

## Stop Police Murders!

On January 7, Tyre Nichols, a young Black worker (he worked at FedEx) in Memphis, Tennessee, was brutally beaten by 5 cops. He was beaten so badly that he died from his injuries 3 days later.

The cops who killed Nichols were part of a special police unit called SCORPION, which was charged with patrolling “high crime” areas, a euphemism for Black and Latino working class neighborhoods. Since Memphis is almost 65% Black, such units are a threat to the majority of the people of Memphis. Although this unit was disbanded shortly after Nichols’ murder, there is nothing to prevent it from being reformed under another name. (New York’s Mayor Eric Adams, a former cop, is bringing back NYPD’s similar anti-crime unit, which had been disbanded in 2020.)



The cops who murdered Nichols were immediately fired and charged with second degree murder and other crimes. This was obviously to try to prevent the massive demonstrations that took place all over the U.S., and all over the world, after the police murder of George Floyd.

The murder of Nichols once again disproves the so-called “bad apples” theory, that it is only a few “bad apples” among the police that spoil the image of the rest.

The fact that all of the 5 cops are Black in no way changes the racist nature of the U.S. capitalist system. First, police forces, at least in the South, began with the run-away slave patrols before the Civil War. And these cops, as all police in the U.S., are used to hold down working and oppressed people.

In 2022, police in this country killed 1061 people, almost 3 per day. Of these, at least 220 were Black (this number is clearly higher, since there are 332 whose race is classified as “unknown”<sup>1</sup>), over 30% of those killed whose race was classified, although Blacks are less than 15% of the population.

Furthermore, one should remember that it was the first Black president, Barack Obama, who was the first to directly attack an African country, Libya, in 2011, leading to the brutal murder of its president, Muammar Gadhafi, the destruction of the country, and the introduction of Black slavery there.

Lenin pointed out, in *The State and Revolution*, that the state consists of “special bodies of armed men” (and now armed women as well), due to the “the cleavage of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes.” They are used, in the form of the police within the country, to oppress and repress Blacks, Latinos and other working people, not to “serve and protect.”. And in the form of the armed forces, they are here not to “serve our country,” but to help to suppress workers and liberation movements abroad.

Make no mistake about it: when there is again a mass militant working-class movement in the U.S., the police (and army) will once again be called out to repress and kill workers of all nationalities, including white workers, as they did in the 1930s.

Independent Workers Party, [www.IndependentWorkersParty.org](http://www.IndependentWorkersParty.org)

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/585152/people-shot-to-death-by-us-police-by-race/>