



## **Statement by Communist Party USA.**

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**A time of great joy for the LGBTQ community celebrating Pride month turned into great horror in Orlando on June 12 – the worst modern day mass shooting in the U.S.**

Our hearts go out to the victims, their families and friends and the LGBTQ community.

This was an act of homophobic hate and terror. Like the killer of eight African American parishioners at the AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, the Orlando killer sought to destroy a space of safety and solidarity.

The response of GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump, instead of healing words, was inflammatory rhetoric.

Trump met hate with more hate using Islamophobia to divert from blaming homophobia and the flood of weapons, including assault weapons, in our communities.

He continues to scapegoat migrants and criminalize Latino immigrants.

The massacre cannot be divorced from the right-wing hate pervading politics the past 35 years, the hate talk radio, Trump campaign and Tea Party and GOP extremism blocking marriage equality and attempting to roll back all democratic rights.

Like Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVey and the Charleston killer Dylan Roof, the killer is a homegrown extremist and who fed on this ideological sewage.

Homophobic hate is connected to misogyny, institutionalized racism and rampant police brutality and killing of African Americans and other people of color and discrimination against the transgender community.

It leads to an ugly and dark place.

Each time there is a major shooting incident the National Rifle Association and gun manufacturers block common-sense gun control despite the fact the majority of Americans support reforms.

They play on fear and declare more people should be armed. The more fear, the more gun sales, the more profits.

This is an affront to the memory of those who died, those they leave behind and the safety of our communities.

Reforms start by adopting universal background checks to keep weapons from unstable individuals and suspected terrorists, ending unrestricted sales at gun shows and online and banning military-style assault weapons.

Let us unite and celebrate equality and our racial, national, gender, and identity diversity, that which makes for a beautiful nation.

Turn anger and tears to legislative action and a record turnout on Election Day 2016. Defeat any candidate opposed to LGBTQ rights or common-sense gun control – beginning with Donald Trump.

**Love over hate. United as one.**

