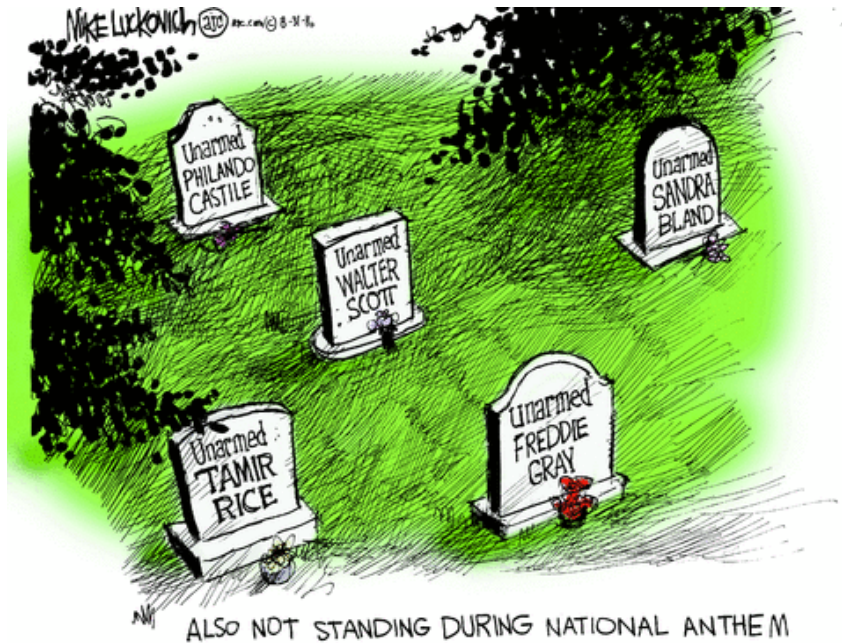


Military Resistance 1412



“Nationwide Strike By Tens Of Millions Of Indian Workers”
“Instead Of Targeting Poverty They Are Targeting The Poor”



Striking workers march in Jharkhand, India, on Friday. (Photo: CPIM/Facebook)

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veteran & Military Initiative Organizing Committee, who sent this in.]

September 02, 2016 by Michael Safi, The Guardian & Nika Knight, staff writer Common Dreams

A nationwide strike by tens of millions of Indian public sector workers has been hailed by union officials as “the world’s largest ever” industrial action, and cost the economy up to 180bn rupees (£2bn), according to an industry group.

"This strike is against the central government, this strike is for the cause of the working people," said Ramen Pandey, of the Indian National Trade Union Congress, to Al Jazeera.

"We have been putting forward our demands for the last five years. But over the last year no minister has even met the trade unions," said Tapan Sen, general secretary of the Center of Indian Trade Unions, "one of 10 groups boasting a combined membership of 180 million workers that called the strike," according to Reuters.

The BBC observes that "Sen’s union has accused the government of a ‘vile conspiracy... to privatize the public sector and invite foreign capital in some parts of industry.’"

Last-minute concessions by the finance and labour ministries, including a 104-rupee rise in unskilled workers’ daily minimum wage, could not ward off the strike against what unions said were the “anti-worker and anti-people” policies of Narendra Modi’s government.

State banks and power stations were shut and public transport was halted in some states on Friday, and 20 protesters were arrested in West Bengal after allegedly damaging government buses, police official Anuj Sharma told the AFP news agency.

Schools and colleges in Bangalore were closed as a precautionary measure, and 4,200 buses sat idle in Haryana. Mumbai and Delhi avoided major disruptions but surgeries were delayed at a major hospital in the capital while nurses demonstrated outside. Images broadcast on Indian TV showed protesters blocking railway tracks and roads in Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha.

Among the trade unions’ 12 demands were a 692-rupee daily minimum wage, universal social security and a ban on foreign investment in the country’s railway, insurance and defence industries.

A nationwide bandh – Sanskrit for closed – on the same day last year reportedly involved 140 million workers, and union said Friday’s protests involved 150 million, a figure that could not be verified. Nor could the claim by Assocham, the peak group for Indian chambers of commerce, that the disruption to supply chains and businesses cost the country’s economy 180bn rupees.

Just one major union pulled out of the national strike: the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, which, like the ruling party, is an affiliate of the Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Modi won power in 2014 promising to replicate across India the double-digit economic growth he oversaw as Gujarat's chief minister. He steered a landmark national goods and services tax through India's parliament last month and has opened up sectors such as defence and aviation for foreign investment.

The government has raised more than 564bn rupees by selling shares in state-owned industries but pulled back from full privatisation and left labour market reform largely to the states.

"The Modi government is probably the most pro-state sector government we've had in 25 years," said Mihir Sharma, a senior fellow at the Observer Research Foundation in Delhi. "The unions are the only people who have bought the idea that the government plans big reforms."

Sharma said the protests – the fourth all-India strike since 2009 – were to "remind the government of the cost of moving forward with its liberalisation programme".

Prof Jayati Ghosh, a development economist at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, said Modi's changes had built on a 25-year neoliberal reform agenda that had left workers across the country worse off.

"Less than 4% of workers in India come under labour protection, and even those protections have become more and more eroded. There's a general sense that instead of targeting poverty they are targeting the poor, and there has been a real running down of spending on essential public services," she said.

She said health workers in some states had not been paid in months, food subsidy and distribution schemes were being neglected and "private employers who wish to discourage any kind of unionisation are being actively encouraged by the central government".

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Another District In Eastern Afghanistan Falls To The Taliban: "The District Is The Second In The East To Fall To The Taliban In The Past Week"

“The US Military Continues To Downplay Taliban Gains And Exaggerate The Performance Of The Afghan National Defense And Security Forces”



Banner from Voice of Jihad celebrating the Taliban's capture of Omna district.

September 4, 2016 BY BILL ROGGIO, Long War Journal [Excerpts]. Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of The Long War Journal.

The Taliban and Afghan officials confirmed that the jihadist group overran the district of Omna in the eastern province of Paktika after Afghan forces retreated earlier today. The district is the second in the east to fall to the Taliban in the past week as the group continues to press operations in all areas of the country.

Afghan soldiers and “special unit personnel” were sent to the district to halt the Taliban advance, but “beat a tactical retreat,” an anonymous Afghans security official told Pajhwok Afghan News. An Afghan official confirmed the Taliban had seized control of Omna.

The Taliban said it was able to “completely liberate Omna district” after four days of fighting in two separate statements that were released on its official website, Voice of Jihad.

“The attack in which heavy and light weapons were used resulted in the district administration buildings and all 6 defense posts overrun, 7 enemy personnel killed, 5 wounded and the rest utilizing the dark to flee,” one statement declared.

“Similarly Mujahideen also seized 6 pickup trucks, a motorbike as well as a sizable amount of weapons and ammunition.”

The Taliban also claimed that 21 Afghan security personnel were killed and 16 more were wounded, while five of its fighters were killed and four were wounded. The

Taliban's claims on casualties cannot be independently confirmed; the group frequently exaggerates casualties sustained in its operations.

Omna is the second district in the Afghan east to fall to the Taliban since Aug. 26. On that day, the Taliban overran Jani Khel in neighboring Paktika province after laying siege to the district center for more than two weeks. Afghan officials in the district pleaded for reinforcements to prevent the collapse of the district but the Ministry of Defense failed to send any.

Paktika province is a known haven for several Taliban groups, including the Haqqani Network and the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, as well as al Qaeda. These groups have fought pitched battles against US forces in the province when the US military had a presence there – before the drawdown that began in 2012.

The Taliban's overt influence in Paktika is difficult to assess as reporting from the province is scarce and the Taliban often controls the rural areas of districts but leaves the district centers under government control.

Of the 19 districts in Paktika, the Taliban controls two (Waza Khwa and Omna), and contests another nine, The Long War Journal estimates based on reporting from the province. The number of contested districts is likely higher; for instance, districts such as Jani Khel and Sarobi were battlegrounds while US forces maintained bases in the area, and it is unlikely Afghan forces are faring any better.

The US military continues to downplay Taliban gains and exaggerate the performance of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. On Aug. 25, Brigadier General Charles Cleveland, deputy chief of staff for communications for Resolute Support, NATO's mission in Afghanistan, said that Afghan forces "are generally on a positive trajectory."

POLICE WAR REPORTS

Father 'Utterly Terrified' After Trooper Aims Gun At His 7-Year-Old During Traffic Stop:

**“The Officer Screamed At Her
Not To Move As He Pointed His
Pistol At Her”**

**Then “He Yelled As My Daughter
Looked On In Terror, ‘Get Your
Hands Away From Your Waist Or
I’ll Blow Two Holes Through Your
Back Right Now!’”**

**“My Hands Were High In The Air As
He Said This, And I Was Not In Any
Way Reaching For My Waist”**

**Arizona Police Filth Say “This Is A
Positive Story. ... This Case Is A Prime
Example Of How Things Should Be
Done”**

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veteran & Military Initiative Organizing Committee, who sent this in.]

August 16 By Amy B Wang, The Washington Post

At first, Kenneth Walton thought the Arizona state trooper following him and his 7-year-old daughter wanted to warn him of a broken taillight.

They were in a rental car, on a stretch of Interstate 40 between Las Vegas and Flagstaff, Ariz., on what was supposed to be a fun Grand Canyon vacation. It was dark, and Walton knew he hadn't been speeding, so — not thinking much of it — he pulled over on an off-ramp, rolled down his driver's side window and waited.

That's when things went “terribly awry,” according to the San Francisco man's account of what happened last Thursday.

“Tonight, I was arrested at gunpoint by an Arizona highway patrol officer who threatened to shoot me in the back (twice) in front of my 7-year-old daughter,” Walton wrote on Facebook, hours after the incident.

“For a moment, I was certain he was going to kill me for no reason. I’m alive, and I need to share the story.”

His post, published early Friday morning and updated throughout the weekend, went viral, serving as a lightning rod for discussions about what is appropriate during interactions with law enforcement.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety confirmed that the traffic stop took place but disputed the tone and some of the details in Walton’s Facebook post, calling it “inflammatory” and “irresponsible.”

The department is standing by the trooper’s actions, including his threat to shoot Walton during the traffic stop, said Capt. Damon Cecil of the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

“We sympathize with them; I don’t think there’s any law enforcement official who would not be just as angry, just as fearful and terrorized if (they were in a similar situation and) officers had guns pointed out,” Cecil told The Washington Post.

“It’s a scary situation. But in light of that, this is a positive story. ... This case is a prime example of how things should be done.”

According to the DPS, the traffic stop occurred around 7:43 p.m. on Aug. 11, after the license plate on Walton’s rental car came up as stolen. The trooper requested backup and followed the rental car on the Interstate 40 until it exited the highway.

The trooper then approached the car with his gun drawn — actions the department said are appropriate for anything considered a “high-risk traffic stop ... when serious crimes or hazardous conditions may exist.”

“Initially the driver, identified as Kenneth Walton, was not responding to officer’s commands while seated in his vehicle so the trooper moved up the passenger-side window and got the occupant’s attention by tapping on the window with his hand,” DPS said in a short statement. “It was at this time the trooper realized there was a child in the car as she sat up into view. Mr. Walton was ordered out of the car and detained in handcuffs while the trooper conducted his investigation.”

The trooper, identified as Oton Villegas, has been with DPS since 2009, the department said. Villegas has not had major disciplinary actions. In 2013, he was named along with several other officers in a civil rights lawsuit that was settled and dismissed without prejudice, Cecil said.

According to Walton, however, the department’s account is inaccurate: He says the first command came when the trooper tapped on the front passenger window, gun in hand, not before.

In addition, Walton said his daughter was sitting in a booster seat in the rear passenger side of the vehicle, not in the front, and was in view — not crouched or reclined — the entire time.

Walton said the DPS statement omitted or downplayed details about how the incident unfolded, including how the trooper (referred to by Walton as an “officer”) interacted with his young daughter.

In his paragraphs-long Facebook post, Walton recounted trying to stay calm while the trooper reportedly escalated the situation.

“Suddenly, the officer rapped on the rear passenger side window with his pistol. My daughter, who was sitting inches from the barrel of his gun, jumped with fear as the officer yelled at me to roll down the front passenger window, his service weapon pointed directly at me. I knew something was terribly awry and I tried to remain calm, keeping my hands visible as I slowly fumbled for the window controls in an unfamiliar car.

“The Officer Screamed Her At Her Not To Move As He Pointed His Pistol At Her”

“My daughter rolled down her window and I explained that we were in a rental car, that we had no weapons, and I was having trouble figuring out how to roll down the front passenger window from my driver’s side door. The officer didn’t listen, and kept yelling louder and more insistently, ordering me to comply with his request as he leered at me down the barrel of his pistol.

“My daughter panicked and tried to get out of her booster seat to reach forward to roll down the front window, and the officer screamed her at her not to move as he pointed his pistol at her.

Walton said he was somehow able to roll the passenger window down, at which point the trooper ordered him to exit the car with his hands up. As he did so, Walton said the trooper came over to the driver’s side of the car and screamed at him to face the other direction.

“Then, as I had my hands in the air, he yelled, at the top of his lungs, in a voice I will never forget, as my daughter looked on in terror, ‘Get your hands away from your waist or I’ll blow two holes through your back right now!’” My hands were high in the air as he said this, and I was not in any way reaching for my waist.

“I was utterly terrified. I’ve heard stories of police yelling out false things like this before they unjustifiably attack someone as a way to justify the attack, and I thought this was what was happening to me. I braced for bullets to hit me and all I could think of was my daughter having to watch it happen and being left alone on the side of the highway with an insane, violent cop.”

Walton said he got down to his knees and backed gradually toward the trooper, following every order “as slowly and deliberately” as possible. He was handcuffed and placed in the back of the trooper’s car, while more law enforcement arrived soon afterward. His

daughter remained in the rental vehicle, frightened and still strapped to her booster seat, he said.

Cecil said it was appropriate for Villegas to have escalated the traffic stop, given the circumstances.

“Our trooper had a set of facts in front of him and responded the way he was trained, the way that was safest for him and his public,” Cecil said. “Putting yourself in the trooper’s position: He’s giving commands, he’s yelling, he’s not getting a response. Should he de-escalate the yelling? Or should he escalate? ... You weren’t there. And I wasn’t there.”

Cecil confirmed that Villegas pointed a gun at the 7-year-old, but did so unintentionally, and that he threatened to shoot Walton because he “perceived a threat.”

“We’re not disputing that our trooper said those things,” Cecil said. “He absolutely did.”

Walton initially said on Facebook that dashboard camera footage would bear out his account of the traffic stop because he was under the impression all Arizona law enforcement officers had dashboard or body cameras.

DPS told The Post there is no dashboard or body camera footage available from the incident, nor is the agency aware of any amateur video taken at the scene — only audio from the trooper’s vehicle before he walked to Walton’s car and after he returned with Walton in custody.

According to DPS, an investigation ultimately found the rental car company had not replaced the license plates when the front plate was reported stolen, which is why it had been flagged in the system.

To complicate matters, Fox Rent a Car said the license plate number in question should have never been placed in the stolen-plates database in the first place.

The rental car, a 2015 Nissan Altima, was registered in Arizona, which only issues rear license plates, according to Fox Rent a Car chief operating officer Sean Busking. Last November, the car was reported stolen in California, Busking said. Five days later, the Oakland Police Department recovered the vehicle — along with its one and only rear license plate — and cleared it to return to the rental fleet, he said.

“Oakland’s police department must have been unaware that Arizona does not issue front license plates when they issued their ‘stolen plate’ report,” Busking told The Post.

“However, we are surprised that the Arizona Department of Public Safety would suggest that Fox is somehow responsible for replacing a front Arizona plate (that) never existed.”

Regardless, Walton and his daughter were released that night without a citation.

“Fortunately, the subject in this case was compliant with the trooper and the situation ended peacefully with no one being harmed,” Flagstaff District Commander Captain Ezekiel Zesiger said in a statement.

Walton disagreed, saying the trooper's aggressive arrest had left both of them physically unharmed but emotionally shaken.

"In the process of scaring me, he basically traumatized my daughter," Walton told The Post. "That's sad because we've taught her that (a police officer is) who you go to, that's who you always trust. That's something we would still like to instill in her but I don't know how we do that now."

In his Facebook post, Walton said he believed the traffic stop might have ended differently had he not been a "scrawny, 48-year-old white guy" wearing a Mickey Mouse T-shirt, cargo shorts and hiking boots, as he was at the time.

"If you are a person who has ever looked skeptically at the claims of Black Lives Matter, or others who talk about police violence, I urge you to consider what happened to me and put yourselves in the shoes of others. I just survived a bizarre gunpoint situation in which I was as innocent as Philando Castile, who was not as lucky as I was. We live in a society where anywhere and everyone can have a gun at any time, and police are responding with fear in dangerous ways.

"I got lucky tonight. My daughter and I made it to the Grand Canyon and I'm going to try to salvage what's left of our vacation. Many others — because of the color of their skin or the way they look or because of simple bad luck — did not meet the same fate."

DPS took umbrage to the post, in particular the insinuation that race played a part, Cecil said.

"(Walton) has an opportunity as a parent to use this as a learning experience. A teachable moment for his daughter — a valuable lesson about the community and interactions with law enforcement," Cecil said. "But instead he chose to make it a negative in a very irresponsible way."

Walton said he has no intention of inciting anyone, he said, or of being representative of any movement.

"It was the first time in my life when I had been approached by an officer with a presumption of guilt and ... I guess I got a taste for what it's like," Walton told The Post. "I had a realization as a middle-aged white male for what it may be like out there. If this is the sort of aggression people face out there, I can understand why there are problems."

Reached by phone on Tuesday, while he was on way back from vacation, Walton said he was still shaken but considering taking his Facebook post down because of all the attention it had received. Some commenters were sympathetic, while others attacked his credibility, calling out his involvement in a 1999 eBay art forgery scandal — something Walton said he has never tried to hide.

"I cooperated with the authorities, plead guilty, served 9 months of probation and took responsibility for my actions," he wrote in an update to his Facebook post over the weekend. "I make no excuses for it. If you think that has anything to do with this, there is nothing I can do to change your mind."

This latest incident comes following nationwide unrest after deadly shootings by police officers in Milwaukee, Falcon Heights, Minn., and Baton Rouge, that resulted in fatal encounters.

So far, more than 250 people have been shot and killed by police officers in the first three months of 2016, according to The Washington Post database on police shootings.

Walton and his daughter eventually made their way the next day to the Grand Canyon — the first time for both of them — and tried in vain to shake what had occurred on the highway.

“I was pretty distracted over the next couple of days at the Grand Canyon, thinking about what had happened,” Walton told The Post. “Things will get back to normal eventually.”

Cecil said DPS has not received a formal complaint from Walton. The department, he added, has not been in direct contact with Walton since the traffic stop.

“Absolutely not. Absolutely not,” Cecil said. “This is not a situation where we feel that we need to reach out to him.

“He’s the one who started this negative relationship and negative communication.”

The Mysterious Private Police Force That’s Killing People In The Nation’s Capital: “An Unaccountable Body Of Agents That Frequently Uses Abusive Tactics”

“Time And Time Again Officers Who Use Any Type Of Force Lie About Their Actions To Investigators And Superiors, In Order To Avoid Disciplinary Action”

“We’re Living In Fear. We Feel Like We’re In Prison, And The Guards Just Walk And Tell You What You Can Do And What You Can’t Do“

01 September 16 By Carimah Townes, ThinkProgress

The last time Beverly Smith had a full conversation with her son, Alonzo, was October 30, 2015. It was a Friday, and even though the weekend had just begun, he was thrilled about the upcoming week. The 27-year-old, who worked with special needs students, had booked several gigs as a part-time portrait model.

When she received the news, Beverly couldn’t have known it would be the last time she’d share a joyful moment with her youngest child.

Early the next day, she sent Alonzo a standard text message about his plans for the weekend, and he responded as usual. But when she sent a second message later that night, she didn’t receive a reply. The following day, she shot off two more texts—both of which went unanswered. That’s when she knew something wasn’t right.

Beverly frantically called Alonzo several times, but the phone kept going straight to voicemail.

On Monday, November 2, she reached out twice—in the afternoon and evening—to no avail. Within minutes of the second try, two internal affairs officers from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) appeared in front of her house. One was holding a picture of a young black man.

As soon as Beverly opened the door, the officers asked if the man in the photo was her son.

“They said, ‘I’m sorry to inform you, but your son was in an altercation with two special police officers and he passed,’” Beverly said, sitting on her plush living room couch in Anacostia, a neighborhood in the southeast part of Washington, D.C. She had no idea what they meant at the time, and asked if Alonzo was stabbed or shot.

“They said, ‘No Ms. Smith. All we know is that he was in an altercation with two special police officers and he passed. But we want you to know, Ms. Smith, that we (MPD) didn’t have anything to do with it.’”

Special police officers like the two that killed Alonzo are not quite full police officers, but they’re more than security guards.

They are a private police force, empowered to make arrests and carry guns. But because they work for private contractors and not public agencies, their actions are often shrouded in mystery.

Ten months after that conversation with the officers on her doorstep, Beverly has started to piece together a fragmented picture of how her son was killed. But there are many unanswered questions about what happened on November 1.

Witnesses told her family they heard a man running through the privately-owned Marbury Plaza apartments in southeast D.C., pleading for help. He was pounding on people's doors, yelling, "They're trying to kill me."

Around 4 a.m., MPD officers were alerted about an assault. By the time they arrived, Smith's body was splayed at the top of a stairwell, his head hanging over the ledge. He was shirtless, unconscious, and unable to breathe.

Videos captured on MPD body cameras offer a grainy version of what happened next. Special police officers handcuffed Smith and kned him in the back, before an MPD officer directed them to make sure he was breathing. When they finally attempted CPR, an unidentified officer said, "All I know is that security had to subdue him, when he was under the influence of PCP."

Smith was transported to a local hospital, where he died later that morning.

Six weeks later, an autopsy report conducted by the city's chief medical examiner ruled the death a homicide. According to the examiner, Smith's body was covered in abrasions, chest contusions, and showed internal hemorrhaging in his neck and back.

Ultimately, the report says he was killed by a "sudden cardiac arrest" and compression of the torso.

Contradicting the special officers at the scene, the examiner concluded there was no PCP in his system, but the 27-year-old did suffer from "acute cocaine toxicity while restrained." Beverly disputes that particular finding, and has since asked for an independent examination.

On November 3, the MPD said it was investigating the incident, and a grand jury convened in December to determine whether or not the special officers should be charged. But authorities have been tight-lipped about their findings the entire time.

As the MPD remains mum, the private company that the special officers worked for, Blackout Investigations and Security Services, is equally quiet about the homicide.

Almost one year has passed since the fatal encounter with special officers, and aside from the autopsy results, Beverly is still missing crucial details about what happened. She doesn't know why Alonzo was at the apartment complex. She doesn't know the names of the special officers who apprehended her son, why they had done so in the first place, and how Alonzo sustained all of his injuries.

What she does know is that she never had a chance to say goodbye. Though Alonzo was still alive when they took him to the hospital, no one contacted Beverly until more than a day after his death. She was told the officers had no way to find her. To her, that remains one of the biggest injustices of all.

“That will be unforgivable. Because my son had his phone on him and they claimed they could not find me,” Beverly said. “They robbed me of the opportunity of feeling and touching my son’s warm body for the last time.”

Alonzo had an incredible work ethic, always juggling at least two jobs, his mother said.

That drive manifested itself early in life. When he was five years old, living in Maryland with his mother, Alonzo expressed over and over that he wanted a job, Beverly recalled. Eventually, their maintenance man came up with one: repairing a doorknob he’d intentionally broken for Alonzo to fix.

“What was so funny was, he got up the next morning. I was still in the bed sleep. He got dressed all by himself, and he woke me up and said, ‘Ma, Ma! How do I look for my first day of work?’” Beverly said.

That eagerness to help was a trait Alonzo carried through adulthood. He attended Morgan State University, where he spent two years working on a degree in social work. He was forced to take a break, because he was living alone and needed to support himself financially. In the interim, he worked with young people with special needs at Accotink Academy in Virginia—a place where he felt he could truly make a difference in kids’ lives. He had struggled in junior high, and related to his students on a deep level.

“He always felt that he didn’t fit in. He didn’t fit the mold. He dressed real neat—things of that nature. The kids used to tease him on the way that he’d speak,” Beverly said. “He’d say, ‘Mom, those kids are just misunderstood.’”

In between jobs, he played flag football and wrote poems, some of which he published in a book called *Lost Soul* in 2013.

Before November, Beverly was tuned in to police brutality happening around the country, particularly after the death of Michael Brown. Yet she never thought she’d be one of the mothers seeking justice—and answers—because her child was killed by police.

“Time And Time Again Officers Who Use Any Type Of Force Lie About Their Actions To Investigators And Superiors, In Order To Avoid Disciplinary Action”

Nationwide, it’s extremely difficult to get information from federal, state, and municipal police about any form of misconduct—especially extrajudicial killings. The criminal justice system is designed in such a way that police wrongdoing is nearly impossible to prove.

Time and time again officers who use any type of force lie about their actions to investigators and superiors, in order to avoid disciplinary action.

Police accounts are hard to contradict if there aren’t recordings of what happened, and officers regularly turn off their cameras or destroy videos after an incident has occurred.

Still, most police departments are subject to public information laws that require them to turn over at least some records to anyone who wants them. Attorneys, investigators and journalists rely on this access to expose misconduct.

Special police officer activity is even harder to track. As is the case with the two involved in Smith's homicide, official investigations are conducted behind closed doors.

And because they technically work for private companies, special officers and their employers aren't legally obligated to respond to public records requests.

Beyond DC, a handful of cities and states contract with security companies to employ special police officers who face far less scrutiny than traditional law enforcement, even though they operate almost identically.

These companies establish their own standards and procedures, disciplinary measures, and managerial discretion. They are then hired by local businesses, government agencies, schools, and developers who might want extra security in their buildings—many of which are occupied by poor residents of color.

Today, D.C. has 120 private companies that employ 16,580 law enforcement agents: 7,720 special officers along with 8,860 guards, stationed at apartment buildings, colleges, commercial buildings, and hospitals, compared to approximately 3,700 MPD officers in the city.

Some are stationed in D.C. government buildings, including the Wilson Building, where the mayor and city council member's offices are located. And 4,523 of those special officers are armed.

Even though they are hired by private companies, special officers are commissioned by the city government to work alongside but independently of the MPD.

The primary difference between the MPD's officers and special officers is that the latter group's authority is limited to the private properties they're hired to protect, whereas the MPD has jurisdiction everywhere. In many ways, though, the line between MPD officers and special officers is a blurry one.

A General Order released by the MPD in 1993 says special officers function much like MPD officers in that they have the power to make arrests and carry firearms—privileges that private security guards aren't afforded.

Special officers are also allowed to use force on the properties they're employed to oversee.

"You can't just have an MPD officer just stationed in a building all day long. You can have a special police officer or security officer do that," Helder Gil, a legislative analyst for the City Administrator's office, told ThinkProgress. "So if you've got a situation where there's break-in at a building, a special police officer can arrest the individual for breaking into the building, hold that individual until MPD officers arrive on scene."

Before they operate in the field, special officers go through a background check by the MPD's Security Officers Management Branch (SOMB).

With such a robust presence throughout the city, there are certainly times when special officers are able to protect civilians. For instance, in 2009, special officers subdued an anti-Semitic shooter at the Holocaust Museum, saving countless lives. One officer, Stephen T. Johns, was killed in the line of duty.

As for when special officers use force, the General Order states that they can be arrested and suspended “for any offence which would justify suspension of a member the (MPD)” —a determination made by the SOMB. Discipline falls under the jurisdiction of the companies they work for, but the MPD’s Office of Communications told ThinkProgress in an email that the MPD’s Internal Affairs Division and U.S. Attorney’s Office are responsible for investigating serious use-of-force incidents.

Since they operate on their own, gathering information about misconduct and special officer brutality can be even more difficult than probing government-run law enforcement agencies.

Perhaps the most well-known use-of-force incident besides Smith’s happened in September 2015. Special officers killed James McBride, a 74-year-old MedStar Washington Hospital Center patient who walked out of the facility without express permission. His death was also ruled a homicide, when the chief medical examiner discovered that McBride died from “blunt force injuries of neck, with cervical spinal cord transection and vertebral artery compression.”

Both officers involved in McBride’s death were indicted in less than four months.

Beyond the high-profile cases, however, information about special officers’ use of force throughout the city is extremely limited. What little information is available paints a picture of an unaccountable body of agents that frequently uses abusive tactics.

“An Unaccountable Body Of Agents That Frequently Uses Abusive Tactics”

To understand this dynamic, one only needs to visit Brookland Manor, an affordable housing complex made up of 535 units in Northeast D.C. The property owner, Mid-City Financial, wants to demolish and rebuild the property, and housing lawyers contend that it hired special officers to intimidate residents and force them to leave. Mid-City Financial did not respond to request for comment on these allegations.

Special police prevent residents from smoking outside, leaning on fences surrounding the apartment buildings, standing on grass and steps, and playing loud music, according to Vincent DeLaurentis of ONE DC, an organization dedicated to housing equity that works closely with the Washington Legal Clinic.

If people are caught breaking the rules, they’re cited for infractions and threatened with eviction.

Those who aren’t on the lease—including children and unwed domestic partners—are handed barring notices that prohibit them from walking on Brookland Manor property altogether.

“Every day it’s a different rule or something where they got to say something to us,” Neeka Sullivan, who’s lived at Brookland Manor for about nine years, told ThinkProgress.

In her time there, Sullivan has spoken to countless special officers and security personnel who’ve given her contradicting orders.

Sometimes she’s allowed to sit on her porch—other times she’s not. One day she’s allowed to play with her grandchild in her building’s courtyard. The next day she’s told to move to the sidewalk, she said.

Because the rules are arbitrary and the threat of eviction looms over them, people of all ages are scared of what the officers will do.

Sullivan says kids run away, the second they see special police in the area.

She’s also seen the officers “get fresh” with young girls, commenting on how they’re dressed and asking how old they are. When there is a real threat, the officers are reluctant to help and tell residents to call the police, she said.

Another resident with several children told ThinkProgress that she’s received 4–5 notices since a July 4th incident involving her son. When the young boy was playing with fireworks in front of their building, he was apprehended by special officers for being too loud. His mother was subsequently told to keep him under control or the entire family would be kicked out—a message sent to her multiple times.

While harassment seems to be the primary way that special officers target people living at Brookland Manor, residents say physical force is also used at the whim of people on patrol.

Gary Good, a 56-year-old tenant who uses a wheelchair told ThinkProgress that he’s personally been a victim of that violence on several occasions over the five years he’s lived in the apartment complex.

The first time, he said, was a Tuesday in June. He was sitting outside in his wheelchair, smoking a cigarette, but officers nearby believed he was smoking another substance. All of a sudden, he said, they walked up to him and threw him from his chair, onto the sidewalk.

Good said he wasn’t charged with a crime. But two days later, special officers attacked him again.

“The security guards came and for no reason, no reason at all, started harassing me, and threw me out of my chair, threw me on the ground, and maced my face, (and) called me ‘HIV,’” Good said. He bit one of the officers as they tried to force him to the ground, so he was handcuffed and reported to the MPD. “(The special officers) had me on the ground for maybe four hours before the police even came and got me and arrested me.”

He was taken to the police station and charged with assaulting an officer, although he wasn't charged for an offense leading up to the brutal encounter. His court appearance is scheduled for next month.

With his case pending, Good is searching for justice. He filed a complaint and is trying to sue the officers for defamation of character. So far, though, nothing has been done. Good isn't certain there will be way to hold them accountable.

In light of tenant grievances, ONE DC and attorney Will Merrifield of the Washington Legal Clinic recently launched a campaign to mobilize them and teach them what their rights are.

The organizers are legally permitted to do so, but they too have been targeted by special officers on the property—told they're trespassing and threatened with arrest.

Such an incident occurred on August 11, when Merrifield and ONE DC passed out fact sheets and details about an upcoming event to learn more about organizing. As advocates went door to door, two special officers approached them and said they were littering and loitering. Officers also shadowed the organizers, walking behind them as they walked into the buildings to talk to residents.

“We're Living In Fear. We Feel Like We're In Prison, And The Guards Just Walk And Tell You What You Can Do And What You Can't Do“

Still, the organizers' treatment pales in comparison to what Brookland Manor residents encounter every single day.

“We're living in fear. We feel like we're in prison, and the guards just walk and tell you what you can do and what you can't do,” Sullivan said. “They're trying to push us out the door.”

Although they work for private entities, special police officers ultimately belong to a complex network of police in the nation's capital that operates alongside the MPD, the city's primary police force, Secret Service, Capitol Police, U.S. Park Police, the Metro Transit Police Department, the D.C. Protective Services Division, and a litany of other law enforcement agencies.

Even without these other agencies, MPD has an expansive presence in the district. In 2012, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported that D.C. has the most officers per resident out of every U.S. city with more than 50,000 people.

Though D.C. has experienced rapid gentrification for over a decade, with the black population free falling from 70 percent in 1970 to 49.5 percent in 2010, black residents are still targeted by police at alarming rates. They are disproportionately stopped and arrested, using what some locals refer to as “paramilitary tactics.” The majority of arrests are made for nonviolent offenses, and most occur in wards with black majorities, such as Ward 8, where Smith was killed.

This culture of policing has left many black people wary of law enforcement.

A survey of 1,000 residents by the Community Preservation and Development Corporation revealed that one in five African Americans don't feel safe around law enforcement, compared to 5 percent of white residents surveyed.

Several tenants of the housing project where Smith was killed told ThinkProgress that additional security is welcome. They fear break-ins and other criminal activity in the complex.

But Beverly and other activists think there's a way to keep residents safe without terrorizing them.

As protests against police violence sweep the country, D.C. officers and lawmakers have expressed support for small improvements to the city's police culture. In April 2015, Mayor Muriel Bowser announced that every MPD officer would be required to wear body cameras within 18 months—a decision that earned a tepid response from local activists fighting for reform. In July, ten council members proposed a “ceremonial” resolution to reform the MPD, vaguely asking for the department to be studied and for “necessary improvements to reduce incidences of police shootings and use of violence.”

After Smith and McBride's deaths, lawmakers also proposed legislation targeting special officers—who aren't legally obligated to adopt MPD reforms unless they are specifically ordered to so by a general order issued by the police chief.

Last December, Councilman Kenyon McDuffie proposed the Special Police Officer Enhanced Security Amendment Act of 2015, which would require special officers to complete pre-assignment search, seizure, arrest, and use of force training for 24 hours—as opposed to 16—and 32 hours for emergency protocol training and terrorism readiness.

In June, Bowser proposed even more training, which will be considered by the Council in September. Under her plan, special police officers would have to undergo 80 hours of pre-assignment training and 24 hours of on-the-job training—more than twice the number of hours that's required of them now.

But many D.C. residents, including Beverly, are skeptical that officer training—which has also been proposed in places like Ferguson, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Cleveland—will be enough to fix the problem.

Beverly belongs to a coalition of activists formed after Alonzo's homicide, called the Pan-African Community Action (PACA), which argues that a drastic overhaul of the system is the only way to make real change.

More training doesn't necessarily equate to better policing, argues Ben Woods, one of PACA's cofounders. The problem, according to Woods, is the nature of modern-day policing itself.

“They're doing exactly what they're being trained to do,” he said.

If civilians have no authority, cops can keep killing people like Alonzo and get away with it.

Even if the MPD were to fully embrace these community-based reforms, however, they still wouldn't touch privatized police forces.

By law, companies are autonomous entities with legal authority to hire and fire their own employees. They aren't beholden to the same rules and regulations that govern the public sector, so reforms to public officers wouldn't stop them from employing additional security personnel. Preventing companies from using special officers in particular would require new corporate laws.

Since day one, Alonzo has always been at the heart of PACA's mission and work. The group launched the Justice 4 Zo campaign last year to demand accountability for the special officers involved, calling for the officers to be charged, a full explanation about what transpired on the morning of November 1, and more transparency among private police forces.

To Beverly, seeking justice for Alonzo is part and parcel of changing the status quo.

Much like she didn't see her son's homicide coming, Beverly never saw herself as a community organizer. But educating others and pushing for social change has become a full-time job and helped her push through unrelenting grief.

"My son is on my mind from the time I get up 'til I go to bed," she said. "The most important thing for me right now that keeps me from not losing my mind is actively being involved and fighting for justice for my son—talking about it, going on radio shows, rallies and marches and things of that nature."

Alonzo motivates her work, but Beverly also feels a responsibility to help black people in general, due to the fact that they are disproportionately killed by law enforcement.

"Everything basically has changed. I'm just not the same person anymore. I guess they say it's part of the grieving process," she said.

When she's not on the go, Beverly crochets and makes spiritual plates to stay busy. Despair tends to hit her hardest during those quiet, lonely moments. She's also struggled with deep depression, ever since Alonzo was killed, and is easily triggered—breaking down in public at random times.

Beverly also lives her life in a state of panic.

"Sometimes I'm up 24 hours, 48 hours 'cause of the anxiety level," she explained. "I'm always wondering, 'Who are these special police officers? What happened?' On top of grieving and losing my son, him being murdered—not knowing what happened—makes it harder."

Until she finds the answers to her burning questions, she'll never stop searching for them.

"I don't look at it as a burden," she said. "I look at it as a duty to fight for justice for my son and for others."

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

If our colleges and universities do not breed men who riot, who rebel, who attack life with all the youthful vision and vigor, then there is something wrong with our colleges.

The more riots that come out of our college campuses, the better the world for tomorrow.

-- William Allen White

FYI: Military Resistance Website Visits: Top Ten Sources Of Visits Ranked 1-10 August 2016

- 1 Germany
- 2 USA
- 3 Brazil
- 4 France
- 5 Ukraine
- 6 China
- 7 South Korea
- 8 Romania
- 9 Poland
- 10 Russian Federation

Readers from an additional 92 have also accessed, including Palestinian Territories, Afghanistan, Thailand, Nigeria, Honduras, Japan, Kazakhstan & Virgin Islands (British)

Source: AWStats

American Empire At My Lai



Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: May 13, 2016

Subject: The Names of 504 Vietnamese Civilians

American Empire at My Lai

You will get away with nothing.
The Earth remembers everything.
Power has no wisdom.
You reap what you so.
Revenge comes with divine order.

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
May 13, 2016

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact hastiemike@earthlink.net)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

**“Pro-Assadists Stand On The
Side Of Dictatorship,
Counterrevolution And
Imperialist Intervention”
“In Syria Washington’s Goal Is
Obvious, And Has Been For Some
Time: It Doesn’t Want Regime
Change”**

**“No One Committed To Solidarity
With The Syrian Struggle Can Align
Themselves With Either Wing Of The
U.S. Imperial Establishment”
“Instead, The Left Must Reject
Imperialism In Any Form, Including
Russia’s”**



August 25, 2016 by Ashley Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

The Syrian Revolution has tested the left internationally by posing a blunt question:
Which side are you on?

Do you support the popular struggle against dictatorship and for democracy? Or are you
with Bashar al-Assad’s brutal regime, his imperial backer Russia, his regional ally Iran
and Iran’s proxies like Hezbollah from Lebanon?

Tragically, too many have failed this test.

From the very beginning of Syria’s revolution--even before the rise of the Islamic State in
Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qaeda’s Nusra Front some years later--a whole section of
the left opposed the popular uprising against the Assad dictatorship that began in early
2011, part of the Arab Spring wave of popular rebellions against dictatorship and
repression.

Since then, they have turned a blind eye to Assad's massacre of some 400,000 Syrians, and his regime's use of barrel bombs, chemical weapons and barbaric sieges of cities like Aleppo. Today, 11 million people--half the country's population--have been displaced, with the Assad regime responsible for the lion's share of the death and destruction.

Even in the early stages of the Syrian uprising, when it was plainly following the inspiration of the popular revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, Stalinist groups like the Workers World Party, Party for Socialism and Liberation, and Freedom Road Socialist Organization never wavered in their support for the Assad regime. They have always preached uncritical support for opponents (perceived or real) of the U.S. government, no matter how oppressive and reactionary.

In the U.S., the small antiwar formation United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) staged a demonstration that included people carrying the flag of Assad's regime--some even wore T-shirts emblazoned with the dictator's face.

The American Communist Party's U.S. Peace Council went so far as to send a delegation that met with Assad and his henchmen. They justified their sympathy with Assad by claiming that he was resisting U.S. imperialism's backing of Islamic fundamentalist forces to carry out regime change in Syria.

"Most of Syrian society (has) unified behind the state to protect a secular Syria against the divided and sectarian result the U.S. and its nefarious allies have been working and killing to generate," wrote Henry Lowendorf about his visit with Assad in a post that circulated on the United for Peace and Justice e-mail list.

"Syria has what is apparently a national unity government, focused during the crisis on fighting off the vicious mercenaries of most powerful country in the world and its allies."

This is a complete distortion of reality that is used to justify standing on the side of dictatorship, counterrevolution and imperialist intervention. The pro-Assadists are discrediting the left in the eyes of Syrians who have fought heroically on the side of the revolution.

A genuine internationalist left must stand with Syria's popular resistance to Assad, which began as a nonviolent uprising against the dictatorship--and against intervention by American and Russian imperialism, as well as by the region's main powers.

How could opponents of U.S. imperialism end up supporting a dictator--one who has been known to collaborate with the U.S. in torturing "war-on-terror" prisoners in the CIA's extraordinary rendition program.

The answer starts with the Stalinist left's support of Stalin's Russia and Mao's China during the Cold War era. It supported those state capitalist dictatorships not only as opponents of U.S. imperialism, but as positive models of socialism.

Thus, some of the same currents that today support Assad yesterday defended murderous repression of workers' rebellions and even imperialist invasions in the past.

They stood with Russia's crushing of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Czechoslovakia's Prague Spring in 1968 and Poland's Solidarity in 1981. They supported Mao's China when the regime wrecked workers and peasants' lives through the Great Leap Forward and oppressed Tibetans in a decades-long occupation. They defended regimes like Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe as anti-imperialist, despite his relentless crackdown on all dissent.

Even today, when all the world's states are obviously capitalist, these leftists support oppressive regimes as "anti-imperialist" so long as they oppose the U.S. in some form.

Under the faulty logic that "my enemy's enemy is my friend," popular struggles for democracy are denounced as the work of American imperialism if they protest the wrong regime.

This attitude, referred to as "campism," has distorted much of the left's response to popular uprisings in the Middle East.

For example, Iran's "green movement" was dismissed as a creation of the U.S. drive to overthrow former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

As a consequence of this flawed underlying approach, the campist left reacted to the Arab Spring in a completely incoherent fashion.

Everyone on the left supported the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions of early 2011 because these countries were considered U.S. allies. But the campists opposed pro-democracy uprisings in Libya and Syria, even though these revolts were driven by the same economic and political grievances--and clearly inspired by the revolts in Tunisia and Egypt.

Why?

Because the dictatorships that masses of people were rebelling against could be depicted as "anti-imperialist" opponents of the U.S.

In reality, both the Libyan and Syrian regimes had been "frenemies" of Western imperialism--sometimes collaborating with and at other times dissenting from the designs of the U.S. government and its European allies. And both regimes were happy to work with Russian and Chinese imperialism. In no way can they be accurately categorized as "anti-imperialist."

As for Assad in Syria, his dictator father joined the first "coalition of nations" for the U.S.-led Gulf War against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 1991.

Bashar al-Assad got his chance to collaborate with a Bush during the "war on terror" years after 2001, when prisoners of war were smuggled into Syrian jails to be tortured for information and then returned to U.S. custody.

At one point, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went so far as to call Assad a "reformer" worthy of engagement.

The campist left's attitude is based, to at least some degree, on a misreading of the structure of today's world order and America's position in it. They presume that there is only one imperialist power in the world--the U.S.--and that it is an all-powerful manipulator of international events.

The U.S. does remain the world's dominant imperialist power, but as a result of its failed war in Iraq and other factors, it has suffered a relative decline in strength.

Washington is now challenged internationally by imperialist rivals like China and Russia, as well as regional powers. In this new imperial order, the U.S. is less capable of controlling world events--it fears popular revolt all the more.

The campist misreadings, however, have led them to the conclusion that the U.S. government is pulling the strings in the rebellion in Syria.

Some have gone so far as to argue--absurdly--that the U.S. backs ISIS against Assad. Ironically, this puts the campists in agreement with Donald Trump, who, in his latest ravings, claims that Obama and Clinton were "founders" of ISIS.

Leaving everything else aside, such arguments display an arrogant dismissal--not unlike defenders of imperialism--of the capacity of exploited and oppressed people to fight for liberation.

“In Syria, However, Washington’s Goal Is Obvious, And Has Been For Some Time: It Doesn’t Want Regime Change”

In Syria, however, Washington’s goal is obvious, and has been for some time: It doesn’t want regime change.

Perhaps the hated figurehead of Assad will be pushed aside, but U.S. policy from the beginning has been to preserve the core of Assad’s state.

Why? Above all, the U.S. fears an unpredictable outcome, whether as a result of the advance of the Nusra Front or ISIS--but especially in the form of a popular revolution.

Anyone who doubts the popular nature of the Syrian Revolution should read Robin Yassin-Kassab and Leila al-Shami's stirring account of it in their book *Burning Country*--or for a shorter online description, Mark Boothroyd's article "Self-Organization in the Syrian Revolution." This is a struggle from below that imperialism has always feared the most.

Today, Washington's goals are to wipe out ISIS and to secure a negotiated settlement in Syria that preserves the regime, if not Assad himself.

On the other side of the international geopolitical rivalry, Russia--profoundly weakened since its defeat in the Cold War a quarter century ago--is reasserting its imperial power through its all-out support for the Assad regime in Syria.

Russia wants to secure its position as a power broker in the region, push back against the U.S. and maintain a base in Syria. For its part, the Iranian government wants to stop

Assad from being toppled for fear of losing a valuable ally in the region. And Assad is eager to manipulate all of the above to preserve his dictatorship.

Unfortunately, campism has shaped the viewpoint of whole sections of the left--even parts that are far removed from the Stalinism of the Workers World Party. It has, for example, informed the attitudes of Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein and especially her vice presidential running mate Ajamu Baraka.

Stein rightly opposes U.S. intervention in Syria, but has made little to no criticism of Assad and his war on the Syrian people. Even worse, Baraka openly supports the Assad regime.

Both have appeared on Russia's state-sponsored, English-language RT television network to speak in opposition to U.S. war crimes, while remaining silent about Putin's and Assad's atrocities.

Many Syrian revolutionaries and solidarity activists are rightly furious about this stance from the major left-wing alternative in Election 2016.

Stein and Baraka each have proud records of standing against exploitation, oppression, racism and war, and their campaign is, in almost every other respect, a principled challenge to the two parties of capital and militarism--the Democrats and Republicans.

But anti-imperialists must not stay silent about this awful exception.

Certainly, the candidates of the two capitalist parties have no alternative on Syria, let alone any other question.

Donald Trump is a racist bigot who wants to bar Muslims from the U.S. and supports Assad's regime as a lesser evil to ISIS.

But Hillary Clinton is no ally of the Syrian people.

She calls for the U.S. to enforce a no-fly zone in Syria, and some of her advisers support air strikes against the Assad regime for the stated aiming of stopping attacks on civilians. But Clinton certainly does not support the original aspirations of the Syrian Revolution.

At most, Clinton supports another strategy to achieve the same aim her former boss, Barack Obama, advocates: a negotiated solution that preserves the core of the Syrian state, preferably with Assad out of power, but possibly with him remaining.

No one committed to solidarity with the Syrian struggle can align themselves with either wing of the U.S. imperial establishment. Instead, the left must reject imperialism in any form, including Russia's.

Rather than look to imperialist powers or dictatorial regimes in either camp, the left should stand for workers' struggle across borders and in defense of oppressed nations and their fight for self-determination.

In Syria, the revolution has suffered a defeat for the time being. While civil society activists continue to seize every opportunity to assert their goals, their forces have been ravaged by counterrevolution--in the form of the Syria regime and its international allies on the one hand, and the Nusra Front and ISIS, which was particularly eager from the start to target the rebels than regime forces, on the other.

The task of the international left today is to oppose intervention by any of the imperialist and regional powers, reject the tyranny of the Assad regime itself, demand the opening of the borders to those fleeing the violence and chaos, collaborate with Syrian revolutionaries--and win people away from campism to the politics of international solidarity from below.

“Then Begins The Epoch Of Social Revolution”

“At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or – what is but a legal expression for the same thing – with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto.

“From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters.

“Then begins an epoch of social revolution.”

-- K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works, Vol. I.

MORE:

“Requirements To Become The Liberating Class Par Excellence”

“No class in civil society can play this part unless it calls forth a phase of enthusiasm in its own ranks and those of the masses: a phase when it fraternizes and intermingles with society in general, is identified with society, is felt and recognized to be the universal representative of society, and when its own demands and rights are really the demands and rights of society itself, and it is in truth the social head and the social heart.

“Only in the name of society and its rights in general can a particular class vindicate its general domination. “The position of liberator cannot be taken by storm, simply through revolutionary energy and intellectual self-confidence.

“If the emancipation of a particular class is to be identified with the revolution of a people, if one social class is to be treated as the whole social order, then, on the other

hand, all the deficiencies of society must be concentrated in another class; a definite class must be the universal stumbling-block, the embodiment of universal fetters ...

“If one class is to be the liberating class par excellence, then another class must contrariwise be the obvious subjugator.

“The general negative significance of the French aristocracy and clergy determined the general positive significance of the bourgeoisie, the class immediately confronting and opposing them.”

-- Karl Marx; Contribution to the Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right (Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, 1844).

Soldiers In Revolt: 1917

“‘Our Staff Printing Plant,’ Says The Soldier, Pereiko, ‘Performed A Great Service For The Revolution’”

“The Bourgeois Press, Although’ Supplied To The Front Free Of Cost In Millions Of Copies, Hardly Found A Reader”

Trotsky, Leon; The History of the Russian Revolution; Volume Two

How was it that with this weak apparatus and this negligible circulation of the party press, the ideas and slogans of Bolshevism were able to take possession of the people?

The explanation is very simple: those slogans which correspond to the keen demands of a class and an epoch create thousands of channels for themselves.

A red-hot revolutionary medium is a high conductor of ideas. The Bolshevik papers were read aloud, were read all to pieces. The most important articles were learned by heart, recited, copied, and wherever possible reprinted.

“Our staff printing plant,” says the soldier, Pereiko, “performed a great service for the revolution.

“How many individual articles from Pravda were reprinted by us, and how many small brochures, very close and comprehensible to the soldiers! And all these were swiftly distributed along the front with the help of air mails, bicycles and motorcycles ...”

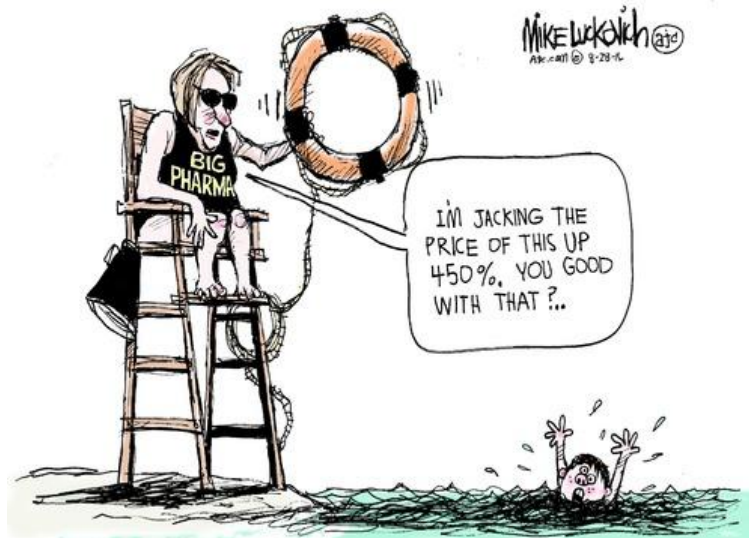
At the same time the bourgeois press, although supplied to the front free of cost in millions of copies, hardly found a reader. The heavy bales remained unopened.

This boycott of the “patriotic” press at times assumed a demonstrative form.

Representatives of the 18th Siberian division passed a resolution asking the bourgeois parties to stop sending literature, inasmuch as it was “fruitlessly used to boil the hot water for tea.”

The Bolshevik press was very differently employed. Hence the coefficient of its useful – or if you prefer, harmful – effectiveness was incomparably higher.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



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