

Military Resistance 13C11



Moscow Denies Its Soldiers Are Crossing The Ukrainian Border: 20-Year-Old Conscript Dorji Batomunkuev, Who Was Seriously Injured Near Donetsk, Tells A Different Story;
“Are Russian Troops In Ukraine, And All The Guests Were Like: ‘No, No, No’”

“We All Listened, And Said To Each Other, ‘Yeah, Right’”



25 March 2015 by Elena Kostyuchenko, Novaya Gazeta

Dorji Batomunkuev, military unit number 46108, is 20 years old and part of the Russian fifth tank brigade from Ulan-Ude, a city near the Mongolian border. He is a conscript and was called up 18 months ago.

When we meet at the Central Regional hospital in Donetsk, his face and hands are burnt and bandaged, and his ears are singed and shrivelled. Beneath the dressings, he's still bleeding.

He says he was injured in the eastern Ukraine town of Lohvynove on 9 February, at the mouth of the Debaltseve pocket, while fighting alongside the separatist militia of the Donetsk People's Republic against Ukrainian forces.

Russia has denied that its forces are fighting in Ukraine, although a recent report by the Royal United Services Institute contests this, suggesting that several units have crossed the border since the conflict began.

At their peak in December 2014, they numbered some 10,000 troops, the report says.

Speaking from the hospital burns unit in Donetsk, Batomunkuev tells the story of some of these troops and their involvement in what has become the most serious conflict in the post-Soviet world since 1991.

How did you end up there?

“I was called up on 25 November 2013. As a conscript, I scored well in firing and fitness training. The following year, as autumn approached, they started to pull together contract soldiers from all the battalions in our sector to make up a separate tank battalion. We were all bundled together, got to know each other, lived together for four days and then set we off.

“They told us that we were going to train but we knew where we were really going.

I was already prepared mentally and morally – we would have to go to Ukraine.

“Back in Ulan-Ude, the numbers and emblems on some of the tanks were painted over, and our patches and chevrons were removed when we arrived at the firing range. We took it all off in order to disguise ourselves.

Passports were left with the military units and military IDs were left at the firing range.

“Training lasted for three months, as planned. They then gave the signal and we moved out.

“As soon as we left the firing range, they said: ‘hand over everything: phone, documents’. From the Kuzminsky training ground we moved out towards the Russian border and stopped in a strip of woodland. Then the signal came through. No notice was read out to us, we were only told to start the march. Even so, without any words, we all understood.”

So no one, neither the political officers nor the commanders, said anything to you about Ukraine?

“No, because everyone already understood. There was no need for them to chew it over for us. No one shoved any patriotic crap down our throats either.”

“Are Russian Troops In Ukraine, And All The Guests Were Like: ‘No, No, No’. We All Listened, And Said To Each Other, ‘Yeah, Right’”

When did you find out that you were on your way to Donetsk?

“When we read ‘Donetsk’ on signs, when we stopped in the city and saw the inscription ‘DNR’. Oh, we are in Ukraine! I poked my head out of the hatch to see the city. It is beautiful city, I liked it. Everything beautiful.

“When we arrived, we went to a shelter and parked. We were taken to a campus for a hot meal and then put into rooms.

One of our guys had a phone, and we found Radio Sputnik.

There was a discussion being broadcast about whether there are Russian troops in Ukraine, and all the guests were like: ‘No, no, no’.

We all listened, and said to each other, 'yeah, right'.

"Who is prepared to talk openly? Our government understands that we have to help but if they send troops officially, that would annoy Europe, and NATO. Although, you understand, don't you, that NATO is also involved of course, that it is supplying weapons to the Ukrainians?"

Did they explain to you how long you would be here for?

"No. But we understood that the whole war depended on us. That's why they'd beaten the training into us those previous three months. We were well prepared, both our snipers and other troops."

"There were 31 tanks in the battalion. We went in companies, 10 tanks in each one. We were around 300 men, all from Ulan-Ude, mostly Buryats (the largest indigenous group in Siberia)."

From mid-January separatist forces were trying to recapture the city of Debaltseve which had fallen under Ukrainian control. Did they explain that this was part of your mission?

"No, they didn't explain anything. But we understood: we don't let anyone out. Whoever moves will be shot dead. Shoot to kill.

"We played carousel, a tactic of tank fire. Three or four tanks would go out to the edge (of the area) of open fire, shoot, and when they ran out of rounds three or four tanks would take their place while they reloaded. That's how we rotated.

"But our battalion commander wasn't in luck. A tank is a very capricious machine – you try to shoot but not a God damn thing comes out. The stupid things wouldn't fire.

"The 'ukropi' ('dill people', a derogatory term for Ukrainians) pounded us. The battalion commander responded by jumping into his tank and was off, destroying first one tank, then another."

How were you injured?

"There was a tank battle. The sound was deafening. I opened my eyes and there was fire, a blinding glare. I heard the sound of gunpowder exploding. I tried to open the hatch but it wouldn't budge. The only thought that crossed my mind was 'that's it, I'm dead'. Then my defence mechanisms suddenly kicked in.

"I tried again to open the hatch. This time it worked. An infantry vehicle arrived and the driver jumped out: 'Mate, mate, come here'. My whole face was burning, my tank helmet was burning. I saw he had a red fire extinguisher, so I ran towards him and he sprayed me. 'Lie down, lie down' he shouted, and doused me again. Early the next morning, I was taken to Donetsk, and I regained consciousness."

Did some of the tank crew die?

“No. There was a guy whose foot was torn off though. It was severed with its boot still attached. Our battalion commander was burnt, as was the gun layer Chip, and Spartak... It’s all seared into my memory.”

Did you fight alongside pro-Russian militias?

“No.”

Did you kill civilians?

“There was an occasion when a pick-up went by and they all said ‘Shoot, shoot’. ‘Wait a minute, wait’, I said. At the last moment, I looked out and saw a guy with a white bandage, a militiaman, one of ours. I thought, if I had blown him away I would have killed one of our guys.”

“The Militia Are Strange Types”

“The (separatist) militiamen didn’t tell us what their movements were. I shouted to our guys ‘They’re ours!’ That was the first time I got scared that we’d end up killing our own.”

So you didn’t coordinate at all?

“No. The militia are strange types. They fire and fire and then stop and if they’re going off to work – there’s no organisation, no leaders, no battle command, it’s all disjointed.”



Residents sit in a bus as they wait to evacuation from Debaltseve of Donetsk area, 3 February.
Photograph: Anastasia Vlasova/EPA

Which settlement was this in?

“I don’t know where we were. All the villages looked the same – devastation everywhere, everything bombed out.”

And how many villages did you pass through?

“Four maybe. There was one time when we recaptured some villages, and others we simply stopped off at... I am not proud of what I did, that I destroyed... killed people. But, on the other hand, I feel more at ease when I remember that it is all in the cause of peace, civilians... children, the elderly, old women, good guys.

“But I’m not proud of this, the fact that I fired and hit ...”

(Long silence)

“Subconsciously, you know you’re fighting the same sort of person as you, in the same sort of tank. Made of flesh and blood. But on the other hand, you understand that he is your enemy. The people I killed were far from innocent. They killed civilians and children. The scum sits there shaking all over, praying that he won’t be killed. He starts to ask forgiveness. God alone is your judge.

“We took a few Ukrainians prisoner. Everyone wants to live when you’ve got their back against the wall. But they are the same sort of people as you, they have mothers too.

“Each person has a destiny of his own, sometimes an unfortunate one. But nobody forced them to do this.

With conscripts, it’s a different kettle of fish. Two- or three-thousand out of the 8,000 Ukrainians we were fighting were conscripted soldiers. I thought also about how I would have acted if it had been me in the place of those 18-year-old boys. I think I would have gone too. If you don’t kill, they say ‘we’ll kill you and your family’.

“But those mercenaries from Poland or Chechnya who are driven solely by ideas, who itch for war: it’s them we must wipe out.”

Did you see Polish mercenaries?

“No but we were told that they were there.”

Did you have contact with civilians?

“No. They came up to us many times but we tried hard not to talk to them. When we were in Makiivka (in the Donetsk Oblast province), they told us that 70% of the civilians there were supporting the ‘ukropi’. When we stopped in Makiivka, we hid in the town park, covered up our equipment and used camouflage, but literally within an hour mortars started raining down on us. I just climbed into the tank, I didn’t care. Mortars can’t damage a tank.”

You have to respect the people’s choice. If Donetsk wants independence, it must be given independence

And that didn’t make you tense, that 70% of locals in Makiivka were supporting Ukraine?

“Of course it made me tense! Mentally, you’re expecting everyone to trick you. They brought us things to eat and drink, tea or whatever. We took it but we didn’t drink it. It could have been poisoned. But as they say, ‘You can’t beat Russians, you can only bribe them’.”

But didn't you have doubts? If it's true that 70% were against you, then why did you go?

“I had doubts. But, for me, 70% of the population of one village doesn’t mean much. You have to respect the people’s choice. If Donetsk wants independence, it must be given independence. I talked to the nurses and doctors there. They said, ‘we want the sort of independence and government that you have, we want Putin’.”

Will there be any (injury) pay-outs to your family?

“I don’t know about that. In Russia, it’s like this – when it comes to money, you can never be sure. On 27 November last year my time as a conscript expired, so I might be made out to look like someone who went on my own to Ukraine. So, I’m a little concerned.”

Do you have regrets?

“It is pointless to have regrets. I don’t bear any grievances because I know that I fought for a good cause. I went with a feeling not of duty, but of justice. I saw how they kill people. They do whatever the hell they like. When we were travelling in the tanks, the ‘ukropi’ would sometimes intercept our radios. I distinctly remember a man’s voice saying: ‘Listen carefully, you Moscow, Petersburg, Rostov degenerates. We are going to kill all of you. First we will kill you, then we’ll kill your wives and kids, we will even get at your parents. We’ll stop at nothing’.”

How do you plan to live from now on?

“I’ve had my fill of war. I served, fought for the DNR. It’s time to live the life of a civilian, to study and work. My body will recover, it will fight back.

“The only thing I still want to visit before I return home to Ulan-Ude is Sensation, a dance event which takes place each year in St Petersburg. The dress code is that everyone wears white. The best DJs come. My sister went...”

Do you have any questions to ask of Putin?

“I don’t have anything against him.

“He’s a very interesting person, of course, and crafty: he’s sending troops, but not sending them. ‘

“There are no troops there’, he tells the world. But then he says to us ‘Jump to it!’

“But if Ukraine enters the European Union and the United Nations, the UN in principle can deploy its rockets and weaponry there (Ukraine was one of the founding member nations of the UN). Then we’ll be in their crosshairs. They would be closer to us, no

longer separated by oceans but by land. That would suck, you know? We have to defend our position so that we are not affected. Like in the cold war, if you remember.

“Today, Russia is concerned. From what I’ve read and the history I’ve studied, Russia’s opinions have started to be reckoned with in recent years. Nowadays, we’re on the rise again, we are being treated with contempt again but we haven’t disintegrated yet.”

AFTERMATH

Batomunkuev and two other injured soldiers were transferred a couple of days later to the regional military hospital in Rostov-on-Don, where they were treated without being registered on any admissions list.

Neither Batomunkuev nor his family were contacted by anyone from his military unit or the Ministry of Defence.

After much persistence his mother got in touch with her son’s military unit where she was told that he was registered on the list of soldiers sent to Ukraine, so the Ministry would fulfil its obligations and pay for his treatment.

“They said that they wouldn’t turn their back on him,” his mother said.

For now, Batomunkuev keeps in touch with his family thanks to his neighbours on the ward, who lend him their mobile phones.

MILITARY NEWS

**The Ukraine Army “Corrupt,
Cash-Strapped And Lacking
Skill”**

**“We Have Generals Who Just Sit
In The Rear”**

**“Families Paying For Soldiers’
Equipment”**

“Six In 10 Ukrainian Casualties Were Caused By Friendly Fire Or Mishandling Of Weapons”



A priest blesses fighters of the Ukrainian Donbass volunteer battalion during a ceremony this week in Kiev before their departure for ‘anti-terrorist’ operations in the east.
Photograph: Sergei Supinsky/AFP/Getty

19 March 2015 by Alec Luhn in Mariupol, Guardian News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

Igor Kuzyo, a nightclub bouncer from Lviv, received a draft notice last summer. But rather than join the Ukrainian army, he travelled east and signed up with a volunteer battalion. At least 30 of these loosely regulated brigades have sprung up in eastern Ukraine to help the short-handed army fight.

Their choice is a telling one.

“They don’t give you anything in the army, the equipment is bad, and they leak secrets even worse than in the interior ministry (which oversees his Saint Mary volunteer battalion),” said Kuzyo. “We have generals who just sit in the rear, they’ve never even shot their weapons,” he added.

At the start of the conflict, Kiev’s army was short on manpower, modern equipment and knowhow. The annexation of Crimea and ensuing Russia-backed uprising in the east caught it unprepared. Ukraine reportedly had only 6,000 battle-ready troops. Their equipment was outdated and ill-maintained, since army purchases were notoriously corrupt.

Alexander Lapko, a senior specialist at the NATO liaison office in Kiev, wrote in October in the New York Times that his family had to spend \$2,400 (£1,615) on a uniform, boots, gun sight, flak jacket and helmet for his brother, who was issued

only a Kalashnikov assault rifle when he joined the army last year. Training has also been lacklustre.

An elite British soldier of Ukrainian descent, who resigned to train Kiev's forces, recently told the Sunday Times that six in 10 Ukrainian casualties were caused by friendly fire or mishandling of weapons.

Commanders were so incompetent that they were endangering soldiers' lives.

"Everything I saw was contrary to everything I was taught in the British army," said the man, who would give only his codename, Saffron.

Now, even after 10 months of war, these problems remain – and they are likely to be all too visible to the first western military trainers in the country.

Under former president Viktor Yanukovich – ousted last February – planned reforms of the army remained largely unfulfilled. Although the draft had been cancelled in 2013 as part of reforms to build a professional fighting force, the army remained full of poorly trained conscripts as the political regime changed in February 2014.

The conflict in the east created a still greater need for manpower even though time and resources for training were scarce.

Earlier this year, Kiev said it had expanded its military forces to 200,000 men since the start of the conflict, mostly by mobilising those who had previously served. With the draft reinstated last year, the defence ministry plans to call up 40,000 conscripts and recruit 10,500 contract soldiers in 2015.

"Of course we need training to revitalise the army, to reform and teach so it will be ready for combat," said the commander of a frontline checkpoint near Mariupol who would give only his call sign Cobra.

His unit, part of a volunteer battalion from Zaporozhiya that has been incorporated into the army command structure, went through about three months of physical and basic arms training before deploying to the front, he said.

After nearly a year of war, Kiev's military has gained battle experience, but "it's hard to talk about a real improvement" in its overall condition, Melnik said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Russian Police Raid Meeting Of Unionized Autoworkers In Kaluga “And Arrested Everyone Present” “Center For Extremism Prevention” Police Used Against Independent Trade Union Activists “The Situation Has United All ITUWA Workers Even More”

March 23, 2015 by Anatoly Karavayev and Daniil Lomakin, Gazeta.Ru

Kaluga police conducted a raid against independent trade union activists who had gathered to discuss layoffs at local car factories.

Due to the decline of the auto market, 750 people might be fired in the very near future.

After being detained on a technicality, the detainees talked to officers from Center “E”, the Center for Extremism Prevention. The trade union movement considers such actions a preventive measure by the authorities.

A scandal has erupted in Kaluga over the detention of fifteen activists from the Interregional Trade Union Workers Association (ITUWA). (Police claim that twelve activists were detained.)

At the weekend, workers from local automotive factories had gathered at the offices of the ITUWA’s Kaluga local to discuss future personnel reductions in the region.

For example, there are plans to lay off 150 people at the local Volkswagen plant in the near future.

In addition, the Peugeot-Citroen plant in Kaluga could dismiss as many as 40% of its workers, around 600 people, without compensation after March 31. Unlike Volkswagen, the French automaker has not yet made an official announcement.

As the ITUWA local informed Gazeta.Ru, they are planning this week to negotiate with plant management. If an agreement to save jobs is not reached, the trade union intends to hold protest rallies and file a series of lawsuits.

The local security forces also took notice of the Kaluga trade union’s activism. Over the weekend, police conducted mass arrests of its members. Moreover,

officers from Center “E”, which specializes in combating various forms of extremism, dealt with the activists.

As activists recounted, they had begun gathering for the meeting when police suddenly entered the ITUWA office in Kaluga and arrested everyone present.

Ultimately, 15 people were taken to the police station. ITUWA local chair Dmitry Trudovoi is certain the detention of the activists was occasioned by the trade union’s increased activism.

“Layoffs are planned at Peugeot-Citroen and Volkswagen. All this has lead the trade union to ratchet things up. Strikes and all that are possible. Basically, this was an act of intimidation,” Trudovoi said of the incident.

“This was a ridiculous police provocation,” Dmitry Kozhnev, who was among the detainees, told Gazeta.Ru.

“First, a beat cop entered the office. He asked about two people who had committed a robbery nearby and had, allegedly, dashed into the building where the ITUWA meeting was taking place.

“Some time later, the ‘bigwigs’ arrived (around forty ranking officers), people in uniform and plainclothes who systematically arrested us and took us to the station.”

“At first, they told us that the arrests were linked, allegedly, to the robbery. But that doesn’t seem to be true, given that people were detained for an hour. Center “E” officers conducted the interrogations. They were trying to figure out what our organization was doing, what events were planned. But none of the detained ITUWA members answered their questions.”

According to Kozhnev, the ITUWA regarded the arrests as an attempt to intimidate members of the trade union.

“Center “E” officers told us we were agents of the West and wanted to destabilize the situation in the country,” said Kozhnev.

“But ultimately they didn’t achieve their objective; they only discredited themselves. On the contrary, the situation has united all ITUWA workers even more,” he added.

The Kaluga Region Interior Ministry office denied the arrests of the ITUWA members occurred during an investigation of their activity.

As Svetlana Somova, head of the press center at the regional Interior Ministry office told Gazeta.Ru that a robbery had occurred near where the trade unionists were meeting. Two unidentified men had attacked a third man and stolen his belongings.

“According to the victim, (he robbers) escaped into the building where the meeting was taking place,” explained Somova. “A group of people, some of whom had no documents, was in the room. They were unable to explain anything about the men who had entered the building. Therefore, they were taken to Police Precinct No. 2. And there

it transpired that an out-of-town trade union movement leader was among them. Naturally, the desk sergeant summoned Counter-Extremism Center officers to avoid provocations.”

As Somova explained, no more than ten officers had been dispatched to the site where the ITUWA members were detained: an extra-departmental security squad, a patrol squad, and police investigators.

“There were no riot police, as has been previously reported in the media,” said the press spokesperson. “If citizens believe their rights have been violated, they can complain to the prosecutor about the police’s actions. ITUWA activists had earlier accused the police of illegal actions, but no violations were uncovered during the course of probes.”

According to the press service spokesperson, police did not suspect they were detaining trade union members because the building sported a large “Barbershop” sign.

ITUWA chair and well-known trade unionist Alexei Etmanov deems the incident in Kaluga unacceptable.

“It’s an absolutely abnormal situation when workers gathered for a trade union meeting are raided by the police. These are the methods not even of the 1990s, but of the 1930s,” Etmanov told Gazeta.Ru.

According to Etmanov, the detainees had gathered on a weekend day at the Kaluga ITUWA office to discuss the situation at the region’s automotive plants.

“There were members from Volkswagen and Peugeot-Citroen and other plants,” said Etmanov.

“A beat cop showed up under false pretenses, then a SWAT team. At the precinct, they tried to fingerprint people. Those who were more experienced were able to wriggle out of it, but some had their fingerprints taken.

“No one filed any charges, of course, but it was a very heavy hint about not fighting so vigorously for one’s rights. I am certain that 90% of this was at the behest of the regional government. There are many foreign-owned plants here. A clear signal had to be sent that there was no need to defend one’s rights too vigorously.”

According to Etmanov, the ITUWA plans to send a letter about the incident to Russian Federal Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev via the All-Russian Confederation of Labor (VKT).

In turn, the Kaluga Region media relations office told Gazeta.Ru it was planning no statements regarding the incident.

“If there are any questions, we are happy to answer them upon written request,” said Anastasia Davydkina, head of the office.

As Kaluga ITUWA organizer Dmitry Kozhnev explained to Gazeta.Ru, around 40% of the workers at the Peugeot-Citroen are on fixed-term contracts that expire on March 31 and, according to the union’s information, will not be renewed.

“The problem with this arrangement existed long ago and was a ticking time bomb. A fixed-term contract allows the employer to fire a worker without paying out any compensation,” explained Kozhnev. “At the same time, it is illegal to hire workers on such conditions. A fixed-term contract may be concluded only when it is impossible to hire an employee under an open-end contract.

“But in the case of the Kaluga plant, there were no such obstacles. Moreover, we already have won favorable court rulings for several plant employees. The court ordered the plant to sign open-ended contracts with them.”

But employees will be offered to transfer to the Volkswagen engine plant, whose launch in Kaluga is planned for the second half of the year. Volkswagen does not rule out the possibility that a portion of the downsized workers might be dismissed by mutual consent. They would be offered a compensation package.

“The packages include financial compensation and medical insurance valid until the end of 2015. In addition, those employees who leave the company by mutual agreement will be the first to be asked to return to the factory when the car market starts to recover,” Volkswagen spokesperson Natalya Kostyukovich told Gazeta.Ru.

In February of this year, the Volvo truck factory in the Kaluga Region shut down completely. Due to the collapse of the auto market, demand for cars had slumped. About 200 people lost their jobs.

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

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**A “Hellish Nightmare”
“Maricruz And One Of Her
Daughters Were Accused Of
Shoplifting And Handcuffed”
Army Veteran “Cody Got Upset And
Protested. A Houston Police Officer
Put Him In Handcuffs”
“‘She Judged Us, Tried Us, Found Us
Guilty,’ She Said, Of The Deputy”**



John Cody, center, his wife, Maricruz and their children, Abigail, 15, left, Celeste, 11, and Sarah, 8, came from their home in La Porte to the rodeo. Photo By Melissa Phillip/Staff

March 18, 2015 By St. John BARNED-SMITH, Houston Chronicle

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is a tradition for John Cody and his family. "For the most part, we always try and go," said Cody, a 35-year-old Houston firefighter and Army veteran.

He and his wife, Maricruz, like to take their three daughters to check out the animals at the petting zoo, munch on greasy carney food and ride the festival rides.

Their trip from La Porte on Tuesday was supposed to be a special one for Abigail, 15, who was going to get to go to the Ariana Grande concert with some of her friends. Their 11-year-old, Celeste, had won an art prize, and Sarah, their 8-year-old had been talking about going for days.

But their outing turned into a "hellish nightmare" when Maricruz and one of her daughters were accused of shoplifting and handcuffed. They posted their story on Facebook, and it has since gone viral.

The incident began when Maricruz and her daughter were perusing a vendor's jewelry in NRG Center. Maricruz, who had just spent \$75 at another stall, picked up some earrings, took a look, put them back, she said.

As they were looking at some other items at a nearby stall, the vendor approached Maricruz and asked if she could point out the earrings she had been examining. The vendor said she hadn't been able to find them.

Maricruz, 32, who works as a kindergarten teacher for La Porte ISD, said she pointed to the pair she'd glanced at: sterling silver teardrops with turquoise colored stones.

The vendor told her the earrings weren't the ones she'd been looking at.

Cody said his wife walked away, upset, and found him - he had taken his two youngest daughters to another part of NRG Center - and told him she had been accused of shoplifting.

"I kind of laughed it off," he said. "I didn't think it was big deal."

They decided to take their children to the bathroom before going on some carnival rides.

While the kids were inside the bathroom, a sheriff's deputy approached the couple and yanked on Maricruz's arm and told her to "come with me," and led her to a security area where she was handcuffed to a bench.

By his own admission, Cody got upset and protested.

"I was trying to get my point across, that this was a mistake," he said.

A Houston police officer put him in handcuffs, and also started to lead him away, before he told the officer his three girls were still in the bathroom.

The sheriff's deputy, who has not been identified, came back, and handcuffed Abigail in front of her sisters while she was washing her hands, he said.

Cody watched another adult take his 8-year-old and 11-year-old daughters to the show's area for missing children.

"They were freaking out," he said. Abigail, their sister and role model, was being taken away in handcuffs, as was he.

"We had a witness who claimed she saw the woman and daughter steal a pair of earrings from the booth," said Christina Garza, a spokeswoman for the Harris County Sheriff's Office, explaining what the vendor told security.

"That's when our deputy and HPD responded to the area," she said, explaining that she had been told an HPD officer had handcuffed Abigail. "They were taken, questioned about the allegations, and released."

Authorities never found the earrings, she said.

"If the family believes there was any wrongdoing, they are welcome to file a formal complaint with our internal affairs division," she said.

Police later took off Cody's handcuffs and went with him to collect his two other daughters.

"My kids have never seen anything like that before..." he said. "They were pretty upset."

His wife and eldest daughter were released about two hours after the ordeal began.

Several law enforcement officers eventually apologized for how the incident was handled and told them they were free to go to the carnival or come back another day, but they told the family they had been banned from NRG Center, Cody said.

Maricruz, meanwhile, is still upset.

“She judged us, tried us, found us guilty,” she said, of the deputy who detained her. “She was adamant we had the earrings. ... It was something very hard for me to watch, my daughter brought in in handcuffs, searched, treated like a criminal.”

Abigail decided to skip the Ariana Grande concert, she said, and the family left without using any of the carnival tickets they had purchased.

“Those kinds things are really important to teenagers,” Maricruz said. “For her to forgo it, it really shook her...”

Cody and his wife said they are planning to file a formal complaint with the Sheriff's Office.

Enemy Combatant Kills Unarmed Texas Man During Traffic Stop:

**“An Animal Gets More Rights
Than A Man”**

**Villalpando “Had His Hands In The
Air And Did Nothing To Threaten The
Officer Who Stopped Him”**

**“My Brother-In-Law Is Out Of The Car
With His Hands Up,” He Said, “And The
First Thing He Asks Is, 'Are You Going
To Kill Me?'”**

March 8, 2015 By Catherine E. Shoichet and Ed Lavandera, CNN [Excerpts]

Rubén García Villalpando was supposed to arrive home from work on a Friday evening in February.

But he never again pulled into the driveway of the home in suburban Dallas where he lived with his wife and four children.

The 31-year-old welder died that night after a police officer shot him twice in the chest.

Villalpando was unarmed, but in early reports about the shooting, police said an altercation erupted after he disobeyed an officer's commands during a traffic stop.

It wasn't until hours after the shooting that his wife says she got a call from police, telling her what had happened.

Now, questions swirl through Marta Romero's mind.

How will their children grow up without a father? Will authorities take the case seriously or toss it aside because of her husband's immigration status and the fact that the man who opened fire was a police officer, not a civilian? And what happened that night to make something so horrible happen?

“If my husband had killed a police officer, he would be in jail,” she said. “But since it was the opposite, will they just leave it this way? Because an officer killed a man, because he killed an illegal and nothing more? What are a human’s rights then? Now an animal gets more rights than a man.”

Villalpando is one of three Mexican nationals killed in U.S. police shootings in the past month, sparking sharp criticism from Mexico's Foreign Ministry and a call for the U.S. Justice Department to investigate. Pressure for authorities to take a deeper look at the controversial case is also coming from north of the border.

At a City Council meeting in Grapevine, Texas, last week, Romero and her children were among a group holding signs that said “Justice for Ruben” and chanting, “Hands up! Don't shoot!” -- the phrase that started as a call to action after the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and has now become a rallying cry across the country in protests against police violence.

Police said it's too soon to say exactly what happened that night. Investigators have interviewed dozens of witnesses and plan to share their findings with prosecutors. No charges have been filed.

“I do not know now whether to believe in the authorities here or not,” Romero said, “because if a police officer acted like this, what can another official do? I don't know. I want to trust them, because they are the ones who are taking care of us in this city. But I don't know what they can do.”

The case already has one piece of evidence that wasn't available to investigators looking into Brown's death: a police cruiser dash cam video.

But police haven't released it to the public.

“There will be more information released as the investigation continues. This additional information may shed more light on Mr. Villalpando's actions that night,” police and city officials in Grapevine said last week. “We look forward to the time that the community can review the dash cam video of this incident, which we believe will answer many questions and correct some misconceptions about this incident.”

Villalpando's family members said they've seen the video, and even though it doesn't show the shooting, they said it's clear there was no good reason for the officer to open fire.

Villalpando was unarmed, they said, had his hands in the air and did nothing to threaten the officer who stopped him.

It all started, police say, when a burglar alarm went off February 20 at a business in Grapevine.

Officer Robert Clark of the Grapevine Police Department spotted Villalpando's car in the area and started to follow him.

Soon, according to police, the pursuit turned into a high-speed chase, with the officer following Villalpando from Grapevine into the neighboring town of Euless, Texas.

A Grapevine Police statement released after the shooting said the dash cam video shows Villalpando's car “weaving through and around the heavy traffic and driving onto the highway attempting to evade Officer Clark.”

Eventually, Villalpando pulled over.

His family said they believe he didn't stop for police right away because he was scared.

He was an undocumented immigrant who had lived in the United States for 15 years and he knew any encounter with police could end with him getting deported and separated from his children, Romero said.

U.S. President Barack Obama's announcement last fall that undocumented immigrant parents of U.S. citizen children could be eligible for work permits as part of a new executive action gave them hope, but also made them even more nervous about making sure they steered clear of trouble until the paperwork came through, she said.

“He was nervous. He knew that to have problems with the authorities was serious. ... We couldn't have a criminal record,” she said. “That is what he had in mind. What is going to happen to me now? Now I am not going to be OK. They are going to deport me.”

Fernando Romero said it was jarring to hear what Villalpando says in the video as he gets out of the vehicle.

“My brother-in-law is out of the car with his hands up,” he said, “and the first thing he asks is, 'Are you going to kill me?’”

There's no sound of any fighting or altercation, but what you do hear, he said, is the profanities the officer repeatedly shouts as Villalpando approaches with his hands up.

It's hard to hear exactly what was said, according to Romero; the family believes the officer made a comment claiming Villalpando was drunk.

Police in Euless, who are leading the criminal investigation into what happened, told CNN the video does contain foul language.

The Grapevine Police dispute the family's assertion that Villalpando did nothing threatening, saying that "contrary to clear instructions" he continued to walk toward the officer after being told repeatedly to stop.

But there's a key thing that's not shown on the video, police and the family said: the shooting itself.

Still, Fernando Romero said the sound of gunshots is clear, piercing through the roar of rush-hour traffic.

His sister, Villalpando's widow, was so devastated after seeing the video he had to carry her out of the police station.

Grapevine Police said the video shows the officer did everything he could to keep the situation under control until backup arrived.

"We believe the dash-cam video, as well as information that has already been in the media, clearly demonstrates that Officer Clark was doing everything in his power, including the use of strong language, to keep Mr. Villalpando at a safe distance until backup arrived and an arrest [was] safely accomplished," Sgt. Robert Eberling said in a written statement released Thursday. "Members of the media have also been diligent in reporting some of the possible explanations for Mr. Villalpando's actions on the night of February 20, including a previous high-speed chase and a prior arrest for DWI, and a fear that he would be deported. Officer Clark had no way of knowing Mr. Villalpando's nationality at the time the traffic stop was initiated and it may not have been evident on a highway in the late evening."

Marta Romero said her husband made a mistake when he didn't stop when the officer tried to pull him over.

But she said he was trying to cooperate and turn himself in.

"He was painted like a criminal who was involved in a robbery and had assaulted an officer, and in the video you don't see any of those things," she said.

"You see the opposite, a man who is scared, who is simply trying to calm the situation, who sees that the police officer has a weapon in his hands."

Now she said, she's seeking justice, hoping the police officer will face the appropriate charges for killing her husband. But she knows the family's search for answers won't be easy. In addition to the doubts swirling in her head, she is faced with questions from her

children, even as she tries to explain to them that their father won't return. The most devastating of all, she said, is, "Mommy, when is my Papa going to wake up?"

Police in Eules said they're also asking plenty of questions.

Investigators have interviewed more than two dozen witnesses and are searching for more people who might have seen what happened, Eules Police Lt. Eric Starnes said

Clark, who's worked for the Grapevine Police since May 2014, is on administrative leave pending the investigation. Grapevine Police did not respond to CNN's request to speak to Clark about the incident.

The burglar alarm that spurred the officer's initial response, police later said, turned out to be false.

Unarmed Black Woman And Mother Of Two Killed By Police After Allegedly Shoplifting At The Home Depot: Shot Through The Head With An Assault Rifle; "In Keeping With A Pattern In Other High-Profile Cases" Police Body Cam Was Not Turned On At The Time.

March 16, 2015 by Anita Winsom and Jeremy Tully, Socialist Worker

The Black Lives Matter movement took to the streets in the Bay Area on February 21 to protest the February 3 killing of Yvette Henderson by police in Emeryville, California.

A march organized by the Anti Police-Terror Project (AFTP) proceeded from the Emeryville police station to a rally organized by ONYX Organizing Committee, Asians for Black Lives and BlackOut Collective, where activists blockaded all entrances to the Emeryville Home Depot, shutting it down for five hours--the period of time that Yvette's body was left to lie in the street after she was shot and killed.

Yvette, a 38-year-old Black woman and mother of two, was killed by police after allegedly shoplifting at the Home Depot. Multiple eyewitnesses to her death say Yvette was unarmed when she was shot.

One protest organizer, Adam Jordan, reported that multiple eyewitnesses described Yvette as, “desperately trying to wave down cars and a bus to get out of the situation, like she was in fear for her life.”



Protesters built a 30-foot-tall shrine to Yvette Henderson in front of the entrance to Home Depot
Photo: Jeremy Tully, SocialistWorker.org

As if the shooting death of Yvette were not troubling enough, according to anti-police brutality activist Mollie Costello, “Multiple eyewitnesses to Yvette's death say she was shot with an assault rifle through the head.”

The daylong action for Yvette drew in several hundred people at its peak, and more than 100 people supported the blockade of Home Depot throughout the day. At all three entrances and exits to the store, activists locked themselves together to stop any attempts by police to remove them. They erected a large shrine to Yvette in front of one of the entrances, setting up a tower nearly 30 feet tall.

Protest participants showed a high degree of self-confidence and determination. Many of those who spoke throughout the day had family members who had also suffered violence at the hands of police. Activists sang, chanted, danced and held speak-outs for the duration of the action. At no point did police or Home Depot security dare to make any attempt to break up the blockade.

A key demand of the protest was the release of all videotapes pertaining to the killing of Yvette. Home Depot has video of the dispute between Yvette and Home Depot security guards, who alleged Yvette shoplifted from the store

Home Depot security guards called the Emeryville police, who later killed her.

Emeryville police shot Yvette in front of a nearby storage facility, Extra Space Storage. The storage facility is also equipped with security cameras and may have video of the actual shooting of Yvette. Activists are also demanding the release of Extra Space Storage's video footage.

Of the two Emeryville police officers responsible for Yvette's death--Warren Williams and Michelle Shepherd--Williams was wearing a body camera when Yvette was shot. But in keeping with a pattern in other high-profile cases, Williams' body cam was not turned on at the time.

Since Yvette's death, city officials have dragged their feet in providing any evidence at all as to what actually happened.

Not only have they held onto video footage from Home Depot and Extra Space Storage, but Yvette's autopsy results have yet to be released, even though a month has now passed since her killing.

Yvette's murder is officially being investigated by the Oakland Police Department. But the Oakland police is notorious for its brutality against people of color and has been under federal oversight since 2003. In that year, the Riders Scandal broke, and it was revealed that Oakland police routinely targeted people of color in West Oakland by kidnapping them, planting false evidence on them, and then beating them to obtain confessions of drug dealing.

In 2012, Oakland police officer Miguel Masso shot and killed Alan Blueford, an unarmed Black teen. Masso was also wearing a body camera that was not turned on when he murdered Blueford.

Protesters note that local media have been complicit in sweeping the killing of Yvette under the rug. According to Jordan, "Media coverage has been completely cooperative with the police. Whatever the police say, the media repeat it. As the police change their story, the local news change theirs."

It will take continued mobilizations and pressure in the streets to obtain any kind of justice for Yvette.

Body cameras and investigations by other police departments offer no solution.

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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.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

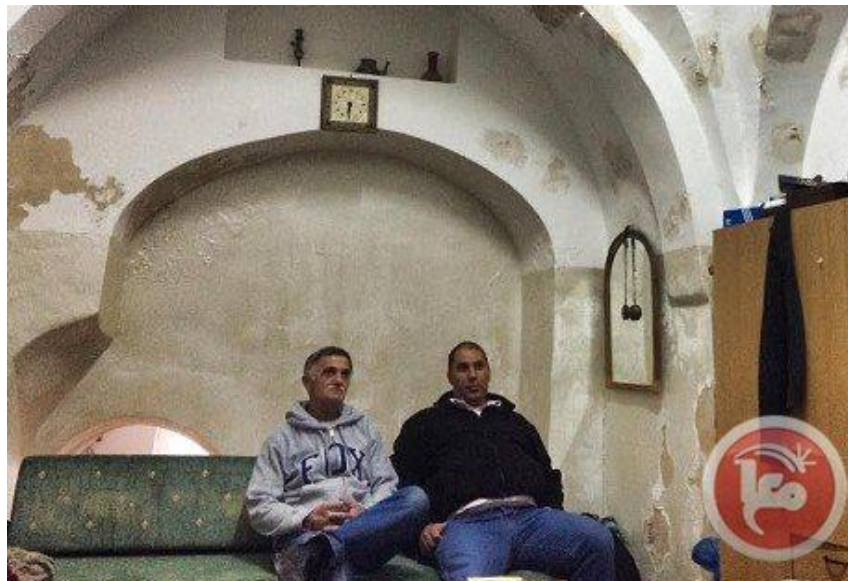


Palestinian Family In Occupied Jerusalem Fights Against All Odds To Prevent Eviction By Zionist Settlers:

“In The 1970s And 80s They Started Taking Them Over One By One, And Now We Are The Only Palestinians Left Here”

“This Is Expulsion”

“A Methodical Policy Of Apartheid By Israeli Authorities Against The People Of Jerusalem”



Family members and friends rest in the family room. (MaanImages/Alex Shams)

In effect, if the settlers successfully kick the Sub Labans out of their home in the coming days, a family that traces its roots in Jerusalem back centuries will be forever displaced, replaced by recent Jewish immigrants.

03/25/2015 By Alex Shams, Ma'an

JERUSALEM (Ma'an) -- On a small alley in Jerusalem's Old City, a Palestinian family is fighting both Israeli government and Jewish settler pressure to stay in a home they have lived in more than half a century.

After a day of fighting with police and Jewish settlers bent on kicking them out of the house, on Monday evening the eight members of the Sub Laban family breathed a sigh of relief after an Israeli court stayed their eviction order.

But the victory is short-lived.

The court said only that the eviction will be frozen until after Tuesday's parliamentary elections, and family members are already bracing for the renewed attempt to force them out, which they expect to come Wednesday morning, if not earlier.

"All of the apartments around us and even in our own building are now inhabited by Jewish settlers," the family's son Rafat Sub Laban told Ma'an during an interview at the home.

"In the 1970s and 80s they started taking them over one by one, and now we are the only Palestinians left here."

The attempted eviction Monday was the second in just over a month, and the family is becoming increasingly fearful that the chances of being able to stay in their home are rapidly diminishing.

A settler organization named Ateret Cohanim has been trying to push them out of the home since 2010, Sub Laban told Ma'an, but pressure has increased rapidly in the last 40 days.

At issue in the case is the fact that the home was owned by a Jewish landlord prior to the 1948 outbreak of hostilities, when almost all Jews fled the Old City for Zionist-controlled West Jerusalem when war broke out.

The Sub Laban family moved into the house in 1956, when they entered into a protected lease agreement with the Jordanian government custodian that took over "absentee" property following the war.

When Israel occupied Jerusalem in 1967, the Sub Laban family renegotiated the agreement -- which entitles them to stay in the house even after the lease lapses and to pass it on as well -- with the Israeli custodian.

In the 1980s the family says they were mandated by the government to perform restoration work on the house, and when they temporarily moved out to allow the work, they were prevented by settlers from returning for 15 years.

In 2000, they finally managed to move back in.

But a decade later an Israeli court sided with the settler group Ateret Cohanim's assertion that the Sub Laban family had “abandoned” the home by not residing in it during the years when they were prevented from entering.



Rafat and his nephew in the courtyard. (MaanImages/Alex Shams)

The settler movement also believes that any property that was Jewish at any point in the past should be given to Jewish owners, and thus they consider the Sub Laban's residency illegitimate.

They also have a stated goal of creating a Jewish majority in the overwhelmingly Palestinian Old City.

A friend of the family who came over Tuesday to lend the family support argued that the Israeli court's attitude toward the case smacked of racist double standards.

“Israel says they want to return this home to Israeli ownership. But then Israel should also give back those homes that Israel took from Palestinian owners in 1967 who fled because of the war,” the friend -- who gave his name only as Muhammad for fear of government reprisal -- told Ma'an.

“The settler groups take over homes and give them to Jews and allow them to live there, and the groups even pay people to live in the homes,” he told Ma'an.

“You have not only the construction of new settlements around Jerusalem, but also a policy of replacement, in which the government bring Jews in to replace individual Palestinians,” he argued.

When Israel took over Jerusalem in 1967 it summarily evicted thousands of Palestinians from the Old City, in addition to the thousands of others who fled out of fear.

Their properties were taken over and many given to Jews, and Israeli authorities refuse to consider returning them. Instead, Israeli courts have largely supported recent efforts by Jewish settler groups to expel even more Palestinians from their homes to make room for new Jewish settlements.

This policy also stands in direct contrast to the demands of Palestinian refugees, who insist that those lands and properties confiscated by authorities in what became Israel in 1948 should be returned to them and they should be allowed to return.

In effect, while an Israeli Jew can petition a court to evict a Palestinian family in a home that belonged to Jews prior to 1948 in East Jerusalem, a Palestinian cannot petition a court to evict a Jewish family in a home that belonged to Palestinians prior to 1948 in West Jerusalem.

The issue of absentee property is only one aspect of the situation the Sub Laban family find themselves in, however.

The Israeli government has a stated aim of “Judaizing” Jerusalem, which means ensuring eternal Jewish control over the city through a policy of limiting Palestinian rights to residency and construction while building homes specifically for Jews across the city.

“What is happening today in Jerusalem is just one part of a methodical policy of apartheid being practiced by Israeli authorities against the people of Jerusalem,” Muhammad told Ma'an.

He noted that the Sub Laban family, if kicked out of their home, would be forced to move to the West Bank, since Israeli authorities' systematic refusal to approve construction permits for Palestinians in Jerusalem has led to a severe lack of available, affordable homes in the city for non-Jews.

Due to Israel's “Center of Life” policy exclusively applied to Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, meanwhile, if the Sub Laban family lives outside of Jerusalem for a minimum of seven years, their right to Jerusalem residency will be revoked, and neither they nor their children will ever be able to freely enter or live in the city they were born in ever again.

In effect, if the settlers successfully kick the Sub Labans out of their home in the coming days, a family that traces its roots in Jerusalem back centuries will be forever displaced, replaced by recent Jewish immigrants.

“This is expulsion under the cover of the legal mechanisms of the Israeli occupation's authority,” Muhammad told Ma'an.

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.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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