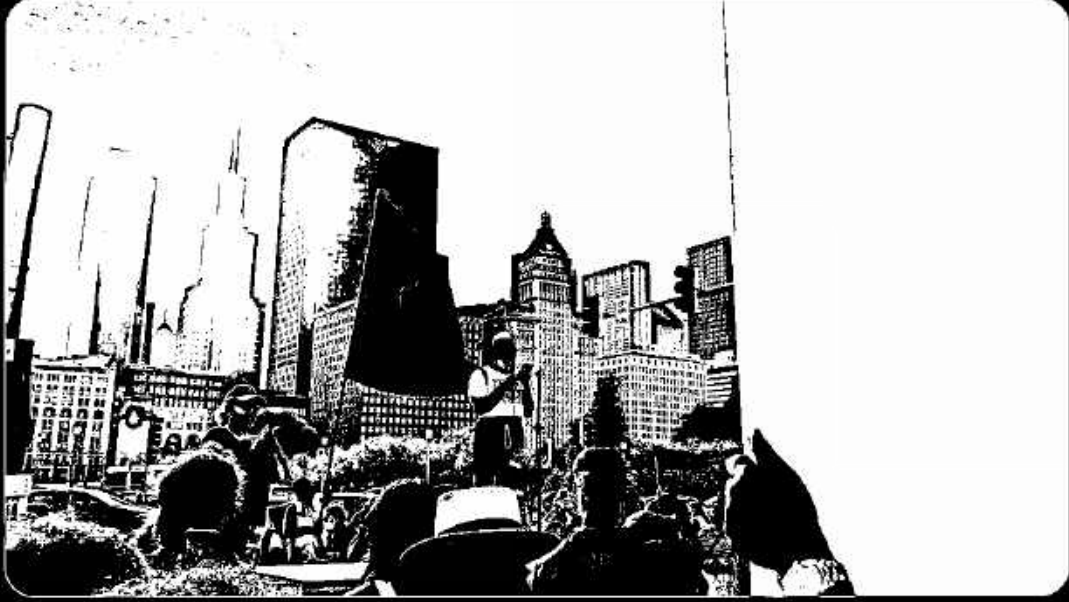
A person from Brave Space Alliance (<https://twitter.com/bsalliancechi>) shared, "First and foremost, to all the black and brown people here today I want you to know that we have been involved in a lot of protests, a lot of demonstrations. But this right here is the best, most intentional, most beautiful display of black and brown joy that I have seen in a long time!" - Their words were met by cheers.. "if you're here right now you are hyper aware of the times we are living in right now.... and this is not the time for your respectability politics."





Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

. @GKMC18 organizer Miracle discusses the PeaceBook ordinance which is calling for 2% of the CPD budget to fund free mental health services and trauma linked to gun violence #ChicagoProtests



2

49



Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

Chicago artist @RicWilson performs his song, "Fight like Ida B & Marsha P" here at Buckingham Fountain #ChicagoProtests



0:07 8.3K views



Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

"You support them [fellow protesters] and however they need to protest because we don't police people's anger," said @BLMChi organizer Ariel. #ChicagoProtests



2 14 42

# DIVERSITY OF TACTICS:

Everyone is free to support the cause as they see fit. We don't police each other's actions, or snitch on each other to pigs or the media. At the same time, we take care not to endanger others with our actions.





Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

The banners at the head of the march, which is preparing to move south on Columbus #ChicagoProtests



0:00 | 2.3K views

4

23



0:04 | 1.6K views

2

14



Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

The banners at the head of the march, which is preparing to move south on Columbus #ChicagoProtests





Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Protesters dancing south on Columbus #ChicagoProtests



0:02 6.2K views

6

43



Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
"We know the truth, we got the stats, if the city's so broke, where they get their money at?" Chant the protesters. #ChicagoProtests



0:04 34.9K views

16

141

452



Grace Del Vecchio @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Protesters have now marched into Grant Park #ChicagoProtesters



The solidarity march proceeded to the statue of the murderer Columbus and was very well organized. At their arrival, Police had already surrounded the statue and were guarding it, forming a barricade with their bikes. About a dozen cops in riot gear were on standby at the other side of the hill. Several police SUV's had already lined up along the lawn west of the statue in Grant park. Streets had begun to be blocked off by cops. Before the people even reached the Columbus statue, the CPD had already demonstrated their power and authority to protect this symbol of racism and genocide.

**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Protesters ascending the hill to the Columbus Statue here in Grant Park  
#ChicagoProtests



0:01 | 37.7K views

23 | 187 | 598

@delvecchiograce · Jul 17

**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Cops are positioned around the statue #ChicagoProtests #GrantPark



4 | 23 | 31

A local community member shared, “1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue – that’s what I was taught in school when I was a kid. And what we have been taught is wrong. Columbus didn’t discover anything. He wasn’t looking for spices or India. He came to a land that he had heard about from African and Arab sailors. To look for a new place to throw the Portuguese flag up, as Europe was in the dark ages while the rest of the world flourished. He came and brutalized the Native people of what we call South, Central, and North America. A “discovery” to Europe that this land existed and that the earth was round. A discovery only to them. But people already lived here. And what followed is the history we all know. Not what they teach in school but what we hear from our Indigenous sisters and brothers. The genocide, theft of land, rape, murder. Columbus the carrier of plagues and pandemics, does not deserve a statue, or any status as an explorer or anything at all. He deserves to be condemned!”

The people marched towards the Columbus Statue, and upon seeing the cops surrounding it, started collectively chanting, “Who do you serve? Who do you protect?”, as they made their way forward. At which point fireworks were heard in and around Grant Park all the while the people kept chanting. The people would not be deterred. The mere act of protecting this symbol of hate and oppression by the CPD was an act of violence against the indigenous, black, and brown community.

Police vehicles immediately mobilized from all directions, riot cops were on the scene within seconds and numerous cops on foot ran to protect the statue. Cops alleged water cans were being flung at them and started using tear gas against the demonstrators. Fireworks were being lit while onlookers watched and filmed from the sidelines. An indigenous femme wearing a ribbon skirt holding feathers awaited her chance at a round dance while CPD cowered right beside he









The area around the statue was cleared of the police and artists came out and redecorated the base around the statue with phrases such as “Defund CPD”, “For Fred Hampton”, “Fuck Columbus”, “ACAB”, “Killer”, “Enough is enough” “The Cops are losing”, and more. Someone climbed on the already draped statue of Columbus, wrapped a rope around it and the crowd began to pull. Well organized and determined the people chanted, “Pull, Pull, Pull!”. Anticipation was high. Everyone wanted that statue down. It is shameful that Chicago, a city with a huge population of black, brown, indigenous, and immigrant peoples, has yet to take any racist statues down.





**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17

Replying to @delvecchiograce

Protesters chanting "Bring it down" #ColumbusStatue #ChicagoProtests



52

193

567





Unfortunately, the statue did not come down, and was interrupted by the police brutally attacking the crowd. An eloquent speaker from Good Kids Mad City (<https://twitter.com/GKMC18>) spoke at a press conference, “This past Friday, peacefully protesting downtown at the racist Columbus statue, showing our rights as citizens to protest against the injustices that have been placed in society. While the action continued, police officers were brought in to circle a group of young unarmed innocent group of people. They brought out tear gas, pepper spray, and mace. They were beating people. There were multiple instances of police brutality. People with their heads busted open, people who couldn’t breathe throughout the rest of the night, people whose skin was burning from pepper spray and one of our own members, an 18 year old girl who had her teeth knocked out.”

Police viciously and indiscriminately attacked anyone within their reach. Beating and arresting, their batons wacked hands, faces, bodies, pushed and punched women, youth, non binary folks, NLG lawyers, elders just anyone they could reach with their batons. They tried stealing peoples bikes and if the owner didn’t let go they beat their hands with batons and hit and push them until they let the bike go. The whiffs of healing sage were replaced by mace

and pepper spray as frantic police sprayed unarmed people. Cries for medics and folks running to help one another was heard. Even though there was a fire truck and ambulance there, none of the people were treated in the ambulance for the burns and blood that ensued. Instead, the ambulance comforted the cops hit by a water bottle. There are various videos online showing the seriously violent and sociopathic behavior of the Chicago Police Department that have been, for many years now, training in military tactics and upping their supply of brutal weapons to use against Chicagoans.

A local Native activist shared some photos of frightened police on FB and wrote, “These pictures were taken at the same time, that’s me calmly standing there with my feathers and ribbon skirt waiting to round dance, while the cops were crying and ‘running for their life’ she went on, “When folks weren’t scared of their bullshit they decided to target less defensive people away from the folks defending themselves- the children, medics, photographers, disabled, and the elderly. We said people are more important than property, their response was ‘people?’”.

**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Pepper sprayed was just sprayed everywhere, protesters retreating  
#ChicagoProtests #ColumbusStatue

0:06 / 0:33

72.3K views

82 209 462

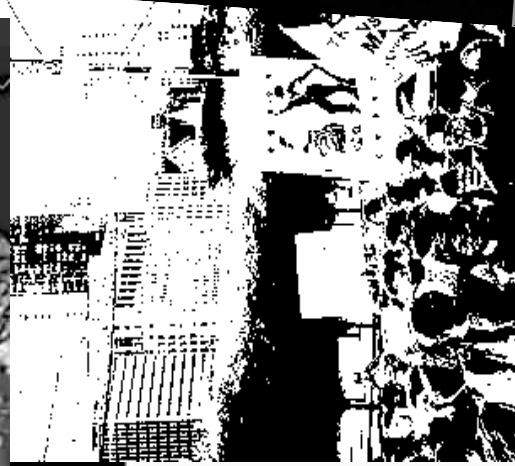
**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
UPDATE: just received word that cops are discussing "mass arrests" via scanner #ChicagoProtests #ColumbusStatue

**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Cops flooding in, spraying pepper spray everywhere, over groups of protesters #ChicagoProtests #ColumbusStatue



**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Cops are circling, spraying protesters with pepper spray #ChicagoProtests #ColumbusStatue

**Grace Del Vecchio** @delvecchiograce · Jul 17  
Current scene here in #GrantPark by the #ColumbusStatue cops have regained control, tons of protesters choking on pepper spray #ChicagoProtests



A Southwest Sider of Zhigaagong expressed, “It was very important and a delight to see CPD’s usual smugness exchanged for shock as protestors launched projectiles and fireworks at them in the initial attempt to clear the statue’s immediate space. The pigs’ faces showed a cognitive dissonance as the protestors’ offense intensified. It seems it was very hard for them to believe violence was being directed to THEM and not just to property, which is an important development in the uprising here in Zhigaagong.

Let it be known: this was a multiracial action, contrary to the white supremacist media narrative that warriors in the uprising are foreign white agitators. We all have legitimate reasons to want to eliminate by any means necessary unelected, unaccountable marauders and assaulters who have the Authority of the State power but not our consent whatsoever. CPD and all other occupying forces are not chosen by us directly, therefore, they have no legitimacy and constitute invading and occupying forces. Invaders and occupiers have no rights, period. They do not even have the right to defend themselves from injury or death from those who violently oppose their illegitimate and violent presence. Adelante!

After the Black and Indigenous Solidarity Rally, a lot of people were hurt, scared and confused. Some, mostly corporate media, blamed the few protesters who lit fireworks or threw water for the escalation of a mostly ‘peaceful’ protest, promoting a dialogue of ‘good’ protester, ‘bad’ protester.

One local Chicago compañerx wrote, “On Friday even before we arrived at Grant Park all the weapons were there, and so were the pumped up cops thirsty for blood. This is not a figure of speech. They surrounded us. We went to Grant Park that day in defense of Black and Indigenous lives. It is a peaceful act to tear down monuments to genocide and enslavement... The pigs repress, sabotage, beat, threaten and intimidate all those who stand against them no matter the tactics, no matter how calm, restrained or how chill we behave. Whenever we question the status quo and exercise forms of association they cannot control, whenever we make another world not just necessary, but actual, they undermine and repress us. On Friday people stood together and defended each other.

Young Black organizers reminded us relentlessly to not panic, to not run away, to stick together, to form defensive lines, to take care of each other, to protect each other, to stay together. Do not panic, they are dividing the group, isolating this or that portion, separating and then attacking.

People showed remarkable calm and restraint, and this was good not because it was “peaceful” to place your body and your bike between the pigs and other protesters but because it allowed us to protect instead of trample each other, which is clearly what the police wanted us to do. They ambushed and chased and threw people downhill hoping for a panicked stampede. They deliberately divided the group so they could more easily beat us up. And this is continuing even now, after the protest. They are hunting us down and tearing us apart. They are manufacturing the “provocation” that makes their position legitimate, and they are prying open divisions between protesters in order to do so. ”

However, some folks felt the organizers should have been more clear about the march and direct action that was to follow the rally. A Little Village resident expressed, “I’m feeling weird about that rally on Friday turning from a rally to a march & statue take over. I’m still not clear on how or why that happened. For safety reasons, I feel like people should be informed and be given the opportunity to consent to participate in putting their bodies at risk like that. There were children, differently abled bodies and undocumented folks in the crowd. People got hurt” She also had some suggestions we could all listen to, “I’d love to see that statue come down and I support the groups who want to do that. This is the part that concerns me, I don’t feel right about putting peoples lives at stake for an agenda that only some knew about and agreed to... I’ve been studying revolution, liberation and creating autonomous communities for some time. Transparency in mission is still key at every step of the way. We can build our own militia. Its not illegal to do so. But using people as pawns is a very, and i hate to put it this way, but white, patriarchal and colonial practice. So is only a few people making decisions for everyone. The revolution will be a slow, intentional & transparent one. I think we’ve all got some reading to do.”

The days following the Black and Indigenous Solidarity Rally saw more protests and many press conferences. On July 18, a march to the mayor of Chicago, Lori Lightfoot’s house was interrupted by Police blocking the road and continuing the brutality.

(<https://www.facebook.com/humboldtparkinchicago/videos/309669607079480/>) A local Chicago compx wrote, “On Saturday evening at a Logan Square protest lead by Good Kids Mad City, people practiced incredible restraint in the face of massive police presence surrounding them, outnumbering them, provoking them, kettling them, threatening them for hours; the psychological assault was so intense a young woman near me passed out. But no one left, no one bailed, everyone stayed together. And still that evening a police car drove into protesters. It was intentional. They are now “investigating”, which means they will manufacture some kind of provocation. They brutalize us to justify their gear, their arsenal, their power and the necessity of their institution.

Whether we stand in silence in a line as we did Saturday, or throw firecrackers and water bottles as some did Friday, the police brutalize us. These are merely different tactics, and we cannot afford to take any tactics off the table. They are all necessary. We are all necessary. “

At a press conference on July 20th by GoodKids MadCity, (<https://www.facebook.com/Fox32Chicago/videos/729166491216253/>) an organization of Black and Brown young people fighting to end violence and calling for more resources to under-served communities, a youth activist spoke, “This is a continuous thing that has been happening within these last few months of actions happening downtown of unarmed youth coming peacefully protesting, and we have more tactics and scare tactics and tanks coming in... [Lightfoot] She brings out thousands of cop cars, tanks with weapons with guns and tasers for unarmed youth. She invests 1.8 billion dollars into the Chicago Police Department. She has a 33 million dollar contract with CPD to be in CPS schools to brutalize young students. To brutalize young black and brown students CPD gets five million dollars a day.” She also went on to explain about food deserts and lack of mental health facilities. On how folks have to drive 30 minutes to get groceries, but the north side and downtown has ample resources. And black and brown south and west sides struggle for food and basic necessities. “Lori Lightfoot would rather protect statues than the citizens who live in the city. Come on. Objects instead of living bodies in the city of Chicago. As somebody who is black.

Somebody who has the same skin as us and she’s not protecting those who look like us. If she didn’t have that title she would be in the same predicament as us. She’s not funding us. No she’s not taking care of us. She’s not making sure that young black women are safe that young black women are being protected. She sent those officers out .. [who] were brutalizing young black women, black girls, people not over the age of 18, beaten pepper sprayed. This is what has been happening in this city every single day for the past month for the past year past decade... But we are here to let Lori and the CPD know that we aint taking this no more. We’re not taking this. No more funding that’s going to people that brutalize us, murder us, sexually assault us. We’re not gonna take it anymore...Funding needs to go to black and brown communities not to send cops into schools. ”

Miracle Boyd, an 18 year old recent graduate of Chicago Public Schools and also a part of GoodKids BadCity, was the young woman who got her teeth knocked out by a Chicago Police Officer. She also spoke at the press conference on Monday and expressed, ” I fight every day in my community to end gun violence... I was attacked by CPD who valued a supremacist statue over my life, safety, and well being. Christopher Columbus did not discover America. He was a rapist, murderer, thief and colonizer who layed the groundwork for indigenous

genocide and the trans atlantic slave trade of Africans. Yet the police are defending the statue of a man who died more than 500 years ago. The police are not serving and protecting us. There is now way I should have left a protest bruised and battered for exercising my freedom of speech...since then, my life has been threatened. I've received several hate messages" She began to tear up and fellow organizers surrounded her hugging and giving support. She continued sternly, "I will not be defamed by the media... I am not a criminal. I am not a menace. I am not a rebel. I am a dedicated freedom fighter who will always stand up for black and brown people across America!"

The bronze statue on a cement slab, covered with a white drape resembling the kkk, was rapidly cleaned of the art, surrounded by new fences, patrolled by security vehicles, and now cameras are also facing it. A group of protesters gathered close by on the night of July 20 to show their continuing disgust for it. Police are still protecting this non-living object, instead of protecting people. Clearly this is their only goal, to protect Racism and serve Colonialism. The Chicago Police Department was built for oppression and has shown time and again that it can only do that. We need to be freed from these oppressors. CPD needs to be abolished. Resources need to be re-allocated to communities of color; to schools, hospitals, social services, to people directly, and not the Police State. Land must be given back to Native peoples so they can teach us all how to care for and flourish with the Earth. The Black, Indigenous, and Brown people of Chicago want freedom, and we are not going to back down! #Defund CPD! #Decolonize Zhigaagong!

<https://twitter.com/hashtag/decolonizezhigaagoong>

<https://twitter.com/hashtag/defundcpd>

Other articles to check out:

<https://thetriibe.com/2020/07/gkmc-organizer-miracle-boyd-and-other-organizers-stand-firm-in-their-demands-to-defund-police-after-decolonize-zhigaagoong-protest/>

<https://www.injusticewatch.org/news/2020/youth-leader-miracle-boyd-attacked-by-chicago-police-at-black-indigenous-solidarity-rally/>

<https://crimethinc.com/2020/07/21/accounts-from-the-battle-of-grant-park-how-chicago-demonstrators-pushed-back-the-police-and-nearly-toppled-a-statue>

## 2. The Chemical Approach

Maybe you're operating with an even smaller team—or toppling the statue all by yourself. In that case, your best bet is melting the damn thing. So let's make a thermite reaction.

“The formula is very simple,” says Chris Harrison, a chemistry professor at San Diego State University. “It's 3:1 by mass of rust and aluminum powder. You mix those together and use a piece of magnesium to use as a high temperature fuse. And if you don't have one, you could use a sparkler.”

The melting point of the hypothetical bronze statue is 1,742 degrees Fahrenheit, but even if you come across a racist cast in copper (melting point: 1,984 degrees), you can still easily melt both with thermite, as it burns at 2,500 degrees.



A statue depicting Christopher Columbus is seen with its head removed on June 10, 2020 in Boston.

TIM BRADBURY / GETTY IMAGES

While thermite might burn nearly half as hot as the sun, it isn't explosive. “You could pack the thermite around [the statue's] ankles using a plastic or metal bucket with the base removed,” Harrison says. “You could invert the halves of the bucket and place them on either side of the feet, and then pour in the thermite, packing it down as best as possible. The more open space there is, the less efficient the reaction will be.”

Once you melt the statue's ankles, it should just fall over, Harrison says, as that metal likely supports everything above it.

# Accounts from the Battle of Grant Park

## How Chicago Demonstrators Pushed Back the Police and Nearly Toppled a Statue

**anonymous author, from crimethinc**

On July 17, 2020, following a rally in Grant Park—the site of horrific police violence during the Democratic National Convention of 1968—demonstrators outwitted and outfought police officers, winning an opportunity to try to topple a hated statue of Christopher Columbus. In the following accounts, participants explore the tactics and strategies of the demonstrators and the lessons they learned in the process.

“That’s not peaceful protest. That’s anarchy—and we are going to put that down.”

-Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, threatening the demonstrators of July 17 for employing a small amount of the force that Chicago police employ daily with impunity. She went on to brag about Chicago’s “long history of peaceful protest,” urging people to “follow that tradition and try to build bridges with others.”

If you’re curious why people would want to tear down statues of Christopher Columbus, start here. For an account of the toppling of a Confederate monument ahead of the current wave of statue topplings, read this.

Aerial footage of the first half of the demonstration. Police have eagerly distributed recordings from the first part of the events, but appear to have suppressed footage of the ensuing police brutality.

### **The Battle of Grant Park**

On Friday, July 17, hundreds of demonstrators clashed with police in the course of attempting to topple the Christopher Columbus Monument in Grant Park in downtown Chicago. The battle of Grant Park was one of the most confrontational and effective projectile assaults on the Chicago Police Department in decades.

At 5 pm on Friday, a Black and Indigenous solidarity rally gathered at Buckingham Fountain in Grant Park. In the course of an Indigenous ritual, rap performances, and impassioned speeches calling for defunding and abolishing the police and decolonizing Zhigaagoong, the crowd grew to at least a thousand. When the rally concluded, around 7 pm, people took the streets. The crowd assembled into march formation on Columbus Avenue and began to march toward the Christopher Columbus statue a few blocks south of the fountain. The march itself was unannounced, but the crowd immediately embraced it, while it appeared to come as a surprise to the few officers present.

Headed largely by Black, Brown, and Indigenous youth, the march was supported by a thunderous mobile sound system and surrounded by a series of large banners reinforced with PVC pipes. Behind the banners and intermingled throughout the crowd, about 40 people unfurled their umbrellas. The march was joyous, raucous, and well organized.

When the march approached the statue of Columbus, about 35 bike cops surrounded the monument. This was not surprising, as the controversial colonial figure has been a recurring target for demonstrators throughout the summer. Both of the Columbus statues in Chicago have been repeatedly vandalized since the uprising in Minneapolis at the end of May. In response, Mayor Lori Lightfoot ordered city workers to wrap the statue in white plastic, causing the already egregious symbol to resemble a klansman.

The marchers seemed prepared for the police presence. Rather than approaching the statue from the street, the crowd veered left off of the road and back into Grant Park, stopping at a lightly wooded hilly area directly adjacent to the Columbus statue. Here, about 150 yards north of the monument, the banner holders rearranged themselves into a “U” formation; along with the mass of umbrella wielders, they surrounded a portion of the marchers, shielding them from view. When the march started moving again, two minutes later, a sixty-person black bloc had formed in broad daylight in the middle of the largest city in the Midwest.

The march headed to the statue, the newly formed black bloc shielded by banners and umbrellas.

As the bloc reached the statue and the crowd surrounded it, a confrontation ensued. Police grabbed at the banners, successfully stealing or breaking several of them; one officer used a piece of a broken banner to attempt to beat demonstrators. They pepper-sprayed people and hit them with batons. In response, from behind the umbrellas, hundreds of cans of La Croix sparkling water began raining down on the police, striking some in the face.

All sorts of people were grabbing La Croix cans left and right. A solitary critic yelled out, “This is not the way,” but he seemed isolated in his perception of the situation. Everyone

else appeared to understand that this moment was about working together toward the common goal of taking down the statue. In the prevailing mood, no one attempted to distinguish between “good” and “bad” protestors. It was as if everyone in attendance agreed that peace police are simply—police.

The barrage of La Croix cans overwhelmed the police. When fireworks began to land among the officers alongside the La Croix cans, the police surrendered the statue and the crowd overran the platform. People ripped the plastic wrap off the statue and threw up tags including “BLM,” “ACAB,” “FTP,” and “La Croix the cops.” Others continued to push the police further away from the statue. Those who were able to used their bikes as shields for themselves and others. Some held the ground by putting their bodies on the line in spite of unrelenting police violence.

Meanwhile, on the statue platform, several attempts were made to secure a climbing rope around the statue’s outstretched arm. Once these had proved inadequate, a brave comrade emerged from the crowd and free-climbed the statue, clenching the rope between their teeth. They ascended the colonialist idol and secured the ropes around its arm. The remaining banner assumed its fourth role of the day when friends stretched it out horizontally beneath the climber in case they fell. Upon descending, the climber trust-fell the last few feet into the safety net offered by the adoring banner-holders. The ropes now attached to the statue were spread out and two teams formed to pull on them. While this was unfolding, people pushed the police out of the area multiple times so that others could focus on pulling the ropes.

The crowd secured the area for a considerable amount of time while people repeatedly attempted to topple the statue. During this time, demonstrators sustained multiple injuries as police continued to employ pepper spray and brutal force. The cops targeted people with bicycles, stealing over 100 of them from the crowd. One young organizer, who had spoken at the rally earlier, was filming the police beating a demonstrator when police attacked her and knocked out her front teeth. Conflicting reports have circulated regarding how many cops were hurt; supposedly, 45 were injured and 18 went to the hospital, though we don’t know how many of those were offensive injuries incurred as a consequence of attempting to injure others.

When police backup arrived, they managed to recapture the area with the reinforcements and massive amounts of pepper spray—causing everyone in the crowd to cough and choke. Having sustained a number of injuries and realizing that they’d done all they could, the crowd linked arms and withdrew to Buckingham Fountain, where they regrouped and safely dispersed. According to reports, twelve demonstrators were arrested. All of them were released on Saturday.

Despite having failed to bring down the statue, the crowd demonstrated that they have learned a number of lessons in the course of this movement. They moved together in a way that allowed for various elements to act with trust in the people around them, trust in the moment, and trust in the justice of their actions. At the end of the evening, the statue was still standing, but the resolve that initially animated the group remained palpable. They needed stronger ropes, better climbing gear, perhaps more explicit invitations to help pull the ropes. But most importantly, they had made it clear that if people come prepared and remain determined, they can face down the Chicago Police Department.

### **Decolonize Zhigaagoong: An Outsider's Inside Perspective**

A truly effective protest is one that disrupts, disturbs, or damages the status quo. Those are the sort of actions that get a response in the form of concessions from the state, reforms. Although this is not a universal law—there may be outliers—it is a broadly applicable theory.

Chicago, Illinois has a long history of truly effective protest. Recently, however, there have mostly been less-than-effective demonstrations. Peaceful, in-line, working with the state as opposed to against it; neither disturbing nor disrupting nor damaging. The George Floyd flame roared here, too, but for the most part, the police seemed to have control over the flow and direction of the “effective” actions.

Although organizers prepared routes, marshals, chants, speakers, performers, and so on, the police ultimately directed traffic and both led and followed the demonstrations. At one point, during one march, people attempted to march onto the highway. The demonstration involved many hundreds of people, whereas there were less than a dozen police officers. But the officers said no, so the march continued past the highway. Another march, around city hall, was led by an officer beckoning the demonstrators.

These demonstrations do not feel like actions against the state, they feel like a ride at an amusement park. A slow one.

Decolonize Zhigaagoong was the first demonstration of the year in Chicago, at least that I have seen personally, that was not only well-organized but also unexpected. It could have accomplished something significant, if not for one small oversight.

The evening started around five in the afternoon with a loose gathering of people. Some were selling merchandise; a rabbi whom I have seen previously, involved with organizers or organizing himself, was speaking to news cameras. People were milling around near the Buckingham fountain. It was a beautiful day, if a bit hot, but sunny and with little clouds speckled in the blue background of the Chicago skyline. A performance from Native Americans started and the whole crowd participated in minor ways. The crowd was growing; I would guess a few thousand.

Then speakers took the stand, two of whom I recognized from previous BLM and affiliated organizations' demonstrations, one of which I know is a leader of BLM Chi. The crowd continued to grow throughout another musical performance followed by a final speaker.

Now they call for the banners to move to the front. The banners are large, maybe five feet tall and very wide; there are a few different formats, but the largest two are made of PVC pipe with a tarp stretched across it and taped to the rectangular pipe frame. The others are less sturdy and large, but all the same they dominate one's vision. The march begins with the banners in the front. Directly behind the banners, demonstrators are walking with umbrellas. This is not occurring anywhere else in the march. People point out a few drones in the sky and diminish their range of vision with umbrella cover. There are several umbrellas to go around, as spares have been brought.

The march reaches Grant Park and abruptly turns into it. Just past a dip in the land is the Columbus statue, wrapped in plastic to protect it. The banners list off to one side, taking a group of marchers with them, and another banner appears, covering the back of the group. Inside this space, people are changing into black clothes, trading off holding banners and umbrellas as they do. Three to four dozen people emerge in black bloc dress code. They march past a line of the other demonstrators.

The banners are at the front; people bring umbrellas into position around them. This creates a sort of phalanx that is initially very effective. The bloc moves towards the statue and the limited number of officers there—maybe twenty. People launch soda cans, full water bottles, fireworks, and other small items at the officers from behind the phalanx. The officers, unsure of what to do and not presenting a front, grab at the umbrellas and spray past them before withdrawing from the statue to wait for backup. Immediately, people begin stripping the plastic covering from the statue while other demonstrators establish a perimeter. People around the statue realize that they cannot strip all of the plastic from the statue, or else do not know how to. They cover it again and some begin pulling out rope.

This is the first oversight. Up until now, the operation has been beautiful. The perimeter is well-established. Peaceful demonstrators stand in deep lines between the bloc and police. From the view on the far west side of the street across from the statue, there almost seems to be more riot cops than protestors. From the statue, the opposite seems true. The officers are abusing the peaceful demonstrators but aren't making a concentrated effort to push through them. They're using pepper spray, but not tear gas or rubber bullets.

Unfortunately, the rope is far too thin, made of a material that stretches too easily when pulled. If properly placed and properly pulled, it might still suffice to topple the statue. One person tries over half a dozen times to throw it over the statue; then a young person from outside the bloc comes and climbs the statue, gripping the plastic covering, in order to loop the rope around the extended arm of Columbus. The arm is near the top of the statue, extending above the edge of the base. There is only one rope in place.

Police, sick of trying to wade through the peaceful protesters, maneuver around the south side of the statue. Bloc'ers and peaceful protesters follow them, holding a line. The officers do not meet the line; some people hurl cans of soda and water bottles and pieces of the pipes from the frames of the banners. The officers try to run around to the east side, but the line follows their movement again; frustrated, they begin beating people at random.

One officer strikes a young man in the head, opening a broad gash. Blood is pouring down his face in multiple rivulets, dripping onto the young woman who is trying to pull him behind the line. People are still holding a tight formation, protecting the ropes from the officers' advance. The officers, in their frustration, overextend themselves. A group of them is suddenly surrounded by a line of protesters. Cans and bottles are thrown; the officers strike back and are beaten with pipes and signs. They are left an opening, away from the statue.

People return to pulling on the rope, the two sides pulling in unison. A person with a black flag suggests that the people pulling ought to alternate and pull from opposite sides—the two lines are almost parallel, twenty yards apart or less—but none of the organizers hear him. As the officers regroup, some people plan to wrap the statue with the rope to create further leverage, but it's too late. The officers have assembled and, as the bloc starts wrapping, they move forward. There is a veritable cloud of pepper spray; the buffer of peaceful protesters crumbles. Even from thirty or more yards away, it reaches the eyes and throat. Seeing the buffer of peaceful protesters melt away, the people around the statue drop the ropes and retreat.

The officers reclaim the statue and, beating and spraying, force the demonstrators back down the hill—coughing, gagging, and shouting, some bleeding. They gather again and march back to the fountain to disperse. Some of them change into different clothing on the way.

With proper equipment and organization, the statue would have been face-down on the pavement in short order. Unfortunately, it still stands.

Although the action was unsuccessful, that doesn't mean it accomplished nothing. The Chicago activist community showed that they will not accept their city's brazen disregard for human life, human dignity, and human rights—that they are both willing to fight for what is right and capable of it, too. Every success is preceded by failure, and every failure is a lesson. Chicago learned several lessons at Grant Park that evening. They learned a lesson about their own power, their own agency. They learned a lesson about the vulnerability of the state. They learned a lesson about planning and organizing. They learned a lesson about failure—that the smallest omission in the best-laid plans can spoil them.

Chicago is learning, not quitting.





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