

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020

Remarks on the Nationwide Demonstrations and Civil Unrest Following the Death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 1, 2020

Thank you very much. My fellow Americans, my first and highest duty as President is to defend our great country and the American people. I swore an oath to uphold the laws of our Nation, and that is exactly what I will do.

All Americans were rightly sickened and revolted by the brutal death of George Floyd. My administration is fully committed that, for George and his family, justice will be served. He will not have died in vain. But we cannot allow the righteous cries and peaceful protesters to be drowned out by an angry mob. The biggest victims of the rioting are peace-loving citizens in our poorest communities, and as their President, I will fight to keep them safe. I will fight to protect you. I am your President of law and order, and an ally of all peaceful protesters.

But in recent days, our Nation has been gripped by professional anarchists, violent mobs, arsonists, looters, criminals, rioters, Antifa, and others. A number of State and local governments have failed to take necessary action to safeguard their residents. Innocent people have been savagely beaten, like the young man in Dallas, Texas, who was left dying on the street, or the woman in Upstate New York viciously attacked by dangerous thugs.

Small-business owners have seen their dreams utterly destroyed. New York's finest have been hit in the face with bricks. Brave nurses, who have battled the virus, are afraid to leave their homes. A police precinct has been overrun. Here in the Nation's Capital, the Lincoln Memorial and the World War II Memorial have been vandalized. One of our most historic churches was set ablaze. A Federal officer in California, an African American enforcement hero, was shot and killed.

These are not acts of peaceful protest. These are acts of domestic terror. The destruction of innocent life and the spilling of innocent blood is an offense to humanity and a crime against God.

America needs creation, not destruction; cooperation, not contempt; security, not anarchy; healing, not hatred; justice, not chaos. This is our mission, and we will succeed. One hundred percent, we will succeed. Our country always wins.

That is why I am taking immediate Presidential action to stop the violence and restore security and safety in America. I am mobilizing all available Federal resources—civilian and military—to stop the rioting and looting, to end the destruction and arson, and to protect the rights of law-abiding Americans, including your Second Amendment rights. Therefore, the following measures are going into effect immediately:

First, we are ending the riots and lawlessness that has spread throughout our country. We will end it now. Today I have strongly recommended to every Governor to deploy the National Guard in sufficient numbers that we dominate the streets. Mayors and Governors must establish an overwhelming law enforcement presence until the violence has been quelled.

If a city or a State refuses to take the actions that are necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, then I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem for them.

I am also taking swift and decisive action to protect our great Capital, Washington, DC. What happened in this city last night was a total disgrace. As we speak, I am dispatching

thousands and thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel, and law enforcement officers to stop the rioting, looting, vandalism, assaults, and the wanton destruction of property.

We are putting everybody on warning: Our 7 o'clock curfew will be strictly enforced. Those who threaten innocent life and property will be arrested, detained, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I want the organizers of this terror to be on notice that you will face severe criminal penalties and lengthy sentences in jail. This includes Antifa and others who are leading instigators of this violence.

One law and order—and that is what it is: one law. We have one beautiful law. And once that is restored and fully restored, we will help you, we will help your business, and we will help your family. America is founded upon the rule of law. It is the foundation of our prosperity, our freedom, and our very way of life. But where there is no law, there is no opportunity. Where there is no justice, there is no liberty. Where there is no safety, there is no future.

We must never give in to anger or hatred. If malice or violence reigns, then none of us is free. I take these actions today with firm resolve and with a true and passionate love for our country. By far, our greatest days lie ahead.

Thank you very much. And now I'm going to pay my respects to a very, very special place. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:43 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to George Floyd, who died during an arrest by police officers in Minneapolis, MN, on May 25; Dallas, TX, resident Charles Shultz; Rochester, NY, resident Madison Mavity; and Federal Protective Service contractor Dave P. Underwood, who was killed in Oakland, CA, on May 29. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 2.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, nationwide demonstrations and civil unrest.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Mavity, Madison; Shultz, Charles; Underwood, Dave P.

Subjects: Armed Forces, U.S. : National Guard; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Deployment; Civil rights : Firearm rights; Civil rights : Freedom of speech; Diseases : Coronavirus, domestic prevention efforts; District of Columbia : Civil unrest and violence; Law enforcement and crime : Nationwide civil unrest and violence; Minnesota : Minneapolis :: Death of George Floyd.

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