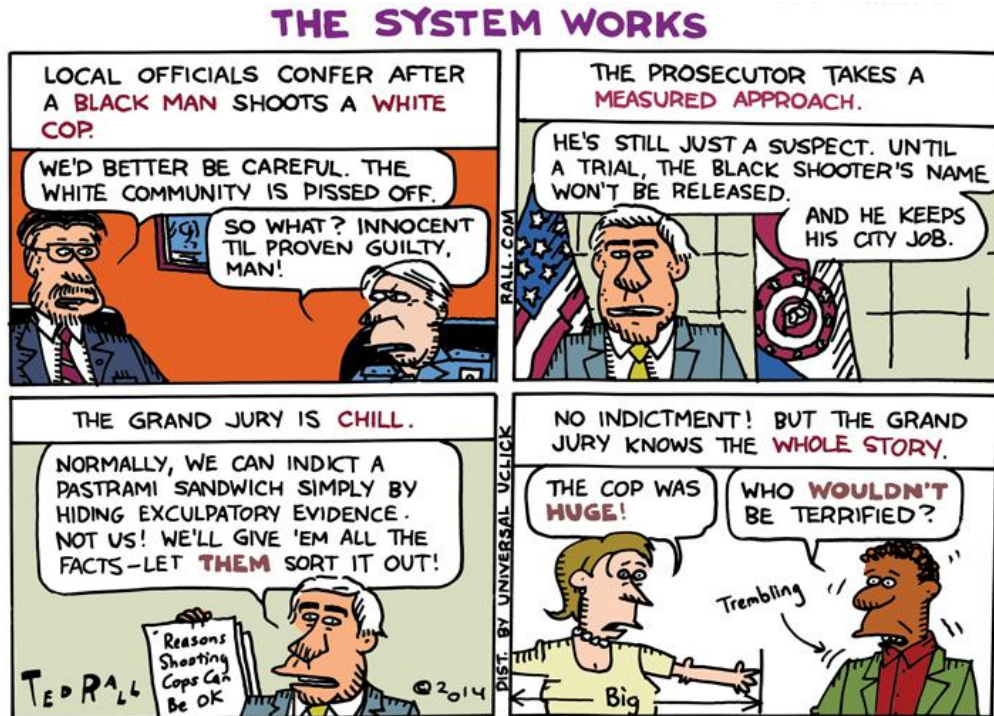


Military Resistance 12L7



**Mass Demonstrations:
“Demonstrations Are Protests
Of Innocence”
“Demonstrations Express Political
Ambitions Before The Political
Means Necessary To Realise
Them Have Been Created”
“Mass Demonstrations Are
Rehearsals For Revolution: Not**

Strategic Or Even Tactical Ones, But Rehearsals Of Revolutionary Awareness”

“It Is An Assembly Which Challenges What Is Given By The Mere Fact Of Its Coming Together”

Comment: T

Thanks to the Editors of Socialist Worker newspaper for referencing the article below, which can be useful in helping clarify the great change we are seeing before our eyes, and where we may be going.

John Berger gets it. One of so far too few these days who do.

Seeing something new as something old coming back again has ever been a common failing of revolutionary organizations. It takes a while to get a grip on material reality moving in sudden tectonic shifts forward, going our way.

The rising against police terror is much more than a rising against police terror, as time and time over is expressed by people of all races interviewed as part of the protests. Including relatives of the dead.

Berger describes our present as history.

He wrote this at the time of the rising from below of millions in Europe, centered on France, May 1968. His comments are from his own direct observation of material reality in motion.

If you have limited time, you are most earnestly entreated to read this and skip everything else in the rest of the Newsletter.

The demonstrators interrupt the regular life of the streets they march through or of the open spaces they fill.

They ‘cut off these areas, and, not yet having the power to occupy them permanently, they transform them into a temporary stage on which they dramatise the power they still lack.

By John Berger, New Society, 23 May 1968 [Excerpts]

Seventy years ago (on 6 May 1898) there was a massive demonstration of workers, men and women, in the centre of Milan.

The events which led up to it involve too long a history to treat with here. The demonstration was attacked and broken up by the army under the command of General Beccaris. At noon the cavalry charged the crowd: the unarmed workers tried to make barricades: martial law was declared and for three days the army fought against the unarmed.

The official casualty figures were 100 workers killed and 450 wounded. One policeman was killed accidentally by a soldier. There were no army casualties. (Two years later Umberto I was assassinated because after the massacre he publicly congratulated General Beccaris, the 'butcher of Milan.')

Mass demonstrations should be distinguished from riots or revolutionary uprisings although, under certain (now rare) circumstances, they may develop into either of the latter.

The aims of a riot are usually immediate (the immediacy matching the desperation they express): the seizing of food, the release of prisoners, the destruction of property.

The aims of a revolutionary uprising are long-term and comprehensive: they culminate in the taking over of State power.

The aims of a demonstration, however, are symbolic: it demonstrates a force that is scarcely used.

A large number of people assemble together in an obvious and already announced public place. They are more or less unarmed. They present themselves as a target to the forces of repression serving the State authority against whose policies they are protesting.

Theoretically demonstrations are meant to reveal the strength of popular opinion or feeling: theoretically they are an appeal to the democratic conscience of the State.

But this presupposes a conscience which is very unlikely to exist.

It would seem that the true function of demonstrations is not to convince the existing State authority to any significant degree.

Such an aim is only a convenient rationalisation.

The truth is that mass demonstrations are rehearsals for revolution: not strategic or even tactical ones, but rehearsals of revolutionary awareness.

The delay between the rehearsals and the real performance may be very long: their quality – the intensity of rehearsed awareness – may, on different occasions, vary considerably: but any demonstration which lacks this element of rehearsal is better described as an officially encouraged public spectacle.

A demonstration, however much spontaneity it may contain, is a created event which arbitrarily separates itself from ordinary life.

Its value is the result of its artificiality, for therein lies its prophetic, rehearsing possibilities.

A mass demonstration distinguishes itself from other mass crowds because it congregates in public to create its function, instead of forming in response to one: in this, it differs from any assembly of workers within their place of work – even when strike action is involved – or from any crowd of spectators.

It is an assembly which challenges what is given by the mere fact of its coming together.

State authorities usually lie about the number of demonstrators involved.

The lie, however, makes little difference. (It would only make a significant difference if demonstrations really were an appeal to the democratic conscience of the State.)

The importance of the numbers involved is to be found in the direct experience of those taking part in or sympathetically witnessing the demonstration.

For them the numbers cease to be numbers and become the evidence of their senses, the conclusions of their imagination.

The larger the demonstration, the more powerful and immediate (visible, audible, tangible) a metaphor it becomes for their total collective strength.

I say metaphor because the strength thus grasped transcends the potential strength of those present, and certainly their actual strength as deployed in a demonstration.

The more people there are there, the more forcibly they represent to each other and to themselves those who are absent.

In this way a mass demonstration simultaneously extends and gives body to an abstraction. Those who take part become more positively aware of how they belong to a class. Belonging to that class ceases to imply a common fate, and implies a common opportunity. They begin to recognise that the function of their class need no longer be limited: that it, too, like the demonstrations itself, can create its own function.

Revolutionary awareness is rehearsed in another way by the choice and effect of location.

Demonstrations are essentially urban in character, and they are usually planned to take place as near as possible to some symbolic centre, either civic or national. Their 'targets' are seldom the strategic ones – railway stations, barracks, radio stations, airports.

A mass demonstration can be interpreted as the symbolic capturing of a city or capital. Again, the symbolism or metaphor is for the benefit of the participants.

The demonstration, an irregular event created by the demonstrators, nevertheless takes place near the city centre, intended for very different uses.

The demonstrators interrupt the regular life of the streets they march through or of the open spaces they fill.

They 'cut off these areas, and, not yet having the power to occupy them permanently, they transform them into a temporary stage on which they dramatise the power they still lack.

The demonstrators' view of the city surrounding their stage also changes.

By demonstrating, they manifest a greater freedom and independence – a greater creativity, even although the product is only symbolic – than they can ever achieve individually or collectively when pursuing their regular lives.

This creativity may be desperate in origin, and the price to be paid for it high, but it temporarily changes their outlook.

They become corporately aware that it is they or those whom they represent who have built the city and who maintain it. They see it through different eyes. They see it as their product, confirming their potential instead of reducing it.

Finally, there is another way in which revolutionary awareness is rehearsed.

The demonstrators present themselves as a target to the so-called forces of law and order.

Yet the larger the target they present, the stronger they feel.

This cannot be explained by the banal principle of 'strength in numbers,' any more than by vulgar theories of crowd psychology.

The contradiction between their actual vulnerability and their sense of invincibility corresponds to the dilemma which they force upon the State authority.

Either authority must abdicate and allow the crowd to do as it wishes: in which case the symbolic suddenly becomes real, and, even if the crowd's lack of organisation and preparedness prevents it from consolidating its victory, the event demonstrates the weakness of authority.

Or else authority must constrain and disperse the crowd with violence: in which case the undemocratic character of such authority is publicly displayed.

The imposed dilemma is between displayed weakness and displayed authoritarianism.

(The officially approved and controlled demonstration does not impose the same dilemma: its symbolism is censored: which is why I term it a mere public spectacle.)

Almost invariably, authority chooses to use force. The extent of its violence depends upon many factors, but scarcely ever upon the scale of the physical threat offered by the demonstrators. This threat is essentially symbolic.

But by attacking the demonstration authority ensures that the symbolic event becomes an historical one: an event to be remembered, to be learnt from, to be avenged.

It is in the nature of a demonstration to provoke violence upon itself. Its provocation may also be violent.

But in the end it is bound to suffer more than it inflicts. This is a tactical truth and an historical one.

The historical role of demonstrations is to show the injustice, cruelty, irrationality of the existing State authority.

Demonstrations are protests of innocence.

But the innocence is of two kinds, which can only be treated as though they were one at a symbolic level.

For the purposes of political analysis and the planning of revolutionary action, they must be separated.

There is an innocence to be defended and an innocence which must finally be lost: an innocence which derives from justice, and an innocence which is the consequence of a lack of experience.

Demonstrations express political ambitions before the political means necessary to realise them have been created.

Demonstrations predict the realisation of their own ambitions and thus may contribute to that realisation, but they cannot themselves achieve them.

The question which revolutionaries must decide in any given historical situation is whether or not further symbolic rehearsals are necessary.

The next stage is training in tactics and strategy for the performance itself.

MORE:

**“The Police Suddenly Have A
Legitimacy Problem In This
Country”**

“People Everywhere Are Going To Start Questioning The Basic Political Authority Of Law Enforcement”

**“When That Perception Sinks In, It’s Not Just Going To Be One Eric Garner Deciding That Listening To Police Orders ‘Ends Today’”
“It’s Going To Be Everyone”**



A standoff in Newark during the wave of rebellions that crossed America in 1967.
Photograph: New York Times Co/Getty Images

Comment: T

In the recent past, Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court and the CIA have, in turn, been thoroughly discredited for being what they are: obedient servants of the rich and powerful who oppress and exploit the rest of us.

Now, as Taibbi senses, somewhat opaquely, it’s the turn of the police. They are the next to the last prop whose key mission is to defend the U.S. ruling class should general mass rage and rebellion reach the boiling point against a government by, for and of the American oligarchy

The police are incapable of doing that job.

Rebellions in major U.S. cities during the 1960's required calling in soldiers to put them down.

In those days, the rebels were Black, the soldiers overwhelmingly not, and they did not identify with the reasons for the uprisings.

We are past those days, and so are the soldiers.

You think not?

See the report below in this Newsletter from Army Times:

“After 13 Years Of War, Troops Feel Burned Out, Underpaid, Lacking A Sense Of Mission.”

Those who pay more than lip service to the need for revolutionary change to rid ourselves of the class of capitalists who afflict us every day in every way would do well to consider what action to organize, now, to transform our soldiers into our allies in the class war for human liberation.

That is a “Sense Of Mission” our soldiers can proudly take hold of.

07 December 14 By Matt Taibbi, Rolling Stone [Excerpts]

Nobody's willing to say it yet. But after Ferguson, and especially after the Eric Garner case that exploded in New York yesterday after yet another non-indictment following a minority death-in-custody, the police suddenly have a legitimacy problem in this country.

The Garner case was a perfect symbol of everything that's wrong with the proactive police tactics that are now baseline policy in most inner cities. Police surrounded the 43-year-old Garner after he broke up a fight. The officers who responded to that call then decided to get in Garner's face for the preposterous crime of selling "loosies," i.e. single cigarettes from a pack.

When the police announced that they were taking him in to run him for the illegal tobacco sale, Garner balked and demanded to be left alone. A few minutes later he was in a choke hold, gasping "I can't breathe," and en route to fatal cardiac arrest.

On the tape you can actually hear the echo of Garner's years of experience with Broken Windows-style policing, a strategy based on a never-ending stream of small intrusive confrontations between police and residents in target neighborhoods.

The ostensible goal of Broken Windows is to quickly and efficiently weed out people with guns or outstanding warrants. You flood neighborhoods with police, you stop people for anything and everything and demand to see IDs, and before long you've both amassed mountains of intelligence about who hangs with whom, and made it genuinely difficult for fugitives and gunwielders to walk around unmolested.

But the psychic impact of these policies on the massive pool of everyone else in the target neighborhoods is a rising sense of being seriously pissed off.

They're tired of being manhandled and searched once a week or more for riding bikes the wrong way down the sidewalk (about 25,000 summonses a year here in New York), smoking in the wrong spot, selling loosies, or just "obstructing pedestrian traffic," a.k.a. walking while black.

This is exactly what you hear Eric Garner complaining about in the last moments of his life. "Every time you see me, you want to mess with me," he says. "It stops today!"

Over the last three years, while working on a book about the criminal justice gap that ended up being called *The Divide*, I spent a lot of time with people like Eric Garner. There's a shabby little courthouse at 346 Broadway in lower Manhattan that's set up as the place you go to be sentenced and fined for the kind of ticket Staten Island cops were probably planning on giving Garner.

I sat in that courtroom over and over again for weeks and listened to the stories. I met one guy, named Andre Finley, who kept showing up to court in an attempt to talk his way into jail as a way out of the \$100 fine he'd got for riding a bike on a sidewalk in Bedford-Stuyvesant. He couldn't afford the hundred bucks. It took a year and multiple all-day court visits to clear up.

I met a woman who had to hire a sitter so she could spend all day in court waiting to be fined for drinking wine on her own front porch.

And in the case of a Bed-Stuy bus driver named Andrew Brown, it was that old "obstructing traffic" saw: the same "offense" that first flagged Ferguson police to stop Michael Brown.

In Andrew's case, police thought the sight of two black men standing in front of a project tower at 1 a.m. was suspicious and stopped them. In reality, Andrew was listening to music on headphones with a friend on his way home after a long shift driving a casino shuttle.

When he balked at being stopped, just like Garner balked, cops wrote him up for "obstructing" a street completely empty of pedestrians, and the court demanded 50 bucks for his crime.

This policy of constantly badgering people for trifles generates bloodcurdling anger in "hot spot" neighborhoods with industrial efficiency. And then something like the Garner case happens and it all comes into relief.

Six armed police officers tackling and killing a man for selling a 75-cent cigarette.

That was economic regulation turned lethal, a situation made all the more ridiculous by the fact that we no longer prosecute the countless serious economic crimes committed in this same city.

A ferry ride away from Staten Island, on Wall Street, the pure unmolested freedom to fleece whoever you want is considered the sacred birthright of every rake with a briefcase.

If Lloyd Blankfein or Jamie Dimon had come up with the concept of selling loosies, they'd go to their graves defending it as free economic expression that "creates liquidity" and should never be regulated.

Taking it one step further, if Eric Garner had been selling naked credit default swaps instead of cigarettes – if in other words he'd set up a bookmaking operation in which passersby could bet on whether people made their home mortgage payments or companies paid off their bonds – the police by virtue of a federal law called the Commodity Futures Modernization Act would have been barred from even approaching him.

There were more cops surrounding Eric Garner on a Staten Island street this past July 17th than there were surrounding all of AIG during the period when the company was making the toxic bets that nearly destroyed the world economy years ago. Back then AIG's regulator, the OTS, had just one insurance expert on staff, policing a company with over 180,000 employees.

It just won't hold.

If the law isn't the same everywhere, it's not legitimate. And in these neighborhoods, what we have doesn't come close to looking like one single set of laws anymore.

When that perception sinks in, it's not just going to be one Eric Garner deciding that listening to police orders "ends today."

It's going to be everyone.

MORE:

“Inmates In Boston’s Suffolk County Jail Cheered And Banged On Cell Windows As Hundreds Of Protesters Walked Past Outside”

14 December By Ian Simpson, Lacey Johnson and Jonathan Spicer, Reuters [Excerpts]

Thousands of demonstrators marched in Washington, New York and Boston on Saturday to protest against killings of unarmed black men by police officers.

Organizers said the marches were among the largest in a recent wave of protests against the deaths that have cast a global spotlight on race relations in the United States.

The rallies were mainly peaceful, though police in Boston said they arrested 23 people who tried to block a highway.

Officers in Oakland, California said they detained about 45 people for vandalism, failure to disperse, resisting arrest and other charges on Saturday night after thousands took to the streets.

Decisions by grand juries to return no indictments against the officers involved in the deaths of Michael Brown in Missouri and Eric Garner in New York have put police treatment of minorities back on the national agenda.

Protesters from around the country gathered at Freedom Plaza, a few blocks from the White House, then marched down Pennsylvania Avenue to rally near the white-domed U.S. Capitol.

Marchers, including many parents with children, chanted “No justice, no peace, no racist police” and “Hands up, don’t shoot.” Protesters carried signs that said “All men are created equal” and “Black lives matter.”

Relatives of Eric Garner and Akai Gurley, who were killed by New York police, Brown and Trayvon Martin, slain by a Florida neighborhood watchman in 2012, all took part in the Washington rally.

“What a sea of people,” said Brown’s mother, Lesley McSpadden. “If they don’t see this and make a change, I don’t know what we’re going to do.”

Protesters gathered in a one-block section of Pennsylvania Avenue and nearby public space. Organizers estimated the crowd at 40,000 to 50,000 people. A police spokesman said there had been no arrests.

Inmates in Boston’s Suffolk County jail cheered and banged on cell windows as hundreds of protesters walked past outside near an entrance to Interstate 93.

Protesters tried to push through police lines near the highway entrance. Massachusetts State Police said 23 people were arrested for disorderly conduct.

Police said one person was arrested in New York after two officers were assaulted by protesters.

The New York march drew a mostly young, ethnically diverse crowd that headed north up Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue from Washington Square Park.

Protesters chanted “How do you spell racist? NYPD” and some taunted police guarding the march route.

At the end of the march, the protesters raised their hands in mock surrender outside the police headquarters in lower Manhattan.

“The culture in America is embedded in slavery, in the courts and the politics, and the culture has to change,” said marcher Kayode Leonard, 33, from Manhattan.

MORE:

**“March For Justice” Parade
Followed By Real Protests From
Below In DC:
Sell-Out Scumbag Sharpton Tries
To Stop Protesters From Ferguson
From Speaking;
“Sharpton Called Them
Provocateurs”
Tells Them To Get Off The Stage**



Protesters march down Pennsylvania Ave in Washington, DC from Freedom Plaza to the US Capitol. Source: dickulous / Instagram

December 13th, 2014 By Staff, www.PopularResistance.org [Excerpts]

Washington, DC saw two very different kinds of protests on the “Day of Resistance.”

There was the DC March for Justice organized by Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network which became known as the Justice for All march; that was followed by a series of protests throughout Washington organized by DC Ferguson which shut down business as usual in various parts of the city and on a key highway.

The DC Ferguson organizers made it clear that they did not have anything to do with Sharpton's march and interrupted the march to exclaim that it was the Ferguson protesters who had created this movement and who should be speaking at it.

Sharpton called them provocateurs.

To our eye, they are the real protesters.

The reason people separate themselves from Sharpton is because he is an extremely partisan Democrat who will not criticize President Obama.

He has consistently tried to funnel the movement against police abuse into the Democratic Party, even though many of the officials in Ferguson who have abused the African American population are Democrats.

Black Agenda Report urged people not to go to the Sharpton march and explained why, with Margaret Kimberly, an editor and senior writer for the publication, writing:

"The real reason he is leading this march is to contain black anger and to keep it from spilling outside of proscribed channels of official authority.

"That is Sharpton's hustle in a nutshell. His job is to keep black people in line while making it appear that he is leading a popular movement. The subterfuge makes this march in particular a grotesque mockery."

An organizer with the Hands Up Coalition in Washington, DC described the event as the "Sharpton fiasco." The Hands Up Coalition in DC is organizing a weekly protest at the US Department of Justice at 4:00 pm each Monday they are calling "Justice Mondays".

Below are tweets describing the events of the day in Washington, DC where thousands protested for an end to racist policing and justice for victims of police abuse.

Many of the people came by bus to Washington, DC to participate in today's march.

They met at Freedom Plaza in Washington, DC. This is the space where we organized the Occupation of Washington, DC that began in October 2011.

At the event the DC Ferguson participants took the stage and demanded to be heard.

While the crowd chanted "Let them speak," Sharpton organizers told them to leave the stage.

Finally, the DC Ferguson organizers took the mic

Then, the DC Ferguson actions began.

MORE:

From Ferguson Citizens And Other DC Marchers:

- 1. Sharpton Nailed As Stooge For The
Oppressors;**
- 2. The Emerging Resistance Goes
Beyond Race And Police**

http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=12829

MORE:

**“The Alarm Bells Are Ringing”
“Environmentalists, Labor
Protesters And Others Show Their
Solidarity Saying ‘These Issues
Are Not Separate’”**

**“Low Wage Workers Protesting For A
Higher Minimum Wage Threw Their
Support Behind The Protests”
Demonstrators “Know Just As Well As
We Do That There’s Injustice In Our
Communities And There’s Injustice In**

Our Fast Food Places And We Need To Do Something About It”

December 09, 2014 by Lauren McCauley, staff writer; Common Dreams

While the protests over deaths of Eric Garner and Mike Brown refuse to stand down, leading environmentalists, labor protesters and others show their solidarity saying: “These issues are not separate.”

With the nation’s streets still filled with protesters and a plan for thousands to march on Washington brewing, the call for justice for Mike Brown, Eric Garner, and other black victims of police violence has only grown stronger.

In the days and weeks since two grand juries failed to indict the police officers who killed the two men, expressions of solidarity have poured in from all corners—from professional athletes to fast food workers, education leaders and environmental groups, with the message that an injustice against one is an injustice against us all.

On Monday evening, several NBA players took the court wearing t-shirts that read, “I can’t breathe,” a reference to the final utterance issued by Eric Garner, who was forced into a chokehold by New York Police Officer Daniel Pantaleo on July 17. “It’s not a Cavs thing,” said Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James, who was one of the players to don the shirt, before the game.

“It’s a worldly thing.”

The symbolic action was not the first expression of support by a professional sports team. Members of the Ferguson community’s hometown football team, the St. Louis Rams, also signaled their solidarity with the movement when they walked on the field on November 30 holding their hands in the air in what has become the signature “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” gesture of the Ferguson protests.

The idea that the demonstrations—sparked by incidents of police violence against black individuals in the communities of Ferguson, Missouri; Staten Island, New York; and elsewhere—have “worldly” resonance is a connection that the environmental movement has also been quick to make.

The argument that environmental issues are inherently intertwined with social justice issues is one that has been voiced repeatedly. But in the wake of the recent grand jury decisions, leading environmental groups have come out strong in support of those in the streets, arguing that a world that breeds such inequalities is fundamentally opposed to the idea of a sustainable society.

“We cannot lead a meaningful fight for the environment without first taking steps to address the unequal valuation of life within it,” Friends of the Earth President Erich Pica wrote in a statement this weekend.

“The preventable deaths of Mike Brown, Darrien Hunt, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Aiyana Jones, Oscar Grant and dozens of others bespeak not just a systematic injustice, but of a cancer in our national consciousness that seems to place little value on the lives of black and brown people.”

“Our mission is to create a healthier and more just world, but we have little hope of success if our nation cannot agree on the definitions of chokehold, unarmed and murder; let alone clean air and water,” Pica concluded.

Low wage workers protesting for a higher minimum wage also threw their support behind the protests against racial profiling and police brutality, staging solidarity “die-ins” and chanting “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” during last week’s national day of action.

Journalist Sarah Jaffe, who wrote about the converging demonstrations for Salon, spoke with St. Louis Burger King worker Carlos Robinson who said that the actions last week “felt different because we were doing it for the Mike Brown situation and trying to show people the significance between injustice in our workplaces and injustice in our communities.”

Robinson, who had been organizing for \$15 an hour and a union for about seven months, said the demonstrators “know just as well as we do that there’s injustice in our communities and there’s injustice in our fast food places and we need to do something about it.”

MILITARY NEWS

After 13 Years Of War, Troops Feel Burned Out, Underpaid, Lacking A Sense Of Mission:

“Morale Indicators Dropping In Nearly Every Aspect Of Military Life”

“They Hate The Army”

52% More Pessimistic About The Afghanistan. Nearly 60% Felt Iraq War Somewhat Unsuccessful Or Not At All Successful”

“A Feeling Of Detachment From The Decision-Makers Who Sent Them To Those Fights”

12.15.14 By Hope Hodge Seck, Army Times. Staff writers Andrew Tilghman, David Larter, Stephen Losey and Michelle Tan contributed to this story. [Excerpts].

A Military Times survey of 2,300 active-duty troops found morale indicators dropping in nearly every aspect of military life.

Troops report significantly lower overall job satisfaction, diminished respect for their superiors, and a declining interest in re-enlistment now compared to just five years ago.

They feel underpaid, underequipped and underappreciated, survey data show.

After 13 years of war, the all-volunteer force is entering an era fraught with uncertainty and a growing sense that it has been left adrift.

According to the survey, active duty troops report a stunning drop in their overall quality of life: Just 56 percent call it good or excellent, down from 91 percent in 2009.

The survey, conducted in July and August, found that 73 percent of troops would recommend a military career to others, down from 85 percent. And troops reported a big drop in their desire to re-enlist, with 63 percent citing an intention to do so, compared with 72 percent a few years ago.

Army Spc. David Potocnik has seen morale in his unit take a hit, though he can't quite pinpoint why. Potocnik, a Black Hawk mechanic with 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation

Regiment, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade at Fort Carson, Colorado, said soldiers struggle to connect what feels like excessive training and additional duties in garrison with operational readiness and the overall mission.

“You’d think garrison would be more relaxed, but it’s frantic — for no reason,” he said.

Troops said more stress is created by the long-term budget cuts under sequestration — the automatic spending reductions over a decade enacted by Congress — and drawdown measures designed to shrink the force.

An Air Force captain in security forces said the fiscal upheaval is causing workplace exhaustion and frustration.

And personal career uncertainty, he said, is driving many of his colleagues out of the service, perhaps earlier than they otherwise would have departed.

“If they see us pinching pennies, and we can’t afford to send them to school, there’s no long-term stability for them,” he said.

“So at that point, they start to look for a job outside, where you don’t have the additional strain on their family.”

A Navy aviation machinist’s mate first class based in El Centro, California, said operational budget cuts left him and fellow sailors cannibalizing parts from other aircraft to do phased maintenance to fix higher-priority broken jets.

Even uniforms are in short supply.

“We are on the bare necessities,” he said. “Sometimes not even that.”

Survey data show troops are also feeling pain in their own wallets.

Congress this year capped the military pay raise at 1 percent, rather than the 1.8 percent that would have kept pace with average annual growth in private-sector wages.

It was the first military pay raise since 1999 that did not at least keep pace with private-sector wages — and the lowest annual military pay raise in 40 years.

In the 2015 defense authorization bill compromise, lawmakers reprised the 1 percent basic pay raise.

In 2009, 87 percent of active-duty troops who took part in Military Times’ survey rated their pay and allowances “good” or “excellent.”

This year, the figure was just 44 percent.

When asked how quality of life might change over the next several years, 70 percent of respondents feel it will decline further.

Pervasive pessimism about the post-9/11 wars may also stoke an overall feeling of dissatisfaction among troops and a feeling of detachment from the decision-makers who sent them to those fights.

Of those surveyed, 52 percent said they had become more pessimistic about the Afghanistan War in recent years.

Nearly 60 percent felt the war in Iraq was somewhat unsuccessful or not at all successful.

“What you have now is just a retroactive action of what the Army did by letting in the influx of soldiers when it was quantity, not quality,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Fernandez, a 17-year soldier at Fort Drum, New York. “And now we have a whole bunch of people who can’t wait to get out. They hate the Army. There’s a lot of negativity.”

MORE:

Money Pinch And Uncertainty Haunting Military Families: “Troop Layoffs And Diminished Pay Raises Have Left Those In Uniform Shaken” “Half Of Troops Say They Are ‘Very Worried’ Or ‘Somewhat Worried’ About Their Household Finances: “I Can’t Tell You How Many Sailors And Marines I Know Who Have Been In A Few Years But Are Still Barely Making It”

12.15.14 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

The height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were fat times for military pay and benefits. Troops were flush with combat cash and special pays, tax breaks and sometimes six-figure re-enlistment bonuses.

Those in uniform were confident that the nation appreciated their sacrifices. Citizens thanked them for their service in word as politicians did in deed, generously raising pay and other compensation, year after year.

The payoff was sky-high morale, even in a time when troops pulled repeated war tours that separated them from family and friends for long stretches.

In 2009, 87 percent of active-duty respondents to the annual Military Times poll rated their pay and benefits “good” or “excellent.”

That’s changed.

Several years of steep cuts in defense spending, troop layoffs and diminished pay raises have left those in uniform shaken, worried whether the military remains a viable career path that can get them ahead.

In the Military Times poll, just 44 percent of 2,300 active-duty respondents rated their pay and benefits as “good” or “excellent” — a new low.

More than 10 percent say they struggle to pay monthly bills, and at least once during the past year resorted to a high-interest payday loan to make ends meet.

“I can’t tell you how many sailors and Marines I know who have been in a few years but are still barely making it,” said a Navy hospital corpsman second class at Camp Pendleton, California, where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation.

Troops today are pocketing far smaller annual pay raises.

The 2014 bump of just 1 percent was the smallest in the 41-year history of the all-volunteer force.

That compares with 3.9 percent in 2009 — and 6.9 percent in 2002. Congress appears poised to approve another 1 percent raise in 2015.

And looking ahead, many military families see an uncertain future.

They worry about a new Pentagon plan to cut housing allowances, which would amount to a direct pay cut for most troops who live off post.

The newly minted 2015 defense authorization bill mandates future allowance rates cover only 99 percent of troops’ average housing costs, not 100 percent.

Service members would cover that 1 percent out of pocket.

Troops also worry they might not have a job in a few years. And if they do, they wonder if they’ll see the same retirement package provided to previous generations.

Moreover, half of troops say they are “very worried” or “somewhat worried” about their household finances, the survey shows.

An Air Force security forces captain with 13 years in, who asked that his name not be used, said the airmen he works with are stressed because they don't know if they'll be cut next in the drawdown.


"You don't know if you will have a full-time job in a year or three or five because the Air Force keeps cutting bodies," said the captain.

"There's stress across the board."

The uncertainty is noticeable in the workplace, the captain said.

"When you're looking at trying to plan for your kids and their education and being able to provide for your family in the near and the long term, you can definitely see with some of our folks that it's wearing on them a little bit," he said.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to injustices, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

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

People do not make revolutions eagerly any more than they do war. There is this difference, however, that in war compulsion plays the decisive role, in revolution there is no compulsion except that of circumstances.

A revolution takes place only when there is no other way out. And the insurrection, which rises above a revolution like a peak in the mountain chain of its events, can be no more evoked at will than the revolution as a whole. The masses advance and retreat several times before they make up their minds to the final assault.

-- Leon Trotsky; The History of the Russian Revolution

**Divide And Conquer - The
American Way:
“The Boston Tea Party Helped
Inspire Colonial Members
Belonging To The 99% To Unite
And Rebel Against Their Common
Oppressor”
“Maybe The So-Called Riot In
Ferguson Is Likewise An
Understandable Rebellious Response
To Ignored Efforts Seeking
Redress?”
“Maybe The Outrage Of The Citizens Of
Ferguson Will Inspire And Unite The
People To Rebel Against Their Common
Oppressors, Too”**

From: Sanford Kelson, Veteran & Military Resistance Organization
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Subject: Divide and Conquer, the American Way
Date: Dec 8, 2014

Black on Black crime is a racist statement.

It is an attempt to justify the illegal killing of Black citizens by certain police officers because Black citizens have illegally killed Black citizens.

Law enforcement officials serve the cause of justice in our name. Nothing non-state criminals do, regardless of their race, can justify any illegal conduct by police officers.

NYC had a policy to stop and frisk Black Americans without any reasonable suspicion of criminal activity. The same percentage of White citizens use and sell illegal drugs as Black citizens but Whites are not stopped and frisked without reasonable suspicion.

White collar crime abounds in Wall Street but business men are not stopped on the streets to have their brief cases searched.

Oppression in America extends beyond what occurs in the Black communities.

Certainly you remember the wider oppression?

A few examples:

Remember the savings and loan scandals of the 1980s and 90s?

1,043 savings and loan associations in the United States failed due to white collar crime. Thousands of innocent customers suffered great financial harm.

Remember the Enron scandal?

Enron customers were cheated through fraudulent overcharging. Hundreds, maybe thousands, of Enron employees lost their jobs, pensions, savings, health insurance and more by reason of its CEO's criminal conduct. Innocent investors also lost millions of dollars.

Remember downsizing?

Greedy corporations moved their production facilities to so-called third world nations to take advantage of wage slave labor, child labor, lack of employee safety laws and environmental regulations, all to garner excess profits.

Think of current Detroit as an example of the economic horrors visited upon American workers and their communities by these greedy laissez faire capitalists without consciences.

In my opinion, these corporate actions were crimes against the American people.

Before Globalization, in Homestead, Pennsylvania, before the world had an infrastructure that facilitated the shipment of American jobs overseas, remember the way Carnegie and Frick pacified their America iron workers by locking them out and bringing in Pinkerton thugs?

Today large corporations continue to engage in activities calculated to pacify their workers to maximize profits.

They just use different tactics.

Remember the 2008 financial crises?

The days of toxic mortgages, mortgage-backed securities, collateralized debt obligations and credit default swaps?

The entire world suffered and still suffers from the crimes of banksters and financial elites.

People lost their homes, pensions, jobs, cars, health insurance and more. Their children had to drop out of college.

Spousal and child abuse and suicides abounded. The corporate crooks who orchestrated the crash got bailed out with trillions of public dollars and took huge bonuses.

Remember, today the top 1 percent of Americans control 43 percent of the financial wealth while the bottom 80 percent control only 7 percent of the wealth.

How much of that 80% is the result of the horrors documented above?

This inequality is also the direct result of federal laws that were passed in return for campaign donations - legal bribery.

None of the above examples can be labeled Black on Black crime.

What kind of crime is it then if we can't blame it on the victims of racism?

Well, let's think.

Its perpetrators are overwhelming rich, White, powerful men and their victims are White, Black, Brown, Yellow and every color and shade in between, members of both sexes and all the different sexual preferences, different religions, different jobs and, well, really, everybody but the perpetrators.

These criminal perpetrators are referred to as the 1%.

They and their lackeys, our elected non-representatives, excel in dividing us, the victims, the 99%, who then blame one another for our common plight instead of focusing on the actions of the 1% who control the economy.

The 1% is afraid of we the people.

Homeland Security, NSA spying and providing military weapons to the police are three signs of this fear.

The 1% fear that the 99% might learn from the rebellion in Ferguson.

Some complain angrily that what happened in Ferguson was a riot in which private property was destroyed and innocent people were adversely impacted. Funny how this works though.

On December 16, 1773, oppressed Americans, in disguise, committed what many labeled serious criminal acts.

They forced their way aboard merchant ships in Boston Harbor, used axes to break into the cargo hold where tea was stored and threw the tea into the water.

These so-called hooligans also trashed and burned the houses of the colony's 1% and even beat and tarred and feathered them.

These crimes and riots, oops forgive me, today they are not considered crimes or riots are they?

No, they are celebrated as justified patriotic acts of rebellion that were necessary because the citizen's efforts to petition their government for redress were ignored so they had no other choice.

Maybe the so-called riot in Ferguson is likewise an understandable rebellious response to ignored efforts seeking redress?

The Boston Tea Party helped inspire colonial members belonging to the 99% to unite and rebel against their common oppressor.

Maybe the outrage of the citizens of Ferguson will inspire and unite the people to rebel against their common oppressors, too.

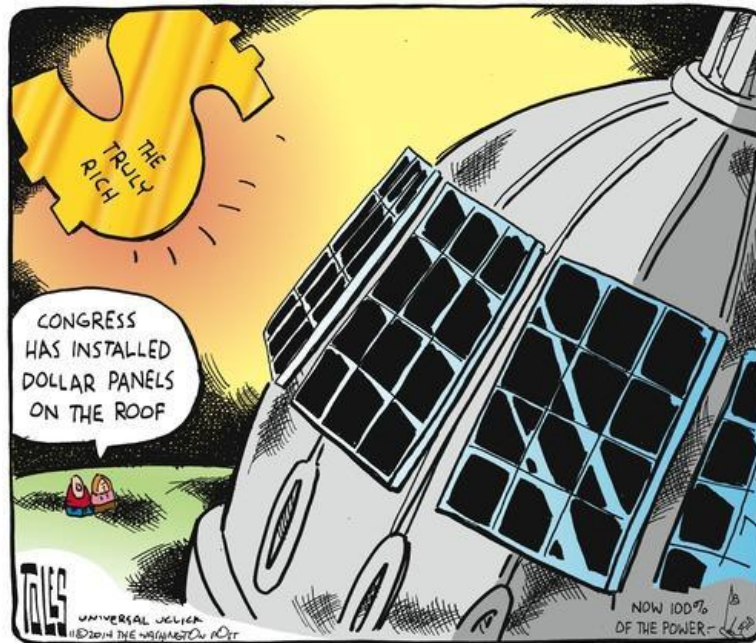


[Via Sandford Kelson, Veteran & Military Resistance Organization.]

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DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Zionists Use Choke Hold To Kill
Palestinian Minister During
Peaceful Protest:
An Execution For Trying To Plant
Olive Trees;
Just Before They Killed Him, He Had
Said “This Is A Terrorist Army,
Practicing Its Terrorism On The
Palestinian People”**

December 11, 2014 by Abby Zimet, staff writer; Common Dreams [Excerpts]

Another travesty and tragedy of the Occupation: Ziad Abu Ein, a 55-year-old Palestinian minister and father of four, died after being choked by an Israeli soldier as he and other activists attempted to plant olive trees at an illegal settlement near Ramallah. Israeli soldiers attacked them, firing tear gas and punching and arresting many.

The head of the Commission Against the Separation Wall and Settlements, Abu Ein had moments before denounced the IDF's violent response to what was a peaceful protest.

"We came to plant trees on Palestinian land, and they launch into an attack on us from the first moment. Nobody threw a single stone," he said.

"This is the terrorism of the occupation. This is a terrorist army, practising its terrorism on the Palestinian people."

The new head of the Commission Against the Separation Wall and Settlements, Abu Ein had moments before denounced the IDF's shooting of tear gas, beating and arresting of activists, and other violence in response to what was a peaceful protest.

The first member of the Palestinian government to be killed in a protest, Abu Ein was a minister without portfolio, a senior member of Fatah and a former Deputy Minister for Prisoners' Affairs who had spent 13 years in Israeli and U.S. prisons. As the newly appointed head of the Commission, he was in charge of organizing popular resistance activities of Palestinians against the security barrier and settlements, and was a frequent presence at protests.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/Default.aspx> and
<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/list.php?id=ej898ra7yff0ukmf16>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."



YOUR INVITATION:

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.

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