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Military Resistance 11F9



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Family Mourns Sacramento Soldier Killed In Afghanistan: Father: 'I Just Miss My Son'

Jun 04, 2013 KCRA

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Jose Ramirez and his wife, Hope Aguirre, sat in their south Sacramento home Tuesday with a knit blanket, bearing a gold star, lying across Aguirre's lap.

The gold star, representing a fallen soldier, is a symbol they would never have hoped to have.

The couple was given the blanket at Dover Air Force Base, where they received their son's remains.

Military officials say Ray Ramirez, 20, died Saturday when his Army combat unit was struck by an improvised explosive device.

Jose Ramirez and Aguirre, Ray's stepmother, returned to Sacramento on Tuesday to a home full of family photos and their son's baseball trophies from his days on the team at Florin High School.

All of it, is a reminder of just how young he was; high school graduation was three years ago.

"You never truly know how much he was loved, until now," Aguirre said, through tears. "Let's honor the fact that he chose to give his life for his country, the fact that he chose to give everybody else the chance to be free."

Jose Ramirez is candid, saying, he wasn't crazy about the idea of his son joining the military. Ray enlisted more than two years ago.

"He [said], 'Dad, can I at least go take my physical and I'll come home and we'll talk about it?'" Ramirez said. "And I stressed that to him, 'Son, you come home. We talk about it.'"

But in the next conversation, Ray told his father that he had just joined the Army.

"Even if I had told him, 'Hey, I wish you weren't going,' or 'I wish this,' it's already done. So it was nothing but support after that," Ramirez said.

The couple has three other children, and had a house full of relatives Tuesday, as they joked about how much Ray loved to eat enchiladas whenever he came home from the base located at Fort Stewart in Georgia.

But every laugh that could be heard in their home was sandwiched between hours of tears.

"I just miss my son, I really miss him," Jose Ramirez said, crying. "I don't think there's a word. Proud doesn't describe it. That boy is more, more of a man than I've ever known."

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

MILITARY NEWS



"SOME OF THE REFORMS BEING SUGGESTED TO ADDRESS OUR SEXUAL ASSAULT PROBLEMS WOULD UNDERMINE OUR GOOD ORDER & DISCIPLINE."

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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

<p>Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies. -- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War</p>

**“The Situation Inside Iran May
Appear Calm, Because Of The
Government’s Harsh**

**Repression, But There Are
Widespread Workers' Protests"**

**"Authorities Are Aware Of The
Time Bomb That The
Impoverishment Of Large
Segments Of The Population Is
Creating"**

**"In The Face Of This Economic Crisis,
None Of The Current Candidates On The
Ballot Has Put Forward A Tangible
Economic Plan That Addresses Workers'
Concerns"**

**"Intimidation, Prosecution And
Imprisonment Of Labor Activists Are
Rampant, But Unions In Iran Haven't
Been Fully Silenced, And Some Have
Even Had Some Limited Success"**

The American left has rightly opposed military adventurism against Iran, but it should also oppose sanctions that hurt ordinary Iranians and back our struggle to gain the freedom of speech and association, as well as the right to bargain collectively and advocate for workplace improvements.

Those basic liberties are essential for our dignity — and for the future of genuine democracy in Iran.

June 13, 2013 By MANSOUR OSANLOO, NewYork Times

Mansour Osanloo, a former president of the Tehran Bus Drivers Union, was imprisoned by the Iranian government from 2006 to 2011.

This essay was translated by Hadi Ghaemi from the Persian.

IRAN'S presidential election on June 14 will be neither free nor fair.

The candidates on the ballot have been preselected in a politically motivated vetting process that has little purpose other than ensuring the election of a compliant president who will be loyal to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Regardless of the outcome of the vote, the most urgent challenge for both the next president and Ayatollah Khamenei will be to confront a rising tide of discontent resulting from a rapidly deteriorating economic situation.

The outside world is primarily focused on whether the election will signal a shift in the Iranian regime's stand on the nuclear issue.

But for the average Iranian the most important issue is the impact of this election on her pocketbook — especially for the hardworking masses, whose purchasing power has drastically decreased as they struggle to provide the most basic necessities for their families.

Iran's industrial workers, teachers, nurses, government and service-sector employees have been hit hard.

The profound mismanagement of the economy by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government, coupled with stringent international sanctions, has made these workers' plight the most important aspect of Iran's domestic politics.

The situation inside Iran may appear calm, because of the government's harsh repression, but there are widespread workers' protests.

Dissidents from all walks of life, including educated but unemployed young people and women, are searching for any opportunity to express their grievances peacefully. Just last week in Isfahan, during the funeral of the prominent dissident cleric Ayatollah Jalaledin Taheri, thousands chanted "Death to the dictator" and "Political prisoners must be set free."

The authorities in Iran are aware of the time bomb that the impoverishment of large segments of the population is creating.

During a recent meeting of Iran's National Security Council, high-ranking officials expressed their concern about possible uprisings of "the hungry."

I know how far the authorities will go. I spent more than five years in prison for my labor-organizing activities.

I was physically and psychologically tortured and threatened with rape. My interrogators also often threatened to detain, torture and rape my wife and children.

My son Puyesh was imprisoned and severely tortured.

The authorities expelled my other son, Sahesh, from his university.

Intelligence agents kidnapped Sahesh's wife, Zoya, three times.

She was beaten and threatened, and during one of these episodes, she miscarried.

Tehran's notorious prosecutor, Saeed Mortazavi, threatened my wife many times simply because she was pursuing my case with the judiciary. And my interrogators constantly harassed her with threatening calls and vulgar text messages.

For the slightest protest against my treatment, I was held in solitary confinement — once for 7 months and 23 days.

Interrogators often threatened to kill me, telling me, "No one knows you are here, we can easily kill you with impunity." They would remind me of the massacres of political prisoners during the 1980s and the many killed in detention since then.

But I was fortunate enough to have widespread international support, especially from international labor unions and human rights organizations. News about my case had an effect on my relationship with the prison guards.

They were exposed to the news about my activism and reasons behind my imprisonment through satellite television channels and the Internet. As a result, their attitude toward me changed over time. I even forged friendships with some of my prison guards, themselves from working-class backgrounds, advising them on how to pursue work-related grievances against their employer.

I recently left the country because of death threats.

But Iranian workers in many sectors are still organizing; some are publicly known, others remain under the radar to avoid the sharp sword of repression.

Intimidation, prosecution and imprisonment of labor activists are rampant, but unions in Iran haven't been fully silenced, and some have even had some limited success.

My colleagues in the Tehran Bus Drivers Union managed to win an 18 percent wage increase, despite the imprisonment and firing of several of its members.

Widespread unemployment, runaway inflation, shortages of essential goods and a precipitous decline in the value of Iran's currency have had such a debilitating impact on workers and wage earners that they can't afford to remain silent and indifferent.

In the face of this economic crisis, none of the current candidates on the ballot has put forward a tangible economic plan that addresses workers' concerns.

They have made references to difficulties and criticized the Ahmadinejad administration's mismanagement and corruption, but they have not proposed or discussed any solutions to the workers' plight.

We welcome international support from all those who care for our struggle.

The American left has rightly opposed military adventurism against Iran, but it should also oppose sanctions that hurt ordinary Iranians and back our struggle to gain the freedom of speech and association, as well as the right to bargain collectively and advocate for workplace improvements. Those basic liberties are essential for our dignity — and for the future of genuine democracy in Iran.

**General Motors & Vietnam:
“Now I Know Why, We Only Put 18
Rounds In A M-16 Magazine Instead
Of The 20, Because Otherwise They
Would Jam”
“This Is Why Our Leaders Do Not Want
To End Wars Today, In Fact They Want
To Start New Wars”**

From: Dennis Serdel [Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th
Brigade; United Auto Workers GM Retiree]
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Subject: General Motors & Vietnam
Date: Jun 16, 2013

**This is from Vietnam GI, the largest Anti-War Newspaper, in an Issue from 1968
when I was making \$315 a Month in Vietnam Infantry.**

I was Working at General Motors after my Tour in Vietnam Infantry 1968.

- Dennis

***“Profit figures are from Fortune Magazine's list of the top 500
Corporations.”***

It says, *“Not do the big corporations make fat profits off of the “defense” contracts, but they get the taxpayer to buy the machines they use to produce the contracts. A “No Lose” deal.*

“In 1967 General Electric, for instance, held \$114 million of the taxpayers property, an amount almost equal to one-third of their profits for that year.

“FIRM: General Motors

“Money Given by the Pentagon for buying Production machinery: \$83,979,781

“1967 Profits [after taxes]: \$1,627,276,000

More From Article :

“Lots of politicians scream about “waste in government” and “welfare and foreign aid giveaway” programs.

The truth is that the biggest giveaway of all is “Defense” spending, which accounts for the biggest chunk of the federal budget.

And it's not the poor or foreign nations who get the money from this particular giveaway.

It's corporations who contract for defense work. But the politicians don't make noise about it because these contractors are their big buck backers.

There are lots of reports about the mismanagement and profiteering that goes on at the Pentagon, but nothing much is ever done about it.

Welfare recipients are an easier target to attack than big corporations.

Here's some of what the latest unpublished report, done by the General Service Administration, found out about the Defense Department's \$45 Billion per year procurement budget:

55% of what the DoD buys from private industry involves no competitive bidding whatsoever.

Another 30% falls into what they call “competitive negotiated contracts,” which is another way of saying that retired generals and admirals employed by industry work out the profits over drinks.

An example is the recent M-16 contract awarded to General Motors even though it's bid was \$20 million higher than two firms which lost out.

DoD owns so much property that its 5,500 person procurement bureaucracy can't keep track of it all. Last year, the GSA report says, they blew \$160 million on computer equipment even though the computers they already had were idle for a total of 3.3 million hours.

The Pentagon spends \$7 billion a year on "research and development" contracts that usually run more than double the original costs estimates.

\$14.7 billion of Pentagon property is held by private industry, supposedly for use on government work. After the government work is completed, the equipment is supposed to be returned for reassignment, but as a rule, no one bothers.

After all, the DoD usually doesn't know where the equipment is.

In theory, they are supposed to be checks against excess profits - profiteering. But audits on the books of five unnamed corporations showed that they had all vastly, understated their profits.

One company reported 5% but audit showed 10%. Another reported a 2% loss but the Government Accounting Office audit showed 15% profit,

The Pentagon gives away billions to the corporations. And it all comes out of our tax money.

	Money given by Pentagon for buying production machinery	1967 Profits after taxes]
FIRM		
General Electric	\$114,752,148	\$361,389,000
North American Aviation	\$105,636,333	\$68,261,000
AVCO	\$89,633,519	\$74,610,000
General Motors	\$83,979,781	\$1,627,276,000
General Dynamics	\$79,174,713	\$57,026,000
Lockheed	\$77,068,029	\$54,359,000
Thompson-Ramo-Wollridge	\$64,706,654	\$42,824,000
McDonnell Douglas	\$57,837,398	\$893,000
ALCOA	\$47,505,011	\$107,366,000
Ling-Temco-Vought	\$42,047,137	\$34,003,000
United Aircraft	\$37,115,005	\$57,310,000
Boeing	\$36,915,820	\$83,938,000
Curtiss-Wright	\$36,661,534	\$11,531,000
Raytheon	\$32,896,692	\$28,602,000

This is from Vietnam GI, the largest Anti-War Newspaper, in an Issue from 1968 when I was making \$315 a Month in Vietnam Infantry.

Also, now I know why, we only put 18 rounds in a M-16 magazine instead of the 20, because otherwise they would jam.

This is Why our Leaders do Not want to End Wars today, in fact they want to Start New Wars.

FTA - Dennis

MORE:

Vietnam GI: Reprints Available

[THEY STOPPED AN IMPERIAL WAR]



Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command.

The pages and pages of letters in the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

Military Resistance has copied complete sets of Vietnam GI. The originals were a bit rough, but every page is there. Over 100 pages, full 11x17 size.

Free on request to active duty members of the armed forces.

Cost for others: \$15 if picked up in New York City. For mailing inside USA add \$5 for bubble bag and postage. For outside USA, include extra for mailing 2.5 pounds to wherever you are.

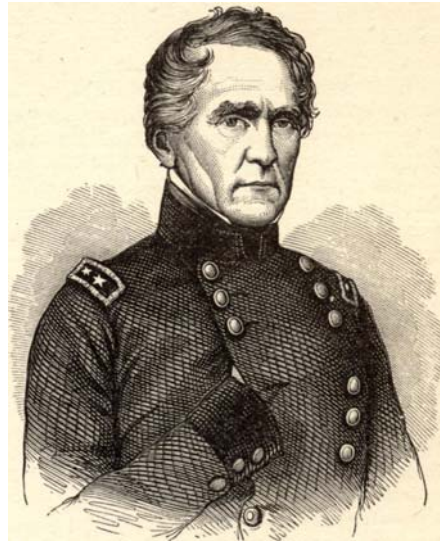
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All proceeds are used for projects giving aid and comfort to members of the armed forces organizing to resist today's Imperial wars.

ANNIVERSARIES

June 17, 1838: Anniversary On A Most Honorable Act By General John Wool Of The United States Army



General John Wool [Sonofthesouth.net]



Carl Bunin Peace History June 16-22

The Cherokee Nation began the 1,200-mile forced march known as the Trail of Tears.

Their removal from ancestral land in the southeast U.S. had been ordered by Pres. Andrew Jackson as the result of a treaty signed by a small minority of the tribe, and approved in the Senate by a one-vote margin.

Ordered to move on the Cherokee, General John Wool resigned his command in protest; Gen. Winfield Scott and 7000 troops moved in to enforce the treaty.

“The Trail Where They Cried” (“Nunna daul Tsuny” in the Cherokee language) led from northern Georgia to Oklahoma.

Along the way, an estimated 4,000 died from hunger, exposure and disease.

“The Solution”

[In Memory Of The June 17 1953 East German Workers Rebellion]

After the uprising of the 17th of June
The Secretary of the Writers Union
Had leaflets distributed in the Stalinallee
Stating that the people
Had forfeited the confidence of the government
And could win it back only
By redoubled efforts. Would it not be easier
In that case for the government
To dissolve the people
And elect another?

Brecht

TROOPS INVITED:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Sadistic Freaks In Command: Zionist Regime Won't Let Kids Over 8 Visit Their Fathers In Prison; Palestinian Prisoners Denied Right To Know Their Own Children: “Putting Limitations And Restrictions On Who Is Eligible To Visit Them, Is A Form Of Collective Punishment”

10 June 2013 by Joe Catron, The Electronic Intifada

Gaza City

On 20 May, Obeida Shamali visited his father, Ahmad Abd Alraheem Shamali, in Israel's Nafha prison.

It was the first time they had seen each other since Israeli forces captured Ahmad in August 2008.

“I was very happy,” the seven-year-old said. He was sitting under a picture of his father in his family's house in Gaza City's al-Shajaiyeh neighborhood.

“Before it, I imagined how his face would look when I met him, because I hadn't seen him for such a long time.”

A fighter with Fatah's al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Ahmad has been sentenced to 18 years in prison by an Israeli military court.

Like hundreds of local children, Obeida had been unable to visit his father for years. In June 2007, a year before capturing his father, Israel banned all visits to Palestinian detainees by families from the Gaza Strip.

To end a mass hunger strike in its prisons, it eased this restriction in May last year. Israel promised to allow visits by parents and spouses, starting two months later.

But children of detainees remained unable to visit their incarcerated parents for almost another year.

Only last month, on 6 May, did Israel allow seven children — all younger than eight years old — to accompany 54 other members of prisoners' families through the Erez checkpoint, which separates Gaza from present-day Israel.

Some 33 children have now joined four prison visits, according to Dibeh Fakhr, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, which coordinates family visits to detainees with the Israeli authorities.

A recent report on the policy by the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem described the current visitation regime. "Visits are permitted very infrequently, only once a week on Mondays, and then only at one prison facility at a time: Nafha, Ramon and Eshel (Dekel)," according to the group.

"As a result, each eligible inmate receives a visit once every three or four months. In contrast, inmates from Israel or from the West Bank who are held on criminal or security grounds may receive visits once every two weeks" ("Israel prohibits Gazan children from visiting imprisoned fathers," 23 May 2013).

"We were all flying with happiness," Najah Shamali, Ahmad's mother and Obeida's grandmother, said about the news that their entire family would be able to visit Ahmad for the first time.

"The whole family celebrated. Everyone obsessed about the visit and could hardly wait for it to come."

But the visit might have been Obeida's last. Israel's new policy still bars Gaza Strip children aged eight or older from visiting their detained parents.

And Obeida's eighth birthday — on 10 July — will almost certainly come before his family's next visit.

"These policies show that the main aim of the Israeli prison system is to destroy the well-being of prisoners," Rifat Kassis, the director of Defence for Children International — Palestine Section, said.

"There is no justification for imposing these restrictions on Palestinian children from communicating and visiting their fathers in Israeli prisons. Even the security justification Israel uses to justify its policies are not in line with its human rights obligations and cannot stand."

According to Kassis, Israel's restrictions on family visits violate not only its responsibilities under international law, but also its own written regulations.

"Denying political prisoners, especially those who are from the Gaza Strip, from their visitation rights for prolonged periods of time and imposing restrictions on them when they enjoy this right, including putting limitations and restrictions on who is eligible to visit them, is a form of collective punishment," he said.

At the end of April, Israel held 511 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, according to B'Tselem. Many are detained for lengthy sentences.

“Most of their children are (older than) eight years,” said Osama Wahidi, a spokesman for the Hussam Association, a Gaza-based group for current and former detainees. “Very few are younger.”

The Hussam Association campaigns around issues of family visitation, issuing statements and holding rallies at the ICRC. Many of its activities, Wahidi said, aim to draw the attention of international media and human rights organizations.

“Their positions are very bad,” he said. “When (Israeli soldier) Gilad Shalit was detained by the Palestinian resistance here in Gaza, every human rights organization talked about him. At the same time, most of them, and the international media, never mentioned Palestinian detainees. But they demanded that Shalit should be released. He was a soldier; he was holding a weapon; he was targeting Palestinian civilians.”

“We don’t have a magic wand to release all the detainees. That’s why we are trying to find ways to talk about the suffering of detainees, their families, and their children. We don’t have any other way.”

At a weekly sit-in by detainees’ families and supporters at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), several detainees’ children shared their experiences of the visitation policy.

“I send him voice messages through a radio station, and written messages through the ICRC,” said Nisma al-Aqraa, the 15-year-old daughter of Mahed Faraj al-Aqraa.

She has not seen her father, a fighter for the Popular Resistance Committees’ al-Nasser Salah al-Deen Brigades, since his capture by Israeli forces in July 2007.

Categorized as a “permanent sick detainee” in the Ramleh prison hospital, where he is serving three life sentences, both of his legs have been amputated.

“I saw him behind a glass barrier,” Hamze Helles complained.

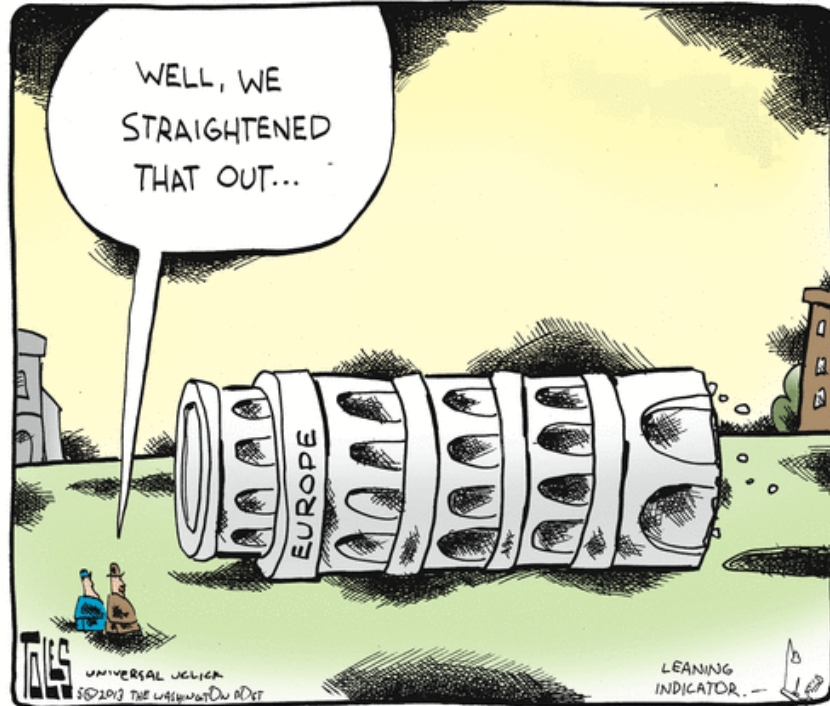
“I couldn’t go inside.” Hamze, who had just turned eight when Israel’s policy shifted on 6 May, was able to visit his father Majed Khalil Helles, a fighter for Fatah’s al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades sentenced to five years, in Nafha prison on 20 May, through an apparent administrative oversight. It was Hamze’s first visit since his father’s capture by Israeli forces in August 2008.

“It doesn’t make any sense to deprive a small child who will never cause any harm to Israel,” Wahidi said.

“It’s not logical. But Israel doesn’t care about its reputation. It feels like it is a state above the law, that no one can hold it accountable for its crimes. Nobody in the international community has shown otherwise.”

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



The Dictator Erdogan Orders Turkish Police To Attack Protest Movement:
“Within Hours, Thousands Of People Began Streaming Downtown To Protest The Crackdown, Setting

Bonfires On The City's Main Boulevard”

“The Brutality Of The Police Assault Already Set Off New Demonstrations In Istanbul, And The Capital, Ankara”



Many critics have been especially upset by his recent campaign to crack down on alcohol consumption and his pursuit of vast urban development projects, which have enriched construction magnates with close ties to the government.

June 15, 2013 By TIM ARANGO, SEBNEM ARSU and CEYLAN YEGINSU, New York Times & 16 June, 2013 By Countercurrents.org. [Excerpts]

ISTANBUL — After 18 days of antigovernment demonstrations that presented a broad rebuke to the country's leadership, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan ordered the riot police to storm the center of the protest movement in Gezi Park on Saturday evening, setting off a night of chaos in downtown Istanbul.

As protesters fled the tear gas and water cannons, the police pursued them, in one case into a luxury hotel near the park where medics tended to people injured in the raid.

Thousands more rallied in the working-class Gazi neighborhood while protesters also gathered in Ankara around the central Kugulu Park.

Within hours, thousands of people began streaming downtown to protest the crackdown, setting bonfires on the city's main boulevard as tear gas wafted through streets normally bustling on a Saturday night.

The Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK), a leading public-sector union alliance, said it would call a nationwide strike on Monday while another union grouping is deciding whether to join the action.

Union executive member Martin Powell-Davies was part of a British trade union delegation that had approached the fringes of the square as police moved in.

He said: "There was a concert by a well-known musician with hundreds of people and families in a festival atmosphere in the square and then suddenly from all sides the police came with water cannons and teargas."

He said: "There are hundreds of Istanbul residents who have come out on to the streets to show their opposition. They are banging the shutters in protest at the sides of the streets."

Local officials said at least 44 people had been injured in the mayhem — the worst since the protests began — but their counts are often low.

Some people sprawled on the floor of a makeshift clinic in a hotel ballroom complained of burns from chemicals in the jets of water shot from the water cannons.

Facing the gravest political crisis in more than 10 years in power, Mr. Erdogan was initially defiant, but late last week attempted to halt the broader movement against him by offering a compromise on the razing of the park that included letting the courts decide what should happen. He won over the protest organizers, but they struggled to bring along the rank-and-file demonstrators, who vowed on Saturday to stay put.

Then, even as the organizers continued to try to work for a peaceful solution, Mr. Erdogan appeared to lose patience, sending in the police.

It is unclear how the latest crackdown will play out in the wider population, given that Mr. Erdogan — who remains popular in many parts of the country — had first offered a compromise.

But the brutality of the police assault already set off new demonstrations in Istanbul, and the capital, Ankara, and appeared to harden the resolve of the core protesters.

"We will keep coming back," said Tulay Bardak, 52, who had fled the park on Saturday night. "We will resist. It's us against them. No amount of gas can keep us out of the park."

By 3 a.m. Sunday, the police were chasing protesters in the streets in Istanbul near the contested park, firing tear gas, water cannons and, according to many demonstrators, rubber bullets.

Some protesters hurled rocks and bottles, but most were attempting to march peacefully to Taksim Square.

To try to stem the flow of new protesters, the city shut down the subway, ferries and some bus routes and the police were blocking main arteries to Taksim.

Earlier in the evening, as violence engulfed the city center, Istanbul's mayor, Huseyin Mutlu, said on television, "The police will go easy on the protesters."

He criticized the foreign media for "giving false information about Taksim," and said, "we should be a loving society, not a clashing one."

Several private television stations, meanwhile, appeared to back off their coverage as the protests intensified. Mr. Mutlu later said the crackdown in the park had lasted only a short time and "did not cause any problems."

One of the protesters who was in the park at the time of the raid, who gave only his first name, Deniz, said, "They fired sound bombs first, and then the tear gas came, and we were caught totally off guard. It was as if they were trying to kill us, not evacuate the park."

The luxury Divan Hotel, on the edge of Gezi Park, became a refuge for protesters fleeing the violence.

Hundreds of protesters, wearing hard hats and gas masks, filled the lobby, where glass cases of cuff links and silk handkerchiefs were smeared with milk that the injured used to clear their eyes of tear gas.

As some kept up their anti-Erdogan chants in the lobby, ambulances arrived and medical workers shuttled in with oxygen tanks and other medical supplies. "Does anyone have any burn cream?" one man yelled.

Another man sat with his shirt off, fanning his burned skin with his socks. "Two days ago he told us to leave, so we were expecting this," said the man, referring to Mr. Erdogan. "He's a dictator."

Selami Yalcinkaya, 42, said, "I have been through the military coup in 1980s, but haven't seen such a brutality."

Adding that he had voted for Mr. Erdogan's party, he said, "This is not an issue of trees any more."

Then, the police outside rushed the lobby, but protesters wedged themselves inside the revolving door and kept them out.

A little while later, the police attacked again, and fired tear gas into the hotel, filling the lobby with white smoke and setting off a mad scramble. Many people fled down the stairs into the ballroom.

One of the injured dragged in was a journalist, who kept saying, "pigs, pigs, pigs," in reference to the police. The Observer saw two elderly women who had passed out being carried out on stretchers to an ambulance.

Mr. Erdogan is supported by roughly half of the population, and the other half is a cross-section of secularists, liberals, urban intellectuals and minorities who are divided in their political views but are increasingly united in opposition to what they view as Mr. Erdogan and his Islamic allies' attempts to unilaterally impose their views on the country.

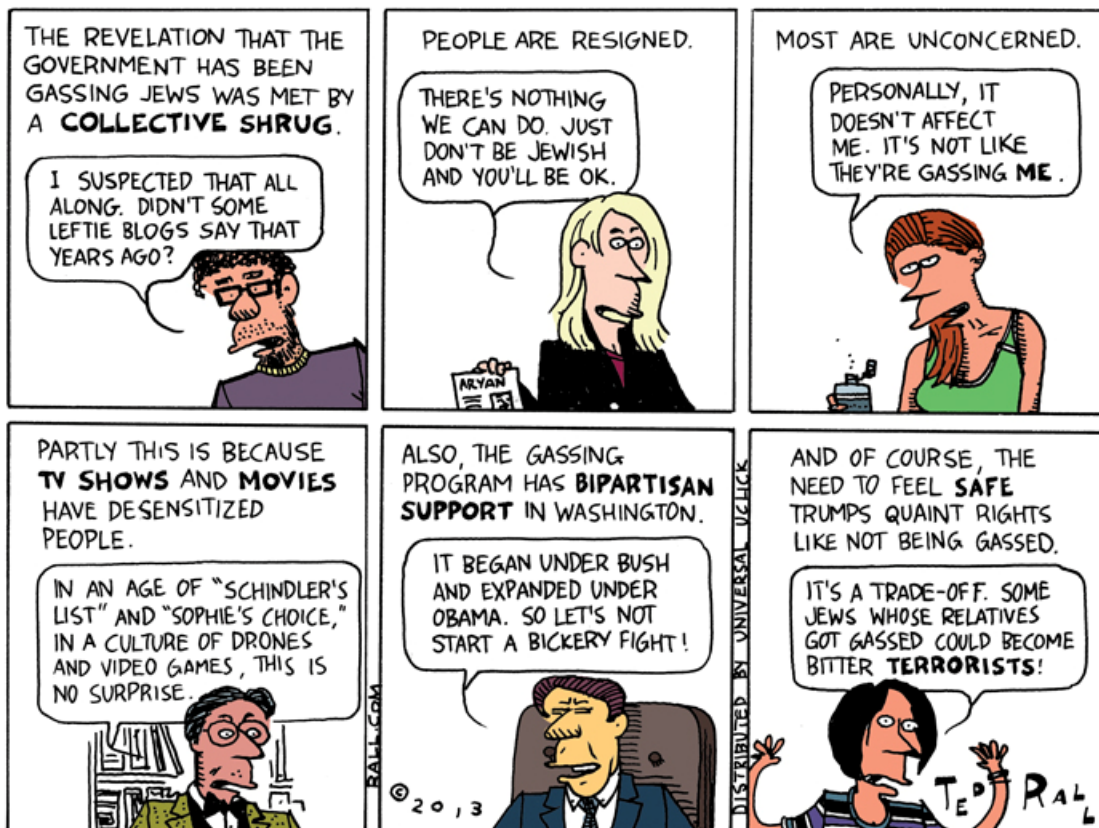
Many critics have been especially upset by his recent campaign to crack down on alcohol consumption and his pursuit of vast urban development projects, which have enriched construction magnates with close ties to the government.

Mr. Erdogan has also antagonized many secular Turks in smaller ways, for example by often telling women that they should have at least three children.

“He goes as far as getting in people’s bedrooms, he decides what we should eat and drink and how many kids we should have,” said a woman in the hotel lobby, whose shoulders were burned from by chemical-laced water.

As the protests in the streets continued, the tent city in Gezi Park was bulldozed. Crumpled tents lay on the ground, amid plates of food that had not been finished when the police arrived.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



The Political Lynching Of Assata Shakur: Why Does The FBI Consider A 65- Year-Old Woman A “Most Wanted Terrorist?” Perjury To Indict, Jury Tampering To Convict - The New Jersey Way?

11 June 13 By William Boardman, Reader Supported News. [Excerpts]

William M. Boardman has over 40 years experience in theatre, radio, TV, print journalism, and non-fiction, including 20 years in the Vermont judiciary. He has received honors from Writers Guild of America, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Vermont Life magazine, and an Emmy Award nomination from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

NOTE: As you consider this article, keep in mind an undisputed, convicted terrorist who bombed hotels and nightclubs in Havana and a Cuban Airliner, killing 73. Luis Posada Carriles has denied the airliner, admitted the rest.

The U.S. has refused to deport him to either Cuba or Venezuela or to prosecute him for terrorism because, after all, he was our terrorist, an anti-communist and a CIA asset.

FBI Terror List: Bombers of U.S. Embassies, Pan Am Flights, Khobar, & USS Cole

The World's Number One Terrorist on the FBI web site, at the top of the FBI's official list of "Most Wanted Terrorists," is Joanne Deborah Chesimard, whose birth name is Byron and whose current name is Assata Shakur.

Shakur, 65, is the aunt and godmother of the late hip-hop icon Tupac Shakur.

A fugitive since 1979, she has lived in Cuba under political asylum since 1984.

In her twenties, she was a leading black liberation activist in New York, relentlessly pursued by authorities until she was jailed in 1973.

Dubiously convicted of murder in 1977, she escaped from prison while her appeal was pending.

In 2005, the FBI, without alleging any terrorist acts, retroactively labeled her a “domestic terrorist.”

And on May 2, 2013, the FBI named her the Terrorist List’s first woman, first black woman, first mother, first grandmother, and perhaps even first grandmother.

“She’s a danger to the American government,” said Aaron T. Ford, the agent in charge of the FBI’s Newark, New Jersey, division at a news conference called to make the Most Wanted Terrorist announcement.

The FBI scheduled the media event on the 40th anniversary of the crime for which Shakur was convicted in 1977, and about which she has always maintained her innocence.

“She continues to flaunt her freedom in the face of this horrific crime,” State Police superintendent Col. Rick Fuentes said at the same news conference, where he called the case “an open wound” for troopers in New Jersey and around the country.

Officially, The FBI Says, She “Should Be Considered Armed And Dangerous”

As it turns out, she’s not widely perceived as a threat by much of anyone.

She continues to advocate revolutionary change, she writes books and shorter pieces, she has a YouTube channel, “Assata Shakur Speaks Out.” Her life and work are included in black studies courses at colleges like Bucknell and Rutgers.

The Cuban government pays her something like \$13 a day to help keep her alive.

Outside the law enforcement community, those who know about Assata Shakur perceive an entirely different person.

The newly-elected mayor of Jackson, Mississippi, considers her “wrongfully convicted.” A sociology professor at Columbia University says there’s “just no material evidence” to support the lone conviction that resulted from seven different trials. A New York City councilman has called for the bounty on Shakur to be rescinded.

For both sides, for all Americans, this case represents some of the unfinished business of the “Sixties.”

The critical event that is perceived so differently by different people took place on May 2, 1973, when two white New Jersey State Troopers, in separate cruisers, stopped a Pontiac LeMans with Vermont plates on the New Jersey Turnpike for a “broken taillight.”

The car held two black men and Shakur, all members of the revolutionary Black Liberation Army. In the shootout that followed, a trooper and one of the black men died. Shakur and the other trooper were wounded.

The other black man, Sundiata Acoli, drove away in the Pontiac with Shakur seriously wounded, and they were arrested separately not long after.

The FBI's current version of the event has no ambiguity: "On May 2, 1973, Chesimard [Shakur], who was part of a revolutionary extremist organization known as the Black Liberation Army, and two accomplices were stopped for a motor vehicle violation on the New Jersey Turnpike by two troopers with the New Jersey State Police.... Chesimard and her accomplices opened fire on the troopers. One trooper was wounded and the other was shot and killed execution-style at point-blank range. Chesimard fled the scene, but was subsequently apprehended. One of her accomplices was killed in the shoot-out and the other was also apprehended and remains in jail."

In fact, Shakur was shot twice, apparently with her hands up, while turning away.

The bullets wounded her upper arms, armpit, and chest, all of which is undisputed.

Expert medical testimony at trial held that her wounds rendered her incapable of firing any weapon. There was no forensic evidence to show that she had fired a weapon, no gunpowder residue, no fingerprint on any weapon.

The surviving trooper admitted on the stand that he had lied to the Grand Jury and testified at trial that he had never seen Shakur with a gun.

After a New Jersey legislator reportedly lobbied the jury for conviction while they were sequestered, the all-white jury delivered a guilty verdict.

FBI COINTELPRO Crimes Give Context to Assata Shakur's Actions

One of her attorneys, Lennox Hinds, now a law professor at Rutgers University, put this event in the context of the time, when the FBI was regularly violating the law with its COINTELPRO program that targeted people the FBI deemed too radical, especially anti-war protesters and black power advocates.

The FBI says all COINTELPRO operations ended in 1971, adding somewhat delicately: "COINTELPRO was later rightfully criticized by Congress and the American people for abridging first amendment rights and for other reasons."

Those other reasons might include law breaking, since COINTELPRO activities included burglaries, wiretaps, physical threats, vandalism, and other illegal actions, even alleged assassinations. There have been no prosecutions of COINTELPRO crimes.

As Lennox Hines told DemocracyNOW! the day after the FBI's Terrorist List press conference:

“In the FBI’s own words, they wanted to discredit, to stop the rise of a black messiah - that was the fear of the FBI - so that there would not be a Mau Mau, in their words, uprising in the United States. And they were, of course, referring to the liberation movement that occurred in Kenya, Africa.

“Now, the FBI carried out a campaign targeting not only the Black Panther Party. They targeted SCLC. They targeted Martin Luther King. They targeted Harry Belafonte. They targeted Eartha Kitt. They targeted anyone who supported the struggle for civil rights, that they considered to be dangerous.”

William Kunstler, one of Shakur’s several defense attorneys, had successfully introduced COINTELPRO evidence at a trial of members of the American Indian Movement (AIM). His motion to do so in Shakur’s trial was denied.

Perjury to Indict, Jury Tampering to Convict - The New Jersey Way?

Referring to the FBI’s sometimes criminal political repression, attorney Hines said:

“It is in that context we need to look at what happened on the New Jersey Turnpike in 1973. What they call Joanne Chesimard, what we know as Assata Shakur, she was targeted by the FBI, stopped. And the allegation that she was a cold-blooded killer is not supported by any of the forensic evidence.

“If we look at the trial, we’ll find that she was victimized, she was shot. She was shot in the back. The bullet exited and broke the clavicle in her shoulder. She could not raise a gun. She could not raise her hand to shoot. And she was shot while her hands were in the air.

“Now, that is the forensic evidence. There is not one scintilla of evidence placing a gun in her hand. No arsenic residue was found on her clothing or on her hands. So, the allegation by the state police that she took an officer’s gun and shot him, executed him in cold blood, is not only false, but it is designed to inflame.

An example of such inflammatory rhetoric came from Special Agent Ford at the May 2 press conference:

“Openly and freely in Cuba, she continues to maintain and promote her terrorist ideology. She provides anti-U.S. government speeches espousing the Black Liberation Army message of revolution and terrorism. No person, no matter what his or her political or moral convictions are, is above the law. Joanne Chesimard is a domestic terrorist who murdered a law enforcement officer, execution-style.”

Inflammatory Rhetoric Can Help Distract People From Facts

Presumably Agent Ford is aware that Sundiata Acoli remains in prison for killing the “law enforcement officer execution style,” that the label “domestic terrorist” was arbitrarily applied in 2005, and that Assata Shakur considers “Joanne Chesimard” her slave name - and that acknowledging any of those facts would

run the risk of possibly humanizing this sexagenarian “danger to the American government.”

The FBI press release of May 2 dishonestly fudges the case, saying, “Chesimard (Shakur) and Squire (Acoli) were charged, convicted, and sentenced for the murder,” as if there hadn’t been two separate trials, four years apart; and as if the second trial of Shakur hadn’t taken place while the convicted murderer of the trooper was already serving his sentence.

The point that the first person convicted of the trooper’s murder has been in prison since 1973 goes unmentioned in most media coverage of the Shakur case.

In an egregious example of slanted reporting, The New York Times on May 2 not only fails to mention Acoli, but frames the story with the trooper’s “execution,” thus leaving the reader little room to infer anything but Shakur’s sole guilt, even though that’s false even if she’s partly guilty as an accomplice according to law.

Special Agent Ford Sounds a Bit Obsessed As He Hurls Verbal Harpoons

According to NBC News, Ford said there was no specific new threat that led the bureau to add Shakur to the list.

He said she “remains an inspiration to the radical, left-wing, anti-government, black separatist movement.... Some of those people, and the people that espouse those ideas, are still in this country. So we’d be naïve not to think that there’s some communication between her and the people she used to run around with.”

While comments at a press conference might be hyperbole in the heat of the moment, Agent Ford’s comments were much the same three weeks later in an interview with Christine Amanpour as reported by Yahoo! News on May 23:

“It’s unfortunate that someone involved in the murder of an officer, kidnappings, hostage takings and robberies in a 14-year span is revered by a segment of society.... For us, justice never sleeps, justice never rests. We’re looking to bring her to justice because she committed a heinous act. She is a member of an organization (Black Liberation Army) which espoused hate against the U.S. government....”

Can the FBI Distinguish Between Thought Crime and Terror?

Talking about a 65-year-old woman effectively confined to Cuba, Agent Ford called her “a supreme terror against the government” and said without apparent irony: “We absolutely still consider her a threat. She is a menace to society still. She has connections and associations from members of that party she belonged to years ago. They are still espousing anti-government views....”

In 1997, when Pope John Paul II was planning to visit Cuba, the New Jersey superintendent of state police wrote asking him to intervene on the state’s side in the

Shakur case by persuading Cuba to extradite her. Superintendent Carl Williams did not make his letter to the Pope public, but he made sure his request was well publicized.

Learning of this, Shakur wrote the Pope her own open letter, which she also broadcast. Aired on Democracy NOW! in 1998 and again on May 2, the letter details her story of her life and resistance, with an early reference to the secret New Jersey letter:

“Why, I wonder, do I warrant such attention? What do I represent that is such a threat? Please let me take a moment to tell you about myself. My name is Assata Shakur and I was born and raised in the United States. I am a descendant of Africans who were kidnapped and brought to the Americas as slaves. I spent my early childhood in the racist segregated South. I later moved to the northern part of the country, where I realized that Black people were equally victimized by racism and oppression....”

The Letter Has Biography, Polemic, Analysis, Confession

Later she admits to harboring the very thoughts the FBI still considers criminal: “I think that it is important to make one thing very clear. I have advocated and I still advocate revolutionary changes in the structure and in the principles that govern the United States. I advocate self-determination for my people and for all oppressed inside the United States. I advocate an end to capitalist exploitation, the abolition of racist policies, the eradication of sexism, and the elimination of political repression. If that is a crime, then I am totally guilty.”

At the end of her fundamentally political, 1800-word-plus statement, written on Martin Luther King’s birthday, she concluded with her request to the Pope:

“I am not writing to ask you to intercede on my behalf. I ask nothing for myself. I only ask you to examine the social reality of the United States and to speak out against the human rights violations that are taking place.

To judge by the public record, the Pope chose not to get involved.

Pursuing Assata Shakur Has Taken On a Ritual Aspect

The FBI and other agencies first became interested in Assata Shakur (then still Chesimard: she changed it around 1970) in the mid-1960s, perhaps at the time of her first arrest in 1967, when she and about 100 other students demonstrated at the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Many charges and sometimes arrests followed, but she wasn’t held or tried, not even in 1971, after she was shot in the stomach. (Later she reportedly said she was glad she was shot, so she wouldn’t be afraid to be shot again.) That case was dismissed.

In the early 1970s, Shakur had been accused of enough crimes that she was the subject of a nationwide manhunt as the “revolutionary mother hen” of a Black Liberation Army cell accused of a “series of cold-blooded murders of New York City Police officers.”

Deputy Commissioner Robert Daley of the New York City Police called Shakur “the final wanted fugitive, the soul of the gang, the mother hen who kept them together, kept them moving, kept them shooting.”

By early 1973, the FBI was issuing nearly daily reports on Shakur’s status, activities, and allegations. She was even the apparent namesake of the FBI operation CHESROB, though it was not limited to her in focus.

For all the attention and allegations, when Assata was captured on May 2, 1973, she was not charged with any of these crimes.

Assata’s Prosecutors Had a Big Problem Finding Credible Evidence

Starting in December 1973, once Shakur had recovered sufficiently from her gunshot wounds, various jurisdictions brought her to trial for various charges, with mostly dismal results:

Dec. 1973 - bank robbery - hung jury, dismissed.

Dec. 1973 - re-trial, bank robbery - acquitted.

Jan. 1974 - murder of NJ trooper - mistrial due to her pregnancy.

May 1974 - two separate murder indictments - lack of evidence, dismissed.

Sept. 1975 - kidnapping - acquitted.

Jan. 1976 - bank robbery - acquitted.

Feb. 1977 - murder of NJ trooper - convicted.

Shakur would spend more than six years in various prisons, often under deplorable conditions, with brutal treatment.

In 1979, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights found that her treatment was “totally unbecoming to any prisoner.”

The UN investigation of alleged human rights abuses of political prisoners cited Shakur as “one of the worst cases” - in “a class of victims of FBI misconduct through the COINTELPRO strategy and other forms of illegal government conduct who as political activists have been selectively targeted for provocation, false arrests, entrapment, fabrication of evidence, and spurious criminal prosecutions.”

On November 2, 1979, Shakur’s brother Mutulu Shakur brought two other men and a woman to see her in the prison visitors’ room. Prison officials did not search them. Prison officials did not run checks on their false identification papers. They had guns. They took two guards as hostages and left with Shakur.

No one was hurt, the guards were left in the parking lot.

The Hunt for Assata Shakur Goes On in Fourth Decade

For the next five years, Shakur was a fugitive with the FBI searching for her, and her community protecting her.

Three days after her escape, more than 5,000 demonstrators rallied in her support.

The FBI circulated wanted posters; her supporters circulated “Assata Shakur Is Welcome Here” posters. In 1980, the head of the FBI complained that residents weren’t cooperating. Residents were alienated by heavy-handed police tactics including a crude, door-smashing raid that turned up nothing and by surveillance of Shakur’s daughter going to grade school.

Although the intensity of the search has waned - the FBI knows where she is, after all - both the FBI and the New Jersey State Police reportedly have an agent assigned to the case fulltime.

In recent years, the pursuit has taken on an anniversary pattern. On May 2, 2005, the FBI named Shakur a domestic terrorist and posted a \$1 million reward for her capture. On May 2 this year, the FBI promoted her to the Most Wanted Terrorist list and New Jersey added another \$1 million to the reward pool.

How and why these decisions are made is unclear. In response to an inquiry, the FBI Office of Public Affairs stated: “The inner workings of how people get selected to the List are not something the FBI shares with the general public.”

According to the same office:

People are added to the List when they meet the following criteria:

“•They have threatened the security of US nationals or the national security of the USA.

“•They are considered a dangerous menace to society.

“•They are the subject of a pending FBI investigation and have an active federal arrest warrant.

“•The worldwide publicity must be thought to be able to assist in the apprehension of the terrorist.”

All She Asked of Her All-White New Jersey Jury Was Fairness

At her trial in 1977, Shakur gave an opening statement to that all-white jury that concluded:

“Although the court considers us peers, many of you have had different backgrounds and different learning and life experiences. It is important to me that you understand some of those differences. I only ask of you that you listen carefully.

"I only ask that you listen not only to what these witnesses say but to how they say it. Our lives are no more precious or no less precious than yours. We ask only that you be as open and as fair as you would want us to be, were we sitting in the jury box determining your guilt or innocence. Our lives and the lives that surround us depend on your fairness."

Ten years after her trial, Shakur was living in Cuba, re-united with her daughter there, but still an engaged activist.

In 1987, she published "Assata: An Autobiography," which remains available as an e-book. That same year, in Public Enemy's hip-hop hit "Rebel Without a Pause," Chuck D shouted "supporter of Chesimard" and brought her to the attention of a new generation.

Assata Shakur became a hip-hop meme.

The hip-hop artist Common was unapologetically supportive in "A Song for Assata." This allowed others to raise a stink when Common played the White House on 2011.

Writing in *The Griot*, Chuck "Jigsaw" Creekmur sees Assata Shakur's appeal this way: "In a quintessentially American way, some folks in hip-hop just appreciate the raw 'gangsta' of a woman who didn't back down, stood firm in her convictions, completely bucked the system, and lived to tell The Pope about it."

The Question for History May Be: Which Side Needs Rehabilitation More?

An attorney who once represented Shakur, himself a longtime black nationalist, Chokwe Lumumba was recently elected mayor of Jackson, Mississippi, by a wide margin.

He told DemocracyNOW!:

"I've always felt that Assata Shakur was wrongfully convicted, so she shouldn't be on a wanted list at all. She never should have been in prison. She was actually shot herself and wounded and paralyzed at the time that the person who she was convicted of killing was shot. So she obviously couldn't have shot him.

"And she also was arrested, which caused the incident, for about eight different charges which she later was found not guilty of or were dismissed. So I think it's unfortunate. Assata Shakur, I believe, will historically be proven to be a hero of our times...."

That's just what the A-habs of the FBI seem to fear most.

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