

Esper at Odds  
With President  
On Army’s Use

White House Angry —  
Military in Turmoil

This article is by Eric Schmitt, Helelene Cooper, Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Maggie Haberman.

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper broke with President Trump on Wednesday and said that active-duty military troops should not be sent to control the wave of protests in American cities, at least for now. His words were at odds with his commander in chief, who on Monday threatened to do exactly that.

Mr. Esper’s comments reflected the turmoil within the military over Mr. Trump, who in seeking to put American troops on the streets alarmed top Pentagon officials fearful that the military would be seen as participating in a move toward martial law.

Speaking at a news conference at the Pentagon, the defense secretary said that the deployment of active-duty troops in a domestic law enforcement role “should only be used as a matter of last resort and only in the most urgent and dire of situations.”

The president was angered by Mr. Esper’s remarks, and excoriated him later at the White House, an administration official said. Asked on Wednesday whether Mr. Trump still had confidence in Mr. Esper, the White House press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany, said that “as of right now, Secretary Esper is still Secretary Esper,” but that “should the president lose faith, we will all learn about that in the future.”

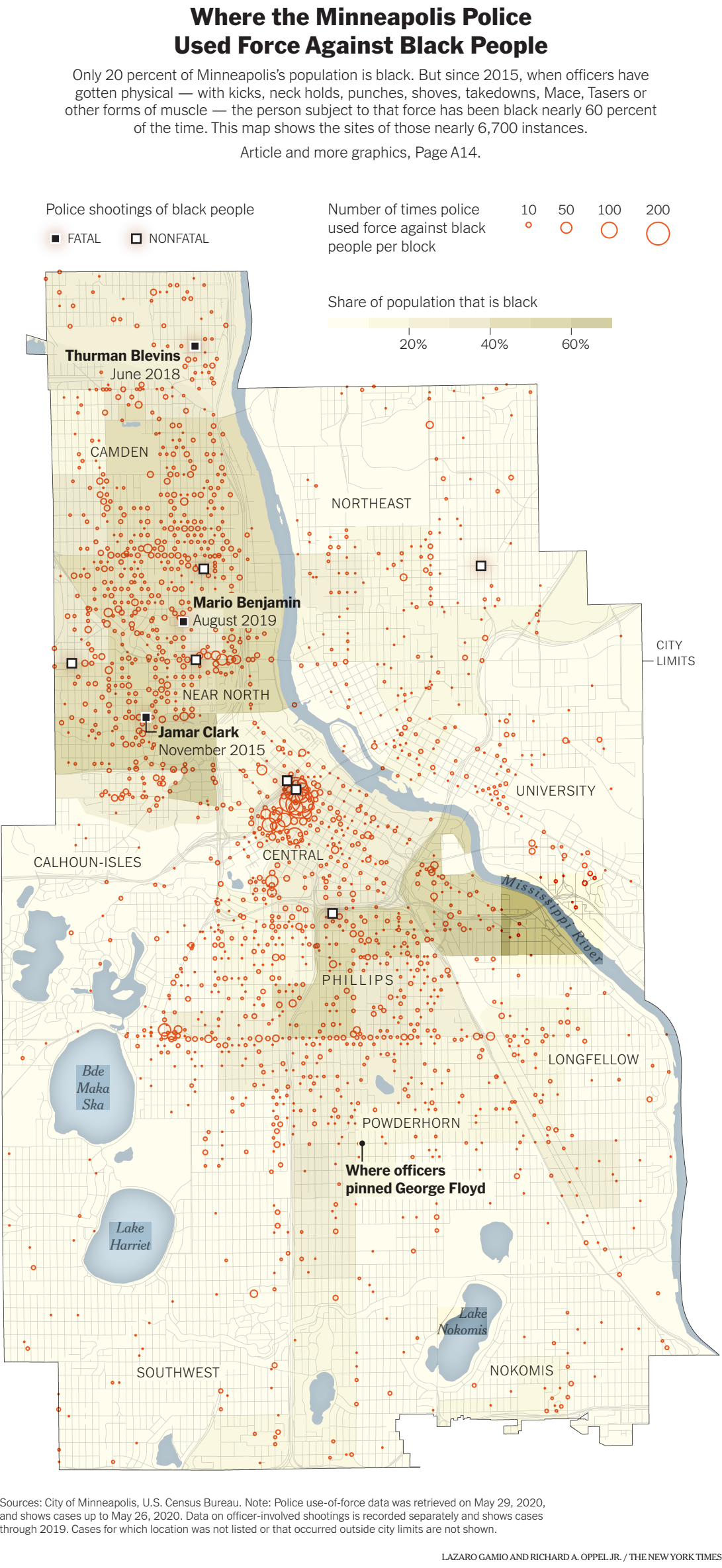
Senior Pentagon leaders are now so concerned about losing public support — and that of their active-duty and reserve personnel, 40 percent of whom are people of color — that Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, released a message to top military commanders on Wednesday affirming that every member of the armed forces swears an oath to defend the Constitution, which he said “gives Americans the right to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly.”

Mr. Esper and General Milley acted after they came under sharp criticism, including from retired military officers, for walking with Mr. Trump to a church near the White House after peaceful protesters had been forcibly cleared.

As anger mounted over the president’s photo op at the church, former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis offered a withering denunciation of the president’s leadership.

“Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people — does not even pretend to try,” Mr. Mattis said in a statement. “Instead he tries to divide us. We

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3 MORE CHARGED,  
ACCUSED OF AIDING  
IN FLOYD’S KILLING

On Day 9 of Unrest, First Officer’s Case Is  
Raised to Second-Degree Murder

This article is by John Eligon, Richard A. Oppel Jr. and Sarah Mervosh.

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The three Minneapolis police officers who failed to intervene while George Floyd was killed were charged on Wednesday with aiding in his death, and officials pressed a more severe charge — second-degree murder — against Derek Chauvin, the officer who pinned Mr. Floyd to the ground with a knee for nearly nine minutes while he pleaded, “I can’t breathe.”

Announcing the charges, Keith Ellison, Minnesota’s attorney general, who was assigned by the governor to handle the closely watched case, asked for patience during what he said would be a lengthy investigation and cautioned that history revealed serious challenges in prosecutions of police officers.

“We’re here today because George Floyd is not here. He should be here,” said Mr. Ellison, a former Democratic congressman and civil rights lawyer, adding later: “Trying this case will not be an easy thing. Winning a conviction will be hard.”

“I take no joy in this,” Mr. Ellison said. “But I feel a tremendous sense of duty and responsibility.”

On a ninth straight night of demonstrations, thousands of people amassed on Wednesday, including on the streets of West Hollywood, Calif., and outside the Colorado State Capitol. Issuing in-

tensifying calls for changes to American policing, the protesters showed no signs of calling off their activism, and in New York City, a rally was planned outside the mayor’s official residence.

The fallout from Mr. Floyd’s death continued unabated on Wednesday as his official autopsy, released for the first time, revealed that he was known to have had the coronavirus in early April, though he was believed to be asymptomatic at the time of his death. Demonstrators have regularly pointed out that police violence and Covid-19 are disproportionately affecting African-Americans.

Former President Barack Obama called on every mayor in the nation to review use-of-force policies and make reforms. Officials in Virginia announced plans

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KEITH ELLISON, MINNESOTA’S ATTORNEY GENERAL, URGED PATIENCE.

Mom-and-Pop Stores in Bronx  
Reel From Looters’ Crowbars

By WINNIE HU and NATE SCHWEBER

The looters attacked with crowbars and bolt cutters.

They broke open stores in the Fordham neighborhood of the Bronx until they came to two glass doors side by side. The door to the left led to a tattoo parlor, the one to the right to a watch and jewelry store. They smashed the right door and ducked around the sharp glass teeth left along the edges.

Inside, they found a treasure case filled with gold and silver watches and laptop computers. They swung again, sending glass flying. They quickly grabbed what they could, missing a couple of watches in the back. Then they reached above and pulled down

Blow to Immigrant and  
Minority Businesses

displays of diamond necklaces, earrings, bracelets and rings.

They were long gone by the time the store owner, Francisco Araujo, arrived hours later on Tuesday to find his family business gutted. By his count, he lost \$150,000 of merchandise. Only a rack of tacky T-shirts with drinking and sex sayings was left behind.

Mr. Araujo said he was just beginning to get his life back after the coronavirus exploded across

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As Poll Numbers Dive, Trump  
Spends to Hold States He Won

By ALEXANDER BURNS and MAGGIE HABERMAN

President Trump is facing the bleakest outlook for his re-election bid so far, with his polling numbers plunging in both public and private surveys and his campaign beginning to worry about his standing in states like Ohio and Iowa that he carried by wide margins four years ago.

The Trump campaign has recently undertaken a multimillion-dollar advertising effort in those two states as well as Arizona in hopes of improving his standing, while also shaking up his political operation and turning new attention to states like Georgia that were once considered reliably Republican. In private, Mr. Trump has expressed concern that his

Ad Barrages in Ohio,  
Iowa and Arizona

campaign is not battle-ready for the general election, while Republicans are concerned about whether the president can emerge in a strong position from the national crises battering the country.

Mr. Trump has been consistently unpopular as president with a majority of Americans; his advisers have long seen his effort to win a new term as depending on the loyalty of his conservative base and the Republican-friendly tilt of the Electoral College — factors that could allow the president

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Britain Would Take In 3 Million  
From Hong Kong, Johnson Says

By MARK LANDLER

LONDON — Prime Minister Boris Johnson raised the stakes in a brewing confrontation with China on Wednesday, promising to allow nearly three million people from Hong Kong to live and work in Britain if Beijing moves forward with a new national security law for the former British colony.

Mr. Johnson’s offer, made in a column in The Times of London, opens the door to a significant influx of people fleeing Hong Kong, should the situation in the territory deteriorate further. But it leaves unanswered thorny questions about how difficult it would be for those arrivals to obtain British citizenship.

Growing Tensions Over  
China’s Security Law

Describing it as one of the biggest changes in visa regulations in British history, Mr. Johnson said the roughly 350,000 Hong Kong residents who hold British overseas passports, as well as 2.5 million who are eligible to apply for one, would be granted 12-month renewable visas that would allow them to work in Britain and put them on a path to citizenship.

“Many people in Hong Kong fear that their way of life — which China pledged to uphold — is under threat,” Mr. Johnson wrote. “If

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Picture Venice Bustling Again,  
Not With Tourists, but Italians

By JASON HOROWITZ

VENICE — For a change, it was the Venetians who crowded the square.

Days before Italy lifted coronavirus travel restrictions on Wednesday that had prevented the usual crush of international visitors from entering the city, hundreds of locals gathered on chalk asterisks drawn several feet apart. They had come to protest a new dock that would bring boatloads of tourists through one of Venice’s last livable neighborhoods, but also to seize a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to show that another, less tourist-addled future was viable.

“This can be a working city, not just a place for people to visit,” said the protest’s organizer, An-

A Post-Pandemic Vision  
of What Could Be

drea Zorzi, a 45-year-old law professor who frantically handed out hundreds of signs reading, “Nothing Changes if You Don’t Change Anything.” He argued that the virus, as tragic as it was, had demonstrated that Venice could be a better place. “It can be normal,” he said.

The coronavirus has laid bare the underlying weaknesses of the societies it has ravaged, whether economic or racial inequality, an overdependence on global production chains, or rickety health

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Echoes of 1989 in Hong Kong  
At Tiananmen Square, change seemed unstoppable. China’s furious response casts a long shadow today. PAGE A12

U.S. to Bar Chinese Airlines  
A retaliatory ban on passenger flights to and from American airports would take effect on June 16. PAGE A13

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5 Vaccine Candidates Tapped  
The Trump administration has selected five companies as the most likely to produce a vaccine for the coronavirus, senior officials said. PAGE A9

Scenes From Atlantic City  
A visit to the gambling mecca looks at how it is weathering the pandemic when it was already hurting. PAGE A6

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Snapchat Joins Trump Fray  
The service said it would stop promoting the president’s account because of his comments off the site. PAGE B1



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Rosenstein in Spotlight  
In a hearing, Rod Rosenstein, the former deputy attorney general, defended appointing a special counsel. PAGE A22

A Presidential Checkup  
President Trump “remains healthy” after taking hydroxychloroquine, the White House physician said. PAGE A23

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This Is Not the End of Fashion  
History and human nature prove that we will dress up again. What that will look like is the real question, Vanessa Friedman writes. PAGE D1

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A Savage Social Satirist  
Bruce Jay Friedman, 90, skipped back and forth between literature and pop culture, including movies, to acclaim. Then he seemed to vanish. PAGE B10

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A Dance About a Tense Time  
Jamar Roberts’s short video “Cooped” is a powerful artistic response to the Covid-19 crisis, with added resonance after George Floyd’s killing. PAGE C1

