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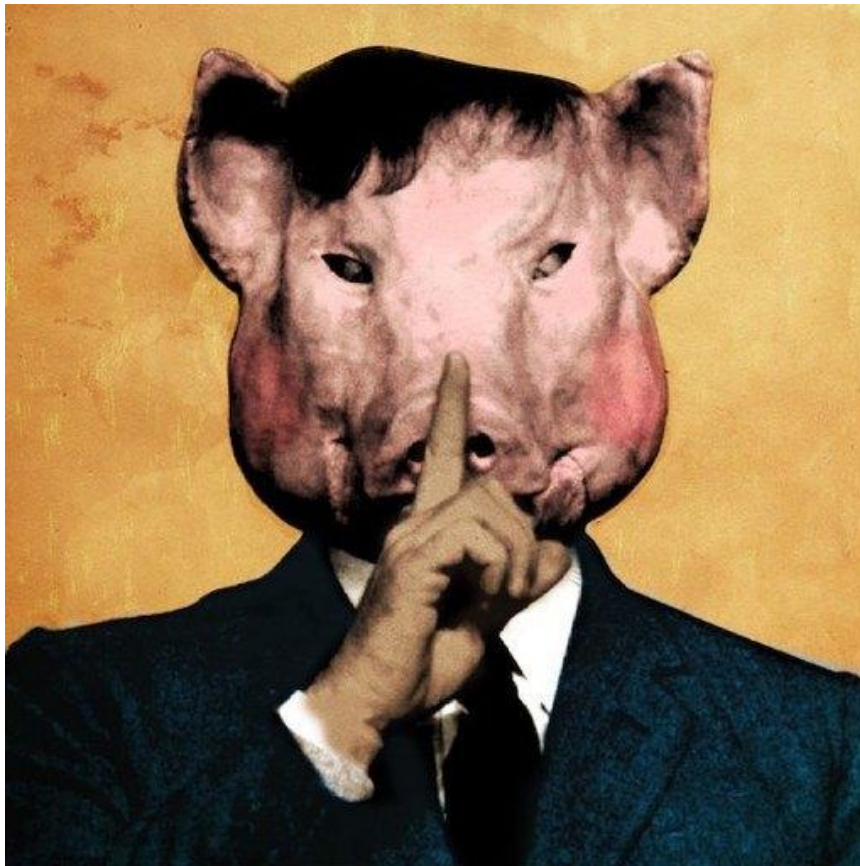
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Democrats and Republicans: United on Glorifying Authoritarian Systems



With President Donald Trump fighting against the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), his Republican minions have managed to navigate a somewhat tortuous road. They have to somehow criticize one of the many authoritarian organizations that they generally revere.

Ultimately, this has proved not too difficult for them; they simply attack the leadership, while praising the rank-and-file.

Democrats, on the other hand, are able to avoid this conundrum altogether, by maintaining their obvious adoration for the corrupt, invasive bureau.

As the Russia-Trump Campaign probe drags on, providing headlines that few people are genuinely interested in, the worship of authority continues unabated. The U.S. military, the largest and most powerful terrorist organization in the world, one that is responsible for the murders of at least 20,000,000 people over the last fifty years, continues to receive increasing amounts of U.S. taxpayers' money, to the detriment not only of the millions of people victimized by the U.S. military, but also of those very taxpayers. Money that goes to weaponry has to come from somewhere, and in the eyes of those who run the U.S. government, both Republican and Democrat, such frivolities as food for the poor, roads, public education and higher education are expendable, as long as the war machine gets all that its lobbyists want.

And then, of course, we have the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Talk about a rogue organization! This is the arm of the U.S. government that is responsible for overthrowing democratically-elected governments, funding and training foreign terrorists, and torturing U.S. citizens and others at various sites around the world.

Let us not forget the 'boys in blue', the U.S.'s domestic terrorist organization, the police force. One might think that 'officers of the law' might be expected to adhere to the laws they are purportedly hired to enforce. But this is not the case; after all, they are the police! Let them shoot innocent, unarmed people, usually but not always people of color, with nearly complete impunity. But when five police officers were killed in Dallas, Texas in July of 2016, one newscaster said the crime had cast a pall over the entire nation. Was not a pall cast over the entire nation when Michael Brown, unarmed, was shot and killed by white police officer Darren Wilson, who then left his body to lie in the street for hours? Was not a second pall thrown over the U.S. when, in November, a grand jury decided not to indict Wilson?

And what about when Eric Garner was killed for selling cigarettes? Or when Philando Castile was executed on the spot for the dastardly crime of driving with a burned-out tail light? Or the murders of Alton Sterling, Oscar Grant (unarmed, handcuffed and lying face-down when he was shot by police officer Johannes Mehserle, who spent nearly seven whole months in prison for that murder), and the hundreds of others who have been killed

by members of that unholy brotherhood, the U.S. police force? Why did not each of these brutal, senseless murders cast a pall over the entire nation?

In the U.S., murder is a horrendous crime unless committed by someone wearing a uniform of the U.S. government. Whether the murder is perpetrated by U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan or Iraq, or by soldiers in the U.S. controlling the drones that cause such unspeakable carnage in Yemen and other countries, the victims are unimportant. Unarmed men, pregnant women, children, including infants – the murders of all of them are excused when done by a man or woman wearing a uniform.

Domestically it is the same; a murder perpetrated by someone in the uniform of the U.S. police force is not a murder at all; it is an example of ‘justified use of force’. Yet if a person not a part of the repressive, out-of-control U.S. police force shoots and kills an unarmed man or woman, he or she is arrested and charged with murder. The loved ones of his or her victim are allowed to make impact statements before sentencing, and, as long as the perpetrator is not wealthy, he or she can expect to spend a significant amount of their remaining life in one of the U.S.’s for-profit prisons.

Has either party condemned any of these killings, whether done domestically or internationally? Have any of the U.S.’s so-called ‘representatives’ in the House or the Senate demanded that police procedures be analyzed or that military expenditures be more carefully scrutinized? Has any Republican or Democrat forcefully denounced U.S. military adventurism around the planet? Hardly!

Yet when five members of the police force were murdered in Dallas, then President Barack Obama, and candidates Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton all weighed on the event. The governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, issued a statement. But whenever confronted with the horror and tragedy of innocent people being killed in the U.S.’s multiple war zones, these luminaries mumble something about ‘collateral damage’, and may add, as an afterthought, that it is ‘unfortunate’.

That U.S. citizens live under a heavily-militarized police state cannot be disputed. That people of color are far more likely to be casualties of this police state is also true. Internationally, although no one is safe from the long and brutal arm of the terrorist U.S. military, today it is Arabs who suffer most from it. U.S. soldiers kill innocent people both on the battlefield, and from the comfort of offices thousands of miles away from their victims. The CIA arms and trains terrorist groups that cause unspeakable suffering in Syria and other nations. FBI surveillance of U.S. citizens has been ongoing for decades.

For eight years, Obama made some attempts to close the Cuban-based U.S. torture center at Guantanamo Bay; he was unsuccessful, mainly because Congress saw no reason for the U.S. not to continue torturing people. He made no effort, however, to end the war in Afghanistan, now in its seventeenth year. He increased the use of murder by drone, and did nothing to reign in the U.S. police.

And now a man who doesn't even pay lip service to wanting to stop the U.S.'s crimes, and who blatantly seeks to increase them, is president of the U.S. His possible pre-election crimes are being investigated, yet his racism, sexism and Islamaphobia not only go unchecked, but also seem to have become fashionable. That, combined with the reverence for brutal authoritarian forces, domestic and foreign, is a recipe for more death and suffering around the world. Yet if people look for a change in governance from the Republicans to the Democrats to alleviate this suffering at all, they look in vain.