

The Case for abolishing the police (3): “How will we stay safe?”

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [George Floyd killing](#) October 16, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts in the wake of the George Floyd murder* 

The 2020 NCC Peace and Social Justice Conference

Police-Free Future panel, October 15, 2020
video

“Defunding the police,” “abolishing the police” are loaded terms. Bound to raise hackles, bound to stiffen spines, bound to clench fists. Gadfly wishes he could slap the coiners of these terms upside the head. So we’re trying to get beyond the knee-jerk reaction to see how the holders of these positions explain themselves.

Here’s a common question.

WON'T ABOLISHING THE POLICE CREATE CHAOS AND CRIME? HOW WILL WE STAY SAFE?

We’re talking about a process of **strategically reallocating resources, funding, and responsibility** away from police and toward community-based models of safety, support, and prevention.



PV's answer to this "common fear" is to indicate that there is divergence in the abolition movement about how fast it would happen.

Some think of it as a "snap-your-fingers" kind of happening. Abolish the police and see what happens.

But, PV says, the majority view is that abolishing is a gradual process while building alternate institutions and diverting funds to "other concrete things."

There's a kind of sorting process, acknowledging the need to keep some things that police departments do but not others.

There's a time for figuring out how to protect people, that is, what the police department claims to do and sometimes does.

In short, abolishing the police is a process characterized by careful thinking.

Over time, the current police department would be phased out.

Spend another 2 minutes with PV:

Audio Player not available in this archive

What are you thinking?

to be continued . . .