

PASSED 4-0
(Mullins + Shetter absent)

Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission
Resolution 24-02 - Denouncing Violent Suppression of Pro-Palestinian Protests

Summary: The Indiana University administration made decisions which led to a militarized state police force violently suppressing pro-Palestinian protests held in Dunn Meadow on April 25 and 27, 2024. In this resolution, CAPS denounces the criminalization, administrative punishment and violent suppression of lawful political dissent, requests that Mayor Kerry Thomson and the Board of Public Safety ensure that no city resources or cooperation will be provided to the Indiana State Police that can be used commit violence or intimidation of protestors at Dunn Meadow, and demands Indiana University immediately cease these activities, hold responsible decision-makers and reverse punitive actions.

WHEREAS, the Commission is appalled at the videos of SWAT police and state troopers assaulting and arresting non-violent student protestors and their supporters on the Indiana University campus on April 25 and April 27;

WHEREAS, this violent suppression of principled calls for peace, freedom, democracy and equality by students, professors and other community members will forever stain the history of our city;

WHEREAS, using militarized police - including rooftop snipers - to intimidate non-violent protestors and their supporters is a violation of free speech and an overuse of state force with the intent to suppress dissent;

WHEREAS, people attending an institution of "higher learning" should not be assaulted, traumatized or criminalized by their university for criticizing its policies, or for supporting students who do so;

WHEREAS, the IU student protestors and their supporters rallying in Dunn Meadow were non-violent and posed no threat to safety;

WHEREAS, peaceful assembly in order to engage in political speech is a protected right under the constitution, and those assembled have the right to demand changes in administrative personnel, ending partnerships with Crane Naval Base, financial divestment from Israel, and equal treatment of Muslim and Middle Eastern students;

WHEREAS, Indiana State Police (ISP) Superintendent Doug Carter defended the use of rooftop snipers, use of force and arrests against non-violent protestors used by ISP on IU campus in an interview to Indiana Public Media on April 29 and stated that "if we have to come back then we will, but that'll be at a time that is known only to us." [1]

WHEREAS, in the recent CAPS-hosted “Reimagining Safety” events held on the IU campus, we learned that many of the problems of US policing stem from the history of state repression targeted against particular racial and ethnic groups to further the practices of settler-colonialism, genocide and chattel slavery, and last week’s use of a violent, militarized police force against city residents speaking against injustice shows that this “history” is far from over;

WHEREAS, the Commission is inspired by the students and other community members who are peacefully demanding changes in institutional practices that they find morally repugnant,

WHEREAS, the Commission is proud of the protestors and their supporters for remaining non-violent in the face of police brutality and provocation, and for refusing to be intimidated into silence.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY ON PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. Denounces the criminalization, administrative punishment and violent suppression of lawful acts of political dissent taking place at Dunn Meadow as violating best practices in policing and as harmful to public safety for all Bloomington community members;
2. Celebrates the non-violence of pro-Palestinian student protesters and their supporters despite facing police brutality, administrative punishment and provocation; and
3. Applauds Bloomington City Council Members Isabel Piedmont-Smith, Andy Ruff, Matt Flaherty, Kate Rosenbarger, Hopi Stosberg, Dave Rollo, Courtney Daily and Sydney Zulich who have issued a letter decrying the Indiana State Police’s use of force at the rally and condemning the actions of IU President Pamela Whitten’s administration; and
4. Requests that Indiana University:
 - a. Immediately cease the violent suppression of pro-Palestinian protests and hold responsible the people who made the decisions leading to these actions, and;
 - b. Reverse all punitive actions taken against non-violent protestors and their supporters on the Indiana University Bloomington campus; and
5. Recommends that Mayor Kerry Thomson and the Board of Public Safety create policies and take other steps necessary to ensure that no resources or cooperation will be provided by the City of Bloomington, including by the Bloomington Police Department, to the Indiana State Police that could be used to commit violence or intimidation against the protestors and their supporters at Dunn Meadow.

PASSED by the Community Advisory on Public Safety Commission of the City of Bloomington,
Monroe County, Indiana, this 1 day of May, 2024.

Kamala L. Brown-Sparks
Co-Chair

May 1, 2024
Date

SOURCES

[1] "ISP Leader on IU protests: 'If in fact, we have to come back, then we will'" By Ethan Sandweiss. April 29, 2024.
<<https://indianapublicmedia.org/news/isp-leader-on-iu-protests-we-may-be-back-at-a-time-know-n-only-to-us.php>>