

Peoples Power Assemblies (PPA) NYC Statement on Dallas and the Future of Our Movement

As #BlackLivesMatter activists we are always being asked to condemn violence.

Let it be clear: we have consistently condemned violence. We have condemned the violence of police brutality that has unapologetically and without punishment robbed Black women, Trans*people, children, and men of their lives. We have condemned the violence of disproportionate militarized policing that has decimated families and communities of color. We have condemned the violence of a criminal legal system that polices, punishes, sentences, and criminalizes Black bodies at higher rates. We have condemned the whole of a system for its complicity in housing discrimination, the school to prison pipeline, media stereotypes about Black people, political and legal forms of institutionalized racism, and the system of unfettered capitalism that has always been dependent on the exploitation of Black lives. We have condemned environmental racism and forms of state neglect that have poisoned the health of our children. We have condemned transphobia, abelism, sexism, and homophobia as additional and intersectional systems of oppression that dismantle the lives of the most marginal of Black people. We have condemned fear and we have condemned hate. We have condemned imperialism, and war, and genocide--processes that have deemed people of color across the globe as disposable. We have condemned this country for its historic, continual, and multiple forms of violence that it has waged on Black people...and we will not leave...this battle is ours to win...and you will be made better for it.

We have condemned.

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And our voices have gone unheard.

In the face of our condemnation we have been told all lives matter: as if our pain, our grief, and our anger somehow is a denunciation of your lives. It is not. In the face of our condemnation we are told to speak in soft tones, be polite, and be non-disruptive. This is about our lives! Our children's lives. Our lover's lives. Our family member's and friend's lives. Our Black Lives. When we die politicians do not say, 'that an attack on Black lives is an attack on all of us.' They do not say that these attacks 'undermine our values' as a society. They do not say to the country, let us 'show some humanity.' This is how NYC mayor Bill de Blasio responded to the attacks in Dallas. His response to us and our condemnations was to increase the size of the police. We continue on--unheard.

Let it be clear: We are a community in a chokehold. We will not condemn any of the forms of action taken by members of our community to release that chokehold. We will condemn the chokehold.

Let it be clear: It is you who must condemn. Condemn racism. Condemn this history of racial oppression: its continuation, its persistence. When you say all lives matter: Mean it! Speak the words: Black Lives Matter. Engage in action to make it so. Or are we not a part of your all lives that actually matter?

Let it be clear. We do not believe in this system that tells us to wait and have patience. That speaks of incrementalism and reform while we die. That speaks platitudes about violence and peace while we are killed. We believe in a people's movement for Black lives. All lives will matter when Black lives matter.

Let it be clear. We will not be silent. Our movement will not be demolished. Our rage will not subside.

#BlackLivesMatter