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The Worker is an organ of revolutionary working-class expression, with the aim of uniting class-conscious workers and proletarian revolutionaries under Maoism, serving the effort to reconstitute the Communist Party.

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**On NYPD's Subway
Mass Shooting**



Protests Break Out Following NYPD Subway Mass Shooting

On Sunday, the NYPD opened fire on 37-year-old Derell Mickles after he boarded a subway without paying fare in Brooklyn, NY. Police officers followed Mickles onto the subway, tased him twice, and proceeded to shoot him, claiming that the individual had a knife on him. Two other bystanders were also shot by the police during the confrontation—including one who was shot in the head—as well as another police officer. The officers handcuffed Mickles after shooting him in the stomach.

Despite police claiming that a knife had been recovered at the scene, the following day the department alleged that the knife had been stolen after the shooting.

The subway fare is currently \$2.90, a rising cost that squeezes poor and working class people. This is in addition to the high tax rates that fleece them and funnel their money to fund the same police that shoot and repress them.

In a news conference on Tuesday, New York City Mayor Eric Adams stated: “I think that those officers should be commended for how they really showed a great level of restraint.” Adams has been pushing for increased police presence at subway stations—along with the national guard, deployed by Democrat Governor Kathy Hochul—to supposedly make the subways safer and enforce the rising metro fare, a price the people are paying in blood.

A witness of the shooting spoke with *The Worker*, stating that there was no knife at the scene and that the police fabricated the story. She also described how the police immediately went to rescue their own officer they shot, passing by the civilians

the national median. A 2021 report found that 36% of all households in the city did not have enough money to pay for their basic needs. For those living paycheck to paycheck and unable to afford to pay up front for weekly or monthly unlimited passes, a year’s worth of daily, round-trip pay-per-ride MetroCards exceeds 11% of the annual income for someone below the official poverty line. On top of this, in 2021, the city cut \$65 million—almost a third—of the funding for “Fair Fares,” a program that was purportedly designed to cover half of the fares of those under the poverty line.

NYC’s transit system leads the country in their reliance on fare costs for covering their operations, in contrast to other cities’ systems which are covered by taxes and government funding. The MTA has a debt of about \$48 billion, most of which is owned by firms such as BlackRock, a major investor and profiteer of Israel’s genocide of Palestinians.

The reactionaries’ formula is this: raise transit fares for the people already straining under the rising cost of living in the capitalist economic crisis while militarizing transit—a choke-point for millions of people going to work, school, childcare, etc.—under the guise of stopping the “criminals” who are skipping out on the criminally-high fares. The people’s just response to this has been the decades of militant protests in defense of dignified living standards and against police terror, demonstrations that find their ultimate expression in exceeding the bounds of legality and challenging the profit-driven system that is rooted in private ownership, exploitation and oppression. The task of revolutionaries and class-conscious workers is to organize this expression, combining the struggle against police terror and the rising cost of living with the conquest of power.

police deployments. Fare evasion arrest rates are found to be significantly higher at subway stations located in poor and predominantly Black neighborhoods, with some officers even resigning and exposing their police commissioners for demanding them to target Black and Hispanic commuters with fare evasion arrests. Arrest rates in the city's 130 stations located in poor neighborhoods are twice as high as those of the remaining 262 stations.

Last year, the increase in subway fares from \$2.75 to \$2.90 was met with protests demanding the reversal of the hike, citing that those most impacted by the fare increase are poor and working class people who make up the majority of public transit users. Fare increases throughout the past 70 years of the city's transit system have been met with resistance. In the 1970s, when the fare was raised to 30 cents and later to 50 cents, hundreds protested, using chains to open the gates and setting off firecrackers inside phone booths. Protests erupted again in 1981, when fares were raised despite the mayor's promises that they would not be raised until the following year. Demonstrators during these protests expressed the need for "a violent overthrow of the government." Fare strikes were organized in 1986 following a fare raise to \$1, with protesters stuffing debris into the token slot of subway turnstiles and throwing dimes at MTA officials. In the 1990s, an MTA vote for fare hikes was disrupted by protesters who carried caricatures of former Mayor Giuliani and former Governor Pataki with the title: "The Monsters Who Ate Mass Transit."

According to the MTA, the next fare hike is set to start in 2025, increasing 4% from the current \$2.90 to approximately \$3. This is amidst the continued rise of living costs in NYC which have pushed larger numbers of people into oppressive living conditions. The median rent for a family of four in the city is around \$54,000 annually, which is 123% higher than

they shot and leaving them to bleed.

On Tuesday evening, a protest gathered outside of the Brooklyn subway station where the shooting occurred. Protesters chanted "Show us the knife" and "Free Palestine and fuck the police". One speaker stated that "\$3 is not the cost of a life, not the cost of four lives", with another adding: "the NYPD has committed a mass shooting over \$2.90." Protesters put forward the demand for justice for the victims of the police shooting, an end to racist police terror, and that the metro should be free while raising slogans of international solidarity with Palestine, the Congo, Sudan, and Somalia. Several emphasized the need for a revolution, with one speaker stating: "This is a system that can't get fixed, we've got to get rid of it. We need a revolution."

The rally turned into a march to the local precinct, where protesters confronted hundreds of police officers. The police officers brutalized several protesters on a number of occasions, using mace, squeezing protesters against cars, and charging at protests and beating them. Protesters remained combative and in high spirits, pushing back against the police, throwing objects at them, and quickly regrouping and pushing back against the cops after skirmishes.

One protester and resident of the area shouted, "if you want to play, burn the precinct down." Another protester called to attention that Black officers were acting the most brutal toward the protesters, and how the state uses identity politics to traffic in the oppression of the masses and as a cover to facilitate reactionization. This sentiment was repeated throughout the demonstration, with one demonstrator noting how NYC Mayor Eric Adams rode off the back of the 2020 May Uprisings to get elected as mayor despite formerly being a high-ranking cop—similar to Kamala Harris. The speaker noted how Adams has been able to get away with more reactionary policies because

of his identity, but that his time is coming to an end as mayor amid the unrest and a number of recent resignations from his cabinet due to an ongoing federal corruption probe.

NYPD Carries Out Mass Shooting While Fare Hikes Squeeze the Poor

Brownsville, Brooklyn – On September 15, the NYPD shot and severely wounded Derell Mickles, a 37-year-old Black man, for taking the subway without paying the \$2.90 fare. The police shot two other commuters and another officer. New York City Mayor Eric Adams praised the officers involved: “I think that those officers should be commended for how they really showed a great level of restraint.” Mickles remains in critical condition after being shot in the stomach and handcuffed. The NYPD notified his mother of the shooting by slipping a business card under her apartment door, which she found the next morning. Protests are planned in the city throughout the week.

This shooting is only the continuation of the NYPD’s anti-worker and racist aggression on subways. In 2021, the NYPD tasered David Crowell, a 29-year-old Black man, after police saw Crowell pay his own subway fare and let his cousin through the emergency gate. Police attacked Crowell with a stun gun after his cousin paid for his fare when confronted by the police.

In 2019, the NYPD punched a young Black man on the subway platform who was an onlooker of a fight. In the same year, 7 NYPD officers tackled and arrested Adrian Napier, a Black 19-year-old man, citing that he had a gun; investigators did not find any guns. In response, hundreds of protesters flooded a subway station and jumped the turnstiles to protest the racist police aggression. In the same year, 500 officers were deployed in the subway,

increasing the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) police force by 64%. This decision was led by former Democrat New York Governor Andrew Mark Cuomo, who pushed the annual spending to over \$50 million a year on deploying new police to crack down on fare evasions. Following this decision, protesters held demonstrations, shutting down the city’s streets and subways.

The NYPD and city officials, including former NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio and current Mayor Eric Adams, have championed cracking down on fare evasions, flooding the subway system with police to counter “crime” and stop financial losses they argue come from fare evasion. In other words, they blame the problems of public transit on the masses and then turn this into an excuse for reactionary violence. Adams’s new turnstiles and increased police presence also act as de facto checkpoints, where arrests for fare evasion are used to search for people with outstanding warrants, according to a Columbia University law professor.

In March of this year, an additional 800 police were sent by Mayor Adams to the subways, adding millions of dollars to the \$250 million that has been spent on deployments to the subway over the past four years. This was in addition to the national guard deployed by Governor Kathy Hochul and her call for a massive expansion of surveillance at the stations. Although Adams claimed it was due to reports of “increasing” numbers of fare evasion, the deployment coincided with the escalation of police repression against pro-Palestine protesters in the city.

Poor and working class residents are burdened with a double tax, in which they have to pay out of pocket for public transportation while also paying some of the highest tax rates in the country, money that is then used to fund