Reformist reforms vs. abolitionist steps in policing

These charts break down the difference between reformist reforms which continue or expand the reach of policing, and abolitionist steps that work to chip away and reduce its overall impact. As we struggle to decrease the power of policing there are also positive and pro-active investments we can make in community health and well-being.

**Does This...**

- **Reduce funding to police?**
- **Challenge the notion police increase safety?**
- **Reduce tools/tactics/technology police have at their disposal?**
- **Reduce the scale of policing?**

**Body Cameras**

- **Increases.** Equipping police officers with body cameras will require more money going toward police budgets.
- **NO.** Body cameras are pitched as making police more accountable, increasing the idea that policing, done “right,” makes people safe.

**Community Policing**

- **Advocates of community policing argue that departments will have to hire more cops to be in neighborhoods and in the community.**
- **NO.** This is based on the belief that policing is focused on keeping people safe, and the violence of policing is caused by a “breakdown of trust” with the community.
- **INCREASES.** Body cameras provide the police with another tool, increasing surveillance and increasing police budgets to acquire more gadgets.
- **NO.** More community policing means that the scale of policing will increase, particularly in Black, Brown, poor neighborhoods, where there is perceived “mistrust.”

**More Training**

- **NO.** More training will require more funding and resources going to police to develop and run trainings.
- **NO.** This furthers the belief that better training would ensure that we can rely on police trained for “counterterrorism” and other military-style action for community policing tasks.
- **INCREASES.** Cops are trained in additional tactics and approaches.
- **INCREASES all of these.**

**Civilian Review/ Oversight Boards**

- **In some cases, there could be an increase in funding, whereas in other cases, there would be no change.**
- **NO.** This would appear to challenge the assumption that policing creates safety or examining how we pay for its costs are essential for decreasing instances of police harm and violence. This is unnecessary rather than part of the daily violence of policing.
- **INCREASES.** Cops can be investigated for killing.”
- **NO.** Some argue for Civilian Review Boards “with teeth,” the power to make decisions and take away policing tools and tactics.

**Civilian Budgeting**

- **NO.** Prosecuting police who have killed and abused civilians.
- **NO.** In unusual cases, rather than part of the daily violence of policing.
- **NO.** Often, media attention in high profile cases leads to more resources and scrutiny, including body cameras and “training.”
- **NO.** This truly entrenches policing as systemic violence. Communities become structured around perpetuating and increasing the idea that police are the go to for every kind of problem.

**Does This...**

- **Suspend the use of paid administrative leave for cops involved in excessive force?**
- **Withhold pensions and don’t reinvest cops involved in excessive force?**
- **Require cops to be liable for misconduct settlements?**
- **Cap overtime accrual of pay for military exercises?**
- **Withdraw participation in police militarization programs?**
- **Prioritize spending on community health, education, affordable housing?**
- **Reduce the size of the police force?**

**YES.** This can increase community-based budgets as municipalities no longer pay for policing’s harm against community members.

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