



More in Common US

From: Dan Vallone, Executive Director, More in Common US

To: The Team and Board of More in Common US

As I write this close to half the states in America have called up the National Guard and protests have extended to nearly every major city in the country. I know the events of recent days have struck home for many of us and for many more in our community. We each experience this in our own way, but we share a deep sensitivity to the profound acts of violence visited against Black Americans. This is not a moment we can stay silent.

As an organization we hold tight the ideals and aspirations for what we can be as a nation. Our own data paints a picture for the new normal most Americans want, where we have purged from our systems the infection of racism and bigotry. Even knowing this, however, I don't feel this is the time to talk about any "light at the end of the tunnel". We need people to recognize the darkness which has for so long corrupted our country's soul. We need to be resolute in our collective condemnation of the systemic killing and abuse of Black Americans at the hands of the police.

This moment brings our mission into acute clarity. At many times, our role is to find the common ground between competing ideologies or between divided groups. So let's be clear, the common ground we stand for is the complete rejection of racism in all its manifestations and the commitment to transform the structural conditions which deny to Black Americans those most essential rights of life and liberty.

We also reject the notion that all police are bigoted as we know from personal experiences the intense pride and seriousness which so many take in performing a difficult job while trying to reform our broken systems--we need only look at the examples of #WalkWithUs throughout the country to see this in action.

This is not a situation remedied by policing reforms alone. All of us have a duty to face the truths and facts about racism in our culture, and then to make change.

On a personal level, my prayers go to the families of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and the countless other victims of racism. I pray too for all those who live with fear every day that their loved ones will be taken from them simply because they are Black. Finally, I pray for those in uniform - and their families - who are on the front lines of creating new systems and norms that serve all Americans.

I am grateful to work alongside each of you. Let us all be here for one another in the coming days and months. And let us further commit ourselves to educating and informing our work and culture with the



tools, knowledge, and abilities to ensure our colleagues, friends, partners, and Americans more broadly can live free from racism and injustice.

Sincerely,
Dan