

Hong Kong, Ferguson and New York City! Solidarity Statement with Black Communities in Ferguson, Missouri and NYC

December 11, 2014

The following statement from Left 21 in Hong Kong was written in early December as the pro-democracy activists there were being driven from the streets. – Dan La Botz, Co-Editor

From Hong Kong to Ferguson and NYC, we send you our warmest solidarity!

No to injustice! No to white supremacy!

It was outrageous that the grand jury failed to indict Darren Wilson, who had shot unarmed 18-year old Mike Brown. We agree with you that: "The whole damn system is guilty as hell."

It was even more outrageous, that after that, Eric Garner's the Grand Jury failed to indict!

How can anyone trust the justice system, when the police can shoot you dead while unarmed, before you even reach a court? And when a man is killed by a policeman using an illegal chokehold, recorded on video but the policeman is still not even indicted?

All the common sense evidence points to systematic bias, within the police, within the courts and within government. How can democracy exist when these state institutions of courts and law enforcement are ridden with injustice? It is clear to us that genuine democratic governance does not exist in American society.

In Ferguson, the jarring truth of racism and injustice exploded with the case of Michael Brown, generating collective outrage against this system that produces these problems. We all know, sadly, that he is only one of many casualties of racist America.

We are aware that Black and poor communities in America face state violence, not only in the form of police shootings. It manifests in other aspects of your lives: unemployment, racist welfare laws, disproportionate policing, housing segregation, and health disparities.

We recognize that the police are not taking responsibility for your safety. Instead, not only do they squash dissent and free expression, they are sending in military equipment into the streets of Ferguson. It seems that the U.S. government and the police forces in your country are willing to use aspects of the military violence they have imposed on the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, and now too on you.

To the community of Ferguson and to those who care about justice and racial equality in the United States, we hope you keep going – keep fighting for what is right! Racial inequality is being used to justify and enable economic inequality and exclusion!

Here in Hong Kong too, we are fed up with our government doing things on behalf of the wealthy few, and willing to use the police to keep us from speaking out about injustice and broken promises.

We have not had a genuine democracy, under British colonial rule nor now, under our "high degree of autonomy" with "one country, two systems" under the Chinese government. We have a small

legislature dominated by the wealthy, and our Chief Executive was elected by only 689 votes in the last election.

Under our undemocratic system is slanted towards the wealthy, our poverty rate has been climbing, our housing has gotten less affordable, and 40% of our elderly are in poverty. The government has poured billions of dollars into development projects, refused to increase taxes on the wealthy, and still cries out that it lacks money to provide a decent universal elderly pension. In short, citizens are being excluded from the community's wealth, and the "order" and "harmony" we see in the society is only the smooth surface hiding massive suffering and humiliation of our own people, imposed by our own government!

All along, the Hong Kong government promised a system of universal suffrage and election of our own Chief Executive, but it has denied it over and over, despite the demands of hundreds of thousands of citizens.

The students, supported by wide masses of the public, have come out to occupy major parts of Hong Kong, simply to demand the government keep its word.

But in Hong Kong, as we see now that speaking out against injustice and government betrayal of its promise of democracy can lead one to face pepper spray, water cannons, and batons - from our own police! It doesn't matter if we are students or doctors or journalists - the police have lost control, backed by the unconditional support of the government that is willing to use maximum force on its own citizens to restore an unjust order.

Just as in Ferguson, we face a police force that has been given the task of basically punishing dissent - while claiming to uphold law. This government and police force have rejected genuine dialogue, denied its obligation to heed the voices of its citizens, and used weapons, threats and even proxy organizations to harass, stigmatize or silence the protesting citizens.

Here, as in Ferguson and NYC, the laws, courts and legislative procedures claim to protect the innocent from abusers. The truth is we know that these institutions have been used to silence, jail and physically crush us, all in the name of the "law."

We know though, that the "law" and justice are not the same thing. We may not have the same struggles, but we share a common situation of government and the police falsely claiming authority over us, and abusing their position of authority and their legitimized use of force, to repress our voices and our just demands.

No more injustice! Enough is enough! Police are not our rulers! No to militarization! No to social exclusion!

Solidarity to Ferguson and to NYC! Black lives matter!

From Hong Kong to Ferguson and NYC, resist state violence!