

It Isn't Ferguson, It's the USA. The Broader Issue of the Unfolding US Police State

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Now that almost all mainstream political and media mind managers have responded, in horror, sympathy or skepticism, to the most recent – as this is written – police killing of an unarmed black man, it is time to consider radical action for social change as opposed to the usual reactionary individual reform.

The attention given this latest outrage has been greater than ever before, which is good no matter what form it takes. Most often it has been understandably critical of the police action, though not many will publicly shout “great” at any alleged racially motivated killing unless they are brain dead, or racists, or more likely both.

The specific facts of the case are not known to anyone but the deceased, who cannot speak, and the killer, who would only be believed or doubted by those whose minds were already made up. We know that the dead man was unarmed and that he was shot six times. We also know that he was young, big and may have been angry, but there is nothing in the constitution that says you get the death penalty for being a big black man who may be angry. Or, for that matter a dumb white man in a position of authority. In fact, if being a dumb white man in a position of authority were a capital offense, our government would be the site of an ongoing blood bath of executions. Sarcasm aside, what is to be done?

Another in a dreadful series of murders of unarmed black men by police officers frequently dressed and equipped like an invading colonial army in a foreign country – what they often are – should not only invite anger but also concern for society in general and not just the community in which this killing took place.

Police officers sometimes commit violent acts based on individual racist ignorance, the last two words being synonymous. But far more often they act for the social ignorance of their employers, to do dirty work in communities many Americans who vacation in foreign countries have never seen except on the TV news.

Who wants to visit ghettos where poor, often darker skinned people live, and without hotels, restaurants, museums and gift shops welcoming to tourists? And given class realities which trump alleged differences in race, how many affluent professionals who accept being designated as “people of color” live in or visit such communities? So the rest of us can think we are personally clean, we employ the police to do the socially dirty work in keeping order among people who have every right to occasionally act disorderly because of the often wretched conditions of their lives. This depraved social situation prevails regardless of the mental or moral cleanliness of any individual police officer’s mind.

While we spend trillions on a warfare state that murders foreigners while maintaining military bases all over the world, and tens of billions on the care and feeding of our pets, and billions to prop up an apartheid state in the middle east that makes us party to mass murders and leads to our being increasingly despised by people all over the world, we tolerate communities of tragic poverty, blatant economic inequality, low income and high crime which are the result of political horrors having little to do with the police officers we employ as veritable colonial armies.

Blaming the police for the bigotries of class, poverty and racism endemic to our system is as stupid as blaming the military for wars. And if you believe that soldiers are responsible for war, whether you are a person of color, no color, or more likely, no brains, be glad there is no death penalty for being stupid.

Even our ruling media corporations are unable to deny some unmistakable facts that can no longer be hidden about our economy:

Inequality is written into the market system under control of private profiteers. It must have vast oceans of poverty to maintain the mountain from which a relatively small number of incredibly wealthy people look down on the rest of us. The increased human suffering this system brings is compounded by what is being done to the natural environment which investment capital treats as just another profit making commodity. That is not simply an aspect of the police, the military, parking lot attendants, school teachers or any other group of workers but rather the necessary social outcome of the system they, and we, are part of and suffering from, until and unless we bring about systemic change that ends that endemic inequality, injustice and human suffering.

Prosecuting one cop who kills a person probably innocent of any crime other than being angry will socially accomplish what all other prosecutions of individual killers do: Nothing!

As long as we lavish hundreds of billions of dollars on producing, selling and using weapons, and compound the moral felony of profit for some at loss for most others by maintaining separations based on skin color, national origin or other divisions created to keep us a mass of minorities controlled by a tiny group of plantation masters who own what we call our democratic homeland, we can prosecute individuals for war crimes and continue killing one another until we run out of scapegoats and face the need to stop the war.

While an idiotic governing group threatens war with Russia over the Ukraine and spreads fanatic hatred in the Middle East with a bombing campaign to supposedly bring democracy and peace while creating death, destruction and refugees, the degradation of inequality, poverty and racism grows much worse at home.

Life is getting worse in communities where almost everyone is either poor, low income or living with minimal choices if any at all by comparison to what passes for those available to a diminishing group living above poverty. Those former working class members rebranded as "middle" as they went into debt to purchase what they could not afford, have in recent years expanded to include more varied skin tones and ethnic integration, but are in decline as wealth grows only for the minority at the top. As life becomes more dangerous for those formerly believing they were affluent, it becomes more miserable for those never more than barely surviving.

With ugly race and ethnic barriers used to keep divisions among people, the class barriers

which are the burden of all need to be understood and fought in order to achieve a democratic system that affords social justice, and equality to all and not just some.

Ferguson is another cancer sore in a nation facing a terminal condition if it insists on simply removing one or another blemish while allowing the organism to continue its deterioration. The personal tragedy suffered in suburban St.Louis needs to be seen and acted upon as a national disorder not limited to one community, and certainly not one aspect of the system of private profits and public loss that reduces us all to accept false identitarian divisions when we most need democratic unity. And real democracy, as opposed to the sham we have that disgraces its name, demands radical action to change the system, not just one or another of its component parts.

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