STATE OF POWER 2021

tni
transnationalinstitute

ABOLISH NATIONAL SECURITY

Arun Kundnani

USA, NEW YORK, 2015: US Marines in Times Square for Fleet Week – demonstration weapons including rifles and arriving in an armored personnel carrier. Credit: © Nina Berman / NOOR

Like its criminal-legal system, the US's global national security infrastructure spreads rather than reduces violence, in ways that are often organised through racism. Extending a politics of abolitionism to national security allows us to understand the structural drivers of endless war and border militarisation and to articulate new visions of security based on the presence of collective well-being rather than the elimination of 'threats'.

While the COVID-19 pandemic raged in 2020, at least 15 million people participated in Black Lives Matter (BLM) demonstrations across the US.[214] These multi-racial protests represented a coming to terms with the country's history of racial violence. Among the predominantly young people protesting, there is a widespread awareness that war, prisons, and borders do not advance the well-being of the majority of people in the US, that turning the country into an 'armed lifeboat' is no solution to climate crisis and zoonotic pandemics, and that wealth never 'trickles down' to the majority under racial capitalism. Those who have come of age in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008/9 are not being taken in by the false image of an exceptionally virtuous US.

As with any movement, within it there is a diverse range of motivations and orientations. Of particular note is the abolitionist approach that has shaped much recent Black-led mass struggle, influenced by Black feminist politics and queer organising – and the radical notions of care these traditions embody.[215] Abolitionism is a mode of political thinking and practice that has emerged from 20 years of organising against the prison–industrial complex by groups such as Critical Resistance.[216] Abolishing prisons and defunding the police are its most prominent aims but opposition to border violence and militarism has also been important. Abolitionism locates policing and incarceration within a broader set of structures that includes borders and military violence deployed abroad.

Fifteen years ago, one of the leading thinkers on abolitionism, Angela Davis, called for anti-prisons organising work to expand to take on the global imprisonment networks of the 'Global War on Terror'.[217] Today, groups such as Dissenters are organising against the entirety of the US's national security infrastructure from a Black abolitionist perspective.[218]

At the core of abolitionist politics is an attempt to reconceptualise the notion of security. The logic that dominates the criminal-legal system, argue abolitionists, involves thinking of harm as a problem that can be solved through officially sanctioned punitive violence. This has two consequences.

First, it means that the criminal-legal system intensifies rather than reduces the circulation of violence, giving rise, in turn, to demands for more police and more prisons – a perpetual motion of criminalisation.

Second, it means that attention is diverted from examining the underlying social and economic causes of what we call 'crime'. Prisons instead serve to screen off the social problems that result from the 'unmanageable political economy' of global capitalism.[219] But in doing so, those problems are worsened.

The massive expansion in the number of prisons and the militarisation of law enforcement are not responses to increased crime but an integral part of neoliberalism, which involves declaring large numbers of people as 'surplus'. Prisons are ways of hiding such people from view and forgetting about the social questions they raise; racism is essential to this process.

In such circumstances, abolitionists argue, calls to reform prisons and police forces to make them more humane are insufficient. So, too, are calls to differentiate more effectively between those who deserve to be incarcerated and those who do not. Such calls avoid a reflection on the root causes of the problems that prisons and police pretend to solve. Instead, abolitionism proposes the creation of an 'array of social institutions that would begin to solve the social problems that set people on the track to prison, thereby helping to render the prison obsolete'.[220]

This broader sense of security would involve meeting educational, childcare, housing, and healthcare needs as well as decriminalising drug use, sex work, and migration. By also creating a justice system based on reparation and reconciliation rather than retribution and vengeance, there would ultimately be no need for prisons.[221]

Of course, achieving that goal is not an immediate possibility. For now, the question is how to push for reforms to the criminal-legal system that move in the direction of defunding and disbanding. The answer will depend upon local context and the balance of political forces. As well as building power through grassroots organising, electoral initiatives will also play a role. The Movement for Black Lives coalition's Electoral Justice Project, for example, has proposed the Breathe Act, legislation that would defund federal incarceration and law enforcement, abolish the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), fund community-led, non-punitive approaches to public safety, retroactively decriminalise drug use, invest in education, health care, housing, and environmental justice, and extend workers' rights.[222]

Abolitionism throws up as many questions as it answers. The work of imagining alternatives to the criminal-legal system is ongoing. What is striking, however, is the generative possibilities of applying an abolitionist approach not only domestically within the US but also to its agencies of global security. In this, abolitionism draws upon the legacies of a Black internationalist politics in the US that found expression, for example, in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee's organising in the late 1960s against the Vietnam war and its work supporting national liberation in Puerto Rico and Palestine.[223]

Like its criminal-legal system, the US's global national security infrastructure spreads rather than reduces violence, in ways that are often organised through racism. And its military actions distract us from addressing the social and ecological problems the planet faces. Abolitionism implies that framing discussion of US military actions in terms of which kinds of 'intervention' are legitimate and which are not is a limiting horizon that hides from view the structural drivers of endless war. Likewise, discussing who should be constrained by borders and who should not means avoiding reflection on the role that borders play in our social and economic systems and what the alternatives might be.

An abolitionist framework entails understanding that genuine security does not result from the elimination of 'threats' but from the presence of collective well-being. It advocates building institutions that foster the social and ecological relationships needed to live dignified lives, rather than reactively identifying groups of people who are seen as threatening. It holds that true security rests not on dominance but on solidarity, at both the personal and the international level. It is possible to address security problems like climate change and pandemic diseases only from an internationalist perspective. In the long term, it is illusory to achieve security for one group of people at another's expense.[224] In policy terms, an abolitionist approach would imply a progressive defunding and shrinking of the US's bloated military, intelligence, and border infrastructure, and the construction of alternative institutions that can provide collective security in the face of environmental and social dangers.

The US racial security logic

The US currently spends over $1 trillion a year on a fantasy of national security. This amount, spread across military, intelligence, and border agencies, is over twice what it would cost to provide both COVID-19 vaccines to everyone in the world and a global safety net to prevent anyone from falling into poverty because of the virus.[225] The Department of Defense budget alone comprises more than half of all federal discretionary spending each year. The US military deploys 2 million men and women across at least 800 military bases in 90 countries and territories around the world. It conducted covert military operations in 154 countries in 2020.[226] It maintains an estimated arsenal of 3,800 nuclear warheads and, in the coming years, plans to spend roughly $100 billion to purchase 600 more nuclear missiles from defence corporation Northrop Grumman.[227]

Beyond the military, the present-day US national security system includes agencies that were forged in the early Cold War, such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the National Security Council (NSC), as well as more recent creations of the Wars on Drugs and Terror, such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With global frameworks like the Global War on Terror and War on Drugs, involving relationships of intelligence-sharing, training, arms exports, and financial assistance, the US is able to draw many other states into its security machinery, driving spirals of conflict across Latin America, the Middle East, South and South East Asia, and Africa. Hundreds of thousands have died in Mexico as a result of the militarised War on Drugs the US has encouraged there.[228] The US remains the world's largest arms exporter, with its share of arms exports rising to over a third of the global total over the last five years.[229]

In the neoliberal era, the national security system has incorporated a web of think-tanks and private security corporations involved in weapons manufacturing, military logistics, the provision of mercenaries and other armed personnel, cyberwarfare, border fortification, and surveillance technology. At one remove from these corporations is the array of Wall Street investors who profit from the taxpayer-funded national security system.

The scale of this infrastructure is almost completely accepted as the taken-for-granted background to US foreign policy-making. To question it is to place oneself outside of what is considered legitimate opinion in elite US politics. Threaded through this consensus is an ideological process which involves repeatedly identifying 'bad actors' – whether they are embodied in nation states or insurgent movements – and selecting methods of dominating them to produce a fantasy of security. The frameworks through which these 'bad actors' are conceived have foundations in the racial and colonial history of the US. Today, they have a global reach.

From the frontier wars of the colonial period to the Global War on Terror, the construction of threats to security has involved what Michael Rogin calls the 'fantasy of savage violence', the fear that racially subordinated groups might inflict their barbarism on the civilised.[230] Rebellions against racial and colonial domination are the indispensable emergencies around which US security policy and practice has usually been organised. Some of these emergencies are real, some exaggerated, and some entirely imagined. Their racial elements might be explicit or submerged. In any case, they provide opportunities for the mythic heroes of US expansion to exact racial revenge or rescue.[231] This involves what Franco Fornari describes as 'the incredible paradox that the most important security function is not to defend ourselves from an external enemy, but *to find a real enemy*'.[232]

In a sense, the US has never stopped fighting 'savages' at its frontiers, even as the frontier expanded to the global battlefields of the Cold War, Global War on Terror, and War on Drugs.[233] The enemy in each case is characterised by an ascribed inherent failure to follow 'civilised' rules of conflict. To conservatives, the enemy is of necessity alien to the values of Western civilisation; to liberals, the enemy fails to uphold democracy and human rights. But these political differences conceal an implicit solidarity: with few exceptions, conservatives and liberals agree that national security means absolute domination over less civilised enemies.

In this way, the US national security system proclaims its own innocence and virtue while it is, as Martin Luther King, Jr., pointed out in 1967, 'the greatest purveyor of violence in the world'.[234]But the weight of history does not fully explain the modalities of US national security policy and practice in the neoliberal era. Neoliberalism depends upon racially coded global divisions of labour that render vast swathes of the human population superfluous to capitalist production. Projects of racist policing, mass incarceration, border militarisation, and counter-terrorism are directed at managing this 'surplus' humanity under neoliberalism. This, in turn, provides a material basis for recurring upsurges of nationalism and racism that flourish in the ruins of neoliberalism's dismantling of collective democratic action.[235]

This emphasis on security under neoliberalism has offered a new basis for the legitimacy of government itself. As former Chair of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, told the Zürich daily *Tages-Anzeiger* in 2007, 'thanks to globalization, policy decisions in the US have been largely replaced by global market forces. National security aside, it hardly makes any difference who will be the next president'.[236]

In other words, because economic policy is usually subsumed in global markets, neoliberal governments find it hard to derive consent from claiming to increase citizens' material well-being; instead, it is easier to legitimise themselves through claims of protecting citizens from myriad terrible dangers – namely, 'national security'. Racially marked populations, who have been dispossessed by neoliberalism, are then cast as new sources of danger, in the form of terrorists, migrants, or criminals.[237] Neoliberal political contest becomes a matter of parties competing over the identification of threats and the implementation of spectacles of violence in response.

The result is a political culture bent out of shape: national security has an overbearing presence in policy-making circles but one that mainly sustains a fantasy of domination and avoids any coming to terms with its own structural failures. As its decision to increase military spending indicates, the Biden administration has not broken with this pattern.

Mourning for America

Such a situation is not unique to the US but is a tendency wherever neoliberalism dominates. However, the US context is distinguished by an ideological attachment to the fantasy of a never-ending 1990s, when, in the aftermath of the Cold War, US exceptionalism seemed to have made possible a stable, US-dominated world order, before China's twenty-first century ascent to superpower status. The delusion of returning to the US 'primacy' of the 1990s has long since become obsolete as a viable means of providing national security. Yet in the Washington policy-making process, alternatives to such a strategy are simply not credible.[238] By not facing up to the irreversibility of its geopolitical decline and the environmental and social challenges it now confronts, the US is putting off a collective mourning for the loss of an imagined America that was loved but no longer exists. This failure to grapple with the early end of the

American century finds expression in liberal calls for a return to a 'rules-based international system' – code for 1990s-style globalisation – as much as in Trump's call to 'make America great again'. Refusing to come to terms with the collapse of a fantasy of US omnipotence produces a melancholic paralysis in the face of real dangers, even as the US national security infrastructure lashes out against the current list of targets: China, Russia, Venezuela, and Iran.[239]

As such, the gap between the official US narratives of national security and the actual security needs of ordinary people has become palpable. The US national security infrastructure has itself been a major contributor to the greatest danger facing the US population over the coming decades, the heating of the planet.[240] Indeed, rather than reduce its carbon emissions, the Pentagon has presented climate crisis as providing a new rationale for its existence, declaring the US military as a necessary source of order in a world of climate-driven mass migration and extremism.[241]

The US national security system did not prevent over half a million people in the US losing their lives to COVID-19, one of the world's highest per capita death tolls in the richest country in the world. Instead, it mobilised anti-Chinese sentiment in response to the pandemic to justify an escalation in spending to counter the rise of China.[242] Thus, even the catastrophes of climate crisis and zoonotic pandemics have been folded into the racialised logic of national security. The cycles of violence spun by the War on Drugs and the Global War on Terror have continued, despite those Wars causing far greater loss of civilian life than drug traffickers or terrorists could ever have imagined.[243] The general pattern is that US policies exacerbate the insecurities they are ostensibly designed to minimise. They have utterly failed to deal with the actual dangers facing the US population. It is a record of failure that can only be described as pathological.

Cracks in the system

But there are cracks in the dominant security logic that could be prised open. US public opinion is sceptical of the endless wars. Around two-thirds of Americans think the 2003 Iraq war was a mistake and over half think the US should not have deployed military force in Afghanistan or Syria. Veterans are just as likely to oppose these wars as anyone else, irrespective of period of service, rank, and combat experience.[244] In both the 2008 and 2016 presidential elections, the winning candidate stood on a platform of military withdrawal (even though Presidents Obama and Trump both subsequently increased military deployment).

Not only is there opposition to US involvement in specific wars but there is also support for defunding the national security infrastructure as a whole: a majority in the US favours cutting the defence budget by 10% and reallocating those resources to disease control and other public services. Twice as many people support such a cut to the defence budget as oppose it.[245] Despite its popularity, legislation introduced to achieve this defunding was easily defeated in Congress.[246]

The body of opinion in favour of military defunding lacks the momentum and energy that comes from grassroots organisational power – the only force capable of overcoming the vested interests and ideological barriers that have stood in the way of coming to terms with US violence.

Fifty years ago, when progressive movements in the US were last at a peak of organisational power, in the shadow of the Vietnam war, Congress did take steps to reduce the power of the national security

infrastructure. The ninety-third Congress, from 1973 to 1975, was, according to Greg Grandin, perhaps the 'most anti-imperial legislature in United States history'. In this period, Congress gave itself the power to review and reverse White House decisions to engage in wars; made intelligence agencies more accountable; abolished two national security entities, the Un-American Activities Committee and the Office of Public Safety; and banned US military support to authoritarian groups and governments in Angola, Chile, Indonesia, South Korea, and Turkey.[247]

Seize the time

Today, once again, young people are on the streets. Abolitionist demands, such as the call to abolish ICE, are central to these movements. At the same time, a Left flank has opened up in the Democratic Party, with a measure of representation in Congress, providing space to articulate implicitly abolitionist demands. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, for example, has called for the Department of Homeland Security to be disbanded.[248]

Three broad areas of engagement will be necessary for any alternative approach to begin to emerge. First, there will need to be intensified efforts of grassroots organising on national security policy-making, informed by an abolitionist perspective applied to the US's global infrastructure of violence. Deciding how best to organise and what specific issues to confront will be a matter for individual initiatives and campaign groups. For one group, the focus might be US sanctions policies, for another, it might be the War on Drugs in Latin America, for another, nuclear disarmament. Despite fighting on different fronts, these various campaigns will all be oriented towards a horizon of national security abolitionism.

Second, there will need to be a push to achieve whatever is possible through electoral and policy advocacy means. First steps might include demands to reduce the number of US military bases around the world, cancelling new weapons systems, and disbanding the United States Africa Command. A fuller agenda would include dismantling the infrastructure of the Global War on Terror and the War on Drugs by completely legalising drug use, halting US financial and logistical support for militarised violence carried out by other governments in the name of countering terrorists or narcotics traffickers, repealing authoritarian counter-terrorist legislation, and closing down the prison at Guantánamo Bay. Add to this a halting of US arms exports and other forms of security assistance and funding to governments that carry out severe human rights abuses, such as Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Diverting resources from the US military would not only reduce one of the drivers of conflict –and cut carbon emissions – but would also free public resources and political space to address the structural causes of the problems the US military claims only it can solve. Within that space, an approach to foreign policy could emerge that was more oriented towards sustaining peace and development through conflict-resolution, debt relief, and reparations programmes that empower local communities rather than make financial aid conditional on acceptance of US counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, or migration-control initiatives.

USA, Washington DC, 06 January 2021. A man dressed as a bald eagle at Presiden Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally at the Elipse. Credit: Nina Berman / NOOR

At the international level, this would imply the US renewing its commitment to the international systems of collective security established after World War II with the creation of the United Nations. The US itself drafted the elements of international law that limit the use of force across borders except in self-defence. With US encouragement, this principle was incorporated into the United Nations Charter, drawn up at San Francisco in 1945. Whatever the institutional weaknesses of the United Nations, its founding principles remain a valid and necessary basis for a system of international collective security.[249]

At the local level, a reduction in US and US-funded military power could enable alternative institutions of public safety to be developed. These might draw upon experiences of community-based security cultivated in locations where the state has failed to protect its citizens. Raúl Zibechi has, for example, written about how in Colombia, in the shadow of the War on Drugs, the indigenous peoples of the Cauca have successfully protected themselves and their land from paramilitaries, guerrilla forces, and multinational corporations by forming unarmed guard units. Unlike police forces, these involve all community members taking turns as guards, are accountable to local assemblies, and aim at restorative justice.[250]

Third, there will need to be an ideological struggle to fully confront the passing of the unchallenged dominance of the US, which would also mean a deep reckoning with the various forms of racial injustice – white supremacy, settler colonialism, and imperial warfare – through which that dominance was established. One way of moving towards such a reckoning is to take down public symbols that celebrate past racist violence, as protestors have sought to do in recent years. Another is through forms of restorative justice. In 2016, for example, 4,000 veterans came to Standing Rock in North Dakota,

where indigenous peoples were fighting the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline. The veterans met with a group of Sioux leaders to apologise for the colonial violence of their military units and offered their political solidarity in the struggle against the pipeline.[251]

At the national level, a progressive step would be the construction of a landmark monument to the lives lost to US military violence, from Wounded Knee to Waziristan.

Twice before in US history there has been a major opportunity to overcome racism, prioritise care over killing, and embrace the reciprocity that constitutes humanity – first, in the era of reconstruction after the abolition of slavery, and then in the heyday of the Black freedom and anti-war movements of the late 1960s. As a third such opportunity begins to become a possibility in the United States – with climate and pandemic crises looming – we must once again seize the time to fulfil the promise of those earlier moments.

Arun Kundnani writes about racial capitalism and Islamophobia, surveillance and political violence, and Black radical movements. He is the author of *The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, extremism, and the domestic War on Terror* (Verso, 2014) and *The End of Tolerance: racism in 21st century Britain* (Pluto, 2007), which was selected as a *New Statesman* book of the year. Twitter: @ArunKundnani

Notes

214 Buchanan, L., Bui, Q., and Patel, J.K (2020) 'Black Lives Matter may be the largest movement in US history', New York Times, 3 July. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html

215 Ransby, B. (2018) Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the 21st Century. Oakland, CA: California University Press.

216 Akbar, A. (2020) 'How defund and disband became the demands', New York Review of Books, 15 June. https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2020/06/15/how-defund-and-disband-became-the-demands/

217 Davis, A. Y. (2005) Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, And Torture. New York: Seven Stories Press, p. 111.

218 'Our vision'. Dissenters. https://wearedissenters.org/our-vision/

219 Davis (2005), p. 113.

220 Davis (2005), p. 92.

221 Davis, A.Y. (2003) Are Prisons Obsolete? New York: Seven Stories Press, pp. 15–21, 91, 107–110.

222 The Breathe Act Section-by-Section Bill Summary, Movement for Black Lives' Electoral Justice Project, 2020.

223 Forman, J. (1997) The Making of Black Revolutionaries. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

224 Abolitionist arguments align with notions of human security. See, for example, Ammerdown Group (2016) Rethinking Security: A discussion paper. https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/portfolio/rethinking-security-paper/

225 Hartung, W. (2017) 'The trillion-dollar national security budget', TomDispatch, 25 July 25. https://tomdispatch.com/william-hartung-the-trillion-dollar-national-security-budget/; Oxfam International (2021) The Inequality Virus: Bringing together a world torn apart by coronavirus through a fair, just and sustainable economy: methodology note, p. 17. https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/inequality-virus

226 Turse, N. (2021) 'Will the Biden administration shine light on shadowy special ops programs?', Intercept, 20 March 20. https://theintercept.com/2021/03/20/joe-biden-special-operations-forces/

227 Hans M. Kristensen, H. M. and Korda, M. (2021) 'United States nuclear forces, 2020', Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 76(1) p. 46. https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.2019.1701286; Eaves, E. (2021) 'Why is America getting a new $100 billion nuclear weapon?', Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 8 February. https://thebulletin.org/2021/02/why-is-america-getting-a-new-100-billion-nuclear-weapon

228 Molloy, M. (2018) 'Homicide in Mexico 2007–March 2018: continuing epidemic of militarized hyper-violence', Small Wars Journal, 27 April. https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/homicide-mexico-2007-march-2018-continuing-epidemic-militarized-hyper-violence

229 Wezeman, P, D., Kuimova, A. and Wezeman, S. T. (2021) Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2020. Stockholm: (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), p. 2.

230 Rogin, M. (1990)'"Make My Day!': spectacle as amnesia in imperial politics"' Representations, 29: 99–123, p. 109. https://doi.org/10.2307/2928420

231 Faludi, S. (2008) The Terror Dream: Myth and Misogyny in an Insecure America. New York: Picador.

232 Fornari, F. (1975) The Psychoanalysis of War. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, p. xvii.

233 Davis (2005), p. 121.

234 Martin Luther King, Jr. (1967) 'Beyond Vietnam',4 April. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/beyond-vietnam

235 Kundnani, A. (2021) 'The racial constitution of neoliberalism', Race & Class. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396821992706; Brown, W. (2019) In the Ruins of Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

236 Quoted in Tooze, A. (2018) Crashed: How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World. New York: Viking, p. 574.

237 Wilson Gilmore, R. (2007) Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

238 Porter, P. (2018) 'Why America's grand strategy has not changed: power, habit, and the US foreign policy establishment', International Security, 42(4): 9–46. https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00311

239 Gilroy, P. (2004) After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture? Abingdon: Routledge.

240 Crawford, N. C. (2019) Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War – Updated and Revised. Brown University, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Costs of War Project, p. 1. https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/Pentagon%20Fuel%20Use%2C%20Climate%20Change%20and%20the%20Costs%20of%20War%20Revised%20November%202019%20Crawford.pdf

241 Department of Defense (2014) Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap. Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense, pp. i, 2, 4. Nick Buxton and Ben Hayes (2015) The Secure and the Dispossessed: How the military and the corporations are shaping a climate-changed world. London and Amsterdam: Pluto Press and Transnational Institute.

242 Bowman, T. (2021) 'Pentagon pushes for bigger effort to deter China's growing military might', NPR, 16 March. https://www.npr.org/2021/03/16/977987292/pentagon-pushes-for-bigger-effort-to-deter-chinas-growing-military-might

243 Institute for Economics and Peace (2020) Global Terrorism Index 2015: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism. p. 14. This report draws on definitions and data from the Global Terrorism Database maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland. Its definition of terrorism excludes most forms of political violence carried out by states and therefore omits the vast majority of violent incidents in the Global War on Terror.

244 Pew Research (2019) 'Majorities of US veterans, public say the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were not worth fighting'. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/10/majorities-of-u-s-veterans-public-say-the-wars-in-iraq-and-afghanistan-were-not-worth-fighting/

245 Pocan, M. (2020) 'The American people agree: cut the pentagon's budget', Data for Progress, 20 July https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2020/7/20/cut-the-pentagons-budget

246 Semler, S. (2021) 'Cut the military budget and give us $2,000 checks with the money', Jacobin, 23 February https://jacobinmag.com/2021/02/stimulus-checks-lee-pocan-defund-pentagon-budget/

247 Gandin, G. (2006) Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism. New York, NY: Metropolitan Books, pp. 62–3.

248 Bseiso, F. (2019) 'Ocasio-Cortez suggests eliminating Department of Homeland Security', CNN, 11 July. https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/11/politics/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-department-of-homeland-security/index.html

249 Moyn, S. (2020) Beyond Humanity: how to control America's use of force – Quincy Brief No. 5. Washington, DC: Quincy Institute. https://quincyinst.org/2020/07/15/beyond-humanity-how-to-control-americas-use-of-force/

250 Zibechi, R. (2018) 'People in Defence of Life and Territory: counter-power and self-defence in Latin America', Transnational Institute. https://longreads.tni.org/stateofpower/people-defence-life-territory; Zibechi, R. (2012) Territories in Resistance: A Cartography of Latin American Social Movements. Oakland, CA: AK Press, pp. 167–9.

251 Tolan, S. (2016) 'Veterans came to North Dakota to protest a pipeline. But they also found healing and forgiveness', Los Angeles Times, 10 December. https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-north-dakota-20161210-story.html