

Military Resistance 16E1

Soldiers Join “Thousands Of Anti-Government Protesters” To Bring Down Government In Armenia: “We Saw Soldiers Take To The Streets, We Saw Priests, Children And Their Parents, Young And Old Coming Out To Show Armenia Was Really United In Wanting These Changes”



Members of the military took part in anti-government protests in Yerevan on Monday (Vahram Baghdasaryan/Reuters)

4.23.2018 Al Jazeera Media Network

Armenia's opposition leader has demanded a snap parliamentary election in the wake of former Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan's resignation over widespread anti-government demonstrations.

Nikol Pashinyan told a rally on Monday in Armenia's capital, Yerevan, he is "ready to discuss conditions of Sargsyan's resignation and transfer of power".

"The National Assembly shall be entitled to nominate candidates for prime minister within a week. Until then, an interim government will be formed, after that snap extraordinary parliamentary elections are needed," Pashinyan said, according to Armenian website NEWS.am.

Sargsyan resigned earlier on Monday following days of protests in Yerevan against his government, which critics accuse of corruption and authoritarian rule.

Thousands of anti-government protesters have taken to the streets since demonstrations began on April 13.

Sargsyan said he would adhere to the demands of the protesters and step down.

"(Opposition leader) Nikol Pashinyan was right. I was wrong. This situation requires solutions, but I won't participate in them. I leave the post of this country's prime minister," a statement on Sargsyan's website said.

"The movement on the streets is against my office. I will fulfil your claim," according to the statement.

Pashinyan, who was released from police detention on Monday fewer than 24 hours after being arrested at a protest in Yerevan, had called on his supporters to launch a "velvet revolution" to remove Sargsyan from power.

Sargsyan, 63, had promised not to run for the post of prime minister having served two consecutive five-year terms as president, but was formally nominated by Armenia's ruling Republican Party earlier this month.

Armenia amended its constitution to change the government from a presidential to a parliamentary system in a 2015 referendum, making the presidency largely ceremonial and strengthening the office of the prime minister, a position which is not constrained by term limits.

Vartan Oskanian, a former Armenian foreign minister, told Al Jazeera the anti-government demonstrations were sparked by Sargsyan reneging on a promise "not to seek any high office if the constitutional change passed".

"The prime minister, under the new constitution, has the combined powers of the president and the prime minister and that was the entire protest against him (Sargsyan)," Oskanian said.

Karen Karapetian, who served as prime minister before Sargsyan assumed office, has been appointed to the role again in an interim capacity.

Al Jazeera's Robin Forestier-Walker, reporting from Yerevan, said Sargsyan's resignation was "astonishing".

"Thousands of people are on the streets, cheering and hugging each other, jumping up and down and honking their horns ... things happened so quickly, I don't think the crowd was expecting this but it is exactly what they wanted," Forestier-Walker said.

"We saw soldiers take to the streets, we saw priests, children and their parents, young and old coming out to show Armenia was really united in wanting these changes."

"This is an indication of how much people in Armenia have realised that they had the power to affect change in a system that was widely regarded as corrupt."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed, Several American Troops Injured In Series Of Attacks In Afghanistan



Security forces stand amid smoke at the site of a suicide attack after the second bombing in Kabul, Afghanistan, Monday, April 30, 2018. A coordinated double bombing hit central Kabul on Monday morning, (AP Photo/Massoud Hossaini)

April 30, 2018 By Carlo Muñoz, The Washington Times

An American service member was killed and a second was wounded during a combat mission in eastern Afghanistan, while several coalition troops were injured in a bombing in the southern part of the country, top commanders in the country confirmed Monday.

In a pair of command statements from Kabul, officials from declined to provide details on the operation in eastern Afghanistan that ended with the American casualties or the nationalities of the troops injured in the bombing in southern Afghanistan's Kandahar province.

The injured U.S. service member in the eastern Afghanistan attack was transported to Bagram Airfield, where he is listed in stable condition. The injured troops in Kandahar were also listed in stable condition after being treated at a coalition facility, command officials said.

Several members of the Afghan security forces were also killed in the Kandahar attack, the officials said.

“My thoughts and those of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan are with the families and friends of our fallen and wounded service members,” said Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan said in a statement on the American casualty.

The dual attacks coincided with a massive bombing in Kabul on Monday, which ended with 25 civilians dead, including nine journalists.

The initial blast, which took place during the bustling rush hour period in the city killed and wounded scores of individuals was followed by a second explosion by a bomber disguised as a reporter on the scene of the initial attack.

Islamic State’s Afghan cell claimed credit for the Kabul bombings. No claim of responsibility was made on the attacks in Kandahar and eastern Afghanistan.

At the Pentagon, Defense Secretary James Mattis downplayed the recent spate of violence which rings in the annual fighting season in the war-torn nation.

Mr. Mattis characterized the bombings as lashing out by the Taliban and the Islamic State, who had suffered military and political setbacks in the face of a reinvigorated American air campaign and Afghan government’s unprecedented offer of unconditional peace talks with the Taliban.

White House national security officials are also supposedly backing an Afghan-led bid to pursue possible peace talks with the notorious Haqqani Network, alongside the Taliban, in an effort to end the 17-year war in the country.

The Pentagon chief was adamant Monday’s attacks was not an indication the U.S.-backed Afghan government was losing momentum in the war against the Taliban.

“This should be completely expected. This is what they do,” he said.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

5 Romanian Soldiers Killed in Kandahar Bomb Blast

30 April 2018 by teleSUR/GB

The target of the bomb was believed to be Romanian troops on patrol in the area.

Five Romanian soldiers and 16 others suffered injuries as a result of the attack. Several women were reportedly among the injured.

Responsibility for the bombing has not been claimed by any specific group.

14 Regime Soldiers Killed In Kunduz Attack: “The Taliban Spokesman Said 130 Attacks Had Been Conducted Country-Wide After The Announcement Of Spring Offensive”

Apr 26, 2018 By Ajmal kakar, Pajhwok

KUNDUZ CITY Fourteen security forces have been killed in the Taliban attack in the Dasht-i-Archi district of northern Kunduz province, an official said on Thursday.

District Chief Nasruddin Nazari told Pajhwok Afghan News the Taliban stormed Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers check post in the Qurlaq village on Wednesday night.

Fourteen ANA soldiers had been killed and four others injured in the attack, he added.

Nazari said the Taliban torched ANA vehicle and took weapons and ammunition with them. Militants managed to flee the area when reinforcement reached to the site of attack.

Sources of Afghan Local Police (ALP) have acknowledged the incident but they have not provided information about casualties inflicted on both sides.

Takhar Civil Hospital Director Jamil Frotan confirmed receiving the bodies of 13 Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers from the Qarloq area of Dasht-i-Archi district.

However, Mohammad Radmanish said eight ANA personnel killed and wounded in the assault that came hours the Taliban announced launching their annual spring offensive.

Also on Wednesday night, the militants launched coordinate attacks on the Baghlan Markazi district of Baghlan province and police checkpoints on highways linking the province with Kabul and Kunduz.

At least two policemen were killed and six others wounded in the attack, local officials said. A fierce clash is still ongoing in Khalazae village of Pul-i-Khumri, the provincial capital.

The Taliban have not yet spoken about the incident, but the group's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said 130 attacks had been conducted country-wide after the announcement of spring offensive Al Khandaq.

He claimed killing scores of security personnel during spring attacks so far.

Bombers Target Security Forces, Journalists In Kabul Near The Afghan Intelligence Headquarters

April 30, 2018 BY THOMAS JOSCELYN, Long War Journal [Excerpts]

Two bombers struck in the Kabul, Afghanistan earlier today.

The attacks were quickly claimed by the Islamic State's so-called Khorasan "province," which released a picture of the jihadists responsible. The two "martyrs" were identified as Qa'qa' al-Kurdi and Khalil al-Qurashi.

The Islamic State claims that the bombers detonated themselves near the Afghan intelligence headquarters, killing or wounding 110 people.

The first jihadist reportedly blew himself up near a security checkpoint for the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in the Shash Darak district. The second bomber targeted journalists who were covering the aftermath of the first explosion.

Hashmat Stanikzai, a police spokesman, told AFP that the second terrorist "disguised himself as a journalist and detonated himself among the crowd."

At least nine journalists were killed, and six others wounded. According to Reporters Without Borders (RSF), it "was the deadliest attack on the media since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001."

"The second blast killed ToloNews cameraman Yar Mohammad Tokhi, three Radio Azadai (Radio Free Europe) journalists (Ebadollah Hananzi, Sabvon Kakeker and Maharam Darani), two TV1 cameramen (Ghazi Rasoli and Norozali Rajabi, aka Khamoush), AFP photographer Shah Marai Fezi, Mashal TV reporter Salim Talash and Mashal TV cameraman Ali Salimi," RSF said in a statement.

The wounded journalists “who were badly injured” include “Naser Hashemi of Al Jazeera, Omar Soltani of Reuters, Ahmadshah Azimi of Nedai Aghah, Ayar Amar of the weekly Vahdat Mili and Davod Ghisanai of the privately-owned TV channel Mivand.”

RSF also noted that all of the slain journalists “were less than 30 years old,” meaning that they were teenagers or even younger when the Afghan War began in late 2001.

Not long after the bombings in Kabul, the Islamic State’s Amaq News Agency claimed that an Afghan intelligence commander was killed and a police chief wounded in a pair of bombings in the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province.

And in a follow-up statement on the Kabul attack, Amaq said that the twin bombings were the third instance in which “the Afghan intelligence headquarters” had been targeted in the capital this year.

Amaq crowed that “among the dead and injured” were “correspondents and photographers from channels and international news agencies.”

More Resistance Action

Apr 25 2018 by Khaama Press & 4.28.18 CNN

An explosion took place in the second police district of the city earlier this evening after a magnetic improvised explosive device was detonated near the police forces.

A spokesman for Kabul police commandment Hashmat Stanikzai confirmed the incident and said the blast take place in the second police district of the city.

He said a magnetic bomb was detonated close to Abdul Rahman mosque and as a result one policeman was wounded.

The site of the explosion is located in the heart of the city considered as the key downtown part and is home to several government compounds as well as the route to the main Kabul bazaar.

No individual or group has so far claimed responsibility behind the explosion.

The anti-government armed militants have been attempting to increase attacks in the key cities and provinces of the country during the recent months.

A group of insurgents launched a coordinated attack on a security outpost in Company area of the city in the West earlier today.

According to the security officials, at least two policemen were wounded although other security sources and eyewitnesses in the area say at least three policemen lost their lives in the attack.

Two Afghan soldiers were killed when a car bomb exploded Saturday in Afghanistan's southern Helmand province, an Afghan official said.

The explosive-laden vehicle targeted an Afghan National Army base in Nadali District, Mohammad Radmanish, deputy spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of Defense, told CNN.

POLICE WAR REPORTS: **[Lest We Forget]**

**Hell On Earth:
“Those Awaiting Trial In Their Airless
Cells Were Enduring An
Unimaginable 115 Degrees”
“The Prisoners Have Not Been Convicted
Of A Crime”**



Inmates at the Workhouse jail in St Louis. (photo: Carolina Hidalgo/St Louis Public Radio)

30 July 17 By Heather Ann Thompson, Jacobin

“Help us!” came the cries from inside St Louis’s notorious “workhouse” jail last Tuesday night.

Men and women locked up there had apparently been begging for assistance for days, but on this night, their pleas happened to be heard by someone on the outside, who posted a video of the disturbing scene on Facebook.

The footage soon went viral and by Friday night, protesters had surrounded the jail, demanding the facility be closed because the nearly 850 people inside were suffering from the week's brutal heat wave.

With temperatures topping 100 degrees outside, those awaiting trial in their airless cells were enduring an unimaginable 115 degrees.

Authorities pepper-sprayed the protesters, and eventually arrested several. But they returned the next night. And their persistence worked. By Monday morning five industrial-sized air-conditioning units had been ordered, bringing the temperature inside the facility down to a much more humane 78 degrees.

What happened this week serves as a reminder that America's jails and prisons are absolute hellholes where human rights violations occur on a regular basis.

It is the men and the women who endure these abuses who force the nation to confront just how inhumanely it treats those it confines. And it is those of us on the outside that must stand in solidarity with them, and insist they be treated as people.

The St Louis Workhouse, officially called the "Medium Security Institution," is a particularly grim place.

The facility's nickname dates back to the nineteenth century, when, in 1843, city officials insisted that prisoners toil in the nearby quarries. The way it operates today is equally bleak. Although the present facility wasn't constructed until 1966, the St Louis Workhouse carries on the Dickensian tradition, treating anyone locked up there as less than human.

The prisoners — who, again, have not even been convicted of a crime — are kept in quarters filled with black mold and infested with cockroaches and rats, skittering in and out of their cells.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the facility is also known for its physical abuses.

In 2012, according to local prisoner rights activists, the Workhouse was cited in a civil suit alleging that guards forced detainees to fight one another for sport, and in 2013 the Justice Department found the institution's rates of sexual assault were well above those of most other jails.

And then there's the heat. Although the Workhouse sits near the Missouri River, on the north side of a city where summer temperatures routinely hover around 90 degrees, it has no air conditioning.

When St Louis mayor Lyda Krewson found herself embroiled in a PR crisis this past week, she couldn't have been surprised that local jails were blisteringly hot — or that exposing people to such extreme heat is potentially fatal.

Indeed, it is regular policy in St Louis and other places to open public “cooling centers” whenever the heat index rises to dangerous levels. They know the lethality of heat.

Consider, for instance, just a few of the heat-induced deaths that have occurred around the country over the last decade. Back in 2006, headlines decried the heat-related death of twenty-one-year-old Michigan prisoner Timothy Souders. Guards had shackled Souders to a cement slab in a swelteringly hot solitary confinement cell and left him there. He eventually collapsed and died. Even though surveillance cameras made it clear Souders was in severe distress, guards did nothing cool the young man down.

And then there was the 2009 death of an Arkansas prisoner named Marcia Powell. According to one report, Powell was placed in an “unroofed, wire-fenced holding cell while awaiting transfer to another part of the prison,” where she went into a coma, and eventually died, from a heat stroke.

So bad has the heat stroke problem been in Texas prisons that in 2011 alone, a dozen men died from the extreme heat. In a civil suit filed thereafter, a federal judge issued a scathing eighty-three-page opinion outlining the horrific conditions. In one instance, a prisoner named Larry Gene McCollum sat awaiting trial in a facility whose heat index reached nearly 130 degrees.

When he died, McCollum’s body temperature was 109 degrees.

The climate control problem in America’s correctional facilities is so severe — whether it’s Florida or New York or California — that Obama’s Justice Department sided with, in an amicus brief, inmates claiming that extreme heat constituted “cruel and unusual punishment.”

The problem is, corrections officials pay little attention to what courts decide or the Bill of Rights demands when it comes to treating the men and women in their charge.

And so time and again the people on the inside are heard only when they cry out for help directly, loudly and publicly. And their conditions are improved only when we on the outside hear those cries and stand with them.

In 2010, for example, it wasn’t until several dozen prisoners confined in oppressively hot, windowless cells in New Hampshire began a hunger strike that anyone took notice of their suffering. Already they had resorted to flooding their cells with a few inches of toilet water simply to get some relief from the heat. But it was only when the men stood together, refusing sustenance, that officials finally agreed to put some fans in the unit where they were held.

Way back in 1990, a St Louis district court judge ordered authorities to improve the conditions of those locked in the Workhouse — starting with not jamming untold numbers of people into a cramped, hellish place simply because they were too poor to afford bail.

But corrections officials didn’t listen.

By 2009, the ACLU of Eastern Missouri was forced to issue a new report — this one indicating that not only had the facility become severely overcrowded, it remained “squalid” and abuses there were appallingly routine. Still nothing happened.

Last week, the men and women awaiting trial at the St Louis Workhouse were finally heard. Why? Because they spoke up for themselves and other ordinary people rallied with them. Today these pre-trial detainees are no longer sitting in ovens. And a number of nonprofits are mobilizing to raise bail to get some of them home.

But this is no time for celebration.

Across the country this summer, men and women are still barely breathing through the oppressive heat in their cells. The solution? According to a spokesman from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, prisoners “are encouraged to refrain from strenuous activity . . . are given extra fluids, ice and are encouraged to take more and longer showers to cool off and prevent heat stress.”

As the men and women from St Louis have made clear, that’s not good enough. Not by a long shot.

Unarmed Mississippi Man Killed By 20-Minute Police Chokehold And Denied CPR: “Herrington Said He Was ‘Going To Get That Nigger’ Seconds Before Confronting Sanders”



Jonathan Sanders, 39, repeatedly told the officer 'I can't breathe,' according to witness.
(photo: Frances Sanders)

16 July 15 By Jon Swaine, Guardian UK

Witnesses have told Mississippi state investigators that an unarmed black man died after being kept in a chokehold by a police officer for more than 20 minutes and denied CPR,

according to his family's attorneys, who said an autopsy confirmed he was fatally strangled.

State medical examiners provisionally found Jonathan Sanders died through homicide by manual asphyxiation, according to attorneys Chokwe Lumumba and CJ Lawrence.

Sanders, who was 39, repeatedly told Stonewall police officer Kevin Herrington "I can't breathe", according to one witness.

According to the attorneys, one witness alleged that Herrington said he was "going to get that nigger" seconds before confronting Sanders in Stonewall on the night of 8 July, and several said the officer was the aggressor.

Police have described the encounter as "a fight".

"We believe there is probable cause for a prosecution," the attorney Lawrence said in an interview on Wednesday. "A determination should now be made by a jury at an open trial as to whether officer Herrington had any justification for choking Jonathan Sanders to death."

The attorneys are requesting that a special prosecutor take over the case, citing remarks at a town hall meeting on Tuesday by Clarke County's district attorney, Bilbo Mitchell, that he had handled 15 cases of killings by police during his career and none had resulted in an officer being indicted.

Warren Strain, a spokesman for the Mississippi department of public safety, did not respond to a request to confirm the preliminary conclusions of the medical examiner's autopsy. Stonewall police chief Michael Street did not respond to a message requesting comment.

Sanders' attorneys said they were present this week while three witnesses, whom they declined to identify due to safety concerns, separately gave matching accounts of what happened to investigators from the Mississippi bureau of investigation (MBI) during filmed interviews.

According to the attorneys, the three witnesses are related to Sanders by marriage and one has 10 years of experience working in law enforcement.

They said this witness told Herrington he was trained in CPR and had his own mask for use on a patient but was repeatedly prevented by the officer from using it on Sanders.

The version of events given by witnesses, they said, is that Sanders was riding by a gas station on a horse-drawn buggy at about 10.30pm when he made a comment to Herrington, who had pulled over a driver. The attorneys said this driver had told them he was drunk and his registration tags had expired.

The driver said his stop was abandoned when Sanders asked Herrington "Why don't you leave that man alone?" or similar, said Lumumba. "According to the driver, once the officer saw Jonathan, his attention was piqued and he said: 'I'm going to get that nigger.'"

The attorneys said investigators from the MBI had informed them they were aware of the alleged racist remark and were in communication with the driver.

Lumumba said a person they call Witness 1 was standing at the window of a nearby home seeking signal for a cellphone when he or she saw Sanders approaching on his buggy, wearing a light on a headband similar to those used by climbers.

“Then, Witness 1 saw officer Herrington’s blue lights come on,” said Lumumba. “Jonathan’s horse reared up, startled, and knocked Jonathan off his horse. His light slipped around his neck. Jonathan ran to get the horse and Officer Herrington came from behind him, yanked him down to the ground in front of the house with the light strap and placed him in a chokehold. Jonathan didn’t even see him.”

Early reports said witnesses had thought Sanders was choked with some kind of flashlight, which attorneys now believe was a reference to the head-mounted light.

“I never saw him go for the officer,” said Witness 1, who was quickly joined by Witnesses 2 and 3, according to the attorneys. They said Herrington held Sanders face-down on the ground and placed his arms around Sanders’ neck to restrain him.

Witness 3, who the attorneys said has law enforcement experience, told investigators he ran outside to see what was going on and told Herrington: “Let him up; he won’t be able to breathe in my grass because my grass is too high,” said Lumumba. Witness 2, who had also moved outside, said he or she then heard Sanders twice say “I can’t breathe”.

The witnesses said Herrington was shouting to them that Sanders was reaching for his gun, despite the 39-year-old being unable to reach the weapon. The officer initially asked Witness 3 to help remove the gun from his belt, before changing his mind and asking for a woman who had been travelling with him in his patrol car to come out and remove the gun with Witness 3’s guidance.

“The chokehold had been going on the entire time,” said Lumumba, who noted that Eric Garner died in about three minutes when placed in a chokehold by a police officer in New York City last year, prompting months of protests.

“Witness 3 was saying ‘Let him up, let him up, he’s not breathing, let me do CPR,’” said Lumumba. “He is trained in CPR and had a mask in his home. But Herrington said ‘No, stand back’.”

The witnesses said that after being instructed by the officer, Herrington’s companion attempted to call for backup but could not operate his radio system, according to the attorneys. Witness 3 again stepped in to help, and officers were dispatched, but they travelled to the wrong location and had to be redirected.

“This time frame, according to Witness 3, is that Jonathan was in a chokehold for more than 20 minutes, close to 30 minutes,” said Lumumba, who said that when a support officer identified as “Officer Derek” arrived, Herrington told his colleague: “I think I put him to sleep.”

Medics were called and used Witness 3's mask, according to Lumumba, but they did not appear to competently administer CPR.

After they sat Sanders upright, "blood starts rushing out of his mouth, and they are never able to get a pulse", said the attorney. Sanders was put in an ambulance and taken to hospital, although the family's attorneys say he was dead at the scene.

Police Tase Alabama Teen 3 Times While She Was Having A Seizure, They Then Tased Her Mother

July 14th, 2015 by AL, MintPress News

A lawsuit filed this month by an Etowah County woman alleges that police officers from Rainbow City repeatedly fired Tasers at her and her teenage daughter at a concert while the daughter was suffering from grand mal seizures.

The 32-page lawsuit, filed July 9 in U.S. District Court, accuses at least five Rainbow City officers and three Gadsden officers who were allegedly handling security for a Jan. 16 hip-hop concert of excessive force, torture "and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment." It also names Rainbow City Police Chief Greg Carroll and Center Stage, the entertainment venue where the suit alleges the incident took place.

The woman and her daughter seek damages for pain, emotional distress, medical expenses, punitive damages and attorney's fees.

Gregory Harp, attorney for the plaintiffs, said the lawsuit speaks for itself.

"A Taser was used three times on a child's chest, during a medical emergency, while she was pinned to the ground by officers," he said. "Other officers present at the scene failed to intervene. Her mother was knocked to the ground, handcuffed, and then she herself Tased and arrested."

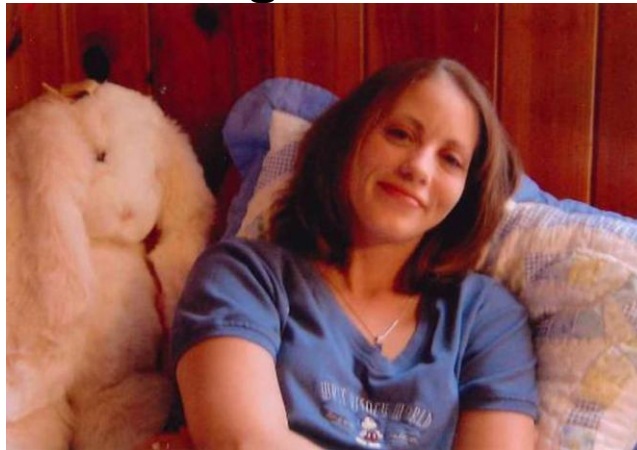
Gadsden City Attorney Lee Roberts said he had no comment as he has not seen the suit. A message left for Center Stage was not returned. Rainbow City Attorney Jim Turnbach said he had not seen the lawsuit, but said it would be "vigorously defended."

According to the lawsuit, the incident happened at a Jan. 16 concert for hip-hop artist Kevin Gates at Center Stage. Earlier that day, the teenager suffered a grand mal seizure at her high school and was treated there but not taken to a hospital.

The suit states that the teenager, as the result of an accident, suffers from a medical condition that brings on the seizures causing her to lose consciousness, experience muscle contractions and "sometimes exhibit loud vocalizations caused by the forceful exhalation of air from her lungs."

Grand mal seizures are caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Police Shooting Of Caroline Small Was 'Worst' Ever Seen, GBI Agent Says: Officers Were Cleared In 2010 Case Riddled With Special Treatment, AJC Investigation Finds



Caroline Small, who died a week after the shooting, never regained consciousness to tell her side of what happened. She had struggled for years with drug and alcohol addiction as well as mental health problems. (Special)

Jul 2, 2015 By Brad Schrade, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Brunswick — At high noon on June 18, 2010, Caroline Small, a petite 35-year-old woman and mother of two, sat behind the wheel of her beat-up Buick Century with nowhere to turn. Police vehicles flanked her on two sides, a shallow ditch was on another and a utility pole blocked her rear bumper.

Unarmed but distraught, Small's crime to that point had been reckless driving and leading police on an erratic low-speed chase that ended when her car, tires flattened to the rims, spun out on a suburban street. Sirens blared and officers shouted as she put the car into reverse, then drive, then reverse. Two officers stood ground near their cars, guns drawn.

"If she moves the car, I'm going to shoot her," an officer yelled. Small pulled forward. Eight bullets tore through the windshield, striking her in the head and the face. The shooting was captured on police dash cam video.

So was what the two Glynn County officers said afterward. They compared their marksmanship. One told a witness how he saw Small's head explode.

Their words were as callous as Small's death unnecessary.

"This is the worst one I've ever investigated," said Mike McDaniel, a retired GBI agent who supervised the 2010 criminal investigation into the officers' actions. "I don't think it's a good shoot. I don't think it's justified."

Small's death has also haunted Byron Bennett, who as a member of the grand jury that considered the officers' fate voted to clear them of wrongdoing. Bennett now regrets that choice.

"I felt like I let that lady down," he said. "I felt like they killed that lady. They didn't give her a chance."

The grand jury Bennett served on found the two Glynn County officers who fired the shots — Sgt. Robert C. Sasser and Officer Michael T. Simpson — were justified in pulling the trigger. A federal judge last September threw out the Small family's wrongful death lawsuit saying the two officers killed lawfully because they thought Small posed a threat. Neither officer was ever disciplined.

What happened in Small's case demonstrates the broad powers police in Georgia have to shoot and kill unarmed citizens and to influence the outcome of their cases in the legal process. An Atlanta Journal-Constitution/Channel 2 Action News investigation of the case found that:

- **Glynn County police officers interfered with the GBI's investigation from the start, seeking to protect the officers.**
- **The department tampered with the crime scene and created misleading evidence that was shown to the grand jury.**
- The local district attorney shared the state's evidence with the officers nearly two months before the grand jury convened and cut an unusual deal with them just before it met.

Amidst a national debate over police body cameras, Small's case also highlights how limited video can be when matched against the wide latitude afforded police and the public's predisposition to believe officers when they say their lives are in danger, no matter the circumstances.

The officers' defense was simple: they believed Small was using her car as a weapon and intended to run them over. They feared for their lives and the public's safety. The argument rested on the implausible notion that Small, resting on her rims, had enough room to drive through a narrow gap and run them down.

Five years later, Sasser and Simpson are both certified officers in Georgia with their police powers intact. Neither would be interviewed for this story. The case is one of at least 150 fatal police shootings in Georgia since 2010 identified by an AJC/Channel 2 investigation.

Small, who died a week after the shooting, never regained consciousness to tell her side of what happened. She had struggled for years with drug and alcohol addiction as well as mental health problems.

Her divorce had finalized just days before the shooting. Her ex-husband, Keith Small, said he loved his wife and remembers her as a caring mother to their daughter, Analiese, who was 3 when her mother was killed, and an older daughter from a previous relationship.

His wife had relapsed in the months leading up to the shooting and been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Dissociative Disorder. He believes her mental health issues played into her actions the day of the chase. She needed help from police, he said, not to be shot. Justice, he said, was not served.

Small has never spoken about the case before, but he is speaking out now, in part, to help clear his wife's name. After the shooting, he said, the public discussion about her drifted to her troubled history with addiction and distracted from the officers' actions.

"She wasn't just a junkie," Small said. "She was a mom. She was a college student. She loved painting. She loved to read....I do want more people to understand that she wasn't just some horrible person running away from the police, because that's not who she was at all."

The Video

David Perry, a 64-year-old prosecutor, was the newly named acting district attorney for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit, including Glynn County, when he met with GBI agents and Glynn Police Chief Matt Doering to watch the dash cam video for the first time.

Perry told the investigators prior to viewing the 31-minute tape that he was pro-law enforcement and skeptical that the officers in the Small shooting had done anything wrong, McDaniel said. As he watched the video, however, Perry's demeanor changed, McDaniel said.

Officer Sasser's dash cam video shows Small backing up into the utility pole, then pulling forward and bumping into his county vehicle.

At roughly the same time, Georgia State Patrol Trooper Jonathan Malone is seen running behind Small's vehicle in an effort to extract her from the driver's side, but he retreats when he sees Glynn County officers with their guns pointed at the Buick.

"Let me get out there and get her out," Malone calls out to the other officers, according to the GBI audio transcripts.

"Hold on, hold on," one unknown officer responds.

"If she moves the car, I'm going to shoot her," Simpson says.

Moments later gunfire erupts and Small is hit by police bullets.

After the shooting, Sasser and Simpson are heard on video discussing the shoot.

“Where did you hit her?” Simpson asks, according to a GBI transcript.

“I hit her right in the face,” Sasser says.

“I watched the bridge of her nose...I pulled the trigger and I watched it hit her at the same time I think I fired,” Simpson says.

Sure Small was dead, Simpson waved off a witness and former EMT who offered to render aid, leaving her slumped against the window bleeding, records show.

The bloodshed began as a simple call to the police of a suspicious person.

Earlier that day, someone spotted Small sitting in her car at a local shopping mall and called police because they thought she might be doing drugs.

When a Glynn County officer approached and asked her to turn off the engine and step outside her car, Small ignored him and drove away. An expanding posse of patrol vehicles, sirens blaring, tried to stop her as she drove around the mall parking lot. Leaving the mall, Small drove four miles through Brunswick, never exceeding 35 mph.

Police laid down traffic sticks to flatten Small’s tires. Small struggled to keep the car on the road, driving on her rims and fishtailing through residential streets. At one point, she drove down the street listed on her driver’s license.

In the video, the chase ends when Trooper Malone, leading the pursuit, bumps the rear of the Buick and it spins to a stop. Sasser quickly positions his Glynn County police car on her front bumper, essentially confining her between the utility pole and his car and the state trooper’s vehicle.

After the video finished, Acting DA Perry hung his head and “turned green,” McDaniel told the AJC and Channel 2.

“We’re going to have to take this to a grand jury,” Perry said, according to McDaniel. “This is bad.”

The Investigation

Within hours of the shooting, Chief Doering had formed his own opinion of what happened. Based on witness statements and dash cam video, Doering told local reporters that his preliminary review led him to believe that the officers’ feared their lives were in danger and that they acted appropriately.

The next day’s news headline backed him up: “Woman shot trying to run down police.”

As is customary in many police shootings across the state, the chief called in the GBI to conduct an investigation of the officers' conduct. The two agencies clashed repeatedly, according to both sides.

Glynn County officers accused the GBI of messing up the crime scene when a technician crawled on the hood of Small's Buick to examine the bullet holes. GBI agents became concerned when Glynn's investigators insisted on sitting in on the witness interviews, causing potential legal problems if the case went to criminal prosecution.

Chief Doering believed the GBI's lead investigator, Lindsay Smith, who reported to McDaniel, was biased against the officers. At a certain point, it became clear to GBI agents that Glynn police were conducting a separate, parallel investigation to their own.

Tensions came to a head during a heated exchange between GBI agents and Glynn officials just days into the investigation. At a meeting to review the GBI's use of force investigation policies, Tommy Tindale, Glynn's head of internal affairs, told GBI agents that "the only reason we call you in is for public perception," according to McDaniel's sworn deposition in the Small family's civil suit.

Tindale went on to say that the department had an obligation to protect its officers.

In an interview with the AJC and Channel 2, Doering said he called the GBI in to conduct an independent investigation. He acknowledged some in his department had concerns about the GBI's conduct.

"I think that (Agent Smith) was not being as impartial to the facts as I thought that perhaps she could have been," Doering said. "She was more accusatory versus just fact finding and there's a difference. You don't accuse somebody of doing something."

But Doering and his investigators weren't being impartial to the facts either, and their handling of the crime scene omitted one crucial detail: the location of Simpson's car.

Simpson, one of the shooters, joined the chase in his police-issued SUV and when Small spun out pulled up to the left of Sasser's car and a short distance behind the other police vehicles.

Immediately after the shooting, however, another Glynn officer moved Simpson's vehicle across the street, according to that officer's police report. The car was left off crime scene diagrams, and its exact location was never established by investigators.

The omission created a huge opening for the officers, one that would be exploited fully when the case went to the grand jury.

The District Attorney

The day Acting District Attorney Perry watched the dash cam video he told the Brunswick News that he planned to indict Sasser and Simpson for manslaughter. Doering was quoted saying he disagreed with the DA's position, but respected it.

“Was there an immediate danger to the officers or the public for them to use the level of force they did?” Perry told the newspaper. “To me the answer was no.”

Days later, Perry inexplicably reversed course, and told the Florida Times-Union in Jacksonville that he would not seek an indictment when he took the case to the grand jury.

“I have no preconceived notions or stance but there are questions here that need to be answered,” he said.

Doering told the newspaper he was relieved.

Perry died this past February, so the reasons for his abrupt change of heart are not fully known. But the record shows that a battle over a permanent replacement for the DA’s job was taking place in the midst of the investigation into the shooting.

A young prosecutor in the office named Jackie Johnson also wanted to be Brunswick DA and announced her intentions just three days after the shooting. She enlisted Chief Doering’s support and Doering wrote Gov. Sonny Perdue a letter of recommendation. In court documents, Doering acknowledged that he spoke to Johnson about Perry’s public statements about the Small case, and that she found his public comments inappropriate.

Perdue appointed Johnson Brunswick Circuit district attorney Aug. 9, and she was sworn in Aug. 12 in a ceremony attended by lawmakers, local judges and police officers, according to news reports. Two days later, she was quoted in the Brunswick News saying she intended to delay taking Small’s case to a grand jury, originally scheduled for later that month.

Johnson’s appointment returned Perry to his previous status as assistant DA in the office. In one of her first official acts on the job, however, Johnson fired Perry, according court records, and took over the Small case herself.

Johnson declined to be interviewed by AJC/Channel 2 reporters for this story.

“As District Attorney, I do not want my words used to compound the tragic nature of this case for our community,” she said in a letter to the news organizations.

Before he died, Perry spoke to an attorney handling the Small family’s civil lawsuit. There was no doubt in his mind, he told Atlanta attorney William Atkins, that he lost his job at the DA’s office because of his position on what happened to Caroline Small June 18.

The Grand Jury

Johnson waited a year to present the Small case to a grand jury. In the interim, she asked a mentor to review the evidence. Rick Currie, the DA in neighboring Waycross, had worked with Johnson when she was fresh out of law school.

Currie told Johnson he thought the officers should be charged with felony murder, Currie told the AJC and Channel 2.

Instead, Johnson undertook a highly unusual set of maneuvers. She cut a deal with the two officers, asking them to waive their right to a 15-day advance notice of any indictment. In return, she agreed not to offer an indictment for grand jurors to consider — unless they asked for one.

Almost unheard of in grand jury proceedings, Johnson also shared the state's case and evidence with the officers' attorneys two months before the grand jury met, according to court records.

The grand jury convened Aug. 17, 2011, and Johnson's deference to the officers showed, according to GBI records and the depositions of witnesses who testified.

A PowerPoint intended to outline the state's evidence did not include details about the two officers' prior use of force, particularly helpful to Sasser, who had shot a drug suspect in a parking lot in 2005. In that case, Sasser said he heard an engine rev as if it were going to spring forward and he shot the suspect because he feared for his life.

Johnson did allow grand jurors, however, to learn about Small's bouts with addiction and past run-ins with the law, including accusations of criminal trespass, theft and burglary. Traces of cocaine and alcohol, found in her system, were also presented to the grand jury.

The prior tensions with the GBI also resurfaced. GBI agents, for example, argued to Johnson that Small's criminal history was not relevant because the officers didn't know that at the time of the shooting and should not be included in the presentation to the grand jury.

Johnson also allowed the officers' attorneys to cross-examine GBI Agent Smith in the grand jury chamber. Having already been granted access to the evidence, they came prepared.

Smith "described the two lawyers basically just taking over the grand jury from Jackie," McDaniel told the AJC and Channel 2. "It's like nothing I've ever heard of before."

Agent Smith was also troubled by an animated re-enactment of the shooting that Johnson allowed to be shown to grand jurors. Created by the Glynn County police department, it showed the two officers standing between a wide gap between the patrol cars as they aimed their weapons. A shifting perspective showed how Small would have a clear angle to run them over. The animation concluded with Small's car driving through the gap and running into the officers.

Smith had seen the animation and believed it presented a grossly inaccurate picture of the crime scene, she later said in a sworn deposition.

The animation also had a huge omission: Simpson's SUV — inexplicably left off the crime scene diagram — was nowhere to be seen. At the time of the shooting, Simpson pulled up to the left of Sasser's car and near Trooper Malone's vehicle.

The tight space between the utility pole behind Small and Sasser's vehicle in front of her — even without Simpson's vehicle pictured in the animation — didn't leave Small enough room to flee, Smith said.

"There is no way on this Earth that car could have moved in one swift motion through that gap," Smith said in her deposition. "The way they showed it, with the wheel being turned and through the gap she went, was impossible."

Perhaps the most powerful evidence in the grand jury chamber was the officers' statements that closed out the proceedings. In Georgia, officers are given the special privilege to make an unchallenged statement at the end of the grand jury hearing. At least one of the officers broke down in tears, as did some of the grand jurors. One grand juror handed an officer tissues, according to another grand juror.

Grand juror Charles McManus, a retired attorney, told the AJC and Channel 2 that he asked about available charges and was told there were none, just a determination if the officers were justified in shooting Small.

The foreman called for a vote and the grand jurors voted 12-6 that they were. There was no discussion or deliberation prior to the vote, McManus said.

"I thought the video pretty much raised serious questions as to whether or not they needed to fire," said McManus, who voted against the officers. "I don't know whether they committed a crime or not, but I felt that they should go before a jury or a court to determine that."

Bennett, the grand juror who now regrets his vote to clear the officers, told the AJC and Channel 2 that he believed the rush to vote without any deliberation affected the outcome. So did the way that he thought the evidence was weighted to the officers' side.

"We failed the process," Bennett said.

After the grand jury's decision was announced, the grand jurors were dismissed. About half of them, according to Smith's sworn deposition, hugged officers Sasser and Simpson on the way out.

The Aftermath

Keith Small had no idea Johnson was even presenting his ex-wife's case. He learned about the grand jury meeting, and its decision, from his attorney in a phone call afterward. He was dumbfounded.

"We had no clue," Small said. "I was once again stunned how that played out with no one being made aware that was coming up."

In June 2012, the family filed a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of Caroline Small's two daughters. Federal Judge Lisa Godbey Wood dismissed the case last September on summary judgment in favor of the officers. A federal appeals court for the Eleventh Circuit affirmed the decision in March.

In her opinion issued Sept. 30, 2014, Judge Wood called the shooting tragic, and noted that few facts in the case were in dispute. After watching the four dash cam videos from the chase, Judge Wood determined that Small's death was not necessary, but that the officers' actions were constitutional.

"Objectively reasonable officers would conclude that she posed a threat to, at a minimum, the officers standing a few yards away," Judge Wood wrote.

Today, Sgt. Sasser remains with the Glynn County Police Department. Simpson left Glynn in June 2014 and took a job as a Glynn County sheriff's deputy in March.

After their investigation in Brunswick, GBI Director Vernon Keenan changed the GBI's policy regarding how the agency investigates officer-involved shootings. The policy now makes clear that any law enforcement agency seeking the GBI's assistance could have no involvement or say in the investigation. It was intended to avoid the conflict and controversy the agency encountered in Brunswick.

"We do not want to go through the experience we had in Glynn County," Keenan said.

"Glynn County wanted to debate with us certain investigative steps that we were taking and they wanted to argue with us about some of the protocols we were following, and that's not acceptable."

MILITARY NEWS

**At Least 126 Bases Report
Water Contaminants Linked To
Cancer, Birth Defects:
"These Included 36 Sites With
Drinking Water Contamination On-
Base"
"1,500 People With Elevated Levels In
The Portsmouth Area"**

“DoD Tested 2,668 Groundwater Wells Both On And In The Surrounding Off-Base Community And Found That 61% Tested Above EPA’s Recommended Levels”

4.27 By: Tara Copp, Military Times

The water at or around 126 military installations contains potentially harmful levels of perfluorinated compounds, which have been linked to cancers and developmental delays for fetuses and infants, the Pentagon has found.

In a March report provided to the House Armed Services Committee, the Pentagon for the first time publicly listed the full scope of the known contamination. The Defense Department identified 401 active and Base Closure and Realignment installations in the United States with at least one area where there was a known or suspected release of perfluorinated compounds.

These included 36 sites with drinking water contamination on-base, and more than 90 sites that reported either on-base or off-base drinking water or groundwater contamination, in which the water source tested above the Environmental Protection Agency’s acceptable levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate or perfluorooctanoic acid, also known as PFOS and PFOAs.

The man-made chemicals, which can be used to make items heat or water resistant, are found in everyday household, food and clothing items, even take-out food wrappers.

At military bases, however, they are concentrated in the foam used to put out aircraft fires.

Maureen Sullivan, deputy assistant secretary of defense for environment, safety and occupational health, said DoD has already made safety changes at affected bases, including installing filters and providing bottled water to families living there. It has also released the full list of installations, reported in a lengthy chart attached toward the end of the congressional report, and will be working with the Centers for Disease Control next year on a study of the potential long-term effects of exposure.

Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson was asked about the exposure this week on Capitol Hill, where she was testifying about the service’s fiscal 2019 budget needs.

“It’s an issue not just in New Hampshire, but at military installations across this country,” said Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-New Hampshire.

“We have 1,500 people who have been tested with elevated levels in the Portsmouth area, who are anxious about their future and their children’s future. And I know there are

many people throughout the Air Force and our other military installations who share that concern.”

In all, 25 Army bases; 50 Air Force bases, 49 Navy or Marine Corps bases and two Defense Logistics Agency sites have tested at higher than acceptable levels for the compounds in either their drinking water or groundwater sources.

Additionally, DoD tested 2,668 groundwater wells both on and in the surrounding off-base community and found that 61 percent of them tested above the EPA’s recommended levels.

In 2016 the EPA established a new, lower guideline for acceptable levels of PFOS or PFOA levels in water supplies: no more 70 parts per trillion. While the EPA did not make the guidelines enforceable, DoD decided to test all of its locations and work toward complying with the new standards.

It won’t be a quick fix, Sullivan said.

The first target for the department was to address the 36 direct drinking water sources that are contaminated and “cut off that human exposure as soon as possible,” Sullivan said. DoD was only able to do that quickly at the 24 locations where it manages the water supply.

At those locations it has installed filters at the water source or inside base housing, relocated water usage to another well, or provided alternate drinking water, such as water bottles, for personnel, Sullivan said.

For the other 12 drinking water sources, provided either by a contracted vendor or through the local utility, it’s a harder fix, because the EPA’s guidelines are not enforceable.

For example, commercial airports and industrial sites also use the foam, which could impact a municipality’s drinking water, but it will be up to that municipality to determine if it will test and make fixes to comply with the EPA’s guidelines, Sullivan said.

“It’s up to the owner of that system to make a decision on what they’re going to do,” Sullivan “So we’re on a fine line of trying to provide drinking water to our folks when we’re buying it from somebody else.”

In those cases the department is working with the vendors or utilities on a solution, and providing bottled water or filters as needed, Sullivan said.

Each base should have its water information posted, Sullivan said. Families with any concerns should be able to go to the base’s restoration program manager — an on-site point person tasked with addressing environmental cleanup issues — with their questions.

DoD has already spent \$200 million studying and testing its water supply, and also providing either filters, alternate wells or bottled water to address contamination.

For the groundwater sources, both on-base and off-base, however, cleanup will take years to address, Sullivan said.

Those groundwater sites will be added to the department's long list of environmental cleanup responsibilities it has at each of its more than 2,900 facilities around the world, and will prioritize that cleanup based on risk. Sullivan estimates the groundwater perfluorinate cleanup will add about \$2 billion to the \$27 billion previously identified cleanup projects for which the department is responsible.

The services are also phasing out the firefighting foam they use and working on replacements that do not contain perfluorinated compounds, Sullivan said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

One way to stop the next war is to continue to tell the truth about this one.
-- Kathy Kelly

ANNIVERSARIES

April 28, 2004: The Truth Comes Out



Carl Bunin Peace History April 23-29

The first photos of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal were shown on CBS's "60 Minutes II."

The photos had been taken by U.S. military personnel responsible for detaining and interrogating Iraqi prisoners arrested following the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

April 30, 1975: An Imperial War Ends In Defeat: After 100 Years Of Colonial Occupation, A Nation Wins Its' Fight For Independence



Last helicopter out of Saigon 4/30/75



U.S. Soldiers Pin: Vietnam Days

Carl Bunin Peace History April 26 - May 2

The U.S. presence ended in Vietnam as U.S. Marines and Air Force helicopters, flying from carriers off-shore, began a massive airlift, Operation Frequent Wind.

In all, 682 flights went out-- 360 at night. 5,000 people were evacuated by helicopter from the military compound near Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport; about 2500 from the U.S. Embassy (1000 Americans total, the rest Vietnamese).

That morning, two U.S. Marines, Darwin Judge and Charles McMahon Jr., Marine security guards, were killed in a rocket attack at the airport.

They were the last Americans to die in the Vietnam War. At dawn, the last Marines of the force guarding the U.S. embassy lifted off.

The war in Vietnam ended as the government in Saigon announced its unconditional surrender to the North Vietnamese. Vietnam was reunited after 21 years of U.S. domination and 100 years of French colonial rule.

May 1, 1886: Noble Anniversary: American Workers Create May Day

Carl Bunin Peace History April 30-May 6

May Day was called Emancipation Day in 1886 when 340,000 went on strike (though it was Saturday it was a regular workday) in Chicago for the 8-hour day.

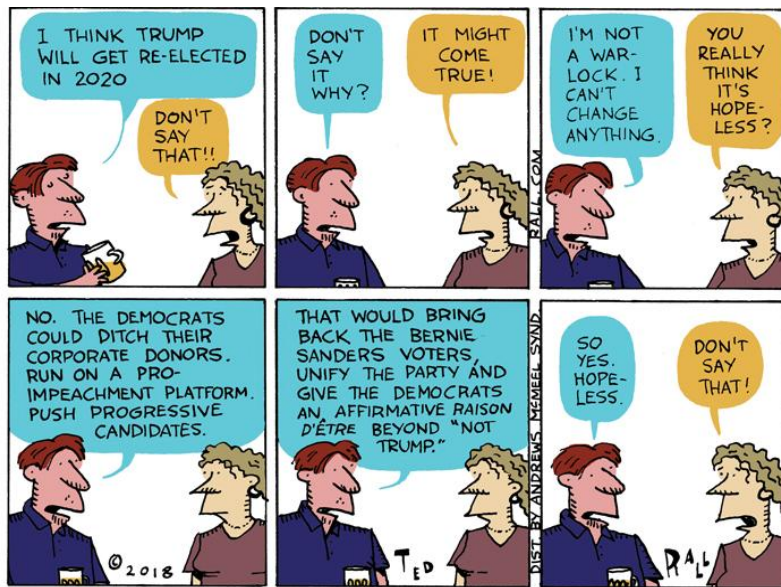
May 1, 1890: May Day labor demonstrations spread to thirteen other countries; 30,000 marched in Chicago as the newly prominent American Federation of Labor threw its weight behind the 8-hour day campaign.

International Workers' Day (a name used interchangeably with May Day) is a celebration of the social and economic achievements of the international labor movement. May Day commonly sees organized street demonstrations and street marches by millions of working people and their labour unions throughout most of the countries of the world

May Day has become an international celebration of the social and economic achievements of the labour movement.



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Military Resistance Newsletter, P.O Box 2604, N.Y., N.Y. 10108 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

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