

# Eric Garner will be avenged

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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Eric Garner's family leads protest on fifth anniversary of his murder by the NYPD.  
Photo: Erik MacGregor/The Independent



Protesters outside killer cop Daniel Pantaleo's house in Staten Island on July 17.  
Photo: The Independent

The whole world saw New York City police officer Daniel Pantaleo use an illegal chokehold to strangle Eric Garner to death. Millions of people were angered by the video taken by Ramsey Orta in which Garner, a loving father of six children, cried out 11 times, "I can't breathe!"

This was a lynching carried out, not by the Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi 60 years ago, but in Staten Island by the New York City Police Department in 2014.

What has happened since then? The courageous truth teller Ramsey Orta was railroaded to prison. The killer Daniel Panteleo is still on the police force, making

more than \$100,000 per year with overtime.

Now, the U.S. Department of Justice, in a decision made by Attorney General William Barr, has refused to bring any civil rights charges against Panteleo.

In the notorious Dred Scott case, Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney wrote that Black people “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” That was in 1857. And 162 years later, the Trump administration and the capitalist class still agree with it.

Barr’s decision to whitewash the murder of Eric Garner was deliberately timed to coincide with Trump’s fascist attacks on the Squad: congresspeople Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib.

Both Barr and Trump are throwing red meat to the most racist elements in U.S. society in order to drive Trump voters to the polls in 2020.

### **How do we get justice?**

The cover-up of Eric Garner’s murder is bipartisan. Democratic New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo refused to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Eric Garner’s death. Instead, the district attorney in cop-infested Staten Island was allowed to impanel a grand jury that was guaranteed to exonerate Panteleo.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who is now running for president as a liberal opponent of Trump, refused to fire Panteleo or even release his disciplinary records to the public.

So how do we get justice for Eric Garner and every other victim of police violence? Frederick Douglass knew the answer: “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

The struggle, led by the courageous Garner family, must continue with more support. An excellent response was the July 17 demonstration that marched right up to Panteleo's house in Staten Island. So was the march that same day by a thousand people on One Police Plaza in Manhattan to voice their outrage.

We need millions in the streets to get the capitalist police state to concede anything.

It took 30 years to put Medgar Evers' assassin, Byron De La Beckwith, behind bars. The Garner family and the working class will not wait that long for justice.

Every struggle — from hundreds of thousands demonstrating in Puerto Rico to workers rebelling in Amazon warehouses — is a guarantee that Eric Garner will be avenged.

