

Execution in Wisconsin: Only the working class can stop police state terror

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The police execution of Corey Ruiz in Madison, Wisconsin, on Wednesday has provoked an eruption of social anger throughout the state and across the country.

Ruiz, a 38-year-old father and longtime Madison resident, was identified by police as a “suspect” after he was reportedly seen looking into parked cars. Police have not alleged that he broke into a vehicle, stole anything or committed any crime whatsoever.

Nevertheless, multiple police units were dispatched to apprehend him. Video recorded by residents shows police knocking Ruiz off his bicycle before surrounding and assaulting him. In broad daylight and in front of dozens of witnesses, officers kicked and tased Ruiz before one cop pulled out his pistol and shot him repeatedly in the head.

As of Friday, more than 48 hours after the killing, the officer who executed Ruiz had not been publicly identified, much less arrested or charged with a crime.

The intersection where Ruiz was murdered remained closed through Friday as residents transformed it into a memorial. Hundreds of workers and young people of every race have participated in protests and vigils demanding “Justice for Corey.” Additional demonstrations are planned throughout the weekend.

Ruiz’s killing is the latest in a wave of state murders carried out over less than three weeks. On July 5, National Guard soldiers deployed as part of the “Memphis Safe Task Force” shot and killed 20-year-old Tyrin Johnson in downtown Memphis, at least the fourth person killed by the task force in 60 days.

On July 7, an ICE agent murdered 52-year-old Lorenzo Salgado Araujo as he drove his brother and co-workers to a job site in Houston, Texas. The surviving workers, whose testimony demolished the government’s claim that he “weaponized” his van, are now imprisoned in an ICE concentration camp in Conroe, Texas.

On July 13, an ICE agent shot and killed Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, a Colombian worker legally

authorized to live and work in the United States, as he drove to work in Biddeford, Maine. The following morning, 28-year-old Juan Jairo Coronilla Durán, legally in the country on a tourist visa, was struck and killed by a tractor-trailer while fleeing ICE agents in St. Augustine, Florida.

Five workers and young people killed in 17 days by police, National Guard soldiers and immigration agents. Not one of their killers has been arrested, and most have not even been publicly named.

These are all manifestations of a single process: the violent restructuring of American society along police state lines.

What was carried out on a Madison street was the local expression of a national policy directed against the working class. The objective source of this violence is the historic crisis of American capitalism. The financial oligarchy is accumulating wealth on a scale without precedent while tens of millions of workers struggle to afford food, housing and medical care.

The wealth of the world’s billionaires has climbed from \$4.5 trillion 15 years ago to \$20.1 trillion today. It increased by approximately 40 percent in only two years.

At the opposite pole, workers employed by some of the largest and most profitable corporations depend on government assistance to survive. The number of Amazon workers receiving food stamps or Medicaid nearly tripled between February 2020 and September 2025. Uber, Lyft, DoorDash, Grubhub and Instacart collectively rank among the largest employers of workers receiving federal aid.

Public assistance is used to subsidize the poverty wages paid by giant corporations and enrich billionaires such as Amazon founder Jeff Bezos. Now even this inadequate aid is being taken away. An estimated 4 million people, including 1.5 million children, have been removed from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program over the

last year.

While children are denied food, the House of Representatives this week approved a National Defense Authorization Act allocating \$1.15 trillion to the military. Six Democrats voted for the bill, providing the margin to pass it. The legislation forms a central component of the Trump administration's proposed \$1.5 trillion military budget.

These resources will finance the expanding war against Iran, continued support for the Gaza genocide, the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine and preparations for war against China. The violence inflicted by American imperialism overseas is increasingly being directed against the working class within the United States. The military occupation of foreign countries and the occupation of American cities are two fronts of the same war.

Social inequality on this scale is incompatible with democracy. The oligarchy cannot impose poverty, war and social devastation through democratic methods. This is why Trump was returned to the White House by the oligarchy and given free rein to construct the apparatus of a presidential dictatorship.

The Democratic Party has responded as a collaborator, not an opposition.

When millions demonstrated against the ICE occupation of American cities and Trump's trampling of the Constitution under the banner "No Kings," Democratic politicians opposed demands to abolish ICE. They sought to divert the mass movement behind the bankrupt slogan "Remember in November," that is, vote for the same Democratic Party that has financed war, expanded the police state and presided over unprecedented social inequality.

Following every police killing, the Democrats recycle proposals for body cameras, review boards, "independent" investigations and additional training. They advanced the same fraud after the murder of George Floyd in 2020. Six years later, the police are killing with still greater frequency and impunity.

According to Mapping Police Violence, police had killed at least 689 people in the United States by July 4. There were only six days during the first half of the year when police did not kill someone. At the present rate, police are on track to surpass the 1,318 people killed in 2025 and approach the record 1,387 killed in 2024.

On average, American police kill more than three people every day. The perpetrators are routinely placed on paid leave, shielded from public identification and cleared

by prosecutors and internal investigations.

The Democrats and their political satellites seek to present police violence as the product of "white supremacy." The racist explanation conceals the essential class function of the police. The police exist to defend capitalist property and the wealth and power of the financial oligarchy against the working class.

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Friedrich Engels explained that the state is not an impartial institution standing above society. It emerges from society's division into irreconcilably hostile classes.

The state's essential foundation, Engels explained, is a "public force" consisting "not merely of armed men, but also of material appendages, prisons and coercive institutions of all kinds." This force grows stronger as class antagonisms sharpen. This is precisely what is taking place in the United States.

The fight to stop police violence, abolish ICE and dismantle the immigration death squads is therefore inseparable from the fight against capitalism and for socialism.

It requires the independent political mobilization of the working class, uniting workers across all racial, national and linguistic lines against the financial oligarchy and both of its political parties. Rank-and-file committees must be built in workplaces and neighborhoods to organize opposition to police violence, deportations, military occupation, social cuts and imperialist war.

This struggle is led by the Socialist Equality Party, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees. The task is to build an international socialist movement of the working class capable of ending capitalist violence and reorganizing society on the basis of human need, not private profit.



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