

Black Lives Matter cashes in with \$100 million from liberal foundations



Black Lives Matter demonstrators gather during a protest on Broad Street in Philadelphia on July 26, 2016, during the second day of the Democratic National Convention. (Associated Press) [more >](#)

By Valerie Richardson - *The Washington Times* - Tuesday, August 16, 2016

For all its talk of being a street uprising, Black Lives Matter is increasingly awash in cash, raking in pledges of more than \$100 million from liberal foundations and others eager to contribute to what has become the grant-making cause du jour.

The Ford Foundation and Borealis Philanthropy recently announced the formation of

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That funding comes in addition to more than \$33 million in grants to the Black Lives Matter movement from top Democratic Party donor George Soros through his Open Society Foundations, as well as grant-making from the Center for American Progress.

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“The BLMF provides grants, movement building resources, and technical assistance to organizations working advance the leadership and vision of young, Black, queer, feminists and immigrant leaders who are shaping and leading a national conversation about criminalization, policing and race in America,” said the Borealis announcement.

In doing so, however, the foundations have aligned themselves with the staunch left-wing platform of the Movement for Black Lives, which unveiled a policy agenda shortly after the fund was announced accusing Israel of being an “apartheid state” guilty of “genocide.”



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Released Aug. 1, the platform also calls for defunding police departments, race-based reparations, breaking voting rights for illegal immigrants, fossil-fuel divestment, an end to private education and charter schools, a “universal basic income,” and free college for blacks.

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As far as critics are concerned, the grab-bag platform combined with the staggering underwriting commitment offer more evidence that Black Lives Matter is being used as a conduit for left-wing politics as usual.

“It’s about time people woke up to the fact that big money is using people as pawns to stoke racial hatred and further their global agenda,” said the Federalist Papers Project’s C.E. Dyer.

Bill Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, said corporations and others may want to think twice about partnering with the Ford Foundation, the fifth-largest U.S. philanthropy with \$12.4 billion in assets.

“The Ford Foundation has traditionally been leftist, at least since the 1970s, on law-enforcement matters. So it’s not a huge surprise, but it’s certainly disappointing,” said Mr. Johnson. “I guess potential donors may want to look at the [Black Lives Matter] movement and see the damage, destruction and murders that they’ve left in their wake.”

For Black Lives Matter, the grant-making partnership isn’t risk free, lending legitimacy to the movement but also credence to those who say it has strayed from the concerns of black Americans calling for equal treatment at the hands of police.

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more apparent that it's become today's Velcro for what the leftist-fringe movement desires."

And that's a shame, he said, "because instead of having a serious movement that might have been a basis for dialogue and improving relations in communities, especially communities of color, it's kind of become in some ways a very violent movement, in some ways a very, very far-left [movement] with an almost statist agenda."

Borealis and Ford did not return requests Wednesday asking for comment, but one of the newly launched fund's partners, the Movement Strategy Center in Oakland, California, praised the foundations for bringing resources to "this transformative movement."

"Ensuring that all Black Lives Matter, in this land and around the world, will require an infusion of assets into Black communities," said the center in an Aug. 8 statement.

In their July 19 announcement, Ford Foundation program officers Brook Kelly-Green and Luna Yasui said that, "Now is the time to call for an end to state violence directed at communities of color."

"And now is the time to advocate for investment in public services—including but not limited to police reform—together with education, health, and employment in communities for people that have historically had less opportunity and access to all those things," they said. "These are the reasons we support the Movement for Black Lives."

Ford and Borealis are hardly alone: They said the fund will "complement the important work" of charities including the Hill-Snowden Foundation, Solidaire, the NoVo Foundation, the Association of Black Foundation Executives, the Neighborhood Funders Group, anonymous donors, and others.

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In addition to raising \$100 million for the Movement for Black Lives, the Black-Led Movement Fund will collaborate with Benedict Consulting on “the organizational capacity building needs of a rapidly growing movement.”

Ford has locked horns over Israel before: In 2003, the foundation announced after years of criticism that it would not renew its funding for leftist causes through the New Israel Fund, according to Forward.

The Black Lives Matter movement exploded in August 2014 after an officer shot dead unarmed 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Since then, police shootings of black men have prompted rioting and protests in dozens of U.S. cities, as well as the deaths of eight officers in separate incidents this year at demonstrations in Baton Rouge and Dallas.

Mr. Johnson confirmed that his organization, an advocacy group for police, has no grant-making alliance with Ford.

“We don’t receive any funding from Ford. But yeah, thanks very much,” he said with a laugh.

Not that he wouldn’t take it. “Of course it would come in handy — look at what’s going on across this country with the attacks on police,” Mr. Johnson said. “We’re not looking for a handout from Ford, but it would be nice to see groups like that or George Soros try to give some nuts-and-bolts help for people who are hurting, instead of throwing money around on grand schemes.”

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