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COMMUNITY & EVENTS

Philly Black Radical Collective Lays Out 13 Demands for City

By Rebecca Hendrickson

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For the Philly Black Radical Collective, the slave memorial nestled in Independence Mall shows the paradox of American freedom.

PHILADELPHIA (WPVI) -- For the Philly Black Radical Collective, the slave memorial nestled in Independence Mall shows the paradox of American

freedom.

"On the other side you have the slave quarters where people suffered and struggled every single day just to survive," explained the group.

This is the site the group chose to publicly announce its 13 demands for Philadelphia City Council and the mayor's office.

The first three are defunding the police budget by 20 percent, ending the criminalization of the protesters.

Also, removing all symbols of state violence such as statues.

"We understand that you can read those demands. It doesn't take a lot of figuring out how to implement these first three demands," said YahNé Ndgo, an organizer with the group.

City council says its already doing a lot of those things, pointing to its new 2021 budget released Thursday. It includes reducing police funding for the first time in over a decade by \$33.3 million.

The Mayor's office also announced this week it's removing the statue of Christopher Columbus and both the mayor and police commissioner apologized for tear-gassing protesters on 676.

They also stated they're putting a moratorium on tear gas use on crowds.

The collective, however, says it wants more. Specifically, charges dropped for anyone who's been arrested while protesting for the Black Lives Matter movement.

"They can just remove all of those charges. They don't have to figure out how to work with the state, said Ndgo. "They have to figure out how to work with multiple agencies."

The group says it will be following its 13 demands with 13 days of action. The first one will be Sunday at Malcolm X Park where it will demand the release of political prisoners.