

# Bees Against the War



Poems by  
**Eric Allen Yankee**

**Bees Against the War**

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Locofo Chaps is dedicated to publishing politically-oriented poetry.

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**Vodka on November 8, 2016**  
-for my comrade Lew Rosenbaum

I drank cheap vodka  
with a Communist Poet  
as we watched the returns roll on in.

I drank cheap vodka  
that looked Russian,  
but was probably distilled  
in Wisconsin. I am not sure  
if my Vodka ever met any Russian lawyers in back rooms  
looking for emails.

I am not sure if Communist Poet Lew  
has ever met any Russian Lawyers.

But on the night of the election  
I hung out with Lew  
and we watched Capitalism's  
latest Caesar take his crown.

I looked at Lew,  
picked up the bottle,  
and said, "I think it's time  
for a drink, Lew."

The poet agreed,  
and we each did a few shots.

## **Bees**

Lead in Flint water.

Poison in Syrian air.

Cancer in the dirt,

Cancer on the airwaves,

Tumors in the White House.

Daily absurdity,  
too much for a poet to keep up with,  
so I just write these words  
and pray for the bees to survive.

What will the flowers do  
when the buzzing stops?

## Warship

You skim through the water  
preparing to throw children  
like missiles into the arms  
of your enemies  
who you were once told  
were your friends.

Such is the way war  
is played.

An old man is writing the checks  
that ensure youth's path  
to burial. War only feels good  
in the body of the one  
who doesn't lift the gun,  
and there's plenty  
of crusted fingers waving cash  
and forcing someone  
else to pull their triggers.

## **Hemlock**

Surrounded by bughouse visions  
of industry,  
the forgotten crawl  
through the death trap  
of appetite,  
dizzy from paying ransom  
just for living --

Hemlock kept ready between  
their cheeks  
as they crawl along  
the ignorant world's marble halls.

There is room enough  
for everyone,  
yet howling sentinels still stand  
in the severe air  
and block the path  
of luxury for all.

## **Riding the Devil**

The dollar rides the devil.

Oil glides down his back  
forming a reflective pool  
at his heels.

The children fill their buckets  
and drink.

Who do all these bones  
belong to anyway?



## Hands Off

"Hands off, Korea!"  
shouts the man  
as he thrusts a sheet  
of his soul at me.  
I admire him  
for standing on this corner  
and protesting war  
for hours each day.  
Will Congress hear him  
from Fullerton Avenue?  
Not likely, but still --  
he will remain here  
and stand against  
the coming war.

A girl walks by on crutches.  
She is the United States  
or what's left of it.  
She's an image of a place  
that believes it once  
stood for something.  
Now it's all broken legs  
and battering rams,  
bigger bombs  
than Corso could imagine,  
and a sense of terror  
that grows everyday.  
This place is afraid  
to face itself.  
It will not stand for hours  
on a corner  
to fight unjust war.  
It will just build bigger bombs  
and break more legs.

## **At War Again/Always at War**

Let the bombs grow.  
It's good for the country,  
or so I'm told.

I ran down the street  
and shouted out the news  
that the war machine  
was operational again.

Those who thought it went away  
looked to the sky  
and saw their very own bones  
coming down.

## **When the Bombs Fell**

When the bombs fell,  
they turned to us and said:

"Human nature is to die,  
so close your eyes dear.  
Close your eyes."

And I closed them  
and imagined a child  
reading a book,  
while eating a sandwich  
under the moonlight.

And when I opened them  
I realized we could have  
avoided all these hollow shells  
if we had just  
said,

"Human nature is to learn,  
so close your eyes, dear...  
close your eyes,  
and teach children  
to live free like Mowgli  
in the jungle."

## Poem Made Up of Words the Feds Monitor on Social Media

Cain and Abel

are phreaking.

There's no shelter-in-place.

It could be time

to go phishing

in Afghanistan.

The Basque separatists

are chasing a tornado

in Tijuana.

There's a hazardous material incident

every time I cook breakfast.

My bacon is radioactive.

Someone call the Food & Drug Administration.

Can the Center for Disease Control

get rid of my headache, please?

This feels like a sign

of TB or even Ebola.

The cat just laid a dirty bomb

in the litter box again,

or maybe it was just a

suspicious substance.

We're all stranded.

Is this just a drill?

Is it all just an exercise?

The shots have been fired.

Maybe it's time we evacuate.

## Neon Orange Hunger Strike

I died while I waited  
ICEBOUND  
At Guantanamo Bay  
100 days into my  
Hunger strike.

College kids  
On Chicago sidewalk battlefields  
Wear neon orange  
Prison jumpsuits  
And black pillowcases  
    On their heads  
    On their souls  
    On their future careers  
As pimps of the dreams  
I still have  
Where I can walk  
On the ceiling of my jail.

Can orange jumpsuits  
And a generous dollar  
Cast change across  
A desert of mimes  
Who are trapped in  
Cuban boxes  
Made from the cell membranes  
Of their own neon  
Orange engines?

No.

We'll all die  
Trying to figure  
Each other out  
And wondering if  
The government  
Or some greater evil  
Wants us dead.

## Two Hundred and One Words for Fidel

-after Lawrence Ferlinghetti

Fidel, your coffin passes by  
and the mad money men of America  
are praising your death  
as they strangle Syrian children.  
They claim you killed your own, Fidel,  
instead of teaching them to read  
or shooting them with free vaccines  
meant to keep gold  
from growing in their minds.  
They tried to stab you  
with your own shrapnel  
over six hundred times,  
and it's impressive  
that you never fell over.  
A business man talks  
of liberating Cuba  
in your absence, Fidel.  
I sit in my studio apartment  
that I pay a thousand dollars  
a month for and I wonder  
how long before the rebel flag  
is draped across your casket  
and your beard declared  
our 51st state.  
Puerto Rico is broke  
and surely someone kneels  
before the Lincoln memorial  
and prays for guidance  
in how to take over an island.  
Step 1: Flash the people your money.  
Step 2: Build them a hotel  
they'll never stay in.  
It's going to be a big tragedy, Fidel,  
on the day the bulldozers arrive  
to demolish your memorial  
to make way for that new golf course.  
But no one can stop a bullet  
fired from Uncle Sam's Gun.  
Just ask Iraq, Afghanistan,  
and Honduras.

## **Mall Patriotism**

Sometimes when I'm at the mall  
and I stand too close to the railing,  
I see myself falling over the edge,  
just tumbling down  
and disrupting the shoppers  
on the bottom floor,  
my blood seeping out,  
covering their designer shoes.

Sometimes I stand close  
to a bonfire  
and I think of casting myself  
into it,  
like a leaf  
that rode the wind  
into the fire.

Maybe someone is burning  
the American flag these days,  
and the Declaration  
of Independence that I saw  
at 7-11 being sold for cheap.  
They didn't have the Constitution.

Maybe we're all the leaves  
blowing towards the flame,  
waiting to ignite  
and turn to black dust.

Maybe  
now I know  
why I have hallucinations  
about falling.

## Angels

Angel haired hipsters  
eating ramen in the park,  
sipping on \$6 PBR  
and planning their next  
art show on the poverty  
of modern art.

Muscles rippling,  
 chests heaving,  
 forks raised up  
 and ready to support  
 some version  
 of the image  
 they always told  
 their parents  
 they had for themselves.

There's a revolution  
brewing in their portfolio.

They can smell  
the designer handbags  
already,  
but the bees  
aren't having any  
of this shit.



## Things to Do On Election Day After You Vote

Scoop the cat litter an extra time.

Do shots of rum while singing  
the Star Spangled Banner backwards  
while on my knees.

Go to the movies. I hear "Snowden"  
is pretty good.

Eat a hamburger while reciting  
the pledge of allegiance  
to a fire hydrant.

Learn to skydive  
and jump out of a plane  
wearing a "Free Hillary"

T-shirt. Scoop the cat litter again.

Drink Irish coffee. Get the cream all over my lips  
and tell people "Thanks for voting  
to keep the military industrial complex  
in business. It needed your help  
to survive." Wipe the cream from my lips  
as I tell people "I'm glad

Bill Clinton left his mark on my face."

Scoop the cat litter again.

Play beer pong in front of City Hall.

Get arrested for playing beer pong  
in front of City Hall.

Bail myself out with a loan from my father.

Eat a taco salad in front of

Trump Tower. Open a Taco Truck and park it near Trump  
Tower.

Order a hamburger at the McDonalds self-service  
machine. Give it to a homeless woman.

Turn election night returns  
into a drinking game.

Blue state equals take a shot of Captain Morgan. Red  
State equals

take a shot of Jack  
and drink a PBR tallboy.

Masturbate to thoughts  
of revolution. Scoop the damn cat box again.

Go to bed when the victor takes the stage.

Cry into my pillow for my country.

## **The Bar**

Two men drink cheap beer  
and lament  
that you can no longer  
joke about punching a woman  
on Television. Where has  
American freedom gone?  
Characters barely drink & smoke  
on Sitcoms anymore!  
Another man interrupts the poetry reading  
and is asked to be quiet.  
He turns to the host and says  
"You motherfucker. You will never  
ask me to be quiet. You motherfucker.  
You motherfucker.  
You motherfucker."

## **It's Dark Out**

It's dark out  
and people are around  
wandering  
fighting

It's dark out  
and people are broken  
bruised  
poor

It's dark out  
and people must eat  
each other  
the rich

It's dark out  
and people are dying  
fleeing  
arriving

## **What Price Bananas?**

-After Allen Ginsberg

Seraphic neon Supermarket of the 1950s!

A rainforest,

Trees and men bent in supplication

To the cadence of fruit!

If I saw you wandering

Poking the peaches of the new Millennium

In search of

Blood

Breath

Bone

I'd tell you we're born

On the altars of Moloch now,

Choked by plastic hands

Of super saving saviors

We forged

In the shape of foxy Chinese logos

And scoliosis bred accountants

Your beard tempts me to follow you, Ginsberg Rinpoche!

I should kill you on the road,

Because you foresaw the highway.

Holy Mcdonalds!

Holy Walmart!

Holy Corporate Personhood!

What price bananas now?

That will be 33 bags

Of migrant children

Who still have

Ten fingers, please.

## **Come Tell Ra**

The sacrifice we leave  
At the temple  
Is the key  
To our unstaunched  
Entry into paradise.  
For when the deathless  
Light begins to sway,  
You are ready  
For our lady's play.

Does the vine  
Grow for us?  
Reach for the exotic.  
Bring down  
The stars  
As we call out:  
"Come tell Ra  
You are ready to die!"

Do you see  
The vermilion whore?  
Feel her impulse  
As you draw  
Nearer to her.  
See her preen  
As she prepares  
To devour your name.

Dissolution of self  
Is the occult initiation.  
If we cannot  
Dissolve our ego,  
We may rightly call  
Hell a man,  
And wait  
For the devils  
To cry out,  
"Burn Skull!"

Sulk to me.

Walk away from me.  
Oh demon of self,  
The end  
Of your time Brings  
luck!

## **Hamburgers**

-inspired by the poem "John Henry" by Anonymous

-for Andrew Puzder, the man who almost became Secretary of Labor

John Henry beat  
the steam drill down,  
but he only won by one.  
His heart gave out and he said,  
"Lord, Lord, I'm done."

The autoworkers in Detroit  
couldn't beat the machines.  
Their hearts gave out  
and the lights went down  
all across the desolate city.  
Now they say, "Lord, Lord,  
I'm done."

The almost Labor Secretary says,  
"Working for free builds character.  
Machines don't take breaks  
or sick days either.  
They don't get depressed  
and they don't talk back.  
Lord, Lord, I'm done  
with humans!"

Well, Mr. Almost Secretary,  
machines don't buy  
hamburgers either.  
Lord, Lord, they don't  
buy hamburgers either.

But what if...  
what if...  
those hamburgers  
were free?  
Lord, Lord, they could  
be free!  
Lord, Lord,  
we could all eat for free!





## **Poem Made Up of Words the Feds Monitor on Social Media #2**

This is a state of emergency.

All FBI agents should report immediately  
to the U.S. Consulate  
where they're smoking marijuana!

In Ciudad Juarez  
the PLO is recruiting  
for the Department of Homeland Security.

North Korea wants you to know  
they've put out the forest fire  
without any help  
from the Irish Republican Army.

There's a chemical weapon  
in the alley that was left there  
by the rats in San Diego.

I just got a body scanner  
and I'm using it to scan  
for hot bodies and smart executions.

All my friends are Artistic Assassins  
waging nuclear war with their art  
and taking over  
the Emergency Broadcast System.

Uh oh! There's a power outage  
and a flood heading towards FEMA.

Someone call  
the Coast Guard.

## **American Kings**

No dreams anymore, right?

That's ok, I'll find one somewhere.

I lost my health insurance  
last year. That's ok, because

I'm an American. My bones  
are held together by bootstraps.

I take iron pills to remind me  
that I used to make steel.

I go to Church.

I paid taxes when I had a job.

The politicians convinced me  
Welfare is bad for me  
and that affordable  
housing is a crutch.

Be strong and dependent on no one  
they told me.

I'm an American.

I load my gun  
and make the others bleed.

I'll build the wall.

I listen to my leaders.

They know how to preserve  
their wealth. Someday it will  
trickle down to me, because  
I'm an American. I believe  
in freedom and dying.

I'm an American. I must believe  
in  
my king  
for

his hand is always around my throat.

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