

# USA: Daunte Wright's murder shows police cannot be reformed

Tom Burns, Workers Power, USA Wed, 14/04/2021 - 07:46

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April 11, 2021 saw the murder at a traffic stop of Daunte Wright, aged 20, by police officers in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis. Police allege that Mr. Wright had an outstanding arrest warrant and attempted to get away in his car. The vehicle would travel a few blocks before colliding with another vehicle after the shooting. Daunte's girlfriend was in the car and was taken to the hospital for minor injuries. The police officer involved in the shooting claims she mistakenly drew her gun instead of a taser. The ensuing protests saw the police deploy tear-gas and rubber bullets to disperse the crowd.

The murder took place only a few miles away from where Derek Chauvin choked out George Floyd's life last May and comes as we enter the third week of the officer's trial, during which prosecution has sought to depict Chauvin as just 'a bad apple'. Police officers involved in training, and above Chauvin in the chain of command, have testified on behalf of the prosecution. However, Daunte's murder, and the sheer number of such killings over many years, proves the inherently racist character of the police force. Quite simply, they cannot be reformed. They must be abolished and replaced by workers' and black community self-defense.

The Black Lives Matter protests after George Floyd's death exposed the brutal nature of policing across the country. There were innumerable videos online of violent repression against innocent protesters; their teargassing in Raleigh, North Carolina or police cars running over protesters in New York or California. The aim was clearly to terrorize us. But, despite this violence by state security forces, protesters across the country remained unbent. The Floyd protests saw the burning of a police precinct, the first such instance in recent American history.

After the killing of Daunte Wright, local protesters arrived. Like police did in Minneapolis, Raleigh, New York, Los Angeles, and other American cities, they met the protesters with violence and attempted to disperse the crowd with rubber bullets and tear gas canisters.

Racist and far-right protesters had gathered in Minneapolis the same day. Of course, the police made no moves against such protesters. Like they did during Trump's putsch in Washington, DC, officers regarded such actors as 'buddies' and 'friends'. Police exist to enforce private property rights and the interests of the bourgeois state.

We must show solidarity with protesters in Minnesota nationwide. That solidarity must involve all organs of working-class organization and organizations that claim to represent us, going beyond words, acting now. Organized labor and the DSA have another chance to take a major role in organizing and protesting against police violence, indeed against the institution itself. If the DSA genuinely wants to lead the working class, it must break with the Democratic politicians' condemnation of 'rioters' and calls for the peace of

submission. They must act decisively in solidarity with BLM and call for everyone out of their workplaces and out in the streets.

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