



Teamsters Local Union No. 848

Chartered in 1937

ERIC TATE
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Condolences to the George Floyd Family



I struggled with putting out a statement about the alleged George Floyd **murder** by a Minneapolis Minnesota Police officer. I usually keep my opinions to myself, but being only Black Principal Officers of a Teamsters Local in the Western United States and the Vice Chair of the Teamsters National Black Caucus I feel in this instance it is important for me to speak out.

I saw a murder of a black man take place on the streets of Minneapolis Minnesota on Memorial Day 2020. I saw a black man in handcuffs, face down in the street with a police officer's knee pressed down on his neck. I heard witnesses yelling at the officers on scene to stop pressing down on the black man's neck. The witnesses informed the officers the black man cannot breathe. They knew this because the black man on the street was telling this fact to the officer with his knee pressed down on his neck. I saw three other officers doing nothing to help the black man. In fact they worked against the black man and prevented the witnesses from coming to the aid of the black man on the street who was obviously in need of protection from the officer with his knee pressed down on his neck. A cry came out from the black man for his mother and the witnesses spoke that the black man was no longer responsive. Time went by as the officer continued to press his knee on the neck of the black man. Then I saw an ambulance arrive and two men came out, they picked up the black man's lifeless body from the street (after they got the officer to take his knee off of his neck) put him on a gurney, into the ambulance and drove away. I saw a murder of a black man take place on the streets of Minneapolis Minnesota on Memorial Day 2020.

Our Members Are Our Strength. . . Our Children Are Our Future. . . Our Retirees Are Our Foundation

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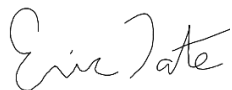
The actions of police brutality directed towards minorities is not new in America. It has been happening my entire life and I have heard stories of it happening all the way back to the days of slavery and we know what happen during that time. The difference between now and then is the development of handheld recording devices. In the past all we could do is file a complaint with the police and the end result of the complaint is the report from the arresting officer(s) stating “the suspect resisted arresting and as a result the officer terminated the individual’s life due to fear for his own safety.” Today because of video capabilities in every cellphone, recordings of these types of incidents can be shown to everyone how excessive force is used by many police officers.

I am hopeful there will be a change but sadly, I am pessimistic that anything different is going to come from the death of George Floyd. WHY? Eric Garner, John Crawford III, Michael Brown, Ezell Ford, Dante Parker, and a long list of others. Time and time again the police wrongfully, unjustifiably, and unnecessary violate the use of force policy of their police department and although the officers may lose their job and possible be charged with a crime, usually the officer is found not guilty in the end.

I believe it is okay to come out and protest injustice although there are health risks to recognize during today’s pandemic of COVID-19. As a Teamster it is my job to picket, rally and demonstrate against things that are done wrong to wage earners in America. What I do not condone is the looting of business, destruction of property and violent attacks on police officers. Never in my life have I seen two wrongs make things right. I understand people are frustrated with the continued criminal behavior of some police officers but looting and burning of businesses that had nothing to do with the death of George Floyd makes you just as bad as the police officers that watched Derek Chauvin kill an unarmed handcuffed man named George Floyd.

What needs to happen is a change in the laws that will make it easier to hold bad cops accountable to bad choices they make in the performance of their duty. All Americans need to recognize that all men no matter what color they are should be treated equally. Finally, there needs to be more opportunities for Americans to earn a living wage and all jobs should pay a living wage which include health benefits and a retirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Tate".

Eric Tate

Secretary Treasurer

Teamsters Local 848

#StopKillingUs