



Speak Out Now

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The Murder of George Floyd – Our Fight Continues

Two years ago on May 25, 2020, George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police. If that young woman hadn't recorded the horrific incident on her phone and posted it to the internet for the world to see, Floyd's murder would have been presented as another case of a Black man threatening cops who were just doing their job.

But the agonizing scene of George Floyd having the life squeezed out of him as he lay handcuffed and face-down in the street with a cop kneeling on his neck for more than nine minutes was there for all to see. Despite George Floyd's pleas, the cop continued to choke him while his accomplices stood by hearing Floyd call out "I can't breathe!" Cops just doing their job.

People across the country responded. Tens of millions took to the streets around the U.S. demanding an end to this wanton racist police brutality. People around the world demonstrated their anger, raising their voices against the brutality of the police in their cities and towns, as well as in solidarity with people in the U.S. The violence of the police is international.

The politicians and corporate heads could not ignore this outpouring of anger and grief. There were demands to defund the police and support social outreach programs instead of having the police respond to every conflict between people or to people with mental illness. There were other demands for better police training, to get cops out of their cars and into the community.

Hearings were held on the local, state and federal level. Studies were conducted. Programs were voted on and some implemented. These responses diverted the energy of many of those in the streets who didn't see what to do other than to demand change.

Large corporations pledged more than \$50 billion in support of the idea that Black Lives Matter. Where did all that money go? Most went to promote the corporations. They chose the organizations they identified as representing the interests of Black people. Some Black people were hired in visible corporate positions. And anti-racist trainings were held.

But what really changed?

The situation for most Black people didn't change. In 2021, there were 1,136 people killed by the police, compared to 1,133 in 2020 and 1,096 in 2019. Black people accounted for 27% of those fatally shot in 2021, but are 13% of the population. In other words, Black people are twice as likely as white people to be killed by the police. (see: policeviolencereport.org)

The hopes of those who organized demonstrations or took to the streets weren't realized, but their efforts weren't wasted. For some activists, the true nature of this system and its police were exposed.

We live in a society where a very small minority holds power, and controls the wealth and the decision-making processes. Force has to be used to keep us working to produce the wealth of this society and make things run without having any say in how things are organized. The police exist to maintain the social order, based on inequality and exploitation.

The response to the murder of George Floyd was a demonstration of the deep dissatisfaction that exists, especially among young people. It also gave rise to a hope and confidence that we can change the world.

There are some who feel threatened by the idea of changing this system. Their fears and anger can push them to accept or embrace the racist or anti-immigrant ideas that are used to divide us. Acting on these ideas has led to racist mass shootings, like the recent one in Buffalo, NY. These racist young white murderers have been filled with hatred and vengeance against people they have been told are stealing their future.

Whether it is the police who get away with murder, or young racists who are made into martyrs by the fascists who fuel their fears with racist hatred, the source is the same — a society that cannot and will not allow us to live as full human beings.

Our solution has to go beyond pressuring the politicians or threatening those who are in power. The real solutions rests with us — the majority — to organize our forces and take responsibility for our lives and our future. And that future cannot be found within a system of capitalism that relies on our exploitation and degradation and uses racism as a way to divide us.