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VOICE OF REVOLUTION

Publication of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization

December 4, 2015

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Contending with Terrorism : 1-3

SAN BERNARDINO AND COLORADO SHOOTINGS

To Contend with Terrorism, Unite Against Injustice

People in the U.S. again faced two more mass shootings, one at a Planned Parenthood Clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado killing three, and another in San Bernardino, California, killing 14 and wounding 21.

Voice of Revolution extends its condolences to the families and friends of all those killed and wounded and to all those involved. We join people across the country in

Contending with Terrorism • 3



Salute Protests : 4-11

SALUTE PROTESTS IN CHICAGO AND MINNEAPOLIS

Government Impunity is a Crime to Be Punished, from the Top Down

Voice of Revolution salutes the determined protests in Chicago and Minneapolis that have united people against racist police killings and the government crime of impunity. Actions in Minneapolis

demanding *Justice for Jamar Clark*, killed by police while he was on the ground with his hands behind his back. Protesters organized an encampment outside the police

Salute Protests • 4



Stop Bombing Syria : 12-20

FIGHT FOR AN ANTI-WAR GOVERNMENT

Stop Bombing Syria and Defend the Rights of Refugees

The U.S. response to the violence and horrific crimes against civilians in Paris November 13 has mainly been to increase U.S. aggression. This includes increasing the bombings of the people of Syria

and increasing the number of Special Forces on the ground there. These forces are known for their illegal black ops, including assassinations and attacks on civilians. They are

Stop Bombing Syria • 12

ONE HUMANITY UNITED AGAINST INJUSTICE!

December edition of ***Voice of Revolution***

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www.usmlo.org • office@usmlo.org • 716-602-8077
3942 N. Central Ave, Chicago, IL 60634

I • Contending with Terrorism

mourning these losses.

While the two cases are different, they have in common use of violence to deal with social and political problems. The Planned Parenthood killings are not being considered an act of terrorism, even though it was clearly a political act, based on opposition to abortion, and one targeting and terrorizing civilians. It is instead being called an act of an angry individual.

The California shootings are now being investigated by the FBI as a possible terrorist act and this possibility is being widely promoted. As is common, attention is being focused on the two individuals who carried out the attack, including that both were Muslims. This is the context of already widespread profiling and attacks on Muslims and refugees. There is an effort to incite and divide people on racist and religious lines.

It is impossible to fully know what occurred and why in California, given both individuals were killed by police as events unfolded. It was first reported, for example, that there was a facebook post by the women, though under another name, supposedly supporting ISIS. Then it was said it she removed it, perhaps a change of heart. Then it was reported that she had acted to “destroy” her facebook page. Who is to know the reality, given the limited and conflicting information? The simple existence of ammunition and firearms says nothing about political motive, as this has been characteristic of many mass shootings. Given facebook can readily be manipulated, by the government and hackers, the various reports do not clarify the why of things. They do however provide the government with a means to say the killings were an act of terrorism and to justify actions against the people in the name of “protecting” us from terrorism. This is a serious concern, given the tremendous powers of the U.S. state.

President Obama, for example, said, “For those who are concerned about terrorism, some may be aware of the fact that we have a no-fly list where people can’t get on planes, but those same people who we don’t allow to fly could go into a store right now in the United States and buy a firearm and there’s nothing that we can do to stop them. That’s a law that needs to be changed.”

Jeh Johnson, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security spoke about the “threat of homegrown, self-radicalized extremists.” He told *The New York Times*, “We have moved to an entirely new phase in the global terrorist threat and in our homeland security efforts.” Terrorists have “in effect outsourced attempts to attack our homeland. We’ve seen this not just here but in other places,” he added. These statements by Obama and Johnson are an indication that yet more measures attacking the rights of the people are planned. Add to this the use by police of the term “crimterrorist,” referring to youth, including protestors,

and the danger is more apparent.

The no-fly list is notorious for having people guilty of no crime on it and for having no way for people wrongly targeted to have their names removed. The list has grown in size ten times since Obama took office and reportedly numbers more than 47,000. About 40 percent are said to have no terrorist affiliation. The government has an additional “Terrorist Screening

Database” of more than 680,000 names. Just what list is to be used and how people are to be targeted, in the name of keeping them from purchasing guns, will be decided by the government. The issue is, these measures are not for purposes of protecting the people, but rather for purposes of intimidating and humiliating them, while further justifying government terrorism against the people.

The example being set by the U.S. government, when it comes to police killings of unarmed youth and civilian massacres abroad, is that such violence is justified. Bombings are taking place daily in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, while drone attacks regularly take place in Yemen, and hundreds are killed in Palestine. In mourning those who died in the most recent mass shootings, we also mourn *all* the people killed by the U.S. These horrific U.S. crimes have also happened too many times. It is urgent to reject all government organized efforts to divide and profile the peoples, Muslims vs. Jews, Black vs. white, refugees vs. native born, etc.

The U.S. under Obama has increased targeted assassinations, drone massacres, bombings of hospitals, torture and aggressive wars, where millions of children are being slaughtered. Why is there discussion about gun control and no-fly lists for individuals, but there is no discussion of removing weapons from the hands of the U.S. state? It is time to lead by example, and call a halt to all violence and killings carried out by the government and its policing agencies, abroad and at home. At this point, why should we think that those who justify and authorize these violent acts and massacres abroad are fit to decide what meaningful action to take here at home? More criminalizing of youth, more violence and killing by police, more terrorism by the U.S., are not solutions.

The U.S. example, as well as that of France, where demonstrations were outlawed and homes raided, clearly show that those in power have abandoned political solutions and are using violence as the weapon of choice to avoid providing economic, political, cultural and social problems with solutions that serve the people. Meaningful action can begin with ending the violence of the U.S. state abroad and at home. Let aggressive war and police violence be ended and those responsible for it punished. Let assassinations and massacres by the state be ended and punished. Let President Obama set an example by ending use of force in resolving conflicts large and small, abroad and at home. This would be a start in the direction needed, for society and its individual members.



I • Salute Protests

precinct for 18 days, contended with armed vigilantes, and marched on City Hall (see p.9).

Chicago has seen numerous activities over the past year, with the more recent days-long actions demanding government accountability for the brutal killing of unarmed 17 year-old Laquan McDonald. While the struggle has brought about the firing of the Chicago police superintendent, organizers are demanding far more and persisting in their efforts.

Organizers, led mainly by African American youth, are targeting the crime of government impunity, demanding that those responsible for the racist police killings, cover-up and protecting of police and city officials involved be held accountable. Their targets include Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and the whole machinery of police repression. As demands bring forward, protesters are calling “to defund policing in Chicago and instead invest in Black futures.” They are also calling for the people to decide the budget so as to fund their rights, saying the “Power of how to spend public funds should not lie with these out-of-touch leaders, but with the public themselves.”

While in Chicago, The one Chicago officer directly involved in shooting and killing Laquan has been charged with murder, he is one of a very few from hundreds of police killings nationwide. As well, none of the other police present tried to stop this officer as he fired 16 times, and none tried to help Laquan. They and their commanders are not being charged.

There have already been 1,000 people killed by police this year, many of them unarmed, many of them African American. As the

cases of Michael Brown and Eric Garner and many others show, police carry out these killings with impunity. Instead of being punished, the government machinery nearly always ensures that they are not charged, and when they are, that they are not found guilty. This is because the problem is systemic, not that of individual police or police commissioners.

The existing state machinery, from the federal government on down, is used to enforce the police powers of the state, which are powers that ensure compliance with the existing state of affairs, in communities, the country as a whole and worldwide. The policing agencies, federal, state and local, serve to keep the rulers in power and the people out. They follow in the footsteps of the military and are themselves militarized, in both equipment and mentality. All, as organized policing agencies, are racist to the core and organized to repress the people. They are part of a machinery for war abroad and repression at home. Youth, especially, are seen as threats and enemies, not human beings.

For these reasons, appeals to the federal government to intervene in a local situation will solve no problem. They could make matters far worse, as the federal government could move to fully control the local and state police agencies — in the name of “improving” them. This opens the door for more direct use of the military.

The determined resistance is making clear that problems of police killings and impunity can only be resolved by the peoples themselves, standing up for their rights. Continued efforts to build the fighting unity of all by targeting the government at all levels for its racist killings and impunity are vital.

Chicago Actions Demand Government Accountability for Racist Police Killings

After more than a year of persistent organizing against police brutality, and finally a court order, secured as part of these efforts, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) released video of the racist police killing of 17-year old Laquan McDonald. Immediately it became clear that police claims that Laquan was a threat to police and confronting them with a weapon were lies — designed to protect an officer known for his brutality and excessive use of force. In this case, the young African American youth was walking away from police, posing no threat whatever, when he was shot 16 times, most while he was already on the ground. A number of police stood by and watched as Officer Van Dyke opened fire within 30 seconds of his arrival and continued firing as Laquan lay on the street. None made any effort to provide medical care, leaving young Laquan to bleed out on the street as though he were not a human being.

The outrage was such that hundreds immediately protested, nightly rallies took place and actions have continued. Protesters not only demanded that Van Dyke be charged, but that all those involved in the shooting and its 14-month long cover-up also be held accountable and the occupation of communities by police ended.

As youth involved in organizing put it, it is time to defund policing, and fund the rights of youth, including for jobs, healthcare and education. Protesters also demanded that all government officials be held accountable for continued police killings and brutality and the impunity with which this continues. The problem is not only the cover-up, but the machinery of government violence, racism and impunity. As organizers brought out, the CPD has a long history of torturing, killing, and covering up crimes. The brutality of this killing is also reflective of the CPD’s Homan Square “black site,” where there has been torture, detention without charges and other police violence.

United Black Friday Protest

One of the more recent actions demanding *Justice for Laquan* took place on Black Friday, November 27, when thousands united to march down Michigan Avenue along Chicago’s “Magnificent Mile,” filled with stores and shoppers. People gathered to block the entrances to stores, informing shoppers of the crimes taking place against youth and urging all to join the boycott of Black Friday.

What stood out at this action and others was the broad

SALUTE PROTESTS IN CHICAGO AND MINNEAPOLIS



participation of all concerned and the stand that government racism and organized attacks, such as police killings, are crimes that must be punished. Teachers and other union members joined, as did clergy, youth from many backgrounds, and various organizations, all united against racist police killings and brutality.

While people welcomed the recent firing of Police Superintendent McCarthy, they also are not being fooled by yet another Justice Department civil rights investigation into the killing. The federal government has conducted more than 100 of such investigations and made recommendations to many police departments, all of which serve to hide the fact that the FBI, Border Patrol, DEA and all the federal policing agencies are also guilty of racism and killing of civilians. Those responsible for crimes cannot be expected to punish them!

This reality is further brought out by the fact that there are serious questions about the video released, video missing, and the refusal to release it sooner.

The dashcam video supplied by police lacked audio, a supposed “technical” failure. Despite repeated questions, no one can explain why video footage supplied to the public lacks audio. Multiple police vehicles are on scene in the video and observers say it is highly unlikely all of the cars had audio malfunctions.

Then there is the question of missing surveillance video near the location where Mr. McDonald was killed. Supt. McCarthy denied reports that officers tampered with video from a nearby Burger King restaurant. According to multiple accounts, some 86 minutes of video footage from the Burger King went missing. The restaurant’s district manager has testified before a federal grand jury. He said members of the CPD deleted video following the shooting. Surveillance footage was missing between 9:13 p.m. and 10:39 p.m. The shooting occurred at approximately 9:50 p.m.,

according to lawyers for the McDonald family.

Few believe Mayor Emanuel’s story of not seeing the McDonald shooting video prior to presiding over a \$5 million settlement with the young man’s family. The settlement was approved by the City Council in April. The shooting took place on October 20, 2014, and Mayor Emanuel was facing election February 24, 2015. Then a runoff election with County Commissioner Jesús “Chuy” Garcia was held on April 7. Many doubt Emanuel would have won a second term had the video been released before the election. All of this is indicative of a state machinery organized to suppress and criminalize the people while protecting and providing impunity to police and government officials. While in this case Van Dyke has been charged with murder, the first such charge against police in decades, there is no guarantee he will be found guilty. Prosecutors, at all levels, routinely make sure police are not punished.

It is also the case that police impunity and racism at home is integral to a state machine at all levels that is racist to the core and acts with impunity abroad. The drone warfare directed against the peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan and Africa as well is racist and goes unpunished. The massive funding of U.S. police powers, including the armed forces and huge domestic policing agencies, are indicative of a system that can provide no solutions and thus has only repression as its answer.

The broad resistance occurring in Chicago, Minneapolis, and elsewhere shows that it is the people that do have solutions, based on ending funding for war and repressions and funding and defending the rights of all, abroad and at home. As organizers in Chicago bring out, “The power of how to spend public funds should not lie with these out-of-touch leaders, but with the public themselves.”

Recent Statements by Black Youth Project 100 Demanding Government Accountability

Statement on the Firing of Chicago Police Department Superintendent Garry McCarthy

Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100) calls for resignation of Mayor Emanuel and Illinois State Attorney Alvarez, defunding of policing and investment in Black futures.

The Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100) is pleased to learn that Mayor Rahm Emanuel has taken one necessary step towards holding himself and the city of Chicago accountable for its promotion and support of systemic violence against Black people by firing Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy.

Mayor Emanuel's decision to fire Supt. Garry McCarthy comes as a result of massive community organizing and direct confrontations between young Black organizers and the Chicago Police Department to expose the ongoing structural abuses of power Black people are subjected to every day. Now, Mayor Emanuel, Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez and all top elected officials involved in the cover-up surrounding the execution of Laquan McDonald must make the right decision and resign immediately. They have demonstrated a deep ineptitude to exercise compassion and good judgment as leaders and should not be trusted to make decisions that impact our lives.

As young Black people who organize Black communities in Chicago, we are clear that Supt. McCarthy, Mayor Emanuel and State's Attorney Alvarez represent elements of a system that must not only be reformed, but radically changed. These changes must include not only new leadership, but also a clear commitment to defund policing and invest in the futures of Black Chicagoans.

- We demand a participatory city budget in which the public has the power to defund the Chicago Police Department and invest those dollars and resources in Black futures by setting a living wage, fully funding healthcare, social services, public schools, sustainable economic development projects and Black businesses that support Black communities.

- We demand an immediate end to the criminalization of Black people for minor possession of marijuana and other petty crimes.

- We demand the immediate firing of Officer Dante Servin without a pension for the killing of Rekia Boyd, as well as all other officers who have contributed to the deaths of Black Chicagoans.

- We demand a fully independent civilian police accountability council with hiring, firing, subpoena and budgeting power. The creation of a Police Accountability Task force appointed by Mayor Emanuel is insufficient and undemocratic.

Public officials now have the opportunity to decide what kind of city they want to help build alongside the young Black people



leading in this critical moment. Our vision is based in a fundamental belief that no city should spend 40 percent of its budget on policing our lives while systematically destroying our communities. This irresponsible allocation of the budget is indicative of the fact that the power of how to spend public funds should not lie with these out-of-touch leaders, but with the public themselves. We are calling on all young Black people, elected officials, clergy and community leaders to join us in a call to defund policing in Chicago and instead invest in Black futures.

* * *

Statement from BYP100 Regarding #STOPTHECOPS Action

Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), Assata's Daughters, We Charge Genocide, #Not1More and Organized Communities Against Deportations (OCAD) are taking action today to shut-down the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Conference in Chicago to demonstrate the urgency for a fundamental shift in the way this country invests in our most valuable resources – our people.

Together, we are organized to demand that our lives, our communities and our futures be made a priority. The police chiefs who belong to the IACP, and their local departments have a debt to pay for the lives and the resources they've stolen and we're here to collect.

From Chicago to Oakland, New Orleans to New York City, Black people live under police occupation everyday. Black folks who are poor, women, formerly incarcerated, working class, LGBTQ and gender non-conforming, differently abled, and/or undocumented are particularly vulnerable to police violence and hyper-surveillance. As a people living in Black bodies, state-sanctioned violence is always a clear and present danger. This must end.

Among the many measures we believe are needed:

- We demand all local, state and federal budgets to defund the police and invest those dollars and resources in Black futures.

- We want reparations for chattel slavery, Jim Crow and mass incarceration.

- We want to end all profit from so-called "criminal justice" punishment – both public and private.

- We want a guaranteed income for all, living wages, a federal jobs program, and freedom from discrimination for all workers.

- We want the labor of Black transgender and cisgender women (unseen and seen, unpaid and paid) to be valued and supported, not

criminalized and marginalized.

- We want investments in Black communities that promote economic sustainability and eliminate the displacement of our people.

The global nature of the IACP conference is not lost on us. We know that American police officers train with defense agents occupying other lands where Palestinians and African migrants experience double oppression. State violence is connected not just from local police station to police station, but also globally among various occupying forces.

Black people deserve to live with human dignity. We are building a movement rooted in people who understand why we must fight. We are constantly at risk of experiencing anti-Black violence by state and its accomplices.

Today, we are putting ourselves at risk to take power over our futures because we know that our liberation will not be handed to us, we have to build it ourselves.

With Power and Love,

BYP100, Assata's Daughters, We Charge Genocide, #Not1More and OCAD

Community Policing is Not the Answer

We Charge Genocide

Activists and community organizations recently released a report on Community Policing, in response to a report by the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS). The CAPS report is a response to President Obama's call, in his speech at the meeting of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), to increase funding for police agencies and to renew the commitment to community policing.

The activists' report, titled "The Counter-CAPS Report: The Community Engagement Arm of the Police State," finds that data gathered at CAPS meetings in several neighborhoods around the city shows that CAPS further strengthens divisions within mixed-income communities. The report found CAPS meetings permeated with racially coded language, where police officials inappropriately encourage small groups of self-selected residents to harass young people of color and target low-income housing.

The report challenges the president's claim that community policing can improve the relationships between the police departments and minority communities. It shows that community policing mobilizes residents already committed to police involvement, increasing police surveillance of a community's most vulnerable residents or visitors. The solution is not, as President Obama suggests, renewed commitment to community policing and further investment in law enforcement. Instead, the appropriate response is to reduce funding for police agencies and reinvest that money in social services like education and public health that will meet real community needs.

The release of the "Counter-CAPS Report" comes on the heels of a series of non-violent direction actions organized around the IACP meeting. This included blocking intersections and entrances of the IACP meeting.

Calls for Mayor Emanuel and Cook County State's Attorney To Resign

Among those echoing Black Youth Project 100's call for Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez to resign (see p.6) are SEIU Healthcare Illinois Vice President Greg Kelley and Action Now's Charles Brown. Action Now is a community organization active on police brutality and education.

Said SEIU's Kelley:

"The firing of Superintendent Garry McCarthy is not nearly enough to restore the trust that has been broken with the people of Chicago as a direct result of the actions of Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and the Chicago Police Department.

"Even as he announced his firing and announced politically expedient task forces, today you heard Mayor Emanuel heap praise on McCarthy. This is despite vast systemic problems that have been so hideously embodied in the murder of Laquan McDonald. Why did it take so long for today's outcome, when the use of excessive force and inequitable policing strategies have long been known?

"The answer is that Mayor Emanuel and Anita Alvarez have enabled and supported a system that has robbed Chicago of true

justice. For too long, this mayor and the people who serve him have been more interested in finding political cover than hearing the cries of citizens, particularly people of color.

"Today's news is the direct result of communities fighting back and doing whatever it takes to reclaim their city. But it does not change the fundamental reality: True justice requires that Alvarez and Mayor Emanuel resign."

Action Now's Charles Brown, a former Chicago police officer, added:

"Justice must be won for Laquan McDonald, those murdered before him, and the whole system must be taken to task in order to prevent more murders of youth. Justice requires that the officers who helped Van Dyke's cover-up need to be held accountable. Justice includes the resignations of Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez and Mayor Rahm Emanuel for their complicity in covering up the murder of a 17-year old. We cannot have leaders hiding the truth for their own protection or because it might be difficult for the public. Everyone who has obstructed justice through their inactions, lies or silence must go."

The Chicago Police Chief Might be Gone — But the Fight Against Brutality Continues

Mariame Kaba

Police violence in Chicago was never directed by one man alone and cannot be eliminated by whoever replaces him

There was dancing in front of Chicago police headquarters at 35th street and Michigan Avenue on the evening of December 1. People were celebrating, in part, because Chicago police superintendent Garry McCarthy was fired earlier that day. Mayor Rahm Emanuel — who had spent days expressing confidence in his police chief — stood in a hot briefing room in front of the press corps and announced that McCarthy had become “a distraction.” Emanuel looked like a man undergoing a root canal without anesthesia.

After days of mass protests — including a shutdown of Michigan Avenue on Black Friday that cost retailers up to 50 percent of their sales — the mayor had apparently decided to cut his losses and throw McCarthy overboard to save himself.

Most Chicagoans of color already do not trust the Chicago police department (CPD), and never have. The memory of more than 20 years of Chicago police torture by Jon Burge and his fellow officers is still fresh in many minds. The brutal killing of Laquan McDonald in 2014 by officer Jason Van Dyke, who has finally been charged with murder, and the inaction and alleged cover-up by fellow officers are only the latest in a long history of corruption and brutality in CPD.

For months now in Chicago, there have been calls for McCarthy’s ouster. He has been criticized for ongoing gun and gang violence; for failing to reprimand cops accused of wrongdoing and excessive force; for keeping officers like Dante Servin, who killed Rekia Boyd, on the payroll, and even defending them in the press. McCarthy was already beyond his expiration date for many Chicagoans.

But the young, predominately black people dancing outside CPD headquarters on Tuesday night were also celebrating months of activism and organizing that had led to the moment of McCarthy’s ouster.

It is difficult to describe the weight of this year in Chicago to outsiders. For those of us who organize against criminalization — including police violence — it feels like there was no respite from the trauma inflicted by the police on our communities between 2014 and 2015. We lost Dominique Franklin Jr. (known as Damo to his friends) in May 2014: he was Tasered twice by Chicago police, hit his head, never regained consciousness and died. His death was the impetus for the launch of We Charge Genocide (WCG), an intergenerational collective effort to make

Damo’s life matter — which has since expanded to making all #BlackLivesMatter.

Over the past several months, Chicago organizers have won reparations for police torture survivors, protested the existence of a so-called black site at Homan Square, successfully mobilized to have officer Servin fired, pressed for data transparency around stop-and-frisk practices, marched by the thousands, shut down the opening day of the International Association of Chiefs of Police conference and more. All of this took place before the brutal and stomach-turning videotape of Laquan McDonald’s execution was released to the public.

The organizing will continue despite McCarthy’s firing: the Black Youth Project 100 — which has, along with groups such as We Charge Genocide and Black Lives Matter Chicago, been organizing for months — issued a set of demands on Tuesday that will form the basis of their ongoing work, (see p.6)

There is talk that firing one police superintendent is mostly symbolic and will not change the culture of policing in Chicago. It is true. The calls for Cook County state’s attorney Anita Alvarez to resign are growing louder, and social media is filled with the hashtag #ResignRahm. Accountability means that if you fail at your job, you should lose it. Resignations are the very least that Chicagoans should expect.

Local organizers are certainly not satisfied with McCarthy’s firing. We will continue to press for structural change because oppression and violence are endemic to policing, not limited to one superintendent. We understand that more people have been killed by the police in Chicago than any other big city in the past five years. We know that in the past decade, Chicago taxpayers have spent over \$500 million to settle police brutality lawsuits. We are painfully aware that police officers in Chicago operate with near-impunity.

Illinois attorney general Lisa Madigan even called for a federal civil rights investigation into the CPD on Tuesday. In a letter addressed to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch, she wrote: “Trust in the Chicago police department is broken, especially in communities of color in the city of Chicago.” That is an understatement if there ever was one.

There was dancing in front of 35th and Michigan on Tuesday evening. But by Wednesday morning, everyone was back to organizing against police violence in Chicago, because it was never directed by one man alone, and cannot be eliminated by whatever man replaces him.

Visit our website: usmlo.org

JUSTICE FOR JAMAR CLARK

Protesters in Minnesota Persist in Struggle Against Racist Police Killings

Since the November 15 police killing of unarmed Jamar Clark, 24, protesters in Minneapolis, Minnesota have been demanding *Justice for Jamar* and an end to racist police killings and brutality. They have had to contend with arrests, a terrorist attack by vigilantes who shot five people at the protest, and most recently the police bulldozing their encampment outside the Fourth Precinct. Despite these attacks, protesters are carrying forward, defending the rights of African Americans and all those subject to police violence.

Jamar's case is similar to that of many African Americans gunned down by police. Witnesses report he was on the ground with his hands behind his back, possibly handcuffed, when police shot him in the head. He died a day later. Videotape of the incident exists but the government is refusing to release it, much as occurred in Chicago and often takes place. This is done by the state in the name of protecting the "investigation."

People across the country have repeated experience with the police killing with impunity and doing so by telling stories designed to blame the men killed and justify their violence. Video often tells the truth of brutality, racism and unjust killings. Video also often shows the person killed was not a threat, as occurred with 17 year-old Laquan McDonald in Chicago, with 12-year old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, and hundreds of others. It is likely also true in this case. A main demand remains release of all related videotape.

Determined Protest

People responded quickly to the police shooting. About 12 hours after it took place, demonstrators with Black Lives Matter, Minneapolis had a 250-person strong "no police zone" at the intersection where the shooting took place. That evening about 30 people organized a sit-in inside the Fourth Precinct station. An encampment of tents was established outside the station, to pursue the protests and for meetings, workshops and to contend with the cold and blizzard conditions. In addition, that evening, November 16, dozens organized to block the main highway nearby, I-94, which they did for more than two hours. Police arrested 51 people.

As dozens remained in the encampment 24/7, hundreds of supporters joined in over the course of the 18-days it held strong. These included university students who walked out about 400 strong, as well as anti-war activists and those defending Palestine. On November 21, more than 200 union members and supporters rallied at the encampment. They brought their banners and wore their jackets, making clear the united stand for *Justice for Jamar*. Participants included those from healthcare, public workers, teachers, letter carriers, members of SEIU, AFSCME, CWA, AFT, and Branch 9 Letter Carriers, (see Labor for Justice for Jamar on facebook for more).

Demonstrators also resisted an effort by vigilantes to terrorize them. On November 23, a group of at least three white men, wearing ski masks, came to the demonstration and attempted to disrupt



it. They were being escorted away from the protest by a group of demonstrators when the men turned and opened fire, shooting five unarmed protesters. All five were taken to hospitals with wounds that were not life threatening. (Those able to returned to the protest later in the week.) Police in large numbers come to the scene in riot gear and maced the protesters as the vigilantes escaped.

The next day more than 1,000 people rallied and marched to City Hall, demanding action against the police and their vigilantes. According to reports from protesters, they made racist taunts at the protest and clearly targeted a peaceful political protest. While three men have now been charged, it is not for terrorism or attempted murder.

The encampment at the Fourth Precinct persisted for 18 days and then was raided in military fashion by a squad of 100 police, and bulldozed down. This generated further actions at City Hall.

A group of 30 clergy took over the rotunda at City Hall December 1. Hundreds then rallied at the Hennepin County Government Center. These actions served to continue the demand to release the tapes and punish those guilty. Demands were also raised calling on the county prosecutor to bring attempted murder and terrorism charges against the vigilantes and immediately indict the police involved in killing Jamar.

As one protester said, "We have endured a terrorist attack by armed white supremacists, police aggression with mace, less lethal projectiles and batons, and freezing temperatures, and we're not going to be intimidated now." Said another, "We been outside for 18 days. We done been maced, we done been shot, we done been through a blizzard and we still here. Ok? We cannot be stopped, because on the path to justice, there is no getting tired!"

A community meeting will take place on Saturday, December 5, at Franklin Middle School, to further unite the fighting forces and organize the next steps in the struggle.

Protesters Need Support, Not Lectures

Laura Jones, Minneapolis Star Tribune Commentary, December 1, 2015

Black Lives Matters protesters and supporters, who have continued their encampment at the Fourth Precinct police station in north Minneapolis for more than two weeks, have been asked to stand down.

The shooting of peaceful Minneapolis protestors last week left me horrified. But the Star Tribune's myopic editorial leaves me deeply disappointed ("Protecting protesters in wake of shootings," Nov. 25).

Protests of police practices have become widespread in recent years, but this is the first time in recent memory that protestors have been shot at by apparent vigilantes. The incident should have prompted a strong editorial condemning the violence and calling on the public to stand with the victims. Instead, the Editorial Board took issue with the demands and tactics of the protestors, and called on them to scale back their protest.

News stories suggest that the attacks likely were racially motivated. Whatever the motives, protestors have been terrorized. Rather than ceding free speech to hateful vigilantes, the paper could call for increased support for the right to gather and protest. Political leaders, and the paper, should denounce without qualification hate crimes and racially targeted violence.

As for the safety of protestors, it is confusing to suggest that protestors would be less safe while outside the doors of a police precinct station. Shouldn't that be one of the safest places? And how does it make sense for the paper to ask individuals to gather in daylight hours, when many work business shifts and the sun sets at 5 p.m.?

The paper also could do more to acknowledge the real tension between investigatory legal processes and the community's legitimate need to know what happened. Last week's release of chilling video of the execution of a black teen by a white Chicago police officer, which was suppressed for over a year, makes clear how horrifying the content can be. We need to acknowledge how critical that information is, and recognize that it is frequently community pressure that results in its public release.

The death of Jamar Clark and the shooting of community protestors has propelled the Twin Cities into the forefront of a national conversation around issues of racial justice and law enforcement. Now is the time to decisively condemn acts that terrorize peaceful protestors, to proclaim First Amendment rights, and to scrutinize policing practices that disproportionately impact — and even kill — black men in Minnesota and across the nation.

One Year Later: Still No Justice For Tamir Rice

Terrance Heath

(Cleveland is one of 16 cities where the Justice Department carried out an investigation and issued recommendations to the police department. The shooting of Tamir Rice occurred after that — VOR Ed. Note)

One year ago this November, Cleveland, Ohio police shot 12-year-old Tamir Rice within two seconds of encountering him. If the prosecutor has his way there will be no justice for Tamir Rice.

On November 23, 2014, Tamir Rice did what bored children all over America do every day. He went outside to play. He took with him a replica toy "airsoft" gun that resembled a real gun. Finding no one on the snow dusted streets on Cleveland's west side, Rice amused himself. He hung out at a recreational center, played with the gun, made snowballs, and threw them at the ground.

Cleveland police officers Timothy Loehmann and Frank Garmback arrived on the scene at 3:30pm. They would later report that they encountered a "male" waving a gun around and pointing it at people. They reported, "The suspect did not comply with the officers' orders and reached to his waistband for the gun. Shots were fired and the suspect was struck in the torso." Rice was taken to a hospital, where he died of his injuries on Sunday night.

Loehmann's and Garmback's version of events included more details.

1. Police said Rice sat at a table with up to five other people.
2. Police said they saw Rice grab the toy gun as they pulled up, and put it in his waistband.

3. Police said they got out of the car and told Rice three times to put his hands up, and he refused.

4. Police said Rice reached into his waistband and pulled out the toy gun. At that point Loehmann shot him in the stomach.

5. Police said the gun looked real, and was missing a neon orange safety tag to distinguish it from the real thing. [...]

The Cleveland Police Department later showed reporters Rice's toy gun. Police described it as "a semi-automatic pistol, with the orange safety indicator removed." This reinforced the claim that the officers could not distinguish it from a real weapon.

The police also revealed that they had surveillance video of the shooting. They would not release it either "out of respect for the family." Due to public demand, police released the video on November 26.

The video revealed that the police lied about almost every aspect of the shooting.

- Rice was not seated with other people. The video shows he was alone. In fact, he was not seated at all. The video shows he was standing when the police officers pulled up.

- Rice did not grab the gun and put it in his waistband. The video does not show the gun on the table or in Rice's hands in the moments before the police car pulls up or after.

- The officers did not get out of the car and tell Rice three times to put his hands up. The video shows Loehmann shot Rice within two-seconds of the officers' arrival. Loehmann opened fire

immediately after exiting the vehicle.

- Police never saw Rice point the gun at them, and never saw whether it had a neon orange tip. The video does not show Rice removing the gun from his waistband at all before Loehmann fired his weapon.

The video released by the Cleveland police cut out shortly after the shooting. The extended video revealed the officers callousness towards Rice and his family.

The police did not offer Rice first aid, and he received no first aid for four minutes. Then a medically-trained FBI agent arrived on the scene. An emergency medical crew arrived three minutes later.

A media investigation later showed that Loehmann had no business wearing a badge or having a gun. In 2012, Independence, Ohio fired Loehmann from its police force, for being “mentally unfit.”

Loehmann was “distracted,” “weepy,” and unable to “communicate clear thoughts,” at a firearms training. As a result, “his handgun performance was dismal.” Loehmann was unable to perform basic functions as instructed.” He “would not be able to substantially cope, or make good decisions” on the job. He would likely crumble under stress. That is from Loehmann’s personnel

file, which Cleveland police never read before hiring him. The supervisors who hired Loehmann were disciplined.

Despite all of the above, city officials absolved the officers and blamed Rice for his own death.

- Rice’s family filed a wrongful death lawsuit. The city’s defense claimed that Rice failed to “exercise due care to avoid injury.”

- Police wanted to charge Rice with “aggravated menacing” and “inducing panic.” Yet the video shows Rice playing before officers arrived.

- A municipal judge ruled that there was probable cause to charge the officers in Rice’s death. Yet, Cuyahoga County prosecutor Timothy McGinty refused to file charges against the officers.

- McGinty leaked two expert reports justifying the shooting, because police were not told the gun might be a toy.

- Another expert commissioned by McGinty called Rice’s killing “objectively reasonable.”

One year later, Rice’s family is still waiting for justice. No one can guess when this process will end. Though it is almost certain how it will end. As in Ferguson, the prosecutor is trying to ensure that no indictments result. The police lied. Loehmann shot Rice on sight. Yet, the officers might not face charges. [...]

Abusive U.S. Cops to Israeli Cops: We Want To Learn From Your Experience

Abby Zimet, December 04, 2015, Common Dreams

Praising Israeli security forces as “the best” in counter-terrorism, a group of 15 senior U.S. police officials recently came back from studying Israel’s occupation-and-counter-insurgency-style policing — complete with militarized gear, tactics and mindset — in hopes of emulating their expertise in racial profiling, excessive force, mass incarceration, collective punishment and other human rights abuses. The Americans, including several big city police chiefs, sheriffs and U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel, met with elite units from the Jerusalem Police, border police and Israeli Security.

This trip was sponsored by the U.S. Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), a security think tank that works primarily with military personnel. Similar training trips have been organized in recent years by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the American Jewish Committee’s Project Interchange.

Police spokesmen say it is a logical collaboration: Israel, which tends to “roll out the red carpet for us,” is “on the forefront on the fight against terrorists”; both Israel and the U.S. feel they are fighting a new class of “crimterrorists” that “blur the line between terrorists and criminal troublemakers.” “Israeli National Police operate in a democratic society very similar to police departments in the US,” the spokesmen say. Also, Israel is already using a lot of the same military and crowd control equipment — from weaponry to tear gas and stun grenades — that the U.S. sells them, and likewise use in areas like Ferguson. Plus, the trips serve as a convenient “indoctrination conveyer belt;”

boasts one organizer, officers who take part “come back and they are Zionists.” Win-win.

Except, actually, *not*. Critics note that American police are learning from an apartheid state’s so-called justice system that deals not with Jewish residents of equal stature, but with a Palestinian population living in what is essentially a giant prison camp, whose daily lives it controls through paramilitary and counterinsurgency tactics. The training programs “seek to reframe Israel’s conquest of Palestine as a campaign of law and order for U.S. law enforcement to emulate,” a narrative that “positions Palestinians not as dispossessed and stateless, but as a pathologically dangerous population that must be controlled and pacified with brute force.”

Rashid Khalidi, the Edward Said professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University and a longtime critic of the occupation, argues the exchange makes perfect sense: “If American police and sheriffs consider they are in occupation of neighborhoods like Ferguson and East Harlem, this training is extremely appropriate — they are learning how to suppress a people, deny their rights and use force to hold down a subject population.” This week, Israel again proved their expertise in those areas: Practicing the collective punishment that is illegal under international law but still a favorite tactic, more than 1,000 Israeli soldiers stormed the Shuafat refugee camp in East Jerusalem to demolish the house of a Palestinian man who last year reportedly killed two Israelis with his car. His widow and five children lived there. Another teachable moment for our boys in blue.

I • Stop Bombing Syria

also used to identify targets for drone killings, which commonly kill civilians.

According to President Obama, speaking in Turkey November 16, “Our coalition [the U.S. and NATO] is intensifying our airstrikes — more than 8,000 to date.” These bombings are mainly impacting the peoples of Syria and Iraq, causing yet more deaths of civilians, destruction of infrastructure like hospitals and forcing more to become refugees.

Obama also announced that the U.S. is “Streamlining the process by which we share intelligence and operational military information with France. This will allow our personnel to pass threat information, including on ISIL, to our French partners even more quickly and more often.” It also means the U.S. will gain more such information more often and use it as it has in the past — not to protect civilians but to illegally spy on them, on foreign government officials and carry out more assassinations and drone strikes, all in the name of security.

Attacking the rights of the peoples, in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine Yemen and elsewhere serves only to create an even more dangerous situation, as the years of war against the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan show. The invasion of Afghanistan occurred in the name of protecting the U.S. after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It has not brought more security. War against Iraq has not. Efforts at regime change in Syria, including U.S. arming and training various forces, has also solved no problem and only unleashed greater insecurity and violence.

The solution required is not intensifying military action but defending the rights of the peoples abroad and at home. This means first of all bringing *All U.S. Troops Home Now!* This is what would contribute to peace and security. It means ending the use of force to settle conflicts and instead putting forward political solutions and use of diplomacy. It means organizing for an Anti-War Government, that would take these actions and put rights at the center, abroad and at home.

Defend the Rights of Refugees

Inside the U.S., the government is engaged in a broad attack on the rights of refugees and attempting to foment divisions along religious and other lines. While President Obama has said he will proceed with settling 10,000 Syrian refugees in the U.S., he is also supporting yet more profiling and security checks. That is, Syrians are being collectively punished simply



for being Syrian and no other reason. They have long been subjected to increased security measures that many other refugees and students here on visas do not face. The screening process for Syrian refugees already takes up to 3 years and requires 21 steps with numerous agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security.

Syrians are not responsible for the actions in Paris, just as the people of Afghanistan were not responsible for 9/11. Collective punishment is a crime, not an answer. The U.S. is responsible for the continuing conflict in Syria and the tremendous humani-

tarian crisis that now exists, yet it takes no responsibility for this and instead targets the refugees and Syrians as a whole.

Since 1980, none of the millions of refugees the U.S. has settled, including Syrians, has committed a terrorist attack. The U.S. government has, yet it is to act with impunity for its terrorism here and abroad.

Defending the rights of refugees is a vital part of counter- ing efforts to divide and further terrorize the peoples here and worldwide.

Signs of More War and Growing Conflicts Inside the U.S.

The response by various politicians and governors inside the U.S. indicate the growing conflicts within U.S. ruling circles in conditions where the rulers can provide no solutions. There is growing inequality, great economic and social insecurity, and more war on the horizon. There are signs of the “cold” civil war now underway, becoming a hot conflict. For example, the majority of Governors have said they would not accept refugees. This includes those in Michigan, home to the largest Arab population in the country, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin as well as many southern states. House Republican Caucus Chair Glen Casada said: “We need to activate the Tennessee National Guard and stop [Syrian refugees] from coming in to the state by whatever means we can.”

New York Governor Cuomo, who said he would accept refugees, also raised this same issue, saying, “Where does it say in the state constitution you can refuse a person placed by the federal government? What are you going to have your militia fight the federal government at the borders of your state?” While saying other Governors were making purely political statements, the fact that the possibility of use of the National Guard is being raised shows the concern that exists for such a confrontation.

Additionally, signs of preparations for broader war and repression have also occurred. The budget bill passed by Congress completely suspended the debt ceiling. This means, in the name of a national emergency, President Obama can run up unlimited debt using war bonds, or perhaps “stopping terrorism” bonds, to finance war actions. Further, Obama vetoed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), an unusual action as it provides funding for the Pentagon. A main reason was his demand to close Guantánamo and instead set up a maximum-security military detention camp inside the U.S. This is so civilians, including protesters, or striking longshoremen, or refugees or any others branded a “threat,” can be held in indefinite detention inside the U.S. Congress passed a second, very similar NDAA, with the Guantánamo language, that Obama signed, November 25.

Defending Rights Provides Security

It is clear that political solutions and peaceful means are not on the U.S. agenda as it continues to strive for world domination. Indeed yet more violence and repression are being unleashed, as the increased bombings, plans for a U.S. Guantánamo, and continued police killings with impunity show.

As the many demonstrations organized across the country in support of refugees and against war and government racism show, stepping up the fight for the rights of all abroad and at home is the source of security. Working today for an Anti-War Government is a path forward to a future where the U.S. is not the world’s worst terrorist and instead contributes to peace and eliminating use of force.

Our Future Lies in Our Fight for the Rights of All!

Statement of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization on the Paris Violence and Crimes

The U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization (USMLO) condemns the brutal violence and crimes that occurred November 13 in Paris, France, directed against innocent civilians. We express our condolences to the families and friends of all the victims. Such terrible crimes directed at working people do not contribute to solving problems. We also mourn the deaths and injury of those in Lebanon, and tens of thousands of innocent civilians in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and elsewhere, victims of U.S. state terrorism. Further measures now by the U.S. to attack the rights of the peoples, such as increasing the bombing of Syria, also do not solve any problem. On the contrary, they create a more dangerous situation for all.

Measures abroad and at home further depriving the peoples of their rights are not acceptable. The Syrians are not to blame for the Paris violence. They are not to blame for the U.S. instigated war in their country, where the U.S. is attempting to impose yet another regime change. Nowhere has U.S. aggression and regime change brought democracy or stability. What it has unleashed is violence and anarchy as the U.S. strives relentlessly for world domination.

The U.S. and the U.S.-led NATO bloc are the ones most responsible for the death and destruction occurring worldwide. They are the ones guilty of collective punishment and civilian



massacres and the terrorism of drone attacks and bombings.

It is also the U.S. state and its monopoly media that are responsible not for the calm and sober responses needed, but for whipping up hysteria about refugees. How are refugees the threat? How is collective punishment the answer? Why are Muslims again being targeted for more profiling and repression here and abroad? All of this serves to divert from U.S. crimes, including racist government profiling, more spying, and more aggression abroad, while justifying more attacks on the peoples. Since 1980, none of the millions of refugees the U.S. has settled, including Syrians, has committed a terrorist attack. To contribute to security, the rights of refugees and all the peoples must be defended.

It is worth asking who stands to gain from the Paris violence. Certainly not the Syrians. It is serving to justify yet more attacks and aggression against the peoples, while hiding who is most responsible for such crimes — the U.S.

USMLO condemns U.S. terrorism and crimes and use of force against the peoples in the name of security. While condemning terrorist acts like that in Paris, we firmly support the resistance to U.S. aggression abroad and its racist and anti-people repression at home. We reject the hysteria against refugees and U.S. violence and use of force. Political solutions are needed. Security at home and abroad lies in the fight for the rights of all.

Statement of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) on the Paris Violence

November 14, 2015

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) categorically condemns the heinous crimes committed in Paris, France on the afternoon of November 13. We express our deepest sympathies with the families, friends and colleagues of the victims and call for sober-minded measures to be taken which do not turn the French and world's people into targets of counter-violence. Measures that further deprive the people of their rights in the name of protecting the security of the French state are not an acceptable answer.

The reactionary violence displayed in Paris is directed against the working people who are not to blame for the instigation of state terrorism but are its victims. Attempts to protect the French state, which deprive the people of their rights and, furthermore, target sections of the people for attack, are self-serving and create an even more dangerous situation.

CPC(M-L) calls on its members and supporters to take these events very seriously, remain calm and lead their peers to draw

warranted conclusions. Who is behind these attacks? Are they an attempt to further murky the waters surrounding the U.S. striving to bring about regime change in Syria, which is now leading to a new round of violence, such as the targeting of a hospital in Afghanistan by the U.S. and to bombings such as what took place in Lebanon that targeted Hezbollah, and other similar activities?

All of it shows the anarchy and violence, which has been unleashed by the U.S. striving for world domination in which the NATO bloc is doing its utmost to isolate Russia and not permit a political solution to problems which have emerged.

CPC(M-L) reiterates its opposition to the use of force to settle conflicts. We reiterate our opposition to the use of the state to suppress the rights of the people in the name of security. All of it shows that political solutions are not on the agenda of the U.S. and European powers, as well as Canada. Instead, civil wars and state terrorism are fomented to get an upper hand. It must not pass!

Governors Have No Right to Exclude Syrian Refugees

Marjorie Cohn, Truthout

As the world reels from the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris last week, more than half of U.S. governors began lining up to scapegoat Syrian refugees fleeing violence in their country. Of those 27 governors, all but one are Republicans. Democrat Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire joined the gubernatorial group and called for the United States to refuse to admit those fleeing Syria. Many proclaimed they would deny entry to the refugees. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott wrote to President Barack Obama: "I write to inform you that the State of Texas will not accept any refugees from Syria in the wake of the deadly terrorist attack in Paris."

A Republican congressman from Tennessee, House Republican Caucus Chair Glen Casada, wants the National Guard to round up Syrian refugees already settled there and prevent others from entering Tennessee. "We need to activate the Tennessee National Guard and stop [Syrian refugees] from coming in to the state by whatever means we can," he said.

But only the federal government — not the states — has the power to decide if and where refugees can settle in this country.

The Law on States' Rights and Immigration

In 2012, the Supreme Court reaffirmed in *Arizona v. United States* that "The Government of the United States has broad, undoubted power over the subject of immigration and the status of aliens." Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the majority, "Returning an alien to his own country may be deemed inappropriate ... The foreign state may be mired in civil war, complicit in political persecution, or enduring conditions that create a real risk that

the alien or his family will be harmed upon return." Kennedy noted that under the supremacy clause of the U.S. Constitution, "Congress has the power to preempt state law." States cannot regulate conduct in a field that Congress "has determined must be regulated by its exclusive governance," Kennedy added. "Federal law makes a single sovereign responsible for maintaining a comprehensive and unified system to keep track of aliens within the Nation's borders."

While states cannot refuse to admit refugees, they may make resettlement more onerous.

The 1980 Refugee Act grants authority to the president to determine how many refugees may be admitted to the United States. The president must consider whether "an unforeseen emergency refugee situation exists" and whether "the admission of certain refugees in response to the emergency refugee situation is justified by grave humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest."

Obama said he will continue with his plan to admit 10,000 Syrian refugees in 2015, stating "many of these refugees are the victims of terrorism themselves ... That's what they're fleeing. Slamming the door in their faces would be a betrayal of our values."

"Our nations can welcome refugees who are desperately seeking safety and ensure our own security," he added, citing rigorous screening and security checks. "We can and must do both."

Republican presidential candidates, including Marco Rubio and Ben Carson, oppose the admission of Syrian refugees to

the United States. Donald Trump says if he's elected president, "they're going back."

Responding to Jeb Bush, who wants to focus assistance efforts on Christian refugees fleeing Syria, Obama retorted, "That's shameful. That's not American. That's not who we are. We don't have religious tests to our compassion." In fact, in addition to Christians, Kurds, Yazidis, Alawites, Shiite Muslims and Sunni Muslims have been targeted for persecution by ISIS.

Refugee Screening and Resettlement

While states cannot refuse to admit refugees, they may make resettlement more onerous by denying resources, including housing assistance, to the federal government. If governors tried to block certain categories of refugees, they would be vulnerable to discrimination lawsuits.

Since 1980, none of the millions of refugees the U.S. has welcomed has committed a terrorist attack.

Security screenings for refugees are conducted by several federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FBI, National Counterterrorism Center and National Security Council. "The vetting process now in place is already a dreadful maze — a Rubik's Cube of bureaucracies practically guaranteeing that few Syrians will ever set foot on our shores," according to James Jennings, president of Conscience International, a humanitarian organization that delivers aid to Syrian refugees in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Greece. "The process takes up to three years and requires 21 steps with numerous agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, all required to sign off. There is next to no chance that a terrorist could get in under the present system."

Kevin Appleby, director of the Migration and Refugee Services Office of Migration and Refugee Policy at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, concurs. "These refugees are the most vetted, they go through more security screening than any arrivals to the United States," he told the Los Angeles Times.

Muslims constitute the largest proportion of victims of terrorism, with those in Syria and Iraq leading the pack. [...] Indeed, according to a 2012 report of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, between 82 percent and 97 percent of the victims of religiously motivated terror attacks during the previous five years were Muslims.

Sudden Proliferation of Anti-Refugee Legislation

Two GOP presidential hopefuls are introducing legislation to prevent or slow down the migration of Syrian refugees to the United States. Senator Ted Cruz is reportedly drafting a bill that would forbid Syrian Muslim refugees from entering the United States. It would, however, welcome Christians. Sen. Rand Paul will introduce a bill to place an immediate moratorium on U.S. visas, preventing refugees and "others from obtaining visas to immigrate, visit, or study in the U.S. from about 30 countries that have significant jihadist movements." Paul plans to pay for the legislation "with a special tax on arms sales to any of these countries."

Later this week, a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee will take up security matters related to Syrian refugees. [...]



There is no evidence that refugees pose a security risk. The Paris attackers were not refugees, although one of them [reportedly] used a fake Syrian passport; they were born in Europe. Since 1980, none of the millions of refugees the United States has welcomed — many of them from the Middle East — has committed a terrorist attack. The 9/11 hijackers entered the United States legally on student or tourist visas. The Boston Marathon bombers were not refugees.

The charge that refugees are a threat to the United States is a tempest in a teapot. If we want to stop terrorism, we should stop killing innocent civilians in other countries.

Bombing Is Not the Solution

Western airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq and Syria have killed at least 459 civilians, including more than 100 children, according to the Guardian. French President François Hollande retaliated for the Paris attacks by bombing Raqqa, thought to be the "headquarters" of ISIS. Raqqa is a city with hundreds of thousands of civilians. The bombs struck the electricity grid, a museum and clinics. Untold numbers of people have been injured or killed in the strikes.

The invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, and drone bombings in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Libya and Syria have not destroyed ISIS. [...]

That is why the bombing by the United States and France must stop immediately. A diplomatic solution involving all players in the region, including Iran, Russia and China, should be seriously pursued.

Arms sales must be halted. Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait have spent billions of dollars arming the opposition to the Assad regime but ISIS is a beneficiary of those weapons. The French have a \$10 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia, and Obama has concluded more than \$100 billion in arms sales to the Saudis during the past five years. [...]

The United States should welcome many more than the 10,000 Syrian refugees Obama has agreed to accept. We have a moral responsibility to provide refuge to those displaced by U.S. actions, which contributed to destabilizing the entire region with invasions and regime changes since 2001.

Killer Drone News Blackout Continues As Mainstream Media Ignore Air Force Whistleblowers

John Hanrahan, December 4, 2015, *ExposeFacts.org*

In the latest example of journalistic negligence, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and other mainstream news organizations in late November continued their apparent policy of “no-bad-news-reporting” about drones.

This time, the major media chose to ignore four former Air Force drone-war personnel who went public with an open letter to President Obama (see p.17) The letter urged the President to reconsider a program that killed “innocent civilians.”

In strong, dramatic language, the four men — in the letter and subsequent press appearances — challenged the official Obama White House/Pentagon/CIA public view that civilians are rarely killed by drones, and that drones make Americans safer and are helping defeat terrorists. Rather, they said that the U.S. drone war is terrorizing local populations and killing innocent civilians.

Now it is not every day that four former drone operators go public with their anguish-filled stories of the drone program killing innocent people and creating blowback against the United States.

In fact, there has not been any day like that. Until now, that has never happened. You would think that this would meet some textbook definition of news — something new, uncommon, dramatic and consequential. When President Obama or a proven liar about the drone program, CIA Director John Brennan, propagandize about drones and how wonderful and precise and well-near infallible they are in crushing extremists, not killing civilians and making us safe — that is what the mainstream media dutifully reports as news. But when four drone whistleblowers — who sat at the very heart of the system guiding Hellfire missiles from Predator drones to human targets in Afghanistan and Iraq — come forward to undermine that tidy little story, those same news outlets turn their collective back.

Voicing such sharp criticism of a top-secret program with which they were all involved is an especially risky move given that the Obama administration has shown itself to be the most anti-whistleblower administration ever. Obama’s Justice



Department has prosecuted more than twice as many whistleblowers under the *Espionage Act* as all previous presidents combined since the passage of the law in 1917.

The letter to Obama, also addressed to Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter and CIA Director Brennan, said that the Bush and Obama administrations “have built a drone program that is one of the most devastating driving forces for terrorism and destabilization around the world.” They expressed guilt, and are experiencing PTSD, as a result of “our roles in facilitating this systematic loss of in-

nocent life.”

In a pointed reference to the Obama administration’s statements in support of the drone program, the letter stated: “We witnessed gross waste, mismanagement, abuses of power, and our country’s leaders lying publicly about the effectiveness of the drone program.”

And, drawing a link between the recent Paris attacks and drone killings creating more terrorists and blowback, the whistleblowers added: “We cannot sit silently by and witness tragedies like the attacks in Paris, knowing the devastating effects the drone program has overseas and at home. Such silence would violate the very oaths we took to support and defend the Constitution.”

These former Air Force personnel — three former Predator sensor operators (Staff Sergeant Brandon Bryant, Senior Airman Stephen Lewis and Senior Airman Michael Haas), and one former drone program infrastructure technician (Senior Airman Cian Westmoreland) — had a combined 20-plus years of remotely operating drone strikes in Afghanistan and Iraq from Creech Air Force Base, Nevada. All had Afghanistan drone experience, and all but Westmoreland also had Iraq experience. This gave them special, first-hand insight into a program whose operators, in Haas’s words, viewed targeted human beings as “ants...just black blobs on a screen” and considered children who came into view on their screens as “fun-sized terrorists.”

Haas and other whistleblowers expanded on the points in their

letter in an interview with *Guardian* reporters, which resulted in two eye-opening articles by Ed Pilkington and Ewen MacAskill. This was followed by a lengthy appearance on Democracy Now! and a news conference in connection with the premiere in New York of a new documentary, “Drone,” in which two of the whistleblowers (Bryant and Haas) make appearances. Agence France Presse (AFP), Reuters and *Newsweek* all carried stories, as did *The Intercept*, *Shadowproof* and other online news sites.

Did you read about any of that whistleblower criticism in *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*, or see a segment about it on television news? No, you did not. [...]

What many Americans see or hear most of the time from the self-censoring mainstream media is superficial reporting on the latest drone strike that killed a certain number of what are almost always described as militants of one type or another. They also get frequent doses of propaganda and soothing assurances from the President and other Obama administration officials that the program of drones and other aerial bombardments is precise, takes special precaution not to kill civilians, but most importantly is making America safer by killing militants while keeping U.S. troops out of harm’s way.

Typical was Obama’s speech in May 2013 at the National Defense University, where he said this: “And before any [drone] strike is taken, there must be near-certainty that no civilians will be killed or injured – the highest standard we can set.” He said civilian deaths constituted “a risk that exists in all wars.”

But as Commander-in-Chief, he went on, “I must weigh these heartbreaking tragedies against the alternatives. To do nothing in the face of terrorist networks would invite far more civilian casualties – not just in our cities at home and facilities abroad, but also in the very places – like Sana’a and Kabul and Mogadishu – where terrorists seek a foothold.”

And who, if they were paying attention at the time, can ever forget major-league truth abuser John Brennan, when he was Obama’s top counterterrorism adviser, saying in June 2011 that for almost a year, “there hasn’t been a single collateral death because of the exceptional proficiency, precision of the capabilities we’ve been able to develop.” In reporting that whopper, *The New York Times* in August 2011 further reported this: “Other officials say that [Brennan’s] extraordinary claim still holds: since May 2010, C.I.A. officers believe, the drones have killed more than 600 militants – including at least 20 in a strike reported Wednesday – and not a single noncombatant.” [...]

The mainstream press [should let Americans] know what was contained in *The Intercept*’s “Drone Papers” articles — such as the revelation that during one five-month period of Operation Haymaker in northeastern Afghanistan, “nearly 90 percent of the people killed in airstrikes were not the intended targets. In Yemen and Somalia where the U.S. has far more limited intelligence capabilities to confirm the people killed are the intended targets, the equivalent ratios may well be much worse.” [...]

Letter from Four Former Air Force Drone Operators

Dear President Obama, Secretary Carter and Director Brennan:

We are former Air Force service members. We joined the Air Force to protect American lives and to protect our Constitution. We came to the realization that the innocent civilians we were killing only fueled the feelings of hatred that ignited terrorism and groups like ISIS, while also serving as a fundamental recruitment tool similar to Guantánamo Bay. This administration and its predecessors have built a drone program that is one of the most devastating driving forces for terrorism and destabilization around the world.

When the guilt of our roles in facilitating this systematic loss of innocent life became too much, all of us succumbed to PTSD. We were cut loose by the same government we gave so much to sent out in the world without adequate medical care, reliable public health services, or necessary benefits.

Some of us are now homeless. Others of us barely make it.

We witnessed gross waste, mismanagement, abuses of power, and our country’s leaders lying publicly about the effectiveness of the drone program. We cannot sit silently by and witness tragedies like the attacks in Paris, knowing the devastating effects the drone program has overseas and at home. Such silence would violate the very oaths we took to support and defend the Constitution.

We request that you consider our perspective, though perhaps

that request is in vain given the unprecedented prosecution of truth tellers who came before us like Chelsea Manning, Julian Assange, and Edward Snowden. For the sake of this country, we hope it is otherwise.

Sincerely,

Brandon Bryant
Staff Sergeant
MQ1B Predator Sensor Operator
USAF Joint Special Operations Command
Disabled Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran
Founder of Project RED HAND

Cian Westmoreland
Senior Airman
RF Transmissions Systems
USAF CENTCOM
73rd Expeditionary Air Control Squadron
Disabled Afghanistan Veteran

Stephen Lewis
Senior Airman
MQ1B Predator Sensor Operator
USAF Joint Special Operations Command
Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran

Washington Refines Its False Flag Operations

Paul Craig Roberts

Washington and its French vassal have refined how they conduct their false flag operations. With the Charlie Hebdo operation, they knew to immediately set the story in stone in order to avoid any questions from the print and TV media and in order to use the set story to take the place of an investigation.

The set story made it unnecessary to explain the mysterious “suicide” of one of the main police investigators while engaged in the investigation of the event. The set story also made it unnecessary to explain why it was necessary to kill rather than capture the alleged perpetrators, or to explain how the French authorities could be so wrong about the alleged get-away-driver but not about the two gunmen. There has been no explanation why the authorities believed there was a get-away-driver, and no such driver has been captured or killed. Indeed, there are many unanswered questions of no interest to any media except the alternative Internet media.

What the US and France learned from the Charlie Hebdo skepticism on the Internet is to keep the story flowing. Charlie Hebdo involved two scenes of violence, and the connection between the two acts of terrorism was vague. This time there were several scenes of violence, and they were better connected in the story.

More importantly, the story was followed quickly by more drama, such as the pursuit of a suspected perpetrator into Belgium, a French bombing attack on the Islamic State, a French aircraft carrier sent to the Middle East, a declaration of war by the French President against ISIL, and speculation that Hollande, pressured by Washington, will invoke NATO’s Article V, which will pull NATO into an invasion of the Islamic State. By superceding each event with a new one, the public’s attention is shifted away from the attack itself and the interests served by the attack. Already the attack itself is old news. The public’s attention has been led elsewhere. How soon will NATO have boots on the ground?

The Western media has avoided many interesting aspects of the Paris attacks. For example, what did the directors of the CIA and French intelligence discuss at their meeting a few days prior to the Paris attacks? Why were fake passports used to identify attackers? Why did the attacks occur on the same day as a multi-site simulation of a terrorist attack involving first responders, police, emergency services and medical personnel? Why has there been no media investigation of the report that French police were blinded by a sophisticated cyber attack on their mobile data tracking system? Does anyone really believe that ISIL has such capability?

The Western media serves merely as an amplifier of the government’s propaganda. Even the non-Western media follows this pattern because of the titillating effect. It is a good story for the media, and it requires no effort.

Initially even the Russian media served to trumpet the set story that rescues the Western political establishment from political



defeat at home and Russian defeat in Syria. But it wasn’t too long before some of the Russian media remembered numerous false stories about a Russian invasion of Ukraine, about Assad’s use of chemical weapons, about US ABMs being placed on Russia’s borders to protect Europe from non-existent Iranian nuclear ICBMs. And so on.

Russian media began asking questions and received some good answers from Gearoid O Colmain.[1]

To understand the Paris attacks, it helps to begin with the question: “What is ISIL?” Apparently, ISIL is a creation of the CIA or some deep-state organization shielded by the CIA’s operations department. ISIL seems to have been used to overthrow Quadaffi in Libya and then sent to overthrow Assad in Syria. One would think that ISIL would be thoroughly infiltrated by the CIA, Mossad, British and French intelligence. Perhaps ISIL is discovering that it is an independent power and is substituting an agenda of its own for Washington’s, but ISIL still appears to be at least partially dependent on support, active or passive, from Washington.

ISIL is a new group that suddenly appeared. ISIL is portrayed as barbaric knife-wielding fanatics from medieval times. How did such a group so quickly acquire such extensive global capability as to blow a Russian airliner out of Egyptian skies, conduct bombings in Lebanon and Turkey, outwit French intelligence and conduct successful multi-prong attacks in Paris? How come ISIL never attacks Israel?

The next question is: “How does the Paris attack benefit ISIL?” Is it a benefit to ISIL to have Europe’s borders closed,

thus halting ISIL's ability to infiltrate Europe as refugees? Does it help ISIL to provoke French bombing of ISIL positions in the Middle East and to bring upon itself a NATO invasion?

Who does benefit? Clearly, the European and American political establishment in so many ways. Establishment political parties in France, Germany, and the UK are in trouble, because they enabled Washington's Middle East wars that are bringing floods of refugees into Europe. Pegida is rising in Germany, Farage's Independent Party in the UK, and Marine Le Pen's National Front in France. Indeed, a recent poll showed Marine Le Pen in the lead as the next president of France.

The Paris attack takes the issue and the initiative away from these dissident political parties. Among the first words out of the mouth of the French president in response to the attack was his declaration that the borders of France are closed. Already Merkel's political allies in Germany are pushing her government in that direction. "Paris changes everything," they declare. It certainly saved the European political establishment from defeat and loss of power.

The same result occurred in the US. Outsiders Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders were slaughtering the establishment's presidential candidates. Trump and Sanders had the momentum. But "Paris changes everything." Trump and Sanders are now sidelined, out of the news. The momentum is lost. The story has changed. "Paris attacks become focus of 2016 race," declares CNN.[2]

Also among the early words from the French president, and without any evidence in support, was Hollande's declaration that the Islamic State had attacked the French nation. Obviously, it is set for Hollande to invoke NATO's Article V, which

would send a NATO invasion force into Syria. This would be Washington's way of countering the Russian initiative that has saved the Assad government from defeat by the Islamic State. The NATO invasion would overthrow Assad as part of the war against the Islamic State.

The Russian government did not immediately recognize this threat. The Russian government saw in the Paris attack the opportunity to gain Western cooperation in the fight against ISIL. The Russian line has been that we must all fight ISIL together.

The Russian presence, although highly effective, is small in Syria. What does the Russian government do when its policy in Syria is crowded by a NATO invasion?

The only benefactor of the Paris attack is the Western political establishment and Washington's goal of unseating Assad in Syria. The Paris attack has removed the threat to the French, German, and British political establishments from the National Front, Pegida, and the UK Independence Party. The Paris attack has removed the threat to the US political establishment from Trump and Sanders. The Paris attack has advanced Washington's goal of removing Assad from power.

The answer to the Roman question, "cui bono," is clear. But do not expect to hear it from the Western media.

Notes

1. "Political author Gearoid O Colmain discusses the Paris attacks with RT International," RT (Youtube), November 14, 2015.

2. "Paris attacks become focus of 2016 race," Eric Bradner, CNN, November 16, 2015.

(*Information Clearing House*, November 16, 2015)

TALE OF TWO CITIES

Why Silence When Beirut Gets Bombed but Tears for Paris?

Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya

Universally, governments have condemned the attacks that took place in the French capital's northern suburb of Saint-Denis on November 13, 2015. Unquestionably, the murder and mayhem that happened in Paris was despicable and tragic. Questions need to be asked, however, as part of an important discussion about the narrative that is emerging.

Putting up French flags and showing solidarity for the people of Paris has immersed vast stretches of the international public. Memes and symbols of support are appearing everywhere. Showing support for Paris has become a major trend on social media and in Euro-Atlantic capitals.

A Tale of Two Cities and Two Standards

The Saint-Denis attacks come a day after the attacks on Beirut's southern Dahiyeh area on November 12, 2015. The murder and mayhem in Beirut virtually went unnoticed in North America and the European Union. This is important to note, because it

means that two different standards are being applied.

The role of the media and the messages it is sending to audiences cannot be overlooked whatsoever. If the terrorist attacks in Beirut were even mentioned, the mainstream media casually only did so. On the other hand, the mainstream media reports about the tragedy in Paris have shown concern and emotion for the attacks there. Victims in places like Baghdad, Mogadishu, Damascus, Donetsk, Tripoli, Gaza, and Sanaa do not even register as newsworthy. News channels have continuously broadcast images and reports about the violence in Paris while politicians and officials across the US Empire have begun their epithets, in the process stoking fear and saturating public opinion and emotions. Facebook even began asking users who were in Paris if they were safe by checking in, but did not provide the same service for Beirut users. Has this service even been provided once for the Baghdadis that have been plagued with constant terrorist bombings since the illegal Anglo-American invasion

of Iraq in 2003?

As an example of how people's emotions can be engaged and influenced, the Lebanese-Canadian singer Sari Abboud, known by the stage name Massari, who was in Paris at the time, was engrossed in the misfortune of Saint-Denis to the point where he made a statement on social media saying that he was praying for Paris. He overlooked his own ancestral land and said nothing about Lebanon. One of his fans quickly responded by asking him why he did not pray for the people of Beirut. The revealing comments were removed quickly. Massari was clearly swept up by the current of the day.

Political interests define terrorism and atrocities in conjunction with who it is perpetrated against. They try to define who merits our concerns and sympathy, and which do not deserve our sympathy. There is a message when US, British, Australian, French, Canadian, and German politicians and leaders make statements in solidarity with the Parisian people, but virtually ignore Beirutis and the peoples of Libya, Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Nigeria, East Ukraine, and Palestine.

Differential Politics

Audiences are being inundated by mass media about the tragedy in Paris whereas the terrorism in Beirut is being ignored or sanitized. This is happening for a reason. It is a matter of the differentials that power interests are projecting. As a part of this, a subtle discourse is tacitly implying that what happened in Beirut is not a tragedy and that the Lebanese people are less deserving of global sympathy than the French people.

This discourse is part of the illusive discursive process of the "Global War on Terror" that aims to justify conquest and domination in humanitarian and righteous terms. The victims of the terrorism in Beirut are disregarded and go unseen, because the people that were murdered in Beirut were an accumulation of Lebanese citizenry, Arab identity, Muslim faith, Shiite confession, working class, and people that lived in a spatial entity known to back Hezbollah. The civilian victims in Beirut are essentially condemned to being lower on the hierarchical totem pole of humanity than their counterparts in Paris.

In the US, a Pennsylvanian candidate running for the U.S. Senate, Everett Stern, wrote multiple times how he supported the terrorist attacks on Beirut. On Twitter, he declared: "Good news!!! I hope Hezbollah terrorists were killed." When confronted, Stern categorized the attack in Beirut as an attack on Hezbollah.

Hezbollah Fights ISIL Death Squads, But the French Government Supports ISIL

Moreover, the historical patterns of how these events are manipulated cannot be overlooked either. Whenever these attacks take place and governments and mass media go into overdrive to inundate society, they opportunistically promote certain interests.



These interests can take the form of curbing civil liberties or justifications for wars. This is what the US government did after the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

France quickly closed its borders when the tragedy in Paris occurred and before the dust has settled the opportunistic and unpopular French President François Hollande has begun talking of a "merciless" war. This does not auger well. Migrants and immigrants are being blamed while Islamophobia and xenophobia in the European Union will be fuelled. Undoubtedly, the tragedy in Paris will be used to justify and promote the dirty wars in the Middle East that the French government has partnered itself up to wage with the United States. Already reports about Syrian and Egyptian passports found at the Stade

de France are being widely circulated, especially with emphasis on Syria. It was soon reported after the attack that the Charles De Gaulle French Aircraft Carrier was being sent from Toulon to the Middle East to help the US-led military operations.

At the end of the day it cannot be ignored that the ilk behind the attack in Paris are the same breed of people that France has directly or indirectly supported in Syria, Libya, Lebanon, and the broader Middle East. The French government and President Hollande have been supporters of Al-Qaeda, Al-Nusra, and the ISIL/ISIS/DAESH/IS in one form or another. These are the groups that the French government and its allies, such as the US and Saudi Arabia, have supported with weapons, trained, and provided diplomatic and political cover for as proxies in regime change operations in the Middle East. When the same criminals and offenders act the same way in Damascus or Aleppo, their crimes are excused or overlooked. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad quickly made this point about what took place on November 13, 2015.

President Hollande has described the attacks on Paris as a war conducted from abroad. The truth is the opposite. The source is not abroad as the French government claims. There is a connection between this violence and French foreign policy. France's government is one of the authors of the terror that has trained, supported, and encouraged these types of activities. "Now they call them terrorists because today they are killing French people, but when they used to kill Syrian people they were considered jihadists," Bashar Al-Jaafari, the Syrian envoy to the United Nations, has commented.

Less than a year ago, an attack on Charlie Hebdo was conducted by individuals that were supported and encouraged by the French government to go fight in Syria and topple the government in Damascus. Ultimately, the people in France should be angry at the French government for supporting these individuals and groups when they went to fight in Syria and other countries. One way or another, these attacks in Paris are the results of the regime change policies of the U.S. and its allies, including France. If you encourage people to murder and fight overseas, or to support that type of conduct, what do you think they will do inside your country or when they get back? (*Strategic Culture Foundation, November 17, 2015*)