

Socialist Workers Party statement

We must build a powerful, disciplined, working-class movement to demand:

Jail all the cops involved in the murder of George Floyd!

The following statement was released May 30 by David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Minnesota.

The police murder of George Floyd has been met with outrage and protest throughout the Twin Cities, the United States and internationally. Our protests forced the government to arrest and charge Derek Chauvin, the cop who murdered George Floyd with a knee to the neck for more than 8 minutes as Floyd and bystanders pleaded for his life. While all four cops involved have been fired, we must continue to demand that they be arrested and prosecuted.

No reforming the police

Cop brutality is not an aberration. It is endemic to the capitalist system. The role of the police—part of the capitalist rulers' criminal "justice" system—is to mete out intimidation and punishment to working people, fighting unionists, and disproportionately to African-Americans.

The police cannot be reformed. No amount of "community policing," "diversity training," or citizen review boards can change the nature of the cops. They exist to protect and serve the interests of the wealthy rulers.

What we need

It will take a powerful, disciplined, militant working-class movement to win victories in the fight against the violence

and brutality that the police inflict on workers and farmers. The mass Black-led movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and 60s as well as the fighting Teamsters Union movement here in the 1930s are powerful examples of the kind of movement and leadership that can and must be built.

Unions have spoken out forcefully against the cop killing of George Floyd and for their prosecution — including the Amalgamated Transit Union, the United Steel Workers, United Auto Workers, International Longshore Association, UNITE-HERE, and many more. The bus drivers' union has refused to participate in transporting protesters to jail who are rounded up by the cops.

Daily large protests continue to spotlight the brutality of the cops and demand the prosecution and jailing of police involved in the killing of George Floyd. But widespread nightly burning, looting and destruction by groups of anarchists, provocateurs, opportunists, and those driven by frustration and demoralization unnecessarily give the government a handle to blame protesters, not the cops and their ruthless brutality, for violence. They are an obstacle to building the kind of move-

ment and leadership necessary to defend the interests of working people and deal real blows to the violence of the police.

The consequences of these actions are not only disrupting the lives and livelihoods of many workers and small businesspeople, through the closures and destruction of grocery stores, pharmacies, schools and various small businesses and the shutdown of public transit. They have also given an opening to the government, which is responsible for defending the rulers' system of exploitation, oppression and violence, to bring in more cops, National Guard, even the possibility of active-duty military forces, to shut down the city.

The cop killing of George Floyd — and of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, as well as the vigilante killing of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia — take place as working people face a broad social crisis today, with millions thrown out of work by government lockdowns. The bosses are organizing for a profitable “recovery” on our backs.

Working-class struggles against these attacks — police brutality, joblessness, attacks on our wages, unsafe working conditions and racist discrimination — will deepen in the years ahead. The capitalist rulers will continue to turn to the police to keep us in check.

Through our struggles, workers' unity in battle, self-confidence and class consciousness will grow. We will rebuild the union movement and a broader social movement of millions to fight in our own interests.

Emulate the Cuban Revolution

In 1959, workers and farmers in Cuba rose up to overthrow a brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship and took power into their own hands. One of the first steps the toilers took, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, was to abolish the police and army, replacing these hated servants of the dictatorship with revolutionary worker-combatants. Emulating that example is the road to ending police violence once and for all.

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- Here is my contribution of \$ _____ to help spread the word.
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