

Private security groups regularly sent Minnesota police misinformation about protestors | MIT Technology Review

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When US marshals shot and killed a 32-year-old Black man named Winston Boogie Smith Jr. in a parking garage in Minneapolis's Uptown neighborhood on June 3, 2021, the city was already in a full-blown policing crisis.

Around 300 officers had quit over the previous two years amid near-constant protests and public criticism in the wake of George Floyd's murder by a member of the police force in May 2020. Intense debates over the Minneapolis Police Department's budget raged, and some Minneapolis council members were elected after campaigning on a platform of defunding the police. Adding yet more strain to the shorthanded department, homicides had increased [almost 30%](#) across the US in 2020. Vital services were starting to fail—in the first half of 2021, [response times to 911 calls in Minneapolis increased by 36%](#).

Minneapolis had been at the vanguard of activism on policing and racial justice since Floyd's death. After Smith's killing, protests [reignited all over the city](#)—not only at public spaces, like the intersection where Floyd was murdered, but also in private ones, like the parking garage where Smith was shot. As demonstrations spread from the streets into shopping districts and parking lots, the cops couldn't keep up.

[...]

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