



RECLAIM *the* REPUBLIC.
RESTORE *the* CONSTITUTION.

The means of defense against foreign danger have become the instruments of tyranny at home. ~James Madison

The federal “1033” Program allows local police departments to procure surplus military weapons, vehicles, and supplies to use on America’s streets. The equipment is largely offered at no cost to local and state police agencies and is expensive to maintain.

Items available for use on American streets through the program include automatic assault rifles, body armor, mine resistant armored vehicles (MRAPS), tanks, military helicopters, drones, and the list goes on.

The “War on Terror” is fueling this militarization of our police, with an alarming number of agencies taking advantage of the 1033 Program. But that’s not the worst of it. The 1033 Program specifies that any participating law enforcement agency must use the equipment within one year of receiving it. If they don’t use it, they have to give it back.

This “Use it or Lose it” provision has led to an escalation in SWAT-style raids – which all too often end in tragedy – and military vehicles being used in truly absurd situations.

It is now routine to witness these vehicles being used at events, such as football games, proms, graduations, parades, fireworks displays, and impromptu police “check points.” Many citizens watched in horror when they witnessed the use of these weapons of war being used in Ferguson, MO, in 2014. Their use needlessly escalated the tension, with reporters and those that were peacefully protesting being treated like enemies in a war zone.

The Posse Comitatus Act was passed to prevent the use of the military in domestic law enforcement. But that protection does little good if we turn our local law enforcement into a military force. The role of the military is quite different from domestic law enforcement. Local police are charged with serving their communities, while the primary focus of the military is combat. The police should not be fighting the citizens they are sworn to protect.

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