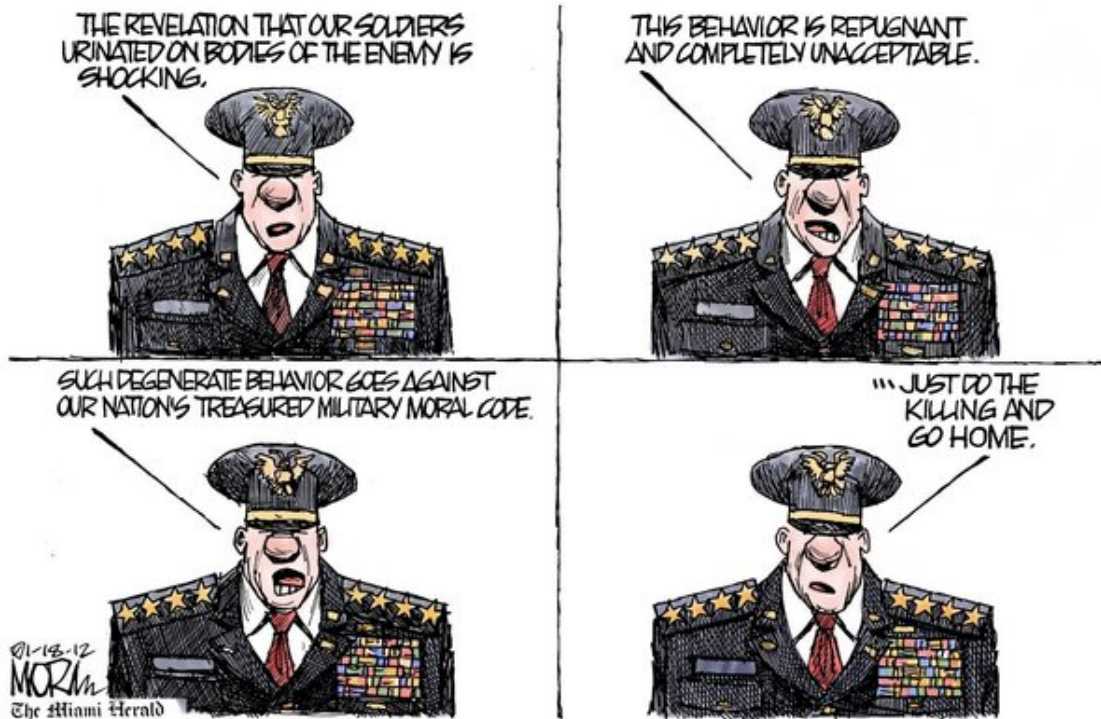


Military Resistance 10A23



Free Syrian Army Ignores Obama Regime Pressure Not To Fight The Tyrant Assad: “Syrian Dissident Soldiers Teaming Up With Armed Civilians To Temporarily Occupy Neighborhoods On Damascus’s Outskirts”

“The Armed Opposition’s Continued Ability To Repulse The Military From These Areas Could Embolden Support”

“The Syrian Government’s Apparent Failure To Control Zabadani, A Suburb Held For Much Of The Past Week By Defected Soldiers, Indicates It No Longer Has Enough Loyal Troops ‘To Impose President Assad’s Will Across The Country’”

The FSA’s Col. Hammoud said the soldiers and civilians have been sealing off neighborhoods for hours before negotiating cease-fire agreements with the government through local governors or other area regime representatives.

U.S. officials repeatedly have voiced concern over the uprising’s drift toward armed confrontation, and have urged the Free Syrian Army not to provoke a military response from the Assad regime.

JANUARY 28, 2012 By NOUR MALAS, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Syrian dissident soldiers said Friday they are teaming up with armed civilians to temporarily occupy neighborhoods on Damascus’s outskirts, a new phase of Syria’s conflict that holds the potential to move the long-quiet capital toward chaos.

For the first time in the country’s 11-month uprising, commanders of the dissident Free Syrian Army said they have fought back the military for stretches of hours or even days in some Damascus suburbs over the past week, using “hit-and-run” operations that are supported by lightly armed civilians.

An eastern section of the green agricultural belt surrounding Damascus, the Eastern al-Ghouta, is slipping in and out of government control, the defected soldiers said Friday.

Some Syria analysts saw this as an early sign that the regime may be struggling to keep order on multiple fronts.

Should the alliance continue between dissident soldiers and armed civilians, these people say, it could lay the groundwork for violent resistance to seep throughout Damascus.

In either case, the outcome is likely to match what Arab and Western diplomats, in the capital and abroad, have broadly expected — that the conflict in Syria will be resolved not by international diplomacy, but as a battle between two armies.

U.S. officials repeatedly have voiced concern over the uprising's drift toward armed confrontation, and have urged the Free Syrian Army not to provoke a military response from the Assad regime.

The Syrian government's apparent failure to control Zabadani, a suburb held for much of the past week by defected soldiers, indicates it no longer has enough loyal troops "to impose President Assad's will across the country by indiscriminate use of lethal force," Exclusive Analysis, a London-based intelligence and political-risk firm, wrote in a report Thursday.

The government's apparent loss of control over east Damascus is likely to be followed by mass protests and President Assad's "departure from the capital, in weeks, if not days," the firm said.

Several other Syria analysts offered similar assessments, albeit with a timeline of weeks, not days, saying the armed opposition's continued ability to repulse the military from these areas could embolden support for the Free Syrian Army.

The militarization of Syria's opposition appears to suggest a shift among the mainstream of protesters. For months after antiregime rallies broke out in Syrian cities in March, organizers called for demonstrations to remain peaceful even amid mounting accounts of government reprisals and brutality. They continued this call even as death tolls rose, and denied playing a role in the deaths of government troops.

But protesters have grown frustrated as international appeals for a Libya-style no-fly zone have fallen flat, and the Arab League monitoring mission has failed to quell the violence.

In a weekly tradition of naming Friday protests, via online vote, activists this week dubbed their demonstrations "the Friday of the right to self defense.

"While Syria's major activists still sound calls for peaceful measures, these have been sidelined by popular enthusiasm over the apparently rising effectiveness of the FSA.

Last week, FSA-backed opposition forces took over Zabadani and another Damascus suburbs, Douma, in what defected soldiers and activists characterize as on-and-off control.

At least six other suburbs have since seen fighting between defected troops, armed civilians and the military.

“The popular support in these areas has been overwhelming,” said Col. Aref al-Hammoud, commander of the Free Syrian Army, which claims to lead the opposition’s armed fight against the Assad regime.

“We depend on the civilians for our operations there.”

Residents couldn’t be reached by telephone. But Damascus-based opposition activists, citing colleagues on the ground, also described an armed civilian resistance.

The FSA’s Col. Hammoud said the soldiers and civilians have been sealing off neighborhoods for hours before negotiating cease-fire agreements with the government through local governors or other area regime representatives.

He said FSA leaders have agreed among themselves not to hold the areas for longer.

“We do not liberate these areas, because calling them liberated invites the regime in to crush us. We call them areas of resistance,” Col. Hammoud said from Turkey, across Syria’s northern border, where he operates.

Col. Hammoud estimated the dissident army now controls about 90% of the northern city of Idlib and just over half of Homs, where the beleaguered neighborhoods of Bab Amro, Bab Idreb, Bab Sibai and Khalidya are opposition strongholds despite frequent military attacks from the city’s outskirts.

Residents of Homs largely corroborate these reports. The claim about Idlib couldn’t immediately be confirmed.

Beyond the capital, dissident commanders described a redoubled military effort by Syria’s government.

One defected colonel described a “second-phase military campaign” in which the military has started to use heavy weaponry including artillery and mortar fire, after months of mainly relying on machine guns mounted on tanks.

Activists reported mortar fire in the central cities of Homs and Hama, two protest hubs that were hardest hit Friday.

Troops from the elite Fourth Division and the Republican Guard — reserved to defend the capital and the president — were deployed across the Damascus suburbs, they said.

In Douma, activists reported a total communications and electricity blackout.

In private, some Syrians who have turned against the regime but aren’t active with the protest movement look at the Free Syrian Army, who they have heard about through media, with hesitant fascination.

One businessman described the group as the last best hope to resolve a conflict that was already a civil war of sorts.

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[A Day In Syria]

Syria News - January 27 2012

Local Coordination Committees of Syria via Uruknet:

Local Coordination Committees:

On Friday, Jan. 27, 588 demonstrations took place across the country from 470 different areas.

The distributions of participants were recorded as follows:

133 different areas in Idlib with 139 demonstrations, 57 different areas in Homs with 77 demonstrations, 57 different areas in Daraa with 68 demonstrations, 54 different areas in Hama with 60 demonstrations, 51 different areas in Aleppo with 65 demonstrations, 42 different area in Damascus Suburbs with 57 demonstrations, 20 different areas in Hasakeh with 31 demonstrations, 18 in Deir Ezzor with 32 demonstrations, 16 different areas in Lattakia with 22 demonstrations, 5 different areas in Raqqa with 7 demonstrations, 1 area of demonstrations in Tartus with 6 different demonstrations, 1 demonstration in Swayda, and 1 demonstration in Qunaitara.

Idlib: Maaret Nouman: 10 army soldiers have defected at the Khaima checkpoint south of Maara.

Idlib: Extremely heavy gunfire is reported along Jalaa Street in the Qusour area, from the checkpoint in Has, from heavy machine guns at the youth military camps in Neirab, and the eastern checkpoint in Kafrouma.

Aleppo: Bab: Campaign of raids and arrest of activists and demonstrators in the city now.

Daraa: Sanameen: Security forces erected new checkpoints near the Division of the Baath Party, noting that most residents of this neighborhood are Christian.

Aleppo: An evening demonstration began in Zaytan Village, which belongs to Zerbe, located south of Aleppo. Demonstrators chanted for the martyrs, the besieged cities and to topple the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Misraba: Eight martyrs and dozens of wounded have been discovered in a new massacre committed by security forces and army. Some of the martyrs have been identified as: Abdo Khouly, Hisham Haji, Abed al-Karam Mahjoub, Mouhamed Moustafa Qudeh, Mouhamed Hawera along with three unidentified corpses.

Aleppo: An evening demonstration in Hallek district within one of the most concentrated presence of security forces in the area.

Damascus Suburbs: An evening demonstration numbered in the 100's in Malieha; participants chanted for the regime's ouster and are saluting the martyrs.

Damascus: Douma: Violent clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's forces in Misraba and Sundyaneh and renewed rounds of gunfire are heard from Hasser Misraba checkpoint along with machine guns. A demonstration began from Qutly, near the mourning site for the martyr Yaseen al-Rayhaney at the Grand Mosque.

Raqa: Tabaqa: Arrest campaign launched by security forces and Shabiha in the city, involved 25 people, identified of them: Mohammad Mansoor Al-Bareej, Mohammad Al-Haj Abed, Mohammad Saleh Al-Salloom, Hamood Faraj Al-Salama.

Aleppo: A massive demonstration, with about 3000 participants, began in al-Sakhoor area and is headed toward the roundabout near al-Helwanyeh High way. Participants were destroying pictures of Bashar al-Assad and a policemen stand. Protestors were not able to make it to the Shaar roundabout due to heavy security deployment that launched tear gas at the demonstration..

The number of martyrs has risen to 60 as of now, including 3 children, 3 women, and 3 defected soldiers from Daraa. The remainders of the distributions are as follows: 11 in Nawa Village, 19 in Homs, 9 in Aleppo, 13 in Idlib, 7 in Damascus Suburbs (Douma, Saqba, and Hamorieh), 2 in Hama, 1 in Tafes, 1 in Damascus.

Aleppo: University City: A massive demonstration in between the units 12 and 11 calling for the toppling of the regime and in support of the Free Syrian Army.

Lattakia: Dorein: An evening demonstration began after Isha (Evening) Prayers in support of the Free Syrian Army and in solidarity with Homs, Hama, and Idlib and all of the besieged cities and demanding the regime's ouster.

Lattakia: Salibya: A demonstration began near Qaws Alnasr (Arch of Triumph) in the rain, chanting in solidarity with Homs, Hama and Idlib and calling for the toppling of the regime.

Damascus: Thiyabiya: A martyr and three children injured in Thiyabiya under the security siege and a complete power outage and military and armed gang (Shabeeha) reinforcements arrive in the region searching for activists and the injured.

Damascus Suburbs: Mleiha: An evening demonstration started where protestors chanted for the besieged cities and for the Free Syrian Army and demanded toppling of the regime. Protestors from Zabdein and Deir Al-Asafeer also joined the demonstration.

Damascus: Saida Zeinab: Military and security reinforcements have arrived; meanwhile, regime forces are kidnapping the wounded from hospitals.

Daraa: Basr Al-Harir: Heavy, random gunfire by security and army forces to terrorize residents.

Damascus: A demonstration started in Jobar despite the awful weather conditions and despite the heavy presence of security forces. Protesters chanted in solidarity with the encircled cities, called for the regime's ouster, and chanted in support of the Free Syrian

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Damascus Suburbs: Qudsaya: An evening demonstration started; participants chanted for the encircled cities and reaffirmed their right to self-defense.

Homs: Four new martyrs in Karam Al-Zaitoun due to arbitrary shelling on the neighborhood: Ibrahim Al-Kharfan, Mohammad Oudah, Ibrahim Oudah and Nidal Mustafa Al-Absh.

Aleppo: Alansari: An evening demonstration is underway; participants are chanting in solidarity with Marjeh, the martyrs, and the encircled cities.

Damascus Suburbs: Mouadamieh: Private Khaled Hasanein Hasanein was martyred by security operatives because he supported activists.

Daraa: Dahiya: Martyrdom of three honorable military members after they refused to shoot at peaceful protesters. They were murdered in Dahiya's police station by a security member.

Banyas: Basateen Islam: Security forces launch a campaign of raids and arrests in the village after yesterday demonstration.

Aleppo: Rityan: An evening demonstration started in the town.

Homs: Hawaren: The residents are raiding the Ba'ath Party and destroy Hafez Assad's statue.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: A massive explosion was heard from Jesr Mesraba amid shooting from machine guns after the clashes re-started between the regime's army and the Free Syrian Army in Mesraba and Sindyana.

Aleppo: Kafarnaya: A massive demonstration in solidarity with Marjeh neighborhood and the besieged cities.

Homs: Al-Qaryaten: Multitudes of military and security forces are surrounding the city from three directions and fear is all over the area.

Hama: Today's known martyrs in Hama include Abdel Aziz Omar Daaboul; he was the father of five.

Daraa: Daeel: A massive demonstration in the Liberty Square in solidarity with Nawa, Homs, Hama and the rest of the besieged cities.

Idlib: Jabal Al-Zawiya: Martyrdom of Mohammad Kharfan from Orum Al-Jouz town by security forces gunfire.

Raqqa: Heavy gunfire rocks the city but there are no reports of casualties yet.

Homs: There are reports of many killed and wounded as a result of artillery shelling and machine gun fire from seven directions in the Karam Zeitoun area. This resulted in multiple homes collapsing and burning with residents inside. In addition, massive explosions in the area have been reported.

Homs: Qosair: Army and security forces fired approximately 500 artillery shells at homes in the city; this was accompanied by heavy gunfire from heavy weapons.

Aleppo - Arshaf: Activists in Arshaf started a demonstration to demand the regime's ouster and Bashar's execution.

Aleppo: An evening demonstration in Terkman Bareh despite the heavy rain, the demonstrators are chanting for the besieged cities and toppling the regime.

Aleppo: An evening demonstration is taking place in Hareel; participants are chanting for residents of Marjeh and demanding the fall of the regime.

Deir Ezzor: An evening demonstration started in the Arda area; participants are chanting in solidarity with the besieged cities and calling for the fall of the regime.

Idlib: Jisr Shoghour: Two children and a woman from the village of Janoudieh were wounded when security forces and shabiha raided the villiage. This led to clashes between the regime's army and the Free Syrian Army, with reports of casualties in the regime's army.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: Three tank carriers arrived in the area from the entrance to Qaban Badran this afternoon, and are headed to the Masraba Bridge.

Homs: Qosair: Mohamad Ahmad Bakkour, 14, from Jadir, was martyred at the hands of security forces. His father had been detained with no charges against him.

Damascus: Sitt Zeinab: Multiple wounded are reported as a result of security forces and shabiha surrounding and raiding the area; they shot randomly at anti-regime protesters from the Occupied Golan Heights.

Damascus: Sayda Zeinab: An evening demonstration by the residents of the occupied lands of Golan despite the extensive security deployment. Chants for the besieged cities and toppling the regime.

Aleppo: An evening demonstration started from the Sakhour area; protesters chanted in support of the Marjeh area and the neighborhoods under siege, and are demanding the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Nawa: The regime's thugs (shabiha) and security forces committed a massacre during a funeral procession today. Eleven civilians were martyred including three women and a child. Dozens were reported wounded due to bullets from the regime's forces during the funeral on Friday. Despite the security and military siege of the village, the townspeople amassed and participated in the funeral procession of Ali al-Muzeeb, a high school student, shot and killed yesterday by security forces. The regime's forces encircled the procession and responded with intense gunfire which led to additional martyrs. Among the eleven people massacred was the activist Bashar Abu al-Sal who was popular for leading the chants for the demonstrations. Assad's security forces and thugs raided the private hospital in the town and attempted to kidnap the wounded. The following martyrs have been identified from the massacre: 1. The child Ahmed Adnan Al-Muzeeb 2. Inaam Al-Swaydany 3. Khaled Adnan Shaaban al-Muzeeb 4. Bilal Swaydany 5. Mohammed Khaby 6. Omran Mutlak al-Muzeeb 7. Ahmed Tayseer . Bashar Abu al-Sal9. Mousa Hamdy Abu-Khashreef.

Banyas: An evening demonstration is taking place in Basateen Al-Islam; protesters are chanting in solidarity with Homs and Hama, and demanding the fall of the regime.

Homs: Intermittent gunfire is reported from the direction of Tadmor's airport; this has become a daily occurrence.

Damascus Suburbs: Rankous: Security forces are firing randomly using heavy weapons in the areas surrounding the town, and have deployed a large number of army tanks

Aleppo: A demonstration within a funeral procession is filling the streets of Shaar. Participants are honoring the martyr and demanding to topple the regime.

Daraa: Inkhil: 18 are reported wounded in the town today as a result of security forces' random gunfire.

Aleppo: Security forces and shabiha are firing live ammunition at protesters in the Athamieh neighborhood.

Homs: Violent clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's forces in Ayshereh and Jib Jandali areas. Security checkpoints in Bab Draib along with others have been targeted in al-Hamadieh area.

Homs: Tadmor: Security forces have completely surrounded the National Hospital.

Homs: Demonstration in Taht Maazantain area with Free Syrian Army Participation.

Hama: Qaleet Al-Madeeq: All kinds of connections are cut in the town and its surrounding.

Aleppo: A demonstration starting in the district of Hala Aljdeeda (New Aleppo) chanting in solidarity with the besieged cities and calling for the regime's ouster.

Aleppo: Security forces are shooting gas grenades to disperse a demonstration that started in Al-Aadamieh neighborhood.

Aleppo: A demonstration in Azamiah neighborhood after Maghrweb prayer (evening prayers). Participants chanted for the besieged cities and called to topple the regime.

Homs: Dozens of the regime's thugs and forces have been wounded and killed under an operation by the Free Syrian Army. The FSA targeted a convoy of buses loaded with the regime's thugs and security forces that deployed to raid the Waar area.

Damascus Suburbs: Ghouta: Violent clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's forces in Ain Tarma, Harmaleh, and Masraba.

Idlib: Khan Sheikhoun: Security forces open intense fire on demonstrators.

Lattakia: Security forces raided Southern Remal and launched an arrest campaign near the Talaeh Camp.

Damascus: Nahr Ayesha: A massive demonstration started despite a security forces siege and security forces open intense fire on a demonstration.

Damascus suburbs: Kesweh: Spread of security barricades at the entrances of the city to prevent cars from entering.

Damascus Suburbs: Masraba: Violent clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's forces.

Damascus suburbs: Al-Set Zainab: A massive demonstration started in solidarity with the besieged cities.

Damascus Suburbs: Jeiroud: A demonstration started at Sharqi mosque during which the independence flag was raised at the Hospital roundabout, and the destroying of images of Bashar from the postal wall.

Homs: Nada al-Masry was martyred by security forces' bullets at the end of Dublan Street. She was an engineer married to Mr. Safouan Tarsha who was also an engineer.

Aleppo: A demonstration started at al-Naser Mosque in Salah al-Dean area in solidarity with the besieged cities; participants chanted to topple the regime.

Homs: Massive gunfire from heavy machine guns is heard from security forces and shabiha stationed at checkpoints in Bayada, Khaldieh, and Deir Baalba.

Daraa: Nawa: Military and security forces imposed a curfew in the town.

Homs: Rastan: Intense gunfire from heavy machine guns is heard from all the checkpoints in the area.

Homs: News of the fall of six martyrs in the neighborhood of Rifai whose bodies could not be accessed because of intense gunfire.

Hama: Intense shooting is heard in several areas of Dabbagha neighbourhood.

Daraa: Tafas: Martyrdom of Mohammad Naseem Al-Horany as a result of his severe injuries.

Raqqa: Tabqa: Wounding of a demonstrator by the bullet of security forces, he is being treated in a field hospital for fear of his being arrested.

Aleppo: Security forces and thugs (Shabeha) are raiding the Marjeh neighborhood and launching a random detention campaign.

Homs: An artillery shell targeted Karm Al-Zayton neighborhood and resulted in many injuries including children in critical conditions.

Damascus: Qadam: Intense gunfire in several areas in al-Qadam district.

Homs: The checkpoint at the Hajjar cross between Tadmor & Tefor streets was targeted by the Free Syrian Army and all of the security elements were killed.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: Martyrdom of 3 including a woman and a child: Tamer Al-Taweel, 15, by security forces gunfire.

Aleppo: A massive demonstration started in Maysar in solidarity with the district of Marjeh and called for the regime's ouster.

Idlib: Martyrdom of Amer Majed Al-Sayed 22 years old and his corpse was found near the Shuayb Mosque.

Salimeh: A demonstration started in solidarity with the besieged cities; participants chanted to topple the regime.

Idlib: Martyrdom of Amer Majed Al-Sayed 22 years old and his corpse was found near the Shuayb Mosque.

Aleppo: A massive demonstration started in Maysar in solidarity with the district of Marjeh and called for the regime's ouster.

Idlib: Salwa: Martyrdom of Abdul Raof Jameel Al-Muathen when stabbed by thugs (Shabeha) right after saying Takbeer (Allah is the Greatest) at the mosque's gate.

Homs: A huge explosion from the direction of the Old Clock (Alsa'aa Alqadeema), followed by heavy gunfire

Idlib: Talaada: Thousands of mourners from many nearby cities are bidding farewell to martyr: Hussam Deib Haj Hussein.

Damascus: Hajar Aswad: Extensive deployment of security forces and thugs (Shabeha), an arbitrary detention campaign and activists' hunting with sporadic shooting all over the area.

Homs: Random shooting by security forces and Shabiha stationed at a security checkpoint in al-Bayada area. Mortar shells have been launched by the regime's forces targeting populated neighborhoods.

Homs: Khaldieh: Intense and powerful explosions are ongoing.

Aleppo: Intense gunfire is heard in Halab Jadida (the new section of Aleppo).

Daraa: Nawa: The number of martyrs has risen to 11, including a child. Security forces stormed the hospital and are kidnapping the wounded.

Damascus Suburbs: Zemleka: Security forces use live ammunition to disperse a demonstration. Several people have been wounded.

Aleppo: Riot Police and thugs (Shabeha) are surrounding Marjeh neighborhood and all entrances were blocked.

Daraa: Kahil: Heavy gunfire by security forces and shabiha has been reported.

Idlib: Khan Sheikhon: Shooting at protesters resulting in a child severely injured and the Free Syrian Army clashing with security forces

Damascus Suburbs: Assal al-Ward: A massacre was committed by Assad's security forces and Shabiha in Duhure al-Maboor area in the village. The following people were identified: Abed Al-Rahman Wafa Mansour, Mohammed Wafa Mansour, Jalal Ahmed Mansour, Mohammed Ahmed Mansour Mohammed Ahmed Daqa, Mohammed Abed Al-Latif Shadid, Taha Amer Sharf, Amer Hussien Huryeh, Omran Mohammed al-Haj, Mohamed Amer al-Haj Ahmed, Ahmed Amer al-Haj Ahmed, Aqoube Hassen Hurya, Mohammed Mustafa al-Said Ahmed, Jama Mohammed Qatmaysh, Ahmed Fouad Shadid, Ashraf Amer Qatmaish, Annas Hussien Qatmaish, Malek Hussien Qatmaish.

Damascus Suburbs: Rankoos: Huge military reinforcements arrived and violent clashes at the city's perimeters.

Homs: Shooting by snipers in Bayada neighborhood in Wadi Arab.

Homs: A powerful explosion rocks Al-Rabiaa Al-Araby area (previously known as al-Janoubiy in Deir Baalba) followed by intense gunfire.

Aleppo: A demonstration started in al-Ashrafeya at the second roundabout; participants demanded to topple the regime.

Hama: A raid on al-Hadid's family building in al-Hamedieh where security forces detained seven members from one family, including children and women. The building is now occupied by security forces and shabiha and snipers are stationed on the rooftop overlooking the Balhoun neighborhood. Bombardment using RBG's, mortar shells, rocket grenades, nail bombs are ongoing. Dozens of civilians have been wounded and martyred.

Homs: Haysa: A demonstration started in Jendar Village; participants chanted for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Qatana: Two powerful explosions were heard in the entire city a while ago and the Ghallayeen area was surrounded entirely by security and military forces.

Damascus suburbs: Al-Theyabie: Security forces are dispersing by live ammunition a massive demonstration with the participation of Golan residents in the area, which led to the fall of several wounded among the demonstrators.

Daraa: Mehajeh: The funeral procession of the martyr Mohammed Mezabed Saaf that turned into a massive demonstration demanding to topple the regime.

Homs: Heavy gunfire by snipers stationed atop the citadel in al-Safsafeh area.

Daraa: Tafes: Clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's forces in the village.

Qamishli: A demonstration in al-Remailan Neftyeh led by the Kurdish Parties.

Daraa: Nawa: Mousa Hamdi was martyred by security forces' bullets.

Aleppo: Al-Bab: Security forces are shooting upwards in the air and using tear gas to disperse the protesters and more than ten were arrested.

Idlib: An explosion in the Hal market and news on another one near the National Security branch in the city.

Hama: Madeeq Castle: The castle was raided this morning under intense shooting and sporadic shelling covering the area.

Lattakia: Qurbet Khokha: A massive demonstration started, with participation of the entire village, despite heavy rain and cold temperatures.

Idlib: Al-Teh Town: A demonstration started chanting for toppling the regime.

Homs: Hawreen: A demonstration started and headed towards Freedom Square; participants chanted for the regime's fall.

Damascus Suburbs: Hamourieh: A child was martyred, Abed Al-Latif Saeed Hasoun, 11, was shot by security forces at a checkpoint located between Masraba and Hamourieh.

Damascus Suburbs: Ghazlaniyeh: A massive demonstration from the Ahmad Mosque after Friday's Prayer chanting for toppling the regime.

Aleppo: A demonstration started in al-Mashahed district after Friday prayers; participants chanted for the regime's ouster.

Damascus Suburbs: Al-Hama: A demonstration started from the Omari Mosque in Shamiyeh area chanting for toppling the regime.

Damascus: Qadam: The regime's forces are firing on protesters and have surrounded the mosques; the entire area is surrounded by security forces and shabiha.

Damascus Suburbs: Haran Al-Awamed: The town was raided by huge number of security forces and thugs (Shabeha). Snipers were deployed on the rooftops overlooking the Grand Mosque with electricity blackout all over the town.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: A power outage was reported in Jiser Mesraba amid explosions and gunfire.

Aleppo: Martyrdom of two men in Marjeh neighborhood and tens others were injured by security forces' gunfire.

Damascus Suburbs: Rankous: The Free Syrian Army attacked the regime's army, which is shelling all entrances to the town.

Damascus Suburbs: Mleiha: A demonstration started from the Grand Mosque; protesters are chanting in solidarity with the besieged cities and for the fall of the regime.

Lattakia: Bakas: A demonstration started in solidarity with Homs; participants chanted for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Mleiha: Clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime forces at the Air Force Intelligence checkpoint at the Mleiha junction are reported.

Damascus: Hajar Aswad: Heavy security presence the whole length of Thawra Street and in the nearby mosques.

Aleppo: A massive demonstration started in al-Fardous area after Friday prayers. Security forces and Shabiha responded with live ammunition; several people have been injured.

Daraa: The town of Nawa presents, on the Friday of the Right to Self-Defense, martyr Bashar Naji Abou Al-Sal.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: A massive explosion rocked the Masraba Bridge area; there are also reports of bursts of gunfire from light weapons.

Damascus Suburbs: Beit Saber: A massive demonstration started after Friday prayers; participants chanted for Douma and the rest of the besieged cities.

Idlib: Ariha: Massive demonstrations started from multiple number of mosques and all met at Freedom square. Security forces faces the protestors with intensive gunfire from Recruiting Checkpoint.

Aleppo University: Approximately 150 anti-terrorist personnel are in the university area in Aleppo.

Damascus Suburbs: Daraya: A second demonstration got out in the Middle Street and was met by Air Intelligence forces gunfire.

Deir Ezzor: Security and Shabiha forces shoot fire to disperse protestors in Wadi street.

Damascus Suburbs: Erbeen: A massive demonstration numbering in the thousands started in Aasqalany Square; participants chanted for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Daraya: Sounds of heavy gunfire are reported in the train station area, where there is heavy security presence.

Daraa: Yadudeh: Two demonstrations started in the village and met in Freedom Square; participants chanted for the besieged cities and the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Nawa: Intensive clashes between the Free Army and the regime's security and army forces.

Damascus: Mazzeh: A demonstration started from the Al-Ikhlass Mosque; protesters chanted for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Kafar Nabta: A massive demonstration started from the Grand Mosque; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Raqqa: Tabaqa: Massive demonstration started from Hamza mosque and another from Noor mosque. Live bullets are fired in attempt to disperse the protestors.

Damascus: Midan: Security forces are firing live ammunition and tear gas to disperse protesters.

Damascus: Barzeh: Massive demonstration started. Protestors chanted for the besieged cities and for toppling the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Daraya: Gunfire from multiple areas in the town is reported.

Damascus: Qaboun: Security forces fired in the area to disperse a massive demonstration that started from the Taqawi Mosque.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: A number of demonstrations from multiple mosques came together at the Grand Mosque.

Damascus suburbs: Yabroud: Massive demonstrations started from most mosques in the city and headed toward the Square. Protestors chanted in solidarity with Qalamoun and Damascus suburbs.

Damascus Suburbs: Qudsaya: A massive demonstration started from the Omari Mosque; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Daraya: A demonstration started despite the heavy security presence in the city.

Hama: Security forces continue to fire on Hamidieh using heavy machine guns from BTRs.

Damascus: Midan: A demonstration started from Khiro Yaseen mosque. Protestors chanted for toppling the regime.

Deir Ezzor: Bokamal: Tanks and other armored vehicles are moving in all areas of the city and clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the regime's army are reported.

Damascus Suburbs: Zamalka: Massive demonstrations started from most of the mosques in the town; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Homs: Gunfire from heavy weapons is reported in areas of Old Homs at the citadel, and most areas in the city of Homs are demonstrating.

Daraa: Bosr Al-Hareer: Massive demonstrations got out from most of the town mosques toward Freedom square.

Damascus: Aisha River: Heavy gunfire is reported near the Ali Bin Abi Taleb Moque.

Lattakia: Demonstrations have started in the Saliba Projects, Saliba, and the main market. Security forces are attacking protesters and arresting some.

Damascus: Qaboun: Intensive security deployment, mosque besiegement and cutting the area locations off each other with checkpoints in the main street.

Jableh: A demonstration started at the Khalfaa Al-Rashidin Mosque; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Daeel: Daeel activist raise the Independence Flag at the military barracks in the municipal building.

Damascus Suburbs: Rankous: The regime's army has started raiding the town from the main entrance; gunfire is reported from the direction of the hospital on the Assal Al-

Ward road.

Hama: A massive demonstration started from a number of mosques in the eastern Aleppo Road area; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Jableh: A demonstration started a short time ago from the Iman Mosque in the Azzi area; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Hama: Bazaar: A demonstration started from the Grand mosque; protesters are chanting in support of the besieged cities.

Aleppo: Kafar Nouran: A demonstration started despite the heavy rain; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Deir Ezzor: A massive demonstration started in Al-Kharita; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Idlib: Hazano: A demonstration started a short time ago; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Eastern Gharieh: Demonstrations are starting from most of the town's mosques; participants are chanting in solidarity with the besieged cities.

Aleppo: Marea: Demonstrations have started from most of the town's mosques. Residents of many of the surrounding villages are participating, and are heading to Karnak Square chanting for the fall of the regime.

Idlib: Koreen: A massive protest that includes women is chanting for the fall of the regime.

Lattakia: A flash demonstration started at the Hussein Mosque; protesters chanted in solidarity with the besieged cities and for the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Tafas: A massive demonstration started after Friday prayers; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Deir Ezzor: Qourieh: Security forces have been conducting a raid campaign since this morning in the Bazoul area.

Homs: Tadmor: A demonstration started a short time ago; protesters are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Deir Ezzor: A demonstration started from the Qaba Mosque in the Joura district; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Hasakeh: A demonstration started a short time ago in the Tawsaieh area in Shadadi; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Aleppo: Atareb: A demonstration started at the Grand Mosque despite the heavy rainfall; participants chanted for the fall of the regime.

Daraa: Daeel: Demonstrations have started from all the mosques in the town and are heading to Freedom Square despite the heavy rain.

Deir Ezzor: Bokamal: Regime forces are firing on protesters near the Ali Bin Abi Taleb Mosque; they are forcing worshipers out of the mosque to arrest them.

Damascus Suburbs: An explosion was heard in the eastern Ghouta area, near Nashabieh on the road to Damascus.

Deir Ezzor: Security forces are firing on demonstrations in the Hamidieh area; the Omar Bin Khattab Mosque has been completely surrounded.

Idlib: Maaret Nouman: Massive demonstrations have started from most of the mosques in the town; all are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Harasta: Heavy security presence in most of the areas, and the Hasan and Zahra mosques have been surrounded. Snipers are stationed on top of the surrounding buildings, and checkpoints have been erected to inspect all cars and passersby.

Deir Ezzor: A massive demonstration started in Tayana; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Deir Ezzor: Bokamal: A massive demonstration started from the Ali Bin Abi Taleb Mosque; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Hama: Jassem Zanzoul was standing in front of his daughter, in the Aleppo Road area, when he was martyred by a sniper's shot to the chest.

Damascus Suburbs: Kanaker: Heavy presence of security forces and shabiha in the center of the town. The Omari Mosque has been completely surrounded.

Banyas: Heavy security presence in all the southern neighborhoods of the city; a large number of security forces and shabiha have sealed off the mosques.

Damascus Suburbs: Mouadamia: Heavy and widespread security presence in all streets and near mosques, and snipers have stationed on rooftops. There are a number of armored vehicles carrying rocket-propelled grenades roaming the streets.

Hasakeh: Massive demonstrations in the Ghowairan area; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: Explosions rock the city; it is assumed they are from the checkpoint at Misraba Bridge

Amouda: A demonstration started next to the Grand Mosque; participants are chanting for the fall of the regime.

Damascus Suburbs: Daraya: A number of white armored security vehicles carrying armed security forces and shabiha entered the town via Ghiath Matar Road.

Aleppo: Kobane: A massive demonstration started a short time ago; participants are chanting in solidarity with the besieged cities and for the fall of the regime.

Lattakia: A number of soldiers defected near the youth camps in southern Raml this morning. This resulted in an exchange of gunfire with the regime's army before the defected soldiers were able to withdraw safely.

Damascus Suburbs: Domair: The regime carried out a house-to-house raid and arrest campaign this morning. Those known to have been arrested include Mohamad Ibrahim Ghaza; Abou Mohamad Hasan, a retired colonel; Ihan Hasan; Abdallah Hasan; and Naser Zaki.

Damascus Suburbs: Rankous: A column of tanks headed from the town of Assal Al-Ward toward Rankous this morning.

Damascus Suburbs: Douma: Communications continue to be cut off. Water has now been cut, following the regime forces' gunfire at water towers.

Hama: Continuous gunfire, along with explosions, were reported a short time ago in the Hamidieh district.

Hama: The regime's army launched nail bombs in the Hamidieh district.

Homs: Quseir: Gunfire, sounds of explosions and Rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) on the homes surrounding the hospital in the city.

Hama: Storming of the districts of Hamidiya and Sharqiya and gunfire from heavy weaponry.

Damascus: Hajar Aswad: Morning protest by the free people of Golan came out in solidarity with Ghouta, Homs, Hama, and the rest of the besieged cities.

Lattakia: the sound of an explosion is heard in Maysaloun Street and sporadic gunfire at the Traders Market.

Hama: the sound of two explosions in Hamidiyeh and heavy firing from machine guns.

Hama: heavy gunfire from the Water Department and the Medical Complex checkpoints in the Jebb and Manakh areas.

Damascus Suburbs: Wadi Barada: the route between Wadi Barada and Zabadani had been closed off amid the presence of tanks, gunfire and flares.

Damascus Suburbs: Wady Barada: News of the deployment of snipers atop the mountains that stretch from Jdeidet Al-Wadi to Deir Kanoon. Tanks and large number of soldiers were stationed at the outskirts of Bseimeh valley and through Ein Al-Saeb to Fakhoukh villages. This comes amid fear of invasion of the valley in the next few days.

Damascus Suburbs: Saqba: The martyrdom of the youth Mazen Abu-Zahab due to injuries by the Shabiha.

This Friday started with six martyrs including the chanter of Baba Amr neighborhood. Three martyrs in Homs and two in Idlib, and a martyr from Saqba in Damascus Suburbs.

Idlib: Dana: Martyrdom of Hussam Deeb Haj Hussein by the security forces stationed in the checkpoint at the city's entrance. Hussam came to the town to participate in tomorrow's demonstration.

Homs: Martyrdom of the activist Osama Edrees who's known for leading demonstrations in Baba Amr neighborhood after he was shot in his chest by the regime's army.

Homs: Martyrdom of Ghanem Hani Al-Hamad after being injured with a pin-bomb shelled by thugs (Shabeha) at Jeb Al-Jandali neighborhood just because they heard Takbeer (Allah is the Greatest) voices.

Homs: Hawla: Massive explosions heard in the city followed by heavy gunfire by the security forces stationed at Huriya (freedom) Square along, with other checkpoints in Teldo.

Idlib: The regime's army in Ma'arat Al-Noman erected security checkpoints to check all passing vehicles especially public transportation means on the Aleppo-Damascus highway near the Shallal Service Center in Ma'ara city. They also stopped 40 young men probably for military related reasons since many of them refuse to join the army.

Daraa: Herak: Security forces and thugs (Shabeha) kidnapped the defected recruit Ahmad Salama Manokh Al-Hariri in the city after he was shot and injured then taken to Brigade#152 to the west of the city.

Hama: The body of the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud from the village of Khanizeer was handed over. He died under torture by the security forces after being detained for two months. He will be buried tomorrow.

Hama: Martyrdom of the Recruit Omar Hassan Al-Hamoud by security forces in Jarjameh district. He defected during Ramadan after learning that his brother was killed when a regime's tank ran him over. The father of both martyrs was detained by security forces yesterday.

Idlib: Martyrdom of Abdo Adnan Sheikh Shaaban by snipers' gunfire and many injuries were reported after the sporadic shooting in Hanano Square.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier From 1 YORKS Killed In Khar Nikah

27 Jan 12 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier serving with 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment was killed in Afghanistan today, Friday 27 January 2012.

Serving as part of Combined Force Nahr-e Saraj (North), the soldier was a member of an International Security Assistance Force foot patrol to disrupt insurgent activity in the Khar Nikah region of Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province, when he received a fatal gunshot wound.

Mourners Pay Respects To Tech. Sgt. Schwartz

January 14, 2012 BY JAMES RUSSELL, Traverse City Record-Eagle

ACME — Flags lined Traverse City's streets as a grieving community said goodbye and thank you to one of their own.

U. S. Air Force Technical Sgt. Matthew S. Schwartz died Jan. 5 in Afghanistan when an improvised explosive device, or IED, struck his vehicle. The blast also killed two other U.S. servicemen.

Schwartz, 34, graduated from Traverse City Central High School in 1996 and was killed during his sixth tour in a war zone.

His wife Jennifer, also formerly of Traverse City, and daughters Aliza, Emily and Morgan survive.

Hundreds of his friends and family gathered at Christ the King Church in Acme today to pay respects. The turnout awed Schwartz's grandmother, Pat Bristol.

"It's just amazing how this town has responded," she said.

The Rev. Raymond C. Cotter officiated the traditional Catholic funeral service. He spoke of the importance of symbols like the U.S. flag and the cross, and what they say about Schwartz's commitment to his country, his family and his church. He called the death "such a significant loss to our nation." "The substance of our lives is so different when you carry those symbols forward, when you allow them to push us to do something," Cotter said. "The flag means you serve something beyond yourself."

Flags waved along the streets near Christ the King, and people held signs that thanked Schwartz for his service.

"It's so nice to see those flags out there," said Dave Barth, a friend of Schwartz's family. "He was just an upstanding kid."

After the service, friends shared their memories of Schwartz.

“He was just a delightful, playful, precious being, regardless of life’s circumstances,” said Maeeda Kenaya, who knew him as a child. “He was a good person who had a lot to give.”

Janet Reed didn’t know Schwartz, but wanted to do something to thank him for his sacrifice. She stood along a cold, blustery Veterans Drive with two flags as the funeral procession made its way into Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens.

“I just wanted to pay my respects and be thankful for what he’s done for us,” she said. “It’s quite a thing that these guys do.”

Al Winowiecki stood quietly near the cemetery entrance. He knew Schwartz in the 1990s, when Schwartz was a young security guard at the Sara Lee plant in Traverse City. He remembered seeing Schwartz carry an Air Force bag, and he wasn’t surprised to learn he signed up to serve his country.

“That’s just the type of person I think he was,” Winowiecki said. “He was a great guy.”

Schwartz earned numerous military decorations for his war zone service, including three Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart and Meritorious Service Medal.

Schwartz’s family was presented with several flags at the graveside service, which included an Honor Guard and a 21-gun salute. A military plane also flew over the cemetery after a serviceman played “Taps.”

“It was just beautiful,” said Ken O’Brien, Schwartz’s brother-in-law. “The military really does it right.”

O’Brien said the community support meant a lot to the family.

“I kind of expected it, but didn’t realize how much,” O’Brien said. “It’s stuff like that that makes you realize people really do think about this. Maybe we’re not all wrapped up in our own little worlds.”

At the church, dozens of pictures lined the entrance, images of Schwartz with his family through the years. Bristol pointed to several photos, and shared stories of graduations and visits to Santa Claus.

“There’s just so many memories,” she said. “It’s the memories that I’ll hold on to.”

**POLITICIANS CAN’T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

**The All-New 2012 Model Taliban
At Afghan Showrooms Now:
“The 60-Year-Old Taliban Cleric Is
On A Different Mission: He Is
Overseeing A Network Of Schools
That Teach Reading, Writing And
Math To Thousands Of Girls”
“The Taliban Now Have Some Uzbek
And Tajik Commanders, And The
Insurgency Has Spread Even To The
Non-Pashtun Regions That Were
Outside Taliban Control In 2001”
“Education Directors In More Than A
Hundred Of Afghanistan’s 398 Districts
Have Reported To Kabul That They
Received Assurances From Local
Taliban Commanders That Their Schools
Would Be Protected”**

JANUARY 28, 2012 By YAROSLAV TROFIMOV, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]. Habib Khan Totakhil contributed to this article.

KABUL—When the Taliban ruled Afghanistan in the 1990s, Maulvi Qalamuddin headed the Committee to Protect Virtue and Prevent Vice, the religious police that shut down girls’ schools, beat up men with insufficiently long beards and arrested those in possession of music or video tapes.

Nowadays, the 60-year-old Taliban cleric is on a different mission: He is overseeing a network of schools that teach reading, writing and math to thousands of girls in his home province of Logar, an insurgent hotbed just south of Kabul.

“Education for women is just as necessary as education for men,” Mr. Qalamuddin thunders. “In Islam, men and women have the same duty to pray, to fast — and to seek learning.”

In recent public statements, the Taliban have made an effort to appear a more moderate force, promising peaceful relations with neighboring countries and respect for human rights.

Such a future Taliban government would be gentler and wiser than its 1990s incarnation, insurgent officials insist.

“As a movement gets older, it becomes more mature, and makes positive changes,” Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid says. “During the past Taliban regime the government would make some hasty decisions, but now we are careful and deliberate.”

A key difference would be an effort to include all of Afghanistan’s tribes and ethnic communities, he adds.

The old Taliban regime was dominated by Pashtun clerics from southern Kandahar province, and discriminated against the Shiite Hazara community and other minorities.

This time around, “every group of the nation will be equally represented and privileged,” Mr. Mujahid says.

The Taliban remain a mostly Pashtun movement, and deeply resents what it sees as disproportionate power enjoyed by smaller ethnic communities under President Hamid Karzai.

But, in the post-2001 insurgency, the Afghan Taliban have largely shied away from the sectarian and ethnic violence that accompanied their rise to power in the 1990s, calling instead on all Afghans to unite against the foreign invaders.

In December, the Taliban leadership swiftly condemned the deadly bombing of Shiite shrines in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif, attacks that Afghan officials have blamed on Pakistanis.

The Taliban now have some Uzbek and Tajik commanders, and the insurgency has spread even to the non-Pashtun regions that were outside Taliban control in 2001.

A future Taliban administration also would seek to establish “good coordination” with the international community in the fight against narcotics, Mr. Mujahid says.

Since 2001, opium has become an increasingly important source of income for the Taliban insurgency, and for several power brokers and former warlords in Mr. Karzai’s administration, according to Western government officials. The Taliban, diplomats say, are highly unlikely to get out of the drug business as long as the war goes on.

Still, the only time in recent history when opium cultivation was nearly eradicated in Afghanistan was in 2001 — when Taliban leader Mullah Omar imposed a ban on poppies, in an attempt to gain international recognition that collapsed after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Severing remaining Taliban links with al Qaeda remains a key demand of the U.S. and allies, and a concession that Western officials expect insurgents to make after the Taliban detainees are transferred to Qatar.

On the ground in Afghanistan, however, the few surviving al Qaeda fighters already have become irrelevant in the current insurgency, especially since bin Laden's killing last May, coalition officials say.

"The Taliban have a local agenda, and do not operate abroad. Al Qaeda is international, and that's the biggest difference," explains the pre-2001 Taliban government's foreign minister, Wakil Abdul Muttawakil.

In any case, he notes, it's not the Taliban but the mujahedeen groups currently in Mr. Karzai's administration who invited bin Laden to Afghanistan in 1996, months before the Taliban captured Kabul.

"They thought he'd asphalt all the roads in Afghanistan because he's a millionaire," Mr. Muttawakil chuckles. "Instead, he just brought war to Afghanistan."

The Taliban's traditional foes, especially among the former Northern Alliance of ethnic Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara militias, dismiss any talk of the Taliban's new moderation as insidious propaganda designed to weaken the West's resolve in the war.

Yet, on at least one crucial issue—education, for girls and boys—Mr. Karzai's government and Western officials concede that significant change has already occurred.

"I don't find them to be as hard as they used to be in the 1990s," Afghanistan's Education Minister Farooq Wardak says in an interview.

In the early years of the insurgency, the Taliban would routinely blow up schools across the country, especially those teaching girls, assassinating government-paid teachers. As a result, in many southern and eastern districts of the country's Pashtun heartland, an entire generation of children grew up not knowing how to read, write or count.

Over the years, this caused a backlash: Young men from the Pashtun villages have increasingly found themselves unable to compete for jobs with better-educated ethnic minorities, such as the Hazaras.

"Our communities have told the Taliban: 'Hey, guys, you're telling us you're trying to topple the government of Hamid Karzai and establish your own government. But when you have your own government, you'll still need doctors and engineers. So why are you not letting my kids go to school?'" Mr. Wardak says.

The Taliban have heeded this message, according to the Afghan minister.

Some 600 schools that had been shut down because of security concerns were reopened over the past three years, he says.

Education directors in more than a hundred of Afghanistan's 398 districts have reported to Kabul that they received assurances from local Taliban commanders that their schools would be protected.

The Taliban, Mr. Wardak adds, frequently tell government-paid teachers: "You have to do your job. If your absenteeism is too much, we're going to fire you."

Last year, there were 440 attacks and threats against schools, down from 500 in 2010, according to the U.N.

These numbers include attacks on schools used by Afghan or coalition forces, seen as legitimate targets by the Taliban. In addition, some of the attacks came from criminal gangs and non-Taliban militias.

Peter Crowley, the Afghanistan representative of the United Nations Children's Fund that's building up the country's education infrastructure, says he's encouraged by a "positive trend" in Taliban attitudes to education, including girls' schools.

"No military pressure is going to force them to accept education," he says. "This is a conclusion they are reaching on their own."

In the Taliban-controlled villages of Logar province, the classes organized by Mr. Qalamuddin, the former Taliban religious police chief, are held inside mosques. They don't use government textbooks to avoid any taint of being associated with Mr. Karzai's administration.

Considered a moderate by Afghan standards, Mr. Qalamuddin is no longer involved in the armed struggle and, after spending two years in prison, lives openly in Kabul.

But, greeting visitors in a room featuring a TV set, Mr. Qalamuddin readily concedes that the Taliban government to which he belonged until 2001 may have erred by focusing on "superficial" issues such as the length of men's beards and unnecessarily banned modern amenities like television.

The elementary schools, in the cleric's home district of Baraki Barak that is now under near-total Taliban control, are funded by a small German aid group named Ofarin that has worked on education in Afghanistan since before 2001. The group pays each of the 67 teachers in the area 2,400 afghanis (\$53) a month, according to its coordinator and co-founder, Peter Schwittek.

Six times a week, thousands of local boys and girls — sometimes together, more often separately — gather in scores of village mosques across the district at the break of dawn, sitting through 90 minutes of math and Afghanistan's national languages of Pashtu and Dari.

An additional 30 minutes a day are taken by Islamic studies, taught by the local mullahs following a textbook written by Mr. Qalamuddin and approved by the Afghan authorities.

In the hamlet of Hajji Musa Kala, villager Mohammad Idris is sending to one of these mosque schools his eight-year-old son and his six-year-old daughter. "If there were some girls' schools nearby, I would have sent my daughter there, but we don't have any," he says. "This is a favor for the people."

In recent years, as the Taliban took over Baraki Barak, Mr. Schwittek hasn't been able to visit the area. Even Mr. Qalamuddin himself hasn't been around for months, fearing more radical insurgent commanders opposed to his involvement in efforts to spur peace negotiations between the Taliban and Mr. Karzai's government.

But the teachers and parents in the district say they have been left undisturbed by the militants, who sometimes monitor the classes but don't otherwise interfere.

"It's nonsense that the Taliban are against women's education," the local insurgent commander, Maulvi Darwish, says in a phone interview.

The red line, he explains, would be adding the language of infidel invaders to the local curriculum. "Learning English isn't a sin, but teaching a foreign language in the mosque would provoke people's sentiments," the Taliban commander says.

Matiullah Asim, a teacher in the district's Hajji Jan Nisar village, says new classes are likely to be established in neighboring villages in the spring.

"The people here are all Taliban sympathizers, or at least pretend to be pro-Taliban," he explains.

Initially, many villagers were concerned that blackboards don't really belong in a mosque, and kept their girls and boys away.

"Now, they've seen that this is something that helps their children. Everyone is sending their kids to get education."

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

**NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1:
PACK UP
GO HOME
THIS IS NOT A PRODUCTIVE USE OF TIME**



U.S. soldiers patrol in the eastern city of Jalalabad January 19, 2012. AFGHANISTAN-EAST/ REUTERS/Omar Sobhani

MILITARY NEWS

“I Did Not Risk My Life To Come Home To Sell Out Politicians Like Rahm Emanuel,’ Said Rory Fanning, One Of The Demonstrators And An Afghanistan War Veteran”

“The Real Fight Is Here At Home” “On January 18, The Chicago City Council Overwhelmingly Approved Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Ordinances To Give Police New Powers To Crack Down On Protests”

January 23, 2012 Brit Schulte and Caitlin Sheehan, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

On January 18, the Chicago City Council overwhelmingly approved Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s ordinances to give police new powers to crack down on protests ahead of the NATO/G8 joint summit coming to the city in May.

The changes to Chicago’s parade ordinance governing protests that Emanuel was demanding would have been worse if not for a campaign by unions, community groups, immigrant rights organizations and the Occupy movement in the two weeks leading up to the vote, which forced the mayor to withdraw some of the worst provisions.

Nevertheless, what remains is a dramatic attack on the right to protest. The new restrictions will be practically impossible for protest organizers to comply with. For example, protest permit applications, which are generally submitted months before planned events, must now include the “size and dimension of any sign, banner or other attention-getting device” carried by two or more people as well as the description of any sound amplification on wheels or carried by two or more people.

The law also enhances the mayor’s powers to install sophisticated surveillance cameras, and it increases the minimum fine for violating the parade ordinance increased from \$50 to \$200.

The mayor had to step back from much steeper increases he had previously sought. Also, his initial proposal contained a provision that sounded as if the cops could deputize practically anyone to perform police functions, but later versions specified that only “certified law enforcement personnel” could be deputized by the city.

Emanuel initially claimed his proposals were temporary measures to “deal with NATO/G8 protesters.” But the only provision that has a sunset clause is the mayor’s power to accept no-bid contracts for the summit. All the rest of the new restrictions are permanent.

The new rules redefine what constitutes a large public assembly, requiring activists to provide \$1 million of liability insurance--unless they can persuade the transportation commissioner to waive the insurance requirement as an undue financial burden to free speech rights.

All told, the new restrictions on protest rights give police and city officials even more rules that they can use to target, arrest and fine demonstrators and organizers as they see fit.

Even more troubling is that these new measures come at a time that people across the city are mobilizing to defend city services from the mayor's budget ax. Mental health clinics, libraries and schools are facing closures across the city, and the contract for the city's teachers expires this summer.

The day before the vote, a press conference [1] organized by the Coalition Against NATO/G8 War and Poverty Agenda [2] brought together a diverse coalition of organizations, including religious leaders, immigrant rights groups, Occupy activists and several labor unions, the Chicago Teachers Union, AFSCME, the Service Employees International Union, the Amalgamated Transit Union and National Nurses United, among them.

"I don't believe in a cap on protest, on freedom of speech," said Martese Chism, a registered nurse and member of National Nurses United. "I don't think Rahm Emanuel and the aldermen have a right to do that...If it wasn't for protest, I wouldn't be who I am today. You know, protest is America. It's part of America's family."

The high point of the fight to defend the right to protest was a demonstration at City Hall by about 200 people who vocally expressed their disgust with the ordinance. Some people arrived as early as 7 a.m. to secure a place in line so they could enter the City Council chambers.

In the hours before the council went into session, groups such as Stand Up! Chicago, a coalition of labor unions, held a press conference, and the rally began. Occupy Rogers Park staged political theater, with a papier-mâché figure of Rahm Emanuel, accompanied by a fake police bodyguard, carrying out mock arrests of protesters. Meanwhile, the line of people waiting to get into the council chambers swelled.

"I did not risk my life to come home to sell out politicians like Rahm Emanuel," said Rory Fanning, one of the demonstrators and an Afghanistan war veteran. "I will continue to peacefully agitate and support anyone who agitates against these unjust laws passed by the fraud that is the Chicago City Council.

"The real fight is here at home."

From the start, protesters were given the run-around by the police. An announcement was made around 9 a.m. that the discussion of and vote on the protest ordinances would be delayed due to an impromptu memorial ceremony for the late Maggie Daley, wife of the former mayor, and no one would be permitted inside until at least noon. Numerous people in suits walked through the velvet ropes to take their seats inside while protesters remained waiting in line.

Many protesters had to leave to get to work or class because of the delay, but others planned to return by noon in order to rally again and try to get inside for the actual discussion and vote.

However, by 11:30 a.m., ahead of the announced schedule, an Occupy activist inside the soundproofed mezzanine gallery relayed to protesters that it appeared the council had already begun discussion about the ordinance.

Protesters demanded to be let in, they were told that there was a “lack of seating.”

“Let us in!” protesters began chanting. Then a police sergeant let slip that the council had officially begun to discuss the ordinance, that there were actually 20 or more empty seats, and that the city council had ordered police not to let protesters in.

The anger of the crowd reached a peak. While protesters chanted, “Let us in! Now!” at the top of their lungs and stomped their feet in time, the media appeared to videotape what was happening.

The chanting only let up when police agreed to let 10 protesters inside--when less than 10 were admitted, more chanting ensued.

Voting began only minutes later with the vast majority of community members and protesters barred from the chambers. Outside, protesters chanted, “We vote no!”

**“I Swore An Oath, Which Is An
Oath To The Constitution, Not To
Protect Some Bullshit Local
Ordinances”**

**“I Thought Our Uniforms Might Be A
Sanity Check For The Cops”
“That Didn’t Work Out So Well”**

In the Navy, where he served for six years, Shepherd had been a computer tech, and he says that’s part of his attraction to Occupy: He simply couldn’t believe the amount of money being wasted overseas.

“It cost \$16 million to redo the computers in my little section,” he says. “They spent \$300 million on the computers on my ship alone. And that’s one small ship in a huge navy.”

January 19, 2012 By Mark Binelli, Rolling Stone [Excerpts]

A little more than six weeks after being shot in the head, Scott Olsen boarded a BART train and rode it across San Francisco Bay to Oakland.

The projectile that struck Olsen fractured his skull and left him in critical condition. More crucially for the narrative, Olsen turned out to be a 24-year-old ex-Marine who'd survived two tours of duty in Iraq.

Though he couldn't even speak for days, a shaky video of other protesters carrying him to safety got endless replays. In the footage, you can hear people around him screaming, "Medic! Medic!" as if a MASH unit might be somewhere nearby, and see Olsen himself, who looks absurdly young, staring up wide-eyed, but unable to speak, as someone shouts, "What's your name?" As the bedlam churns around him, Olsen slowly reaches up and touches his bleeding head.

He's heading to Oakland to attend his first protest since he got hurt, and so has decided to wear a sort of costume: a brown camouflage Veterans for Peace T-shirt over a loose pair of American flag pants, minus the stripes – it's just white stars on that patriotic shade of blue – and an inside-out bandanna worn like a headband, his shoulder-length hair tied into a ponytail.

We miss our stop. Olsen says, "You're following directions. From a guy with. Brain damage."

Despite the gray skies, about 2,000 people have gathered around the park.

Most seem to recognize Olsen, who receives a steady stream of fist bumps, shoulder clasps and quiet thank-yous as he looks for his friends. He's gracious to a fault about his new fame, patiently giving interviews to Al Jazeera, NPR and a kid using his iPhone as a recording device.

The former Occupation campground has become a vast, muddy field. Otherwise, the air is festive, with a tinge of revolutionary danger.

When a cop tries to film the proceedings with a camcorder, an angry mob confronts him and begins chanting, "Go away!" An early-morning march had successfully closed down much of the port of Oakland, and similar actions had taken place in Portland, Seattle and San Diego. After the current rally, there would be another march to the port, about two and a half miles away, and there was already talk of extending the Oakland port shutdown to cover the overnight shift, all of which added up to about \$4 million in lost business, according to port authorities.

Olsen spots a white Veterans for Peace flag and makes his way through the crowd. The young man holding the flag, a Navy veteran named Josh Shepherd, is a friend.

"I was with this guy when he went down," Shepherd says, nodding at Olsen.

That morning, the police had cleared out the park and set up a barricade. By evening, Occupiers returned to take back the park. Shepherd and Olsen had shown up in uniform – Josh in crisp dress blues, Scott in a camouflage jacket – and intentionally placed themselves between the police line and the seething, chanting protesters.

"I swore an oath, which is an oath to the Constitution, not to protect some bullshit local ordinances," Shepherd says. "I thought our uniforms might be a sanity check for the cops." He smiles ruefully. "That didn't work out so well."

In the chaos that followed, Shepherd lost track of Olsen, and didn't realize until later in the evening that his friend had been hurt.

In the Navy, where he served for six years, Shepherd had been a computer tech, and he says that's part of his attraction to Occupy: He simply couldn't believe the amount of money being wasted overseas.

"It cost \$16 million to redo the computers in my little section," he says.

"They spent \$300 million on the computers on my ship alone. And that's one small ship in a huge navy."

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THEM HOME: ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



ARLINGTON, VA - DECEMBER 27: The casket of U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Vincent J. Bell at Arlington National Cemetery. Bell, an artilleryman for the 2nd Battalion of the 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force based in Camp Pendleton, California, was killed by an improvised explosive device explosion while he was on foot patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, during his fifth deployment in ten years with the Marine Corps. (Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)

"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops."

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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