

Before the Law we all should have the same color

Racism, #BlackLivesMatter and the death of George Floyd

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Abstract

For hundreds of years, people who were precepted as being different because of having another race or a different skin color, have been discriminated and had to face a phenomenon called racism. Everything started with slavery. But slavery, instead of ending at a certain point, the concept only transformed into something worse, something that still persists in the 21st century and is present around us. Even in countries where democracy represents the main symbol, like the United States – a representative country when it comes about people`s rights and democracy – racism is still around, well and alive. What is important to mention though, is that people never stopped fighting against it. Even nowadays, thanks to the globalization and the development of the world, the fight, the tactics and the ways of fighting it got stronger and the voice got louder.

The year of 2020 has brought a lot of atrocities with it. Besides the pandemic the death of George Floyd also represented a shock for the entire world and a fresh start for the movements of the Black Lives Matter organization. The main questions here are: Did the death of George Floyd change anything? Did the protests against his death have an effect over the world? And is it possible, nowadays, to finally get rid of this disease called racism that has been walking on Earth for way too long? By following the course of the events, these three questions should find their responses.

Keywords

Racism, 21st century, United States, #BlackLivesMatter, George Floyd, protests, 2020

I. Racism – definition and short history

1.1. Definitions of racism

Even though we are within the 21st century and also the world has evolved alongside with its mentality, racism still represents a negative phenomenon that is present all around us. It metamorphosizes into many forms and it makes certain to affect plenty of individuals within the society. But, in order to understand better this concept, it is important to define what racism is. Therefore, we can say that racism represents “the belief that humans may be divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called races”. Racism considers that there is a link between the “inherited physical traits and personality”. And of course, it takes in consideration the fact that some races are superior to other races.¹

The Oxford dictionary defines the term of Racism as being “the inability or refusal to recognize the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins. More widely, the devaluation of various traits of character or intelligence as ‘typical’ of particular peoples.”²

And last but not least, a final definition would be that racism is “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.”³ Racism can also have other meanings and take other forms. Here can be mentioned, as an example, the act of discrimination that is directed upon other human beings. So basically, the people in cause, those who have to face the many forms of racism and are discriminated constantly, most likely have a different race or a different ethnicity and they are precepted as being different in the eyes of an individual. Those who apply the characteristics of the racism consider and have a certain way of thinking that the race, the color, the gender or the

¹ “Racism | Definition, History, & Laws,” Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/racism>.

² “Racism,” Oxford Reference, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oi/authority.20111012125231893>.

³ “Definition of RACISM,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/racism>.

sexual orientation are the factors that define an individual as a human being. It can be deduced from what was mentioned previously that everything – and by everything, we mean the act of racism - happens because of the social perceptions towards those who are biologically and maybe, mentally different.

1.2. Short History of racism

In order to understand, the importance of the situation that the black people – either being African Americans or Native Americans – had to face from the beginning of everything and until now, it is absolutely necessary to analyze the roots of the problem.

Racism was mainly born as a result of ignorance and of course, fear. It somehow represents a modern concept taking in consideration the fact that racism, as we know it nowadays, appeared in the European age of imperialism. But, taking a look back, it can be proved that the roots of racism can be found deeper in history and actually had another form. Slavery actually represented the start of everything and is a key concept that made sure to forge the future in one way or another. And as it is well known, slavery is older than we can imagine, the first acts of it happening thousands of years ago.

Looking back, we can see that it all started when the Europeans began to trade African people against their own will from their homeland to America. The Triangular Trade ⁴system was a trading goods system, that started from America, going to Europe and then, Europe as a reward for the received goods, would trade African citizens from their own colonies that were established there. First, they would bring them and commercialize them in the Caribbean region and then they would be transferred to America. Therefore, these people were treated as being goods instead of human beings.

The slaves were exchanged for all kind of products, considered to be fancy at that time. The mainly goods that can be mentioned are: cotton, spices, sugar and rum. The main act of work that the slaves were supposed to do was to work on plantations.⁵ The conditions were horrible.

⁴ "Racism: A Brief History | Show Racism The Red Card," accessed February 2, 2021, <https://theredcard.ie/racism-a-brief-history/>.

⁵ "Racism."

People would either die on the journey, on the ship, from Africa to America or commit suicide because of the harsh environment they had to live in.

Therefore, different excuses were created in order to hide the brutality of slave trading and the brutality of their work and social life. Some people even tried to stop this unimaginable phenomenon but it turned into an extremely profitable business so they couldn't do anything. In the end, the self-proclaimed "superior" class started to treat them as objects, as goods and put tags on them, mentioning the fact that, in their opinion, "black people are lazy or that they were less intelligent."⁶

II. Racism in the United States – general presentation and the process of segregation

2.1. General presentation of racism in the United States

After what was described previously, it can be clearly seen that the phenomenon of racism in America started during the colonial era. It involved all kind of laws, attitudes, practices and different actions that discriminated people based on their race or ethnicity.⁷ The African Americans ethnic group had to face a lot restrictions in their lives as time passed by. All the freedoms that a person was supposed to have were included in those restrictions. The political freedoms and the political rights, the social freedoms and the social rights, and we can mention even the economic freedoms. These were prohibited for those who were biologically different, as it was mentioned before. Besides the African Americans, the Native Americans people also faced the cruel side of racism like genocides, forced removals or massacres. Unfortunately, even nowadays, they still have to face discrimination.⁸

⁶ "Racism."

⁷ Rory Van Loo, "A Tale of Two Debtors: Bankruptcy Disparities by Race," *Albany Law Review* 72 (January 1, 2009): 231.

⁸ Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality : The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley, Calif. : University of California Press, 1994), <http://archive.org/details/insearchofequality0000mccl>.

Racism was mainly manifested through: genocide, slavery, Native American reservations, Native American boarding schools, immigration and naturalization. And, last but not least, segregation.⁹

2.2 Segregation in the United States – definition and short history

Even though the United States slowly abolished the slavery step by step, the Native Americans and African Americans, basically the black people that established in the United States of America, continued to be marginalized by other people by making abuse of the process of segregation¹⁰.

But, in order to understand better what the process of segregation represents and why racism was and still is manifested through it, we have to define it. Therefore, one definition of segregation is: “the separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area, by barriers to social intercourse, by separate educational facilities, or by other discriminatory means”.¹¹

The Oxford dictionary defines it simply, as being “the act or policy of separating people of different races, religions or sexes and treating them in a different way”.¹² Even though it represents a negative phenomenon that harms other people’s lives, segregation was actually made a law for multiple times between the 18th century and the 19th century. The mentality at that time was simple yet hard to understand as the Americans didn’t believe that the white people and black people – which are of course, biologically different - are able to coexist and live together in the same society. Even though the African American people and the Native American people were free, as the slavery was abolished, this taking the social status or the tag of slaves away, a lot of important figures from the public life argued and were confused regarding their fate. Besides their fate, the social status after the liberation was also questionable from their point of view. Some of the figures

⁹ Henry, P. J., David O. Sears. *Race and Politics: The Theory of Symbolic Racism*. University of California, Los Angeles. 2002.

¹⁰ History com Editors, “A Look Back at Segregation in the United States,” HISTORY, accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/segregation-united-states>.

¹¹ “Definition of SEGREGATION,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/segregation>.

¹² “Segregation Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.Com,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/segregation>.

that we were talking about came with the idea of returning the African American slaves back to their continent, back to their homeland but some of them came with the solution of creating their own homeland.

But until reaching to that point, first, the rulers of the country made sure to dictate and to regulate the most aspects of the black people`s life – for example, even where they could work. After that, slowly, the pools, the jails, the schools, the residential areas and even the public parks started getting segregated. People started getting separated in almost every circumstance. White people were in advantage in one side and black people were marginalized on the other side. Even in the case of waiting rooms to the dentists, professional offices or hospitals, people were forced to stay separated. Colleges were segregated and new ones started to appear, colleges that were created especially for black people. Somehow, even though regarding the situation this represented a way of giving everyone a proper education.

The American Civil War, war that lasted from 1861 and until 1865, represents a key event and a decisive factor in all of what was mentioned before. This is how the opposition against abolishing slavery happened. But even so, the president of those times, Abraham Lincoln, couldn`t be stopped from accomplishing the desired results and his goals.¹³

The results of the American Civil War were, most importantly, the end of the enslavements. This thing was possible because of the introduction of the 13th Amendments. Regrettably, the death of the president Abraham Lincoln happened as well. All these events marked the fate and the development of the United States.¹⁴

Over the years, individuals and those who were discriminated or marginalized, had a lot of attempts of fighting the inequality that they were facing all the time, The Civil War representing the start of the movements. Even though it wasn`t easy at all, through hard efforts and through publicly speaking their voice, the community that had to suffer the most, slowly, managed to somehow change the mentality and those who were considering them significantly different and finally they got accepted as human beings, recovering their rights back, step by step.

III. Segregation and Racism in the 21st Century

¹³ “American Civil War | Causes, Definition, History, & Facts,” Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/event/American-Civil-War>.

¹⁴ “Our Documents - 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery (1865),” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=40>.

Some people say that, nowadays, segregation, discrimination and racism are not manifested the way they were manifested back in the history¹⁵. Indeed, as time passed by, the perspective and the mentality of people changed and racism started to be precepted as being socially, culturally and especially, morally unacceptable. But even so, racism can still be seen in the society and all of its forms are still around. Lately, evidences of racial discrimination in different sectors of the United States were exposed. Here we can mention: the criminal justice system, the business system, the economy sector and even housing, health care, the media sector or politics.

The media has other thoughts when it comes about what is going on in the United States. The justice system brutality and its way of discriminating the African Americans and the Native Americans in the 21st century has no differences, or better said, it has a lot of similarities with the behavior and practices that were used in the colonial era.¹⁶

The United States of America is a country that is considered to be a symbol, a representation or even a reflection of the most powerful democracy on Earth. A symbol that makes promises when it comes about fulfilling its people`s need or when it comes about listening and taking in consideration the voice of its population. But, since the pattern is well imprinted in the mentality of a lot of people, racism still represents an issue to the *World's Most Powerful Country*.¹⁷ Even so, because of the development of the world, the globalization and the modernization of everything that is around, the fight against the racist behaviors became easier and easier to implement, not only in the country in cause – United States - but, we are talking about the whole planet - who started supporting the fight against racism.

IV. The #BlackLivesMatter movement and the case of George Floyd

4.1. The #BlackLivesMatter movement

¹⁵ "Our 21st-Century Segregation: We're Still Divided by Race | Reniqua Allen," the Guardian, April 3, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/03/21st-century-segregation-divided-race>.

¹⁶ "US Election 2020: Why Racism Is Still a Problem for the World's Most Powerful Country," *BBC News*, October 30, 2020, sec. US Election 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2020-54738922>.

¹⁷ "US Election 2020."

The Black Lives Matter movement or, after its abbreviations “*BLM and B.L.M* is a political and social movement originating among African Americans but nowadays, it is addressing to all those who are not coming from the Caucasian race. It is a movement which is emphasizing the basic human rights and the racial equality. It’s main purpose is to protest against various forms of racism”¹⁸.

Nowadays, when we hear about the words Black Lives Matter, we are thinking about a hashtag that we can find on the social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram or Facebook. Or we can think about a political action committee that fights for the racial justice.¹⁹ This global organization was originally founded in 2013 as a response and as a protest, to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer, George Zimmerman. It also organizes different movements against the brutality of the police, mainly in the United States – but it can also be found in Canada and United Kingdom - and against different acts of violence that occur against people of color.²⁰

As it was mentioned before, the movement itself started in the year of 2013 by using the well-known hashtag #BlackLivesMatter on all the social media platforms after Trayvon Martin, an African American teenager was shot by George Zimmerman²¹. Thanks to the wrath and anger that was present all around the internet, slowly, the movement started to institutionalize itself turning into a global organization. One year later, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter²² was considered to be the word of the year²³ and a phenomenon, that somehow changed the world and its perceptions towards what is actually happening the in the lives of other people. The founders of the movement are three women of color who could not stand the injustice that has been made for so many years: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi.²⁴

¹⁸ “Definition of Black Lives Matter | Dictionary.Com,” www.dictionary.com, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/black-lives-matter>.

¹⁹ Janell Ross, “Black Lives Matter Launches a Political Action Committee. But It’s Not an Easy Fit.,” *Washington Post*, October 27, 2015, sec. The Fix, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/10/27/black-lives-matter-goes-official-with-a-political-action-committee-but-its-not-an-easy-fit/>.

²⁰ “About,” Black Lives Matter, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>.

²¹ “About.”

²² Gretchen McCulloch, “Is a Hashtag a Word? The Case of #BlackLivesMatter.,” *Slate Magazine*, January 29, 2015, <https://slate.com/human-interest/2015/01/is-a-hashtag-a-word-the-case-of-blacklivesmatter.html>.

²³ Tanika Siscoe, “#BlackLivesMatter: This Generation’s Civil Rights Movement,” January 1, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.15760/honors.279>.

²⁴ “Herstory,” Black Lives Matter, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/>.

Their strategy was simple in the beginning, and everything started with the creation of a network or a social media platform where they provided the truth regarding the daily lives of the black people who were facing racism. By using hashtags, they managed to reach thousands and thousands of people faster than they could imagine. In the end everything turned into a humanitarian organization with a purpose that was well defined – to fight racism. To make justice.

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But besides the social media, the organization considered that they needed to do more than have a presence and an integrity on the internet. Therefore, they – the members of the organization - took direct action through protests, rallies or marches. This was a way of building their power. During the manifestations or during the protests, the people would use political slogans on banners such as: “Hands up, don’t shoot”^{26/27}, “I can’t breathe”^{28/29}, “No justice, no peace”³⁰, “Is my son next?”³¹, and of course, the famous one “Black Lives Matter”.

These represented some tactics³², some strategies created with the purpose of rising awareness of the injustice that was and still is happening around. Another purpose is to wake up the empathy of the other human beings when it comes about this sensitive subject. They took in

²⁵ Herbert G. Ruffin II, “Black Lives Matter: The Growth of a New Social Justice Movement,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/black-lives-matter-growth-new-social-justice-movement/>.

²⁶ This slogan was used as a reference which was attributed to the death of Michael Brown, a 18 years old young adult, a man of color that was fatally shot in 2014 by Darren Wilson, a 28 years old police officer, in Ferguson, Missouri, United States.

²⁷ “Doj_report_on_shooting_of_michael_brown_1.Pdf,” accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/doj_report_on_shooting_of_michael_brown_1.pdf.

²⁸ This slogan was used as a reference which was attributed to the death of Eric Garner in 2014, New York, United States. Daniel Pantaleo, a police officer, put him in a precluded strangle hold while capturing him.

²⁹ “‘I Can’t Breathe’: Eric Garner’s Last Words Symbolize Our Predicament | HuffPost,” accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/i-cant-breathe-eric-garner_b_6341634?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9lbi53aWtpcGVkaWEub3JnLw&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlt6KvaO_laYk5y4kQO-Q92SD9XBDjNUuK5JSEBI-vCxybTCFr4riSEGBL9urktcMoSdRU_aoEYKKiHauDqs2JShgXRIZCfwHtbcRW6cK6I3SndhRgNbr7rm599FI_x-WrkAgx2XP6bwPJEVbfZ9SeZ8VedvfDEKDLIC_62DmW8&gucounter=2.

³⁰ “‘No Justice, No Peace’: Black Lives Matter & Bernie Sanders – Sociology In Focus,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170128200047/http://sociologyinfocus.com/2015/08/no-justice-no-peace-black-lives-matter-bernie-sanders/>.

³¹ “Protest against Police Violence, Vigil for Reconciliation Held in Memphis,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://archive.commercialappeal.com/news/protest-against-police-violence-begins-in-south-memphis-372841dddf7-69a3-e053-0100007f2095-386078911.html/>.

³² “Tactics of Black Lives Matter | KCTS 9 - Public Television,” November 2, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20151102024356/http://kcts9.org/programs/in-close/tactics-black-lives-matter>.

consideration the fact that if they would make people feel uncomfortable, not only those who were people of color and they were scared to speak up their voice, but the other races as well, would address and fight against racism in a proper way.³³

V. Case Study: The Killing of George Floyd

5.1. Background of the events

The year of 2020 brought with itself a lot of moments or better said, a lot of atrocities that will definitely mark the history and the future at the same time. There were the Australian bushfires, there were rumors about the death of Kim Jong Un, the president of North Korea, a pandemic started, there was a devastating explosion in Beirut, and, of course, last but not least, there were massive protests, Black Lives Matter protests, that not only marked the world wide web but they marked the whole humanity.³⁴

Regarding the Black Lives Matter protests, everything started on the 25th of May 2020 when George Floyd, an African American rapper – besides his other occupations: truck driver and security guard - was killed in Minnesota, Minneapolis, United States by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer. Four people were involved in this unfortunate event. Besides George Floyd and Derek Chauvin, Tou Thao and J. Alexander Kueng were the persons who assisted at the death of the Afro-American rapper without interfering with anything.³⁵

The cause of his arrest was the use of a presumed counterfeit bill. The police officers who took part in the operation belonged to the Minneapolis Police Department. George Floyd, was handcuffed brutally and was forced to lay down and face the ground the entire time. What actually happened next, shocked and unleashed the anger of the entire world. Derek Chauvin, the police

³³ "A Movement, a Slogan, a Rallying Cry: How Black Lives Matter Changed America's View on Race," NBC News, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/movement-slogan-rallying-cry-how-black-lives-matter-changed-america-n1252434>.

³⁴ "2020 Events: Yep, These All Happened in the Year from Hell," accessed February 2, 2021, <https://nypost.com/list/major-2020-events/>.

³⁵ "Chauvin And 3 Former Officers Face New Charges Over George Floyd's Death," NPR.org, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/03/868910542/chauvin-and-3-former-officers-face-new-charges-over-george-floyds-death>.

officer, pressed his knee against the victim`s neck for about eight minutes and forty-six seconds, leaving him without any breath.³⁶

Even though George Floyd complained multiple times about the fact that he couldn`t breathe, the man who was brutally and indifferently pressing his knee against the 46-year-old man`s neck, didn`t even bother to rise his leg to let George regain his breath. Slowly, the victim started to panic and expressed out loud how he wasn`t able to breathe and also how afraid he was to not die. In despair, he called for his mother but after a few minutes, Floyd stopped talking. When the other officers that were witnessing all of this checked his vital signs, they realized that George Floyd died. Not believing such thing, Chauvin refused to stand up and set the victim free. He only understood the gravity of the situation in the moment the medics gave the verdict and declared George Floyd as being dead.³⁷

The next day, on the 26th of May, more footages of the tragic event became public, taking advantage of how fast the information travels. Soon enough, the media – either social media or traditional media – found out about the inhuman act. As a cause of this effect, the officers who were present got dismissed as their behavior was unacceptable. The result after the autopsy of George Floyd`s body was declared to be homicide.

The death of George Floyd activated, once again, the protests and the manifestations against the police brutality, against the lack of accountability and of course, against the police racism that is present in the justice system of the United States.

5.2. The impact of George Floyd`s death – the memorials, protests and movements

³⁶ “George Floyd: What Happened in the Final Moments of His Life,” *BBC News*, July 16, 2020, sec. US & Canada, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52861726>.

³⁷ “8 Minutes and 46 Seconds: How George Floyd Was Killed in Police Custody [Video] - The New York Times,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html>.

The area where George Floyd got killed by the police officer turned into a commemoration place. Numerous notices were placed there with the purpose of honoring him and also to make a reference to the Black Lives Matter development.³⁸

Later on, a march started, where thousands and thousands of people showed up in order to walk together for justice and for George Floyd with the final destination being the 3Rd Precinct of the Minneapolis Police.

Just like it was mentioned before, this campaign also used slogans, just like they did before in other cases of brutality. This time, the banners had phrases on them as the following: “Black Lives Matter”, “Justice for George” and, once again, the famous “I can’t breathe”.³⁹ The place where the tragic event happened, an intersection, was named as George Perry Floyd Jr. Place. Soon, the intersection got closed as the supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement, occupied it in order to share their demands for justice regarding the racist behavior that is still present in the system.⁴⁰ All these actions spread quickly. Internationally, over 60 countries started to support the movements of the Black Lives Matter organization and their own causes. Locally, more than 2000 cities – here can be mentioned some of them: New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Ohio, Denver, Houston or Seattle - started a bunch of demonstrations in the United States, most of them being peaceful demonstrations but of course, there were a series of riots as well.⁴¹ Even though everything started peacefully, the implications of the police by using flash grenades, rubber bullets, smoke bombs and tear gas, only turned these demonstrations into something more aggressive. As a result, the area where the demonstrations took part got vandalized and suffered because of the action that people took. More statues or monuments that had the purpose to represent an act of honoring different persons or events that were linked with racism or even slavery got, unfortunately, stolen, vandalized or destroyed during the demonstrations.

³⁸ “In Pictures: A Racial Reckoning in America,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/05/27/us/gallery/george-floyd-demonstrations/index.html>.

³⁹ “‘It’s Real Ugly’: Protesters Clash With Minneapolis Police After George Floyd’s Death,” May 26, 2020, <https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2020/05/26/hundreds-of-protesters-march-in-minneapolis-after-george-floyds-deadly-encounter-with-police/>.

⁴⁰ “Minneapolis to Name Stretch of Chicago Avenue for George Floyd,” MSN, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/minneapolis-to-name-stretch-of-chicago-avenue-for-george-floyd/ar-BB19bMI5>.

⁴¹ “How Black Lives Matter Reached Every Corner of America - The New York Times,” accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/13/us/george-floyd-protests-cities-photos.html>.

5.2. The reactions regarding George Floyd's death

When it comes about the reactions after the death of George Floyd, they were not only shared by the victim's family but also by the whole world. Like it was mentioned before, the impact of the cruel act that happened against George Floyd was more than can be described.

First of all, it is normal for the family to share the first reaction regarding the tragedy. The victim's cousin, Tera Brown⁴² shared her disappointment regarding how the police acted. She declared that one of the main duties of a policeman is to serve and to protect those in need. But, taking in consideration how everything ended, not even one policeman bothered to actually help George Floyd who was desperately begging for his life. One of the victim's brother stated the following: "They could have tased him; they could have maced him. Instead, they put their knee in his neck and just sat on him and then carried on. They treated him worse than they treat animals."⁴³ The former basketball player, Stephen Jackson, a friend of George Floyd gave a public statement where he expressed how the death of his friend destroyed him.⁴⁴

Courtney Ross, George Floyd's girlfriend made sure to ask the people who were protesting for his death, to do it in the most honorable way possible. Her statement was direct saying that: "You can't fight fire with fire. Everything just burns, and I've seen it all day – people hate, they're hating, they're hating, they're mad. And he would not want that."⁴⁵

Besides the family, all the former presidents of the United States made sure to release statements regarding this tragedy. Barack Obama, a man of color as well, made his statement public by using the personal Twitter account. He expressed his feelings and said that these kinds of acts should not be normal in the 21st century in the United States.⁴⁶ He also said that United

⁴² Christina Maxouris CNN, "George Floyd's Family Says Four Officers Involved in His Death Should Be Charged with Murder," CNN, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/27/us/minneapolis-george-floyd-police-death/index.html>.

⁴³ CNN.

⁴⁴ "Ex-NBA Player Stephen Jackson Mourns Loss of His Longtime Friend George Floyd | Fox News," accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.foxnews.com/sports/nba-stephen-jackson-mourns-loss-longtime-friend-george-floyd>.

⁴⁵ "He Was Kind, He Was Helpful': Friends, Family Say George Floyd Was A Gentle Giant," May 26, 2020, <https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2020/05/26/he-was-kind-he-was-helpful-friends-family-say-george-floyd-was-a-gentle-giant/>.

⁴⁶ Marina Pitofsky, "Obama on the Death of George Floyd: 'This Shouldn't Be "Normal" in 2020 America,'" Text, TheHill, May 29, 2020, <https://thehill.com/homenews/news/500128-obama-on-the-death-of-george-floyd-this-shouldnt-be-normal-in-2020-america>.

States, as we know it, "was founded on protest: it is called the American Revolution, and every step of progress in this country, every expansion of freedom, every expression of our deepest ideals has been won through efforts that made the status quo uncomfortable."⁴⁷

Using the Clinton Foundation, the former president Bill Clinton, also made a public statement: "In the days since George Floyd's death, it is impossible not to feel grief for his family — and anger, revulsion, and frustration that his death is the latest in a long line of tragedy and injustice, and a painful reminder that a person's race still determines how they will be treated in nearly every aspect of American life."⁴⁸

The former president George W. Bush and his wife, the former First Lady, Laura Bush, made sure to share their thoughts and their deepest regrets. In their 500 pages statement, they firstly declared that both of them are "anguished by the brutal suffocation of George Floyd and disturbed by the injustice and fear that suffocate our country". Then, they declared that: "It is time for America to examine our tragic failures."⁴⁹ This was followed by other words that the president addressed, saying that "many doubt the justice of our country, and with good reason. Black people see the repeated violation of their rights without an urgent and adequate response from American institutions. We know that lasting justice will only come by peaceful means."⁵⁰

5.3. Reactions in the international context

When it comes about the international context, many countries shared their own opinions about the shocking event. For example, in Canada, Justin Trudeau, the prime minister considered racism as a real problem that exists in both countries - Canada and the United States. He addressed

⁴⁷ "Obama Urges Young People To Keep Up Their Protests To Bring Change," NPR.org, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/sections/live-updates-protests-for-racial-justice/2020/06/03/869208191/obama-urges-young-people-to-keep-up-their-protests-to-bring-change>.

⁴⁸ "Read: Obama, Bush, and Carter on George Floyd Protests," accessed February 2, 2021, <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/06/obama-bush-carter-george-floyd-protests.html>.

⁴⁹ "Former President George W. Bush: 'It Is Time for America to Examine Our Tragic Failures,'" accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/former-president-george-w-bush-it-time-america-examine-our-n1222591>.

⁵⁰ Kevin Breuninger, "'Looting Is Not Liberation': George W. Bush Calls for Unity, Equal Justice during George Floyd Protests," CNBC, June 2, 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/02/george-w-bush-calls-for-unity-during-george-floyd-protests.html>.

to its people, telling them that one of the most important things is to stand up against this atrocity.⁵¹ Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel, was more direct regarding this and described how the murder of George Floyd is unacceptable and a very terrible thing. Even the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated publicly that the United States has a large history when it comes about the human rights abuses.⁵² Boris Johnson, the British Prime Minister agrees with the facts that racist violence definitely has no place in the society. He shared that he felt sickened regarding the behavior of the police officer from the footage and he advised people to protest peacefully and constantly against racism.⁵³

Even the international organizations of the world made sure to speak about the death of George Floyd. The European Union shared the bloc's opinion through the EU's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell. They described these actions as an abuse of power and they made a public statement mentioning how shocked and appalled the whole bloc was.⁵⁴ Michelle Bachelet, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, censured the episode as one of numerous killings of unarmed African Americans, and advised the United States to take "genuine activity" and end the rehash of such killings. She likewise asked protestors to "express their requests for equity calmly" and for police to avoid further utilization of inordinate power.⁵⁵

The important religious figures and the spiritual leaders of the world also shared their regrets and thoughts regarding the death of George Floyd. Pope Francis, talked about this event during the weekly prayer that took place in Vatican: "Dear brothers and sisters in the United States, I have witnessed with great concern the disturbing social unrest in your nation in these past days, following the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd. We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism

⁵¹ "Trudeau Takes a Knee for George Floyd," POLITICO, accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/05/trudeau-takes-a-knee-for-george-floyd-303922>.

⁵² "Russia, Iran, China Chide U.S. over Human Rights after Minneapolis.," accessed February 3, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/05/minneapolis-human-rights-china-russia-iran.html>.

⁵³ "Boris Johnson on George Floyd Killing: 'Racist Violence Has No Place in Society' – Video," *The Guardian*, June 3, 2020, sec. Politics, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2020/jun/03/boris-johnson-on-death-of-george-floyd-racist-violence-has-no-place-in-society-video>.

⁵⁴ "EU 'appalled' by Floyd's Death, Warns against Excess Force | Reuters," accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-minneapolis-police-protests-eu-idUSKBN23919P>.

⁵⁵ "OHCHR | UN Human Rights Chief Urges 'Serious Action' to Halt US Police Killings of Unarmed African Americans," accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25910&LangID=E>.

and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life."⁵⁶ The 14th Dalai Lama talked about the death of George Floyd to his students, in India, using this cruel event for teaching them a lesson and for sharing the following: "there are some who even take it as a pride to be able to kill somebody"⁵⁷

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, The Black Lives Matter development and the death of George Floyd has exhibited an unmatched capacity to reach and to influence, an enormous crowd as we could see. Cities from the United States, numerous countries in the world, organizations and even spiritual leaders talked about how racism still represents an issue in the 21st century and how unacceptable it is to live with this belief in our days. Each one of them made sure to ask their own people to fight against it, so that the world could be a better place.

All in all, the "Black Lives Matter" is a solid reason that will keep on getting more grounded and gain force. For the entirety of the resistance this development has met the collusion and its understanding. This policy driven issue won't be quieted or downsized. African Americans alongside numerous whites and individuals of various social foundations are starting to proceed to forge a better society and not fall back to where the world once has been. They have an ambition to represent the lives that are no longer present in this world: Travon Marin, Eric Garner, Mike Brown and George Floyd.

Since the beginnings of the United States, people of color have been considered as they don't make any difference to the society. Individuals of color were subjugated and mistreated because of the shade of their skin. At the point when subjugation finished, people of color were once more segregated because of the visible biological differences. It wasn't worthy to segregate people based on their skin tone in the pre-Civil Rights time, and it shouldn't be worthy to do the same acts of segregation in the post-Civil Right times. The prevalent type of bigotry is not, at this point clear or dependent, on organic attributes. It is an inconspicuous type of bigotry known as

⁵⁶ Valentina DiDonato and Delia Gallagher CNN, "Pope Francis Condemns Death of George Floyd, Calls US Unrest 'Disturbing,'" CNN, accessed February 3, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/03/europe/pope-francis-george-floyd-intl/index.html>.

⁵⁷ "Dalai Lama Condemns George Floyd's Death | TheHill," accessed February 3, 2021, <https://thehill.com/changing-america/respect/equality/500130-dalai-lama-condemns-george-floyds-death>.

visually challenged prejudice that has affected different pieces of American culture including the criminal equity framework.

The Black Lives Matter Movement is another social equality development to battle against this new type of bigotry. It's expressing that race matters in a general way, publicly, where race is viewed as irrelevant. The Black Lives Matter Movement is attempting to move away from partial blindness to shading awareness. The Black Lives Matter development needs to keep on growing as a social characteristic. It should attempt to try, not to turn into a social equality legal counselor. It should not turn into something like the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s, where the pioneers removed themselves from the individuals they were supporting for. The Black Lives Matter Movement has nearby parts across the United States that can be utilized to address bigotry at the neighborhood level. There, additionally, should be new laws and arrangements to supplant the race impartial ones in the criminal equity framework that cause racial differences. The approaches at each level of the criminal equity framework should guarantee that there aren't any differences between the races.

These new approaches are far off for the Black Lives Matter Movement. The main thing the Black Lives Matter Movement can do next is to teach America about partially blind bigotry, change popular assessment and gain uphold. Race does make a difference; people of color matter and it will take a central move in the general population to accept that they matter to change the criminal equity framework and American culture. The death of George Floyd and the death of many others, the response of media, of the countries and of the whole world will mark the change for the future. A future where racism is finally combatted and finally gone.

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