





SOUTHERN ECHO STANDS WITH YOU AND AGAINST RACISM AND BRUTALITY

65 years ago, the nation's attention was focused on the horrible fear, terror, and violence that plagued African Americans due to racial hatred. The images of a beaten and battered Emmitt Till, his body broken, and life taken by White Supremacists, forced a nation to sit up and finally notice the brutality inflicted upon people of color. Till's funeral was photographed and published throughout the media, opening the eyes of the country.

In 2020, the country's eyes are being forced open once again. To many, the horrific video depicting the brutal murder of George Floyd invokes the same righteous anger and shock as the photographs of Till that still haunt us. But unlike Till's murder, the cause of Floyd's death was captured, clearly on video. Just as George Floyd could not escape from the knee slowly choking the life out of him, one cannot watch that footage and escape the violent reality that African Americans are too often the victims of police brutality.

More than that, Floyd's murder and the global Covid-19 pandemic has served as a wake-up to those who did not see the violence, the hatred, the suspicion, or the disparities visited upon African Americans. While the virus has exposed the systemic bias and inequities within our healthcare system and economic opportunities, horrific videos like George Floyd's have exposed the brutal violence brought to bear on Black and Brown bodies.

In America, there is a history of state-sanctioned murdering of people of color. Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Eric Harris, Sandra Bland, Michael Brown, Alonzo Smith, Philando Castile, and Breonna Taylor are just a few names on a long list of lives lost due to police violence. And there have been more lives lost, lost to the horrors of slavery, the evils of Jim Crow and segregation, and the continuing racial oppression represented in the Confederate flag that still flies over our state.

Emmitt Till was not the first; however, George Floyd should be the last. Southern Echo stands with those of conscience, and we demand accountability and an end to police brutality in all its forms.



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