

Advance the movement against racial discrimination and police murders!

Nationally, 1,218 people were killed by the police in 2015.¹ Many of them were victims of police murder, with a disproportionate number being black or other national minorities, e.g., black men were two to three times more likely to be killed by the police than white men. Since then the number of people being killed by the police has slightly declined, and this is no doubt related to the spreading of the Black Lives Matter movement. In fact, this movement has spread so far that there are now constant protests by NFL players and other sports teams on all levels, with the racist President slurring and threatening the protesters, while covering over that the protests are against racism and police murders. But clearly this movement must be spread farther and deepened. As of October 31 this year, another 994 people have been killed by the police, many of them either innocent of any wrong-doing or who should never have had guns drawn on them. Among these numbers are two outrageous and totally unjustifiable killings by the Seattle and King County police this summer.

Justice for Tommy Le and Charleena Lyles!

First was the June 13 gunning down of 20-year-old Tommy Le, a popular Vietnamese-American student at South Seattle College. For some reason Tommy had been acting strangely the night of his killing: e.g., threatening people; reportedly carrying a knife; saying things that made no sense. When the cops arrived he was barefoot and wearing shorts and was outside – which gave the cops plenty of room in which to

maneuver or back off if anything happened. But when their taser failed, one of them, Deputy Molina, pulled his pistol and shot Tommy *twice in the back* and once in the hand as Tommy tried to leave. A week later the Sheriff's office reported Tommy Le had only been carrying a fountain pen.

Then on June 18 Seattle police gunned down Charleena Lyles, a pregnant African-American mom of four. Charleena had called the SPD to investigate a burglary of her apartment. Two cops were sent because the Department knew that she'd recently been having mental health problems. After their routine investigation was nearly over Charleena suddenly threatened them with a kitchen knife or knives. But both cops had batons, one had pepper spray and was to the side or rear of Charleena, and there were many things they could have done to stay out of her way or to physically defend themselves without killing her. Instead, both drew their Glocks, aimed at “center-body mass” (i.e., aimed to kill), and between them they shot Charleena a total of *seven times*, with three of the bullets entering her back or the rear of her arm.

But despite militant protests demanding justice and mass denunciations of the authorities at public meetings, the killers of Ms. Lyles and Mr. Le have not been charged with anything, nor have they even received a slap on the wrist from their police superiors. This once again shows how far the system will go to preserve police impunity, and it shows that the liberal Democrats who rule

Seattle and many other big cities cannot be relied on to deliver justice. Indeed they're part of the problem: they hire the police chiefs and they oversee the murderous police policies.

The class origin of this racist police savagery

Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the labor power of the majority of the people by a relative handful. Oppression is therefore built into it, and the capitalists especially benefit from racial, sexual, and anti-immigrant discrimination and oppression: The capitalists make extra profits by super-exploiting the victims of their special oppression. They also blame the victims of their special oppression for the ills actually caused by the capitalist system itself. And then they use this to divide the working-class, thereby weakening the inevitable resistance.

The police are the enforcers of the law and order of this unjust and racist system. As such, they inevitably view the masses of working people as suspects or enemies. On a daily basis this translates into their bullying, shut up, don't act out, obey me attitude toward masses, particularly African Americans and other doubly oppressed working people and youth. Along with this, in these decades of austerity for the people while the rich get incredibly richer, the police and their masters fear mass rebellions, and seek to tamp down any form of "disobedience" before it can grow into more. Backing the police are the politicians of both parties, who normally give the

police everything they want, who compete with each other in praising them, and who have been militarizing the police forces for decades.

The working class response

The majority of African-American and other national minorities shot down by the cops are from the working class, and it is a matter of elementary justice that all workers should stand up for the rights of their more victimized and oppressed sisters and brothers. This is part of the struggle to unite the entire class for its resistance struggles against capital and to build a movement to overthrow it. We should work to consolidate a revolutionary trend within the Black Lives Matter and other progressive movements to do this, a trend that steadfastly fights for justice and reforms as part of building up a revolutionary movement. With this in mind, let us continue to spread the word about every racist atrocity. Let us continue to build the protest movement. And all out for the November 24 "Black Friday" protest!

Friday, November 24, noon to 8 pm
Westlake Park, 401 Pine St.
Called by Black Freedom Front – Seattle

1. According to killedbypolice.net

Seattle Communist Study Group
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