



MAY 29, 2020

Speak Out Now

speakoutsocialists.org bayarea@ speakoutsocialists.org (510) 343-9105

Racism Must Be Opposed by All of Us!

In cities around the U.S. people took to the streets to express outrage over George Floyd's murder by cops in the middle of the day on Tuesday, May 26. Minneapolis police took Floyd, a Black man, out of his car saying they were investigating a forgery. Floyd was handcuffed and soon forced to lie down in the street. One of the cops put his knee on Floyd's neck, pressing down while Floyd gasped in agony for more than five minutes that he couldn't breathe. Two more cops arrived and knelt on Floyd's body. Onlookers yelled at the cops to let Floyd up. Videos of the murder quickly went viral.

Another Black man murdered by the cops! A tragedy, but certainly not an exception! Cops in the U.S. kill an average of three people a day. About one in 1,000 Black men and boys in the U.S. can expect to die at the hands of police – that's 2.5 times more likely than white males. Out of the thousands of killings by cops since 2005, only 98 cops were arrested and only three were convicted of murder.

Because of the videos and because people took to the streets in anger, the authorities responded. The four cops were fired and sent home! The mayor called for prosecution of the cops. On Friday one cop was charged with third degree murder and manslaughter, the lowest murder charge. The three other cops have not even been charged.

Racism in this country means that one in four people killed by the police is Black. Black people are 18% of the U.S. population and are 40% of the prison population. One in three Black males will be incarcerated during their lives and receive 19% longer sentences than white males.

The violence of poverty means that tens of millions of Black people in this country live in a daily state of emergency. In 2020, Black families are 2.5 times more likely to live in poverty than whites.

And this pandemic means that poor communities of color, who often lack comprehensive health care, have suffered a much higher rate of illness and death.

Over half of Black households (58%) rent their homes, while only 28% of white households rent. The unemployment rate for Black people is twice as high as whites. And with the virus - what is it today?

Black children are three times as likely to live in poverty as white children. Schools today are as segregated as they were in the 1960s. Poor districts with the most students of color receive 15% less per student in state and local funding than the wealthier white districts.

The people of Minneapolis and other cities are right to take to the streets. People's calls for justice have resounded in this country since its earliest days. And when enough of us have raised our voices and our fists, those in authority are forced to respond.

But the basic functioning of this system hasn't changed. Racism and the violent oppression that accompanies it serves to divide the population and allows the wealthy few to profit from our exploitation.

The murder of George Floyd has revealed the deep racism of this system for all to see. Trump tweeted that the U.S. military was ready to assist and that "after looting comes shooting." Basically saying that the police and other state forces should shoot protestors who looted. Trump and those he represents are more concerned about a Target store that lies in ashes than the body of a man lying in the city morgue!

George Floyd's murder cannot be forgotten. We can not remain silent or continue with business as usual. We have to organize, stand up against racist violence and organize to fight to protect the health and lives of us all.