

Military Resistance 13G7



Private Prison Near Kingman Rocked With Rioting: Ariz. Sends Special Forces Put Down Uprising



Kingman Prison

July 5, 2015 Jerod MacDonald-Evoy and Craig Harris, The Arizona Republic

KINGMAN, Ariz. — A private prison near Kingman that was rocked with rioting during the July 4th weekend appeared under control Sunday, after the Arizona Department of Corrections was forced to bring in 96 members of its special tactical support unit to help quell the disturbances.

State correctional employees, donned in military fatigues and carrying rifles, tear-gas equipment and batons, were seen Sunday morning going into the prison operated by Utah-based Management & Training Corp.

The special unit was brought to the facility to restore order, following a series of disturbances that began last week, Andrew Wilder, a Department of Corrections spokesman, said Sunday. A day earlier, local law-enforcement officers were called to the scene to guard the perimeter to ensure there were no escapes.

It's likely that more inmates will need to be removed from the prison because of damage inmates caused in the medium-security facility, Wilder said.

Previously he said at least 700 inmates would be removed and transferred to other locations, including state prisons, county jails and other private prisons. It's possible inmates could be sent out of state, he added.

Problems began July 2 in the medium-security Hualapai Unit of the Arizona State Prison Complex-Kingman when inmates were "non-compliant and caused significant damage" in two housing areas, MTC said in a statement released Sunday.

Nine staff members and seven inmates have been hurt since troubles began Wednesday, Wilder said.

The prison is about 20 miles west of Kingman and the complex can easily be seen from Interstate 40.

Wilder declined comment regarding MTC's operation of the private prison. He also said he had no information on who would be paying for the transfer of the inmates or the bill for local law enforcement having to respond to back-to-back incidents.

The DOC spokesman reiterated that contrary to some bloggers' reports, there were no escapes and that no inmates breached the prison's perimeter either Friday or Saturday.

Saturday night, the flashing blue and red lights of at least a dozen law-enforcement vehicles could be observed around the perimeter. The road into the complex was blocked by local police officers, and the Kingman Police Department and Mohave County Sheriff's Office referred all questions to MTC.

At about 9 p.m., the law-enforcement vehicles began pulling back from the prison's perimeter and the roadblock was lifted.

About 2 miles away, law enforcement and medical crews stood ready to respond, but they also began pulling back late Saturday night.

Gov. Doug Ducey has been briefed on the situation, said his spokesman, Daniel Scarpinato.

"The state's Number 1 priority is to protect Arizona citizens and our public safety officials," Scarpinato said via email.

The department deemed the first day's unrest, which injured six, a "major disturbance" among minimum-security inmates.

Five of those injured officers were treated at the prison, with one transported to a local hospital for treatment and later released, according to Issa Arnita, a spokesman for MTC.

Thursday's incident was described as a full-scale riot involving inmates in the medium-security unit, and it spread over two of the prison's five housing units, Arnita said.

The prison, which is in Golden Valley and houses about 3,600 minimum-and medium-custody inmates, opened in 2004. It has had several high-profile security breaches in recent years.

An inmate serving a five-year sentence for theft and possession of drug paraphernalia was badly beaten there in January and died at a hospital three days later. His family is seeking \$7.5 million from the state and MTC.

In 2010, three inmates escaped and went on a violent crime spree that included the murder of an Oklahoma couple vacationing in New Mexico. The inmates were caught and received new prison sentences.

On July 22, the DOC will begin accepting bids for a \$50 million project that would be spent on up to 2,000 prison beds in the next two years, according to Samuel Richard, executive director of Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition.

MORE:

Prison Guard At Center Of Kingman Prison Riot Kills Himself: "In An Altercation With Inmate When He Used Pepper Spray, An

Act That May Have Helped Spark The Destructive Riot” “Inmates Reportedly Had A Growing List Of Complaints” “Officers Were Engaging In ‘Excessive Use Of Tasers And Pepper Spray’ When Less Severe Means To Respond Are Available”

July 17, 2015 By Doug McMurdo, Special to the News-Herald

GOLDEN VALLEY - A corrections officer who was at the center of a riot July 2 at Arizona State Prison-Kingman committed suicide early Wednesday morning at his home in Bullhead City.

Bullhead City Police spokeswoman Carina Spotts said officers responded to the 30-year-old man's apartment at about 1:15 a.m. after his wife called to report he wanted to commit suicide.

Officers reportedly watched the man walk into his home from the balcony when they arrived at his apartment and then heard a gunshot. The man reportedly used a 30.06-caliber rifle to shoot himself.

Spokesman Issaa Arnita of Management Training Corp., the Utah company that manages the private prison in Golden Valley, confirmed the man was in an altercation with an inmate when he used pepper spray to control the prisoner, an act that may have helped spark the destructive riot that injured nine correctional officers and four inmates over four days of unrest at both the Hualapai and Cerbat units.

The most serious incident is the one in which the man was involved.

The riot occurred at the medium security Hualapai Unit, which is closed while the facility is cleaned and repaired. Inmates virtually destroyed four of five housing units at the roughly 1,500-bed prison and nearly 1,200 of them have since been moved to other detention centers in and outside of Arizona.

"The answer is yes," said Arnita, director of corporate communications, when asked if the man was at the flashpoint of the riot, which broke out at about 8 p.m. and lasted for several hours.

What Arnita refused to address, for a number of reasons, is the man's motivation to end his life.

Inmates reportedly had a growing list of complaints, including what one recent employee said was their belief officers were engaging in "excessive use of Tasers and pepper spray" when less severe means to respond are available. Her story will be published in Sunday's Daily Miner.

Arizona Department of Corrections spokesman Bill Lamoreaux said the department was unable to comment on the man's suicide or what might have been his motive, given the ongoing nature of the investigation. "We don't know what led to his death," Arnita said. "It's up to the police to determine that. The state doesn't know because they're still investigating so it seems people are drawing conclusions based on hearsay."

Arnita said in an email that the man's death was tragic. He also refused to comment on what might have led him to commit suicide. "We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of our colleague and friend," said Arnita. "Our hearts go out to his family for their great loss. It is not appropriate for us to speculate regarding the motive behind his death. We are fully cooperating with police in their investigation into this tragic situation."

The man had been a corrections officer at the prison since December of 2012, said Arnita.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Collaborator Officials Blown Up



July 25, 2015. At least one official of Afghan National Directorate of Security was killed and four persons were injured when a bomb exploded in Jalalabad, Afghanistan.
(EPA/GHULAMULLAH HABIBI)

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
RESIST THE OCCUPATION**

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

Neither of us (myself or Engels) cares a straw for popularity. A proof of this is, for example, that, because of aversion to any personality cult, I have never permitted the numerous expressions of appreciation from various countries with which I was pestered during the existence of the International to reach the realm of publicity, and have never answered them, except occasionally by a rebuke.

When Engels and I first joined the secret Communist Society we made it a condition that everything tending to encourage superstitious beliefs in authority was to be removed from the statutes.

-- Karl Marx

An Appeal From Greece: For Solidarity With The Prisoners Of 15 July — Against Police Brutality

17 July 2015 by OKDE-Spartakos

The government of SYRIZA-ANEL who voted the new memorandum, in the same line with previous governments, has proved that they cannot enforce the new austerity measures that destroyed the life of workers and people in Greece and complete the overturn of the massive NO of the working class, without resorting to the last form of social dominance: the state-police violence and repression.

On the night of 15 July, day of general strike in the public sector, municipalities and hospitals against the new memorandum, in the demonstration organized by trade unions and social and political organizations, the police of the “left government” spent out all of their rage.

The part of the demonstration where members of OKDE-Spartakos were standing, with obvious presence, flags and chants, were attacked brutally without any provocation by the riot police, who cruelly beat and wounded demonstrators and then arrested them for no reason.

Two comrades of OKDE-Spartakos and ANTARSYA, after a harsh beating during the attack, but also after their arrest, were taken the next day 16/7, with other arrested demonstrators, to the DA with lots of ridiculous false charges.

Their trial has been scheduled for Wednesday 22 July.

These two comrades are Manthos Tavoularis, bookstores worker and Secretary of Book shops Workers' Union and Michalis Goudoumas, social worker, member of the Union of Workers of the Foundation for the Child “Pammakaristos”

15 other militants were arrested with our comrades and they were treated by the policemen with the same brutality and are also taken to trial in Wednesday.

The government does not allow any illusions about their allies and their enemies.

They choose to vote for the new memorandum in a close collaboration with the political parties of the bourgeoisie, the media establishment, the native and European capital, the EU and the IMF.

The government choose to attack with unthinkable brutality, using the familiar ‘Praetorian Guard’: MAT (the Greek riot police) and DIAS police unit, against political organizations of the anti-capitalist left, trade unionists and political activists, who have been fighting against the memoranda, austerity and authoritarian bills, in the last years, who also fought and worked for the ‘NO’ answer in the referendum, who have been

fighting for the emancipation of the working majority and their liberation from the capitalist inferno.

The suppression by the government that authoritatively turned the overwhelming 'NO' of the working people into a 'left' memorandum of extreme class savagery, does not frighten the political activists who fight on the side of the people who say NO UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.

That's why we stand by all the co-political activists who were the 'target group' of the police suppression during the workers' rally on the 15th July and we demand the immediate withdrawal of all charges with which the arrested political activists are being forced into trial.

We participate in the solidarity assembly at Evelpidon court complex, on the 22nd of July, at 9am

[Sign the petition here](#)

Probably The Most Remarkable Documentary Film Ever Made "The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty" By Esther Shub: 1927

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lk0yfcP_t5U

[Thanks to Frank M. for sending in.]

"The first 'found footage' documentary"

Brings together like nowhere else films on the lead up to and course of World War I, from early years to fall 1917.

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I have never seen anything like this before in my lifetime, and neither have you, if you haven't already seen it.

See history played out, uncensored, material reality before one's eyes, as it truly was. Nothing like the false impressions we get today. Makes the current round of World War I documentaries look like comic books.

NOTE: The first try for full screen doesn't always work. Be patient with delays. It will show on the bottom of your monitor.

Williams A Political Symbol And An Athletic Powerhouse: “Serena Has Chosen To Partner With An Organization That Fights For Prisoners”

**“After Her Wimbledon Victory,
Serena Williams Was Asked Which
Athlete She Admired The Most. She
Said That It Was Muhammad Ali”
“Not For His Boxing But For ‘What He
Stood For’ Outside The Ring”**



Serena Williams wins the women's singles final at the All England Lawn Tennis Championships in Wimbledon, London, Saturday July 11, 2015. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

July 14, 2015 By Dave Zirin, The Nation

There are numerous articles—terrific articles—defending Serena Williams against the racism and sexism that have long stalked her career. This will not be one of those articles.

As long as gutter invective is hurled at Serena, there will always be a need to defend her—and by extension stand up for everyone who feels the primary sting of these attacks. (J.K. Rowling is even standing up for Serena, adding a new dimension to her #blackgirlmagic.)

But, just as I wrote last week about not merely “defending” women’s sports but actually going on “offense,” we need to be similarly aggressive in stating factually just who Serena is becoming before our very eyes. If our eyes remain narrowed in a defensive stance, we could be missing a transcendent chapter in sports and social history beginning to coalesce.

Serena Williams just won her 21st Grand Slam. That’s the same number every other active women’s player has collected combined. In her last 28 matches she is 28-0, and at the US Open this August, Ms. Williams will be favored to win the sport’s first calendar Grand Slam since Steffi Graf did it 27 years ago.

At 33, Williams actually seems to be gaining strength, and as John McEnroe said to ESPNW’s Jane McManus, among women, “she could arguably be the greatest athlete of the last 100 years.” I think this even understates her case. She is our Jordan. She is our Jim Brown. She is our Babe Ruth, calling his shots. She is no longer content to dodge bullets, but understands how to stop them. Serena is that rare athlete who has not only mastered her sport. She’s harnessed it.

But Serena Williams is more than just our 21st-century Michael Jordan. If we take a break from defending her, which her detractors do not make easy, it becomes increasingly clear that she is also perhaps our Muhammad Ali.

That’s sacrilege in some circles, and understandably so. Ali risked years in federal prison to stand up to an unjust war, becoming the most famous draft resister in history. His very presence at different points inspired the first Pan-Africanist stirrings of Malcolm X, the anti-war evocations of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the very mental survival of a prisoner half-way around the world named Nelson Mandela.

There is and never will be anyone like Ali, without question. But this is also not the 1960s, and there will also never be anyone like Serena.

Serena Williams is our Ali, and before defending that statement, I want to break down what, in my view, makes Ali “Ali.”

To be in Muhammad Ali’s tradition of athletes, there are three basic boxes one would need to check: The first is that the sportsperson in question would need to be amongst “the greatest” in their field. As mentioned above, Serena more than checks that box.

Secondly, one would have to be polarizing in a way that speaks to issues beyond the field: thrilling some people politically and enraging others with every triumph. Similarly, a loss would feel like more than “just a game” to their fans: more like a punch to the gut.

Lastly, to even be in this conversation, one would have to not just “represent” or symbolize a political yearning but actually stand for something, and risk their commercial appeal by taking such stands.

Serena doesn’t only check these boxes. She has, I would argue, confronted—and overcome—more obstacles than even the great Muhammad ever had to face. Her political powers of representation, every time she emerges victorious, is off the meter.

Symbolically, the very audacity of Serena Williams—a black woman from Compton who has owned a country-club sport with style, flair, and the occasional leopard suit, is without comparison. She is “peak Tiger Woods” in skill, but cut with Ali’s transgressive style: the equivalent of the Champ telling the craggy, macho world of boxing that he was “so very pretty.”

But not even Ali had to achieve in an atmosphere as inhospitable as Serena’s athletic setting. This is about the very particular intersectional oppression she has faced as a black woman.

This iconic body she proudly inhabits—her shape, her curves, her musculature—has been the subject of scorn, regardless of the results. Even at his most denigrated, Ali’s loudest detractors conceded that his physical body was a work of athletic sculpture. As a man—a black man—he was objectified with a mix of admiration, longing, and envy, in the ways black male athletes have always been seen since the days of plantation sports. It was his mind and mouth that truly made him threatening. People wanted Ali to “shut up and box” for years before finally stripping him of his title. But as that phrase implies, they still wanted him to box.

Not Serena. Instead, she has had to face a tennis world that has made it clear in tones polite and vulgar that it would be so nice if she wasn’t there. But she has shut them all up with the same wicked power that defines her game.

She, like Martina Navratilova before her, has forced sportswriters and fans to confront what a female athlete’s body can look like, and they have often responded as terribly as we would both expect and fear.

While overwhelmingly male sports media and many tennis fans mocked and continue to belittle her appearance, Williams brushes them off—at least publicly—like so much shoulder dust. The greater her stature, the more pathetic they look. The higher her profile, the lower they seem. In Ali’s day, William F. Buckley saw it as his “white man’s burden” to tear him down. Serena has Buckley’s media spawn attempting the same and they look just as small, just as pathetic.

Then there are her explicit politics.

This is not the 1960s and there isn’t a mass movement to deify Serena Williams the way there was one to lift Ali, when the world was insistent upon his destruction. But that only makes the stands she has chosen to take all the more remarkable.

In 2000, Serena Williams pulled out of the Family Circle Cup in South Carolina in solidarity with the NAACP's call to boycott over the flying of the Confederate flag atop the state house.

After her Wimbledon victory Saturday, she spoke about the recent "Mother Emmanuel" Church murders in Charleston, calling it a "tragedy yet again," and an "unspeakably sad" moment that takes its "toll." However, she pledged to "continue to have faith, continue to believe, continue to be positive, continue to help people to the best of (my) ability."

She has been a voice for women's pay equity in the sport, backing her sister Venus's powerful push for economic gender justice in a sport that at one time paid women with bouquets of flowers.

Most compellingly, as the Black Lives Matter movement has attempted to focus the nation on both police violence and the injustices that surround our system of mass incarceration, Serena has chosen to partner with the Equal Justice Initiative, an organization that fights for prisoners' rights amid the racism that pervades our criminal-justice system.

In a move as audacious as it was affecting, she even tied her return to Indian Wells, a tournament she had boycotted after being showered with racist catcalls in 2001, to the raising of money for the organization.

Using boxing as a platform for these kinds of politics amidst the 1960s was certainly legendary. But doing it in 2015 in the world of tennis? It's simply above and beyond, like clearing a hurdle while wearing cement shoes.

If anything, the greatest difference between Serena and Ali is the absence of that mass social movement to elevate her presence and push the non-believers to see what we have in front of us.

Muhammad Ali went from despised to beloved because a mass black-freedom struggle and anti-war movement took him as their own. He became more than an athlete: He became a social question.

Similarly, a movement fighting for #BlackLivesMatter and gender justice, a movement of struggle that includes the young women of Ferguson, Bree Newsome, and everyone fighting fiercely to reshape this country, has the potential to deliver Serena Williams to even greater heights.

She is also becoming a social question, because she represents in so many ways the questions that people are facing in their daily lives.

In other words, she poses this very sharp interrogation to the viewer: When you see her serve, her volley, and her physical self; when you hear her words, her concerns, her causes, which side are you on? This remarkable athletic force of nature, or those trying—and failing—to tear her down?

After her Wimbledon victory, Serena Williams was asked which athlete she admired the most. She said that it was Muhammad Ali.

Not for his boxing but for “what he stood for” outside the ring.

For years people have asked who would be “the next Muhammad Ali.” If we dare to lift our heads, it will be clear that she is right in front of us. In the years to come, we may need to change the question and ask who will be “the next Serena Williams.”

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.

“Let Us Now Picture To Ourselves, By Way Of Change, A Community Of Free Individuals, Carrying On Their Work With The Means Of Production In Common”

Excerpt from Karl Marx. Capital Volume One; Chapter One: Commodities; Section 4 - The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof

Let us now picture to ourselves, by way of change, a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community.

The total product of our community is a social product.

One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social.

But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion amongst them is consequently necessary. The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organisation of the community, and the degree of historical development attained by the producers.

We will assume, but merely for the sake of a parallel with the production of commodities, that the share of each individual producer in the means of subsistence is determined by his labour time.

Labour time would, in that case, play a double part. Its apportionment in accordance with a definite social plan maintains the proper proportion between the different kinds of work to be done and the various wants of the community.

On the other hand, it also serves as a measure of the portion of the common labour borne by each individual, and of his share in the part of the total product destined for individual consumption.

The social relations of the individual producers, with regard both to their labour and to its products, are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, and that with regard not only to production but also to distribution.

The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan.

This, however, demands for society a certain material ground-work or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development.

New F-35 Technology ‘Radar’ May Detect Objects In Sky



USMC Photo

July 19, 2015 by Joe Zieja, The Duffle Blog

EGLIN AFB, Fla. — Lockheed Martin has announced a new, cutting-edge technology that will be outfitted in future iterations of the F-35 Lightning II, also known as the Joint Strike Fighter.

The new technology, code-named “radar” may allow the fifth-generation fighter to spot other objects in the sky.

“It’s like, these beams, see?” Lauren Ramirez, spokeswoman for Lockheed Martin said during a press conference that announced the space-age technology. “And they shoot out of an invisible cannon at the nose of the aircraft. And they bounce back, and then

something catches them and reads them — like two guys throwing a paper airplane back and forth, but the paper airplane has the locations of stuff in the sky on them. It's really neat.”

A demonstration of the technology, pictured below, proved without a doubt that the F-35's radar technology was the key to making it the premier fighter of the modern aviation era. During the presentation, Ramirez repeatedly jumped up and down, pointing to the display and shouting “See? See? Radar!”



Funding for the F-35, which has come under unprecedented scrutiny, immediately saw a loosening of its restrictions after the announcement.

“This is what we’ve been waiting for,” Senator Jack Reed, ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said after the announcement.

“If there’s anything we’ve learned about the F-35 program, it’s that continuing to throw money at it will absolutely yield results. This new radar thing is your proof.”

This isn’t the first revelation of incredible technology that has come out of the F-35 program.

In February 2014, the F-35 showcased its ability to rapidly disintegrate its own engine on the runway, a technology that Lockheed Martin described as “an effort to stop China from reverse-engineering the super cool engine technology.”

Other advancements in fighter technology, such as a resistance to using jet fuel above a certain temperature and being shot out of the sky by a plane that is 40 years older than it, serve to highlight the F-35’s usefulness in combat.

When asked why repeatedly suffocating its pilots was considered a technological advantage, Ramirez laughed out loud.

“You really need to do your homework,” she said. “That’s the F-22.”

Motorist Pointing Finger Just The Green Light Cop Needed

July 23, 2015 The Onion

DANVILLE, VA—Recalling the provocation that came midway through a routine traffic stop, Danville police officer Dylan Hayden told reporters Thursday that driver Donald Watkins' decision to frustratedly point his finger at him was just the green light he needed.

“Legally, I’m not allowed to touch the motorist after pulling him over, but when he extended his index finger directly toward me, I knew that gave me the go-ahead right there to take whatever action I deemed necessary,” said Hayden, adding that as soon as he noticed the conceivably threatening hand gesture, he had full authority to skip right ahead to exerting force.

“Frankly, I probably would’ve had the okay to rock and roll after he cursed under his breath, but I wanted to be absolutely certain that I was in the clear. Once he pointed his finger at my chest from inside his vehicle, I knew I’d be covered no matter what happened next. He really left the door wide open for me with that one.”

Hayden expressed confidence that there was probably someone wanted for robbery who looks similar enough to Watkins to legally justify pulling him over in the first place.

ANNIVARSARIES

**July 1877:
American Workers Exploded With
Rage — And The Rulers Of The
Nation Feared The Fury Of The
“Terror” From Within:
“Pittsburgh Was ‘In The Hands Of Men
Dominated By The Devilish Spirit Of
Communism’”**



A contemporary artist's rendering of the clash in Baltimore between workers and the Maryland Sixth Regiment during the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. The governor had called out the troops on behalf of the railroad company.

Carl Bunin Peace History July 16-22

United Electrical Workers News - 06/02 [Excerpts]

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, American workers exploded with rage — and the rulers of the nation feared the fury of the “terror” from within.

A headline in the Chicago Times in 1877 expressed the capitalists' anxious outrage: “Terrors Reign, The Streets of Chicago Given Over to Howling Mobs of Thieves and Cutthroats.”

After three years, the nation still suffered through a major economic depression.

A strike by railroad workers sparked a coast-to-coast conflagration, as workers driven by despair and desperation battled troops in the streets of major U.S. cities.

The foreign born were widely blamed for the unprecedented, collective expression of rage against economic hardship and injustice.

The ruling elite, badly shaken by the widespread protests, thought a revolution was underway.

The New York Sun prescribed “a diet of lead for the hungry strikers.”

When the fires turned to cold ash and working-class families buried their dead, no one — neither labor nor capital — would be the same again.

If there ever was such a thing, this was no ordinary strike.

It was an explosion of “firsts.”

The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 was the first major strike in an industry that propelled America’s industrial revolution.

It was the first national strike, stretching from Atlantic to Pacific.

In some cities, especially St. Louis, the struggle became one of the nation’s first general strikes.

This was the first major strike broken by the U.S. military.

Probably in no other strike had so many working people met a violent death at the hands of the authorities.

BORN OF DEPRESSION

The Great Strike was a creature of one of the periodic economic downturns that have caused misery for working people throughout U.S. history.

A bank panic on Sept. 18, 1873 disintegrated into depression. “Weekly the layoffs, wage cuts, strikes, evictions, breadlines and hunger increased,” wrote Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais in *Labor’s Untold Story*. The winter of 1873-74, especially in large cities, was one of great suffering for the tens of thousands of unemployed workers and their families who were starving or on the brink of starvation.

As the depression stretched into 1874, the unemployed demanded work and unions fought wage cuts. But the depression itself became a powerful weapon in smashing unions.

Millions suffered through months upon months of mounting misery. “By 1877 there were as many as three million unemployed (roughly 27 percent of the working population),”

according to Boyer and Morais. “Two-fifths of those employed were working no more than six to seven months a year and less than one-fifth was regularly working.

“And the wages of those employed had been cut by as much as 45 percent, often to little more than a dollar a day.” Newspapers reported cases of starvation and suicide.

FIXED ELECTION

Political crisis seemed to mirror the economic mess.

Many Americans in 1877 believed their new president had reached the White House through fraud.

Certainly Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, was not the man for whom a majority of voters had cast their ballots the previous year. Democrat Samuel Tilden overcame the Ohio governor in the popular vote but 20 disputed electoral votes from Florida and other states threw the election into House of Representatives.

Thomas Scott of the Pennsylvania Railroad reached a deal with Hayes: in exchange for a federal bailout of his troubled investment in the Texas and Pacific Railroad, the millionaire industrialist would deliver Congressional votes to Hayes.

As a further inducement, the Republicans promised to end Reconstruction, a blatant betrayal of African Americans. Southern Congressmen deserted Tilden, handing the election to Hayes.

President Hayes withdrew federal troops from the South, ending Reconstruction and its promise of political equality for former slaves. The troops would soon have other uses.

PAY CUTS

The Pennsylvania Railroad had already slashed wages by 10 percent when it cut wages by another 10 percent in June 1877. The following month that railroad company, the nation’s largest, announced that the size of all eastbound trains from Pittsburgh would be doubled, without any increase in the size of crews.

Angry railroad workers took control of switches and blocked the movement of trains.

Meanwhile, on July 13, the Baltimore & Ohio cut the wages of all workers making more than a dollar a day, also by 10 percent. The company also reduced the workweek to only two or three days, a further pay cut.

On July 16 firemen and brakemen refused to work.

The company tried to bring on replacements — many experienced men were unemployed because of the depression — but the strikers assembled at Camden Junction, three miles from Baltimore, would not let trains run in any direction.

The word quickly spread to Martinsburg, W. Va., where workers abandoned their trains and prevented others from operating them.

The railroad company appealed to the governor, who called out the militia.

Militiamen and workers exchanged gunfire. The scabs ran off, the militia withdrew — and the strikers were left in control of their idled trains.

The strike swiftly followed the rails to Wheeling and Parkersburg.

As Harper's Weekly reported the following month, "Governor Matthews evoked the aid of the national government. President Hayes responded promptly."

Federal troops armed with Springfield rifles and Gatling guns arrived in Martinsburg on July 19. The show of force got the trains running, releasing the 13 locomotives and 1,500 freight cars bottled up in Martinsburg.

STRIKE SPREADS

But the strike was far from over. "Indeed, it was barely begun," reported Harper's Weekly.

"As fast as the strike was broken in one place it appeared in another," wrote Boyer and Morais. The revolt against the powerful railroad companies spread into western Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Ohio.

Believing that strikers in Cumberland were stopping the eastbound trains from Martinsburg, Maryland's governor ordered out the state militia.

Thousands of the jobless and underpaid in Baltimore clearly saw whose interests the governor's proclamation served.

Within a half hour of the call, "a crowd numbering at least 2,000 men, women, and children surrounded the (Maryland Sixth Regiment) armory and loudly expressed their feelings against the military and in favor of the strikers," according to Harper's Weekly. The crowd added bricks and stones to the curses hurled against the armory. The police were powerless.

Once the troops emerged for their march to Camden Station, shots were fired — and shots were exchanged.

The militia killed at least 10 and wounded many others, among them curious onlookers. The Fifth Regiment was also attacked, although no shots were fired.

BATTLE IN PITTSBURGH

Sympathy for the strikers was even stronger in Pittsburgh.

Here, said Boyer and Morais, the strike against Tom Scott's Pennsylvania Railroad "had the support even of businessmen, angry at the company because of extortionate freight rates." The police and local militia sided with the strikers, so the authorities had to appeal for troops from Philadelphia.

When the militiamen arrived and marched out of the station, they were met with the cries of an angry crowd — and, according to Harper's, "a shower of stones."

They emptied their rifles into the crowd, killing 20 men, women and children and wounding 29.

"The sight presented after the soldiers ceased firing was sickening," reported the New York Herald; the area "was actually dotted with the dead and dying."

A newspaper headline read: "Shot in Cold Blood by the Roughts of Philadelphia. The Lexington of the Labor Conflict at Hand. The Slaughter of Innocents."

As the news reached nearby rolling mills and manufacturing shops, workers came rushing to the scene.

Workers broke into a gun factory and seized rifles and small arms. Wrote Boyer and Morais, "Miners and steel workers came pouring in from the outskirts of the city and as night fell the immense crowd proved so menacing to the soldiers that they retreated into the roundhouse."

By midnight, Harper's said, some 20,000 surrounded the roundhouse, 5,000 of them armed.

Workers and soldiers exchanged gunfire throughout the night. The workers nearly succeeded in burning out the troops by sending a blazing oil car hurtling against a nearby building.

'A NIGHT OF TERROR'

A Civil War veteran among the besieged troops told a New York Herald reporter that he had seen some "wild fighting" in that conflict, but "a night of terror such as last night I never experienced before and hope to God I never will again."

The next morning the troops evacuated the roundhouse and fought their way out of town.

Pittsburgh policemen were among those reportedly taking aim at the strikebreakers.

The angry crowd then torched the railroad station, roundhouse, company offices and scores of railroad cars.

The New York World told its readers that Pittsburgh was "in the hands of men dominated by the devilish spirit of Communism."

Meanwhile, on July 21, President Hayes had issued a proclamation warning strikers and their sympathizers to disperse within 24 hours. The next day, Pennsylvania's governor had ordered every regiment in the state to report for duty. Clashes between troops and strikers in Reading added to the death toll among workers.

CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS

The strike continued to spread. Reported Harper's, "On the morning of the 25th the strike had reached its height, when hardly a road was running, from the Hudson to the Mississippi, and from Canada to Virginia."

The strike reached Chicago, as workers on the Michigan Central followed the example of the men on the other lines. General Sheridan's cavalry, newly recalled from the South, attacked a group of workers there, killing many and wounding many more.

The workers of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad joined the strike in St. Louis, where the Workingmen's Party coordinated a general strike.

The Workingmen's Party had several thousand members.

At one of its huge meetings, writes Marieke van Ophem, "a black man was the voice for those who worked on the steamboats and levees. He asked: 'Will you stand to us, regardless of color?' The crowd shouted in response: 'We will!'"

Not only did the trains cease running, but breweries, flour mills, foundries and other shops stopped operating as well.

As a result of this working-class solidarity, bosses agreed to pay raises and shorter working hours without a reduction in wages.

Then the military arrived — the U.S. Army and state militia, as well as armed vigilantes in the service of the bosses. Although there had been no violence, St. Louis came under martial law. Strike leaders were thrown in jail. Bosses canceled the wage increases and the eight-hour day.

'SHOT BACK TO WORK'

Business leaders became better organized, rallying their political allies, who mobilized the might of the military. Tom Scott of the Pennsylvania Railroad had recommended giving strikers "a rifle diet for a few days and see how they like that kind of bread;" in the end, the government's ability to inflict violence on strikers and supporters got the trains rolling again.

As one worker put it, "We were shot back to work." By early August the strike had collapsed everywhere.

It had been an unforgettable event, and many railroad workers seemed to have been justifiably proud.

“Without any organization they had fought with bravery and skill and the country had been behind them,” wrote Boyer and Morais. “The strike had been as solid as it was spontaneous. There had been few desertions and few scabs.”

Some 100,000 workers had gone on strike, and countless unemployed workers in numerous cities had joined the strikers in protests against intolerable conditions. Farmers, who hated the railroad companies and their extortionate practices, fed the strikers.

More than half the freight on the nation’s 75,000 miles of track stopped moving.

More than 100 had died and 1,000 had been jailed, although those imprisoned were not the ones directly responsible for the deaths.

The results of the Great Strike were mixed. Even as they agreed to some worker demands, bosses were determined to never again allow workers the upper hand.

“The railroads made some concessions, rescinded some wage cuts, but also strengthened their ‘Coal and Iron Police,’” writes van Ophem. “In several large cities, National Guard armories were constructed, with loopholes for guns.”

Working people learned that without strong unions and nationwide organization they could not defeat the alliance of capital and government. America’s Industrial Revolution was underway, and with it, born in the blood of men and women who yearned for a better life, a modern labor movement.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

IDF Officer Shot Fleeing Teen: “Al-Kasbah And The Other Palestinian Youth Were Running Away From The Israeli Forces”

July 13, 2015 by Allison Deger, Mondoweiss

New video footage has emerged of the moments before an Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldier shot and killed 17-year old Mohammed al-Kasbah on July 3, 2015 in the West Bank village of al-Ram near the Qalandia checkpoint.

The recording was captured by a security camera posted at a gas station and contradicts Col. Yisrael Shomer’s account where he said he fired at the Palestinian teen because his life was in imminent danger.

In the footage an Israeli army vehicle stops on a busy street near the gas station. Palestinian youth are seen approaching and stone throwing. Two soldiers then exit the Jeep and pursue the youth on foot as they flee out of frame. A third soldier also stepped out of the vehicle, but remained by the side of the car. Thirty seconds later, the soldiers return, pile into the car, and speed off.

During the brief moment when the soldiers are off-camera Shomer shot al-Kasbah three times in the chest, head, and back. Al-Kasbah was then taken to a public hospital in Ramallah.

His heart had already stopped beating. Hospital staff told Mondoweiss he was then resuscitated, but died 15 minutes later around 7am due to blood loss from the injuries.

The video was released by the Israeli human rights organization B'tselem that also conducted an investigation. "According to several eyewitnesses, Col. Shomer shot Ali-Kosba from a distance of some ten meters and then went up to him and moved him with his leg. Then, instead of obtaining medical aid for the injured youth, the soldiers drove off," said B'tselem in a statement today.

Al-Kasbah's two older brothers were also killed by the Israeli army when they were teenagers.

Following the shooting Central Command Maj. Gen. Roni Num said he "fully backed the brigade commander and the way he handled the incident, in which the force was faced with real mortal threat."

The IDF spokesperson's office told Mondoweiss the officer shot al-Kasbah because he posed "immediate danger" to the soldiers. They added that a verbal warning was given in Arabic first, to stop throwing stones. Next a warning shot was fired in the air. Then shots were aimed at al-Kasbah.

While the B'tselem video does dispute if cautions were given before the officer opened fire, it does counter the claim of threat to life because al-Kasbah and the other Palestinian youth were running away from the Israeli forces.

The Israeli army opened an investigation Shomer's conduct on the day the shooting occurred.

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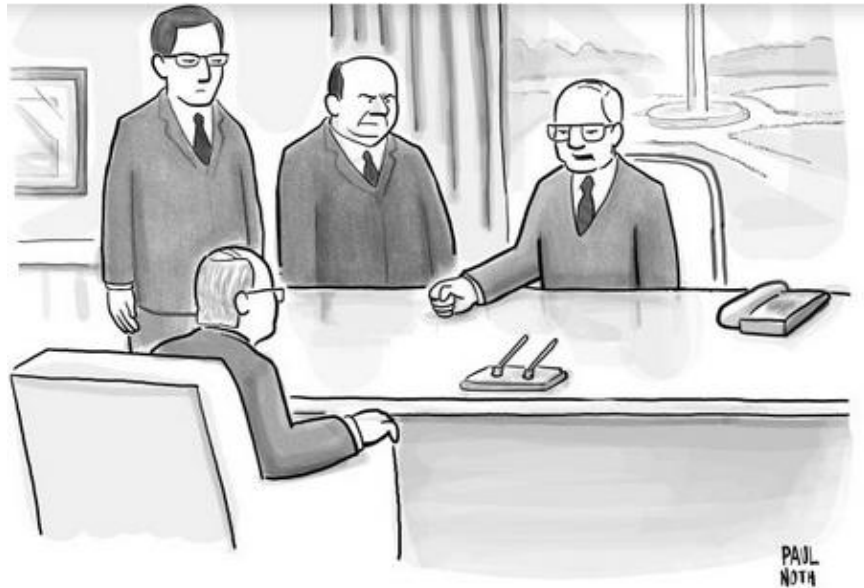
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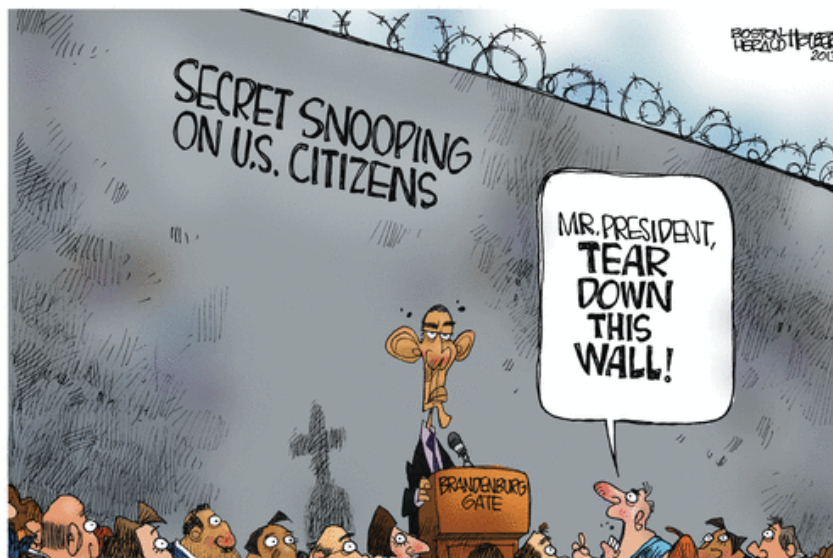
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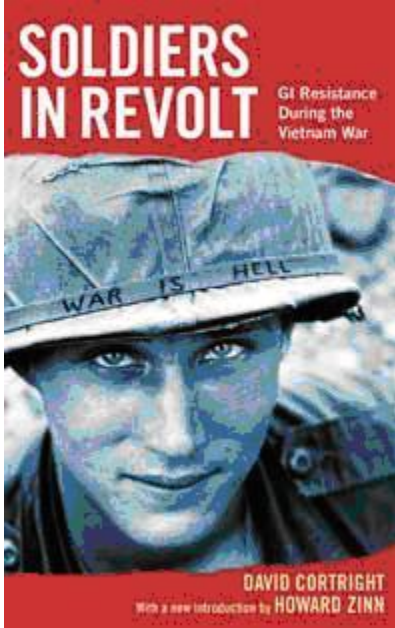
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