

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: How do we stop police brutality, cop killings & attacks on peaceful demonstrators? Mark Friedman, Random Lengths News Reporter. HS Science teacher, Member CFT I strongly encourage the labor movement to take the lead in helping to organize continued massive, peaceful, legal protests supporting the indictment and full prosecution on murder charges of the remaining three police officers involved in the killing of George Floyd. Abstention by organized labor in this social movement against cop killings is unacceptable. The focus must be both national and local examples of police brutality, defunding the cops and creating an understanding that the police are there to “protect and Serve” the wealthy, not working people as any of us who have ever been on strike or a strike picket line clearly know. We have all witnessed peaceful protests in Los Angeles and other cities that then turn violent by the actions of police provocations to demonstrators, agent provocateurs within the ranks of the demonstrators, (who are often off-duty cops — as we have seen historically in the antiwar, labor and civil rights movements) and the frustrations of young people who are not being heard. There have been so many police brutality cases nationally where the cops are set free, while thousands of black people fill the jails on minor misdemeanors and trumped up charges. Large protests in more than 300 cities and dozens internationally continue to spotlight the brutality of the cops. But widespread nightly burning, looting and destruction by groups of anarchists, provocateurs (revealed in The Los Angeles Times), 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 movement 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 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, the National Guard and even the possibility of active-duty military forces, to shut down the city. This is a national, multigenerational and multiracial movement against police brutality and racism added to unemployment on a massive scale that this country has never seen. This is not a black thing.

This is not 1968. Although the response by the police and the governments of both Democrats and Republicans, from liberal to conservative, is similar. They send in the National Guard and arrest hundreds. Now is the time for labor to take the lead and fill the vacuum of leadership. Labor should join with whatever leadership within the black community, religious and others willing to take a stand against police brutality without criminalizing young people for minimal looting or fires that reflect, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, "the language of the unheard." As one protester put it, "Black Americans have been looted for hundreds of years." How can you compare that to a sneaker store or a Starbucks? Young people are just showing their rage because they are not being heard. Labor has a responsibility to join with them. I believe the best we can hope to accomplish under the racist, capitalist rule is to stay the hand of these federal government-sanctioned and protected judge, jury, and executioners in uniform. Institutional racist conduct and acts cannot and will not be reformed out of existence. It must be declared a crime and met with severe and immediate punishment to the fullest extent of the law. To open this discussion, I suggest these demands against police brutality and abuse of power. 1) Federal prosecution of all four officers in the George Floyd murder. Automatic Federal charges for all police violations of the civil rights of all people of color, including killings, beating, false arrest, etc. 2) Abolition of all police for-profit programs National, State, and local. 3) Automatic firing for all racist text, emails, letters, social media posts, phone calls, and so-called private conversations. 4) Abolition of all no-knock warrants and abolition of all stop & frisk rules for every US police department. 5) Automatic firing, arrest, and jail time for all false reports, fake evidence, and lying testimony. 6) End of all federal funding of every police department in the country. 7) End of all ticket writing incentive programs, speed trap schemes, and traffic stops for petty violations. 8) Abolition of all police weapons drawn, traffic stop. End to all non-recorded sobriety tests. 9) Abolishment of all military grade weapons given to local police departments

California Federation of Teachers Call for Discussion:

How do we stop police brutality, cop killings & attacks on peaceful demonstrators?

Mark Friedman, Random Lengths News Reporter. HS Science teacher, Member CFT

I strongly encourage the labor movement to take the lead in helping to organize continued massive, peaceful, legal protests supporting the indictment and full prosecution on murder charges of the remaining three police officers involved in the killing of George Floyd. Thomas Lane and J. Alexander Keung, who helped restrain Floyd, and Tou Thao, who stood near the others, were not initially charged. Lane, 37, Kueng, 26, and Thao, 34, are now charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder and aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter.

Abstention by organized labor in this social movement against cop killings is unacceptable. The focus must be both national and local examples of police brutality, defunding the cops and creating an understanding that the police are there to “protect and Serve” the wealthy, not working people as any of us who have ever been on strike or a strike picket line clearly know.

We have all witnessed peaceful protests in Los Angeles and other cities that then turn violent by the actions of police provocations to demonstrators, agent provocateurs within the ranks of the demonstrators, (who are often off-duty cops — as we have seen historically in the antiwar, labor and civil rights movements) and the frustrations of young people who are not being heard. There have been so many police brutality cases nationally where the cops are set free, while thousands of black people fill the jails on minor misdemeanors and trumped up charges.

Large protests in more than 300 cities and dozens internationally continue to spotlight the brutality of the cops. But widespread nightly burning, looting and destruction by groups of anarchists, provocateurs (revealed in *The Los Angeles Times*), 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 movement 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 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, the National Guard and even the possibility of active-duty military forces, to shut down the city.

This is a national, multigenerational and multiracial movement against police brutality and racism added to unemployment on a massive scale that this country has never seen. This is not a black thing. This is not 1968. Although the response by the police and the governments of both Democrats and Republicans, from liberal to conservative, is similar. They send in the National Guard and arrest hundreds.

Unions have spoken out forcefully against the killing of George Floyd and for their prosecution of the cops who did it — including the Amalgamated Transit Union, the United SteelWorkers, Teamsters, United Auto Workers, International Longshore Workers Union, UNITE-HERE, N. Carolina and late to the game the LA AFL-CIO and many more. The bus drivers’ union in Minneapolis refused to transport protesters to jail who were rounded up by the cops. Other important organizations have also publicly denounced the cop brutality such as Communities for a Better Environment in Wilmington, National Physicians for Social Responsibility, National Network on Cuba and Pastors for Peace.

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compare that to a sneaker store or a Starbucks? Young people are just showing their rage because they are not being heard. Labor has a responsibility to join with them.

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To open this discussion, I suggest these demands against police brutality and abuse of power.

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- 2) Abolition of all police for-profit programs National, State, and local.
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- 5) Automatic firing, arrest, and jail time for all false reports, fake evidence, and lying testimony.
- 6) End of all federal funding of every police department in the country.
- 7) End of all ticket writing incentive programs, speed trap schemes, and traffic stops for petty violations.
- 8) Abolition of all police weapons drawn, traffic stop. End to all non-recorded sobriety tests.
- 9) Abolishment of all military grade weapons given to local police departments

I look forward to hearing back from some of you in the labor movement who are reading this. We need action by labor — not just words.

Let's have a public discussion with readers of *Random Lengths News*. Mark.friedman@randomlengthsnews.com