



CAPCR Shout Out

They Do Not Deserve a Raise, God Damn It!

by Johnson Lancaster

A ballot measure (Prop P) is being placed before St. Louis residents next month November 2017 asking registered voters whether to increase sales taxes to give the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department more money for pay and new equipment.

So the same police who are beating up people exercising their First Amendment rights of freedom to peaceably assemble, the same police who are tear-gassing and pepper spraying people who freely speak dissenting opinions, the same police who are brutalizing clergy, the same police who have been walking scot free after murdering countless residents for decades--- they want a raise? We don't think so!

The ballot measure if approved by voters would allocate 75 percent of the projected revenue to the police department and 25 percent to community development and youth-oriented programs. The St Louis Police Officers Association threw a tantrum and vowed to oppose the tax increase because it did not give the SLMPD 100 percent of the projected revenue. So, what the union is saying is that if they can't have it all they don't want any of it?? Is the union saying they don't care about community development and youth oriented programs---the very people they pledged an oath to "protect and serve"???

Currently more than 50 percent of the city's municipal budget is devoted to arresting people, processing them in court and incarcerating them. St. Louis is already a police city state. With crumbling infrastructure, imbalanced economic development priorities, almost non-existent city services (except for whatever property developers, big corporations, wealthy neighborhoods and sports teams desire), what the city does NOT need is to give more resources to the apparatus of oppression that is known as the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. The most organized, well-armed gang of jack-booted thugs in the city has been holding the residents hostage while claiming they need more cops and newer equipment to surveil the streets, fight crime to keep us safe from so-called anarchists, "violent" protesters and "unlawful" assemblies.

Who will keep us safe from marauding SWAT units and riot squads????

Recently it was revealed that the SLMPD overspent its overtime budget by at least \$500,000. At the same time, the department allows cops to moonlight in part-time jobs at private security firms. The SLMPD even has a term for it—working secondary duty. That means our tax dollars train police helping them develop skills that they are compensated for by private corporations and the corporations do not reimburse the city for having access to these city employees. In special business districts, the taxes raised by these entities pay for things like, wait for it....additional police protection, NOT other types of services needed in the community. It was also revealed that the city has secretly paid out \$4.7 million in civil suit settlements to victims of police crimes and repression as well as hundreds of thousands of dollars to current and former

police officers who sued the department for termination and discrimination. Solely from a business point of view, any subsidiary that caused financial woes, garnered negative public relations and tarnished the company's image in the marketplace while alienating customers would either be reorganized, sold or shut down completely.

This same department would be rewarded for its entrenched, systemic, ingrained para-military anti-social policies that retard community development and serve as an occupying force terrorizing the have nots in our city.

NO, they do not deserve to be rewarded. They do not deserve a raise. They need to be reminded that they work for us and we will NOT pay them to brutalize us. We will NOT pay them to shoot us down in the streets. We will NOT pay them to pepper spray and tear gas us. We will NOT pay them to corral us like cattle and cage us like animals. The SLMPD needs a complete overhaul---a culture change from top to bottom. Maybe the current nationwide search for a new police chief is the place to start.

What we want is a new vision of public safety that makes thriving communities the priority. What we want is people fulfilling opportunities to enhance the quality of life for their families. What we want is true social political and economic justice. Vote NO on Proposition P. Send a message to the SLMPD that we are disappointed in the level of protection and service we are receiving from them.