Common Sense

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Unfriending the Police?

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Defund the police?

First, take a moment to celebrate those on the American Left who have finally — miraculously — stumbled onto something they actually want the government to spend less money on.
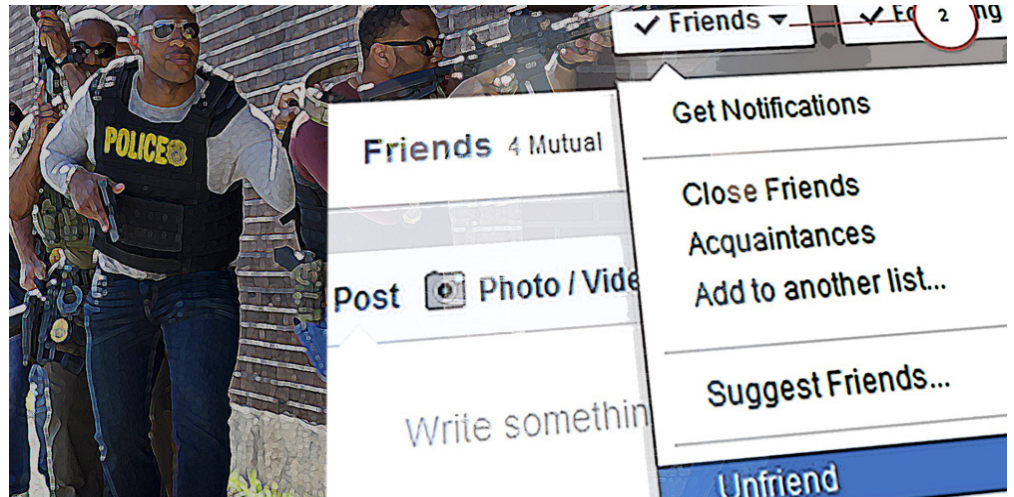
Second, consider policing expert and *Washington Post* columnist Radley Balko's amply backed-up contention that "the evidence of racial bias in our criminal justice system" is "overwhelming."

Nonetheless, Mr. Balko notes that "lots of white people are wrongly accused, arrested and convicted" and "treated unfairly, beaten and unjustifiably shot and killed by police officers. White people too are harmed by policies such as mandatory

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minimums, asset forfeiture, and abuse of police, prosecutorial and judicial power."

Even if police violence is "more of a problem for African Americans," posits David Bernstein at *Reason*, "it's not solely a problem for African Americans. Eliminating racism, in short, would still leave the U.S. with far more deaths from police shootings than seems reasonable."

This is not an argument to ignore racism, but in favor of making effective changes in policy and law.

Maybe the solution to our police violence problems is not *defunding* departments, in a vast *unfriending* campaign, but to let up on some of their burdens, require them to do less. De-*task*.

For starters? Defund the War on Drugs!

Drug prohibition has been a criminal justice disaster — filling our jails with victimless criminals whose problem is drug addiction. In a myriad of ways, the drug war has spawned greater police corruption and introduced more intrusive and dangerous policing.

Let's have a frank conversation about . . . making practical changes to our criminal justice system.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.