

Military Resistance 10A7

Notice:

Serious Military Resistance Website Problem That Delayed End Of Fund Raising Raffle Fixed

Until today, Military Resistance Newsletter issues since January 1, 2012 could not be uploaded to the Military Resistance website, <http://www.militaryproject.org>, because of a technical problem.

Because notice of the deadline for the Military Resistance Fund Raffle was supposed to have been posted on the website January 2, it is therefore necessary to extend the Raffle entry deadline.

A newsletter giving the extended date for the end of the Raffle is being prepared and will be sent out no later than Jan. 9

Thanks for your patience, and apologies for the delay, to everyone who has contributed so far to the Fund Raising effort. We will end the Raffle as soon as a new deadline can be posted to the website.

**Syria Sniper Shot High When
Officers Ordered Him To Kill:
He Joins Thousands Of Soldiers
Who Have Gone Over To The
Revolution Against The Assad
Dictatorship;
“Some Of Us Soon Realised That The
Crowds Were Just Ordinary People,
Chanting For Freedom”**

“Nearly Everyone In The Government Army Is Secretly Against The Regime”

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

07 Jan 2012 By Nick Meo, Tripoli, Lebanon; Telegraph Media Group Limited [Excerpts]

For months Mohammed Ismael, a softly-spoken and clean-shaven 23-year-old, sat on the rooftops of buildings in Hama, menacing the city's population with his powerful Chinese-made rifle.

He watched through his telescopic lens as men, women and children scattered in panic as his shots rang out, dropping their anti-regime banners and running for the cover of buildings and alleyways.

As a highly-trained sniper with the Syrian army's elite 18th Division, he was repeatedly ordered by his officers to shoot protesters.

He observed as the secret police arrested and savagely beat the people on the streets below him, and he listened as a handful of his comrades, hardcore regime supporters, boasted about their own prowess at hitting their mark - chalking up tallies of dead demonstrators who, they believed, were stooges paid \$100 a day by Israel and other enemies of Syria.

But Mr Ismael, a Bedouin Arab from the desert region in the east of the country, was not so sure.

“At first we believed the officers when they said we were fighting against enemies of Syria,” he said.

“We weren't allowed to watch television and they took our mobile phones away, so we didn't understand what was happening in our country.

“We were so excited. We wanted to do our duty and fight terrorists. But some of us soon realised that the crowds were just ordinary people, chanting for freedom.”

He dared not refuse to shoot, aware that if he did so he could be killed himself. Instead, he says, he was careful always to miss his targets: aiming slightly too high, silently praying that his bullet would hit nobody, and only then squeezing the trigger. To his relief, he claims, he never saw a body fall.

Finally it all became too much and in October - by now posted to a village near the Lebanese border - Mr Ismael decided to escape his unit.

But as he did so he was shot in the shoulder, almost certainly by his commanding officer, he believes, and bleeding profusely had to be hauled to safety by other refugees.

Now Mr Ismael is among the growing number of Syrian army defectors who have found their way along a dangerous route across the border into neighbouring Lebanon.

Some have now joined the loose organization that they call the Free Syrian Army, which is dedicated to fighting back against the regime - and Mr Ismael is convinced that thousands more would leave their posts almost immediately if only they had somewhere safe inside their own country to flee to.

"I wanted to escape in May, as soon as I realised that we had been lied to," Mr Ismael told

The Sunday Telegraph at his hiding place in the Lebanese city of Tripoli. "But there was nowhere to go then. Nearly everyone in the government army is secretly against the regime, but who wants to lose his life and throw away his future and that of his family for nothing?"

"They would all defect if they had a chance."

"Thousands of soldiers would defect, and they would kill the hard-core generals who still support President Bashar al-Assad. Peaceful protests are not enough. We need the Free Syrian Army and it needs the support of foreign countries."

To add to the growing death toll inflicted on protesters, on Friday a suicide bomber apparently targeting a police bus in central Damascus killed 26 people and wounded 63.

The government blamed the bloody attack on al-Qaeda, vowing an "iron fist" response.

But a spokesman for the Syrian National Council blamed recent bombs on the "regime's dirty game", and activists pointed out that the attack was in Midan, an area with regular demonstrations on Fridays.

Soldiers who have deserted to Lebanon were blunter.

Mr Ismael said: "There is no al Qaeda in Syria, this was done by the regime to try to frighten people. They want Syrians to think that if the regime falls, there will be bloodshed and civil war like in Iraq. Syrians know it is not true, they know the regime are killers."

But for now, the Free Syrian Army consists of only a few thousand lightly-armed men, capable of launching hit-and-run attacks against the regime but not a threat to its survival.

Its leader, Colonel Riad al-Asaad, last week threatened to launch attacks from his refuge on the Turkish border, but it was doubtful how many men really answer to him or what damage they can inflict.

Defectors claim that tens of thousands of soldiers have now fled their barracks, in many cases with their guns, and some have attempted to protect demonstrations from attack, with limited success.

But the regime's army probably still exceeds 300,000 men, armed with tanks and heavy weapons, making it a far more formidable force than anything at Colonel Gaddafi's disposal in Libya.

Other army defectors whom The Sunday Telegraph met last week, huddled over a stove in the lawless Wadi Khalid area along the mountainous border, were hazy about the SFA to which they claimed to belong.

A former soldier called Zain said: "At the moment when a soldier defects he doesn't know where to go, he needs sanctuary. If the SFA held territory inside Syria thousands would desert. We know that many of our old comrades would be desperate to get out of the army if they had a chance."

"Those activists who say we need a peaceful revolution, they are sitting in bars in Beirut enjoying themselves and they have no idea what it is like on the ground," said a colleague.

"They can't see what is going on and they don't understand how much people are suffering in places like Hama. Food is cut off for neighbourhoods that are anti-regime, there is no power, and snipers shoot people at random.

"I'm sure that in these conditions, most people in Syria want foreign military help. They don't want ground troops, but they do want a no-fly zone."

Whether they get it or not, the defectors are determined to fight against the regime, and believe they now have no choice.

"If we fight, we believe we will win eventually. If we stop fighting, Assad will kill us all," Mr Ismael said.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Unlucky Seven: Roadside Bomb In Afghanistan Kills 4 Indiana National Guardsmen Looking For Roadside Bombs

January 8, 2012 AP

Four soldiers with an Indiana-based National Guard unit were killed in Afghanistan and a fifth was injured when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb as they were working to clear a supply route of the improvised bombs, guard officials said Saturday.

Indiana Adjutant General Martin Umbarger said the four members of the Valparaiso-based 713th Engineer Company died Thursday morning in southern Afghanistan. He said all of the men were combat engineers who specialized in clearing major supply routes.

The blast occurred as their vehicle traveled along a road, scouting for signs of roadside bombs and other potential problems convoys might encounter as the move supplies in the decade-long war in Afghanistan, Umbarger said.

The four men killed were identified as: Staff Sgt. Jonathan M. Metzger, 32, of Indianapolis, Spc. Brian J. Leonhardt, 21, of Merrillville, Ind., Spc. Robert J. Tauteris Jr., 44, of Hamlet, Ind., and Spc. Christopher A. Patterson, 20, of Aurora, Ill.

A fifth soldier injured in the blast, Pvt. Douglas Rachowicz, 29, of Hammond, Ind., was initially treated at a military base hospital in Kandahar before being airlifted to the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, Umbarger said.

He said the four soldiers' deaths were the greatest number of Indiana guards since March 2005, when four members of the Indianapolis-based 76th Infantry Brigade died when a land mine exploded under their military vehicle about 30 miles south of the Afghan capital of Kabul.

Umbarger said the four soldiers' families were informed Friday of the deaths, and the last family members were told the news Friday night.

MORE:

Three Airmen Killed By Shi Ghazi IED

January 07, 2012 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 013-12

The Department of Defense announced today the deaths of three airmen who were supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. They died Jan. 5 in Shir ghazi, Helmand province, Afghanistan, when their vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device.

Killed were:

Senior Airman Bryan R. Bell, 23, of Erie, Pa. He was assigned to the 2nd Civil Engineer Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base, La. For more information media may contact the Air Force 2nd Bomb Wing public affairs office at 318-456-3309.

Tech. Sgt. Matthew S. Schwartz, 34, of Traverse City, Mich. He was assigned to the 90th Civil Engineer Squadron, FE Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. For more information media may contact the Air Force 90th Missile Wing public affairs office at 307-630-3908.

Airman 1st Class Matthew R. Seidler, 24, of Westminster, Md. He was assigned to the 21st Civil Engineer Squadron, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. For more information media may contact the Air Force 21st Space Wing public affairs office at 719-556-5185.

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

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

**MILITARY RESISTANCE NEWSLETTER
BY MAIL FREE FOR ACTIVE DUTY
TROOPS**

**IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A SELECTION OF MILITARY
RESISTANCE NEWSLETTERS MAILED TO YOU, EMAIL YOUR
ADDRESS TO: CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG OR MAIL
TO: BOX 126, 2576 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025-5657
USA.**

Please say how many you wish sent.

**Be Advised: They will be different issues of Military Resistance to satisfy DOD
regs that you may possess copies, *provided you don't have more than one of the
same issue in your physical possession on your person or in your living quarters.***

FUTILE EXERCISE: ALL HOME NOW!



U.S. soldiers block the way near the scene of an insurgent attack in Kandahar, south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Jan. 3, 2012. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)...

MILITARY NEWS

**Ron Paul Campaign Leads In Cash
From Military Donors:
“An Army Reservist Who Spoke Up
For Paul While In Uniform — And
Landed In Trouble For It — Is Just
One Of The Soldiers Getting Behind
The Texas Congressman’s
Campaign”**

“We Don’t Need To Be Picking Fights Overseas And I Think Everybody Knows That, Too”

**Comment On Paul Support Within Armed Forces: T
[From Military Resistance 9L20 12.24.11]**

The reporter [Timothy Egan, The New York Times 12.23.11] is right about this: “Where they put their money in a campaign, paltry though it may be in comparison to the corporate lords who control a majority of our politicians, says a great deal.”

Here is a window into a significant political shift against the Imperial government beginning to achieve momentum within the armed forces.

Today that shift from below is reflected in a number of ways: in the support for Paul, for one, as well as open support expressed earlier this year by many troops for the Occupy Wall Street movement.

The clothes worn by growing consciousness that the Imperial government is our common enemy will change as developments in society unfold, in the military and among working class civilians as well.

Ron Paul and Occupy Wall Street are mere costumes put on for a time, to be discarded as our revolutionary movement from below rises and gathers the strength and confidence to challenge, defeat and expropriate the class of capitalists who take the wealth and power of society as their own personal property.

Victory will take considerable organization to achieve, and cannot be willed into accomplishment, depending instead upon material reality to mature consciousness among hundreds of millions worldwide, but we have the sun and the wind at our backs, and both are in the face of the enemy.

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veteran & Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

January 7th, 2012 By PAUL J. WEBER, Associated Press [Excerpts]

GALVESTON, Texas — An Army reservist who spoke up for Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul while in uniform — and landed in trouble for it — is just one of the soldiers getting behind the Texas congressman’s campaign.

Plenty of other troops simply send Paul some campaign cash.

Paul arrived Friday in New Hampshire riding the momentum of a top-three finish in Iowa, a fundraising haul of \$13 million in the last quarter and bragging rights of having more donors who list military affiliations than his Republican rivals combined.

Not among those contributors: Cpl. Jesse Thorsen, who gushed that it was “like meeting a rock star” when he joined Paul on stage wearing his camouflaged fatigues in Iowa this week. That ran afoul of Defense Department rules involving partisan political events, though the military doesn’t prohibit soldiers from giving money to candidates.

Paul is the only Republican who says he’ll bring home nearly all U.S. forces if elected, and that could be helping him draw in dollars.

Paul received at least \$95,567 from military donors between January and September of last year, the most recent data available, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

Between January and September, Romney raised \$13,300 and Santorum \$750 among donors who listed a military affiliation as their employer. Newt Gingrich had \$4,900.

Paul also outpaced military donations made to President Barack Obama, who had \$72,616.

That’s nearly seven times what Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum, who edged out Paul in Iowa, collected from military donors combined.

Retired Army Sgt. Thomas Rutherford, whose campaign contribution of \$201 hit the threshold for public disclosure under federal election law, believes soldiers started taking a closer look at Paul’s opposition to U.S. intervention after experiencing it firsthand.

“He has the firmest grasp on foreign policy of all of them,” said Rutherford, 36. “I used to think we’re the biggest, best country in the world and we have to go over there and show them how to do it. In the military, I came to the conclusion that the best way how to do it wasn’t to use the Army.”

No other contender in race has had a soldier make such a splash on their behalf as Thorsen, who’s gone from be a 28-year-old reservist off active duty to a political celebrity overnight.

Thorsen became Paul’s best-known supporter in uniform after appearing on the podium at the campaign’s Iowa headquarters Tuesday night.

“We don’t need to be picking fights overseas and I think everybody knows that, too,” he said to loud applause.

Thorsen later told The Associated Press that he believes many troops support Paul.

“A lot more than you would think, absolutely,” he said. “And, I think one thing that would help is more people need to stop voting for what they think is best for their party and start voting for what they think is best for their country.”

Military rules prohibit soldiers from expressing opinions about candidates while in uniform. Thorsen has stopped giving interviews to news media.

Paul's Iowa campaign chairman, Drew Ivers, said Paul invited Thorsen to speak after a live interview Thorsen had with CNN was cut off for technical difficulties.

He said the campaign thought Thorsen would know the rules about political activity in uniform and that it didn't know he could get in trouble.

“It was not planned, scheduled, rehearsed or scripted,” Ivers said of Thorsen’s appearance at the rally.

“I think his spontaneous reaction for 30 seconds on stage is reflective of the general military support for Ron Paul. We’ve established that through a number of other areas.”

The outsize number of military donors is a badge of honor for the Paul campaign, which has been derisively mocked as the choice of pot smokers, 9/11 conspiracy theorists and idealistic young voters whose wild enthusiasm at campaign stops doesn't always translate to Election Day turnout.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Nothing has more revolutionary effect, and nothing undermines more the foundations of all state power, than the continuation of that wretched and brainless régime, which has the strength merely to cling to its positions but no longer the slightest power to rule or to steer the state ship on a definite course.
-- Karl Kautsky; ‘The Consequences of the Japanese Victory and Social Democracy’

Padded Cell



Vietnam Veterans Memorial Washington, D.C. 2008: Photo by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: January 07, 2012
Subject: Padded Cell

Padded Cell

**A Vietnam vet stretches to touch a name on the Wall.
As an infant child reaches out to touch its mother's breast,
I just want to touch the Wall.
For a chosen few, the Wall will become flesh.
Fast forward 40 years since the end of the Vietnam War,
and there are fewer Vietnam vets touching the Wall.
Why?
Because Vietnam vets are being pushed to extinction.
The lies of that war are being reinvented to make it appear
as if it were a noble cause.
I once saw the Moving Wall in a small town in Idaho.
On the moving monument was written:
The Cost of Freedom is Written on the Wall.
I had a PTSD reaction that ambushed me right there.
I had a flash back to when I was in a padded cell in 1980.
I was raging against everything America stood for.
Now it is time for Iraq and Afghanistan vets to hear the screams of
Vietnam Vets.
The rage of rape makes us soul brothers.
We are next of kin through betrayal.
Lying is the most powerful weapon in war.**

**Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
Jan. 6, 2012**

**Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71.
(For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)**

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head.
The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a
so-called insurgent.**

**The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did
not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

“Wanting To Measure The Political Maturity Of The Proletariat Through Statistics Drawn From Elections And Union Membership Is Like Wanting To Measure The Mont Blanc With A Tailor’s Tape”



Mont Blanc

Excerpt from *'After the First Act'* by Rosa Luxemburg (4 February, 1905)

Wanting to measure the political maturity of the proletariat through statistics drawn from elections and union membership is like wanting to measure the Mont Blanc with a tailor's tape.

In the so-called normal times of everyday bourgeois life, we know almost nothing about how deeply our ideas have already sunk roots, how strong the proletariat is, or how inwardly rotten is the structure of the ruling society.

All the vacillations and mistakes of opportunism can ultimately be attributed to a false estimation of the forces of the socialist movement and to a subjective illusion of weakness.

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.



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“Along Comes The Supreme Hamas Leader, Khaled Mash’al, And Declares That Hamas Has Given Up All Violent Action”

“When Hamas Forswears Terrorism, There Is No Pretext For An Attack On Gaza”

“Our Army Will Not Let Itself Be Thwarted By The Likes Of Mash’al.

When The Army Wants A War, It Will Have A War”

“Our Almost New Chief Of Staff, Benny Gantz, Has Been Announcing At Every Possible Opportunity That A New War Against The Gaza Strip Is Inevitable”

1.7.12 By Uri Avnery, Gush Shalom.org [Occupied Palestine] [Excerpt]

Is there no limit to the villainy of Hamas? Seems there isn't.

This week, they did something quite unforgivable.

They stole a war.

For some weeks now, our almost new Chief of Staff, Benny Gantz, has been announcing at every possible opportunity that a new war against the Gaza Strip is inevitable.

Several commanders of the troops around the Strip have been repeating this dire forecast, as have their camp-followers, a.k.a. military commentators.

One of these comforted us. True, Hamas can now hit Tel Aviv with their rockets, but that will not be so terrible, because it will be a short war. Just three or four days. As one of the generals said, it will be much more “hard and painful” (for the Arabs) than Cast Lead I, so it will not last for three weeks, as that did. We shall all stay in our shelters – those of us who have shelters, anyway – for just a few days.

Why is the war inevitable? Because of the terrorism, stupid. Hamas is a terrorist organization, isn't it?

But along comes the supreme Hamas leader, Khaled Mash'al, and declares that Hamas has given up all violent action. From now on it will concentrate on non-violent mass demonstrations, in the spirit of the Arab Spring.

When Hamas forswears terrorism, there is no pretext for an attack on Gaza.

But is a pretext needed?

Our army will not let itself be thwarted by the likes of Mash'al.

When the army wants a war, it will have a war.

This was proved in 1982, when Ariel Sharon attacked Lebanon, despite the fact that the Lebanese border had been absolutely quiet for 11 months.

(After the war, the myth was born that it was preceded by daily shooting. Today, almost every Israeli can “remember” the shooting – an astonishing example of the power of suggestion.

Why does the Chief of Staff want to attack?

A cynic might say that every new Chief of Staff needs a war to call his own. But we are not cynics, are we?

Every few days, a solitary rocket is launched from the Gaza Strip into Israel. It rarely hits anything but an empty field. For months, now, no one has been hurt.

The usual sequence is like this: our air force carries out a “targeted liquidation” of Palestinian militants in the strip. The army claims invariably that these specific “terrorists” had intended to attack Israelis.

How did the army know of their intentions? Well, our army is a master thought reader.

After the persons have been killed, their organization considers it its duty to avenge their blood by launching a rocket or a mortar shell, or even two or three.

This “cannot be tolerated” by the army, and so it goes on.

After every such episode, the talk about a war starts again. As American politicians put it in their speeches at AIPAC conferences: “No country can tolerate its citizens being exposed to rockets!”

But of course, the reasons for Cast Lead II are more serious.

Hamas is being accepted by the international community.

Their Prime Minister, Isma’il Haniyeh, is now traveling around the Arab and Muslim world, after being shut in Gaza – a kind of Strip-arrest – for four years. Now he can cross into Egypt because the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas’ parent organization, has become a major player there.

Even worse, Hamas is about to join the PLO and take part in the Palestinian government.

High time to do something about it. Attack Gaza, for example. Compel Hamas to become extremist again.

Not content with stealing our war, Mash’al is carrying out a series of more sinister actions.

By joining the PLO, he is committing Hamas to the Oslo agreements and all the other official deals between Israel and the PLO. He has announced that Hamas accepts a

Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. He has let it be known that Hamas would not contest the Palestinian presidency this year, so that the Fatah candidate – whoever that may be – would be elected practically unopposed and be able to negotiate with Israel.

All this would put the present Israeli government in a difficult position.

Mash'al has some experience in causing trouble for Israel. In 1997, the (first) Netanyahu government decided to get rid of him in Amman.

A team of Mossad agents was sent to assassinate him in the street by spraying his ear with an untraceable poison. But instead of doing the decent thing and dying quietly from a mysterious cause, like Yasser Arafat, he let his bodyguard chase the attackers and catch them.

King Hussein, Israel's longstanding friend and ally, was hopping mad.

He presented Netanyahu with a choice: either the agents would be tried in Jordan and possibly hanged, or the Mossad would immediately send the secret antidote to save Mash'al.

Netanyahu capitulated, and here we have Mash'al, very much alive and kicking.

Another curious outcome of this misadventure: the king demanded that the Hamas founder and leader, the paralyzed Sheik Ahmad Yassin, be released from Israeli prison. Netanyahu obliged, Yassin was released and assassinated by Israel seven years later.

When his successor, Abd al-Aziz Rantissi, was assassinated soon after, the path was cleared for Mash'al to become the Hamas chief.

And instead of showing his gratitude, he now confronts us with a dire challenge: non-violent action, indirect peace overtures, the two-state solution.

**“No War In Iran’
“No Israeli Military Attack On Iran”
“The Obama Administration Put Its Foot
Down, And Hand-Delivered To
Netanyahu And Ehud Barak An
Unequivocal Order To Abstain From Any
Military Action”**

[The usual clueless fools are yowling and howling about the need to stop some secret U.S. Imperial plot to attack Iran. No doubt when there is no attack, the same yowling and howling clueless fools will claim credit for stopping it.

[This yowling and howling about the need to mobilize to stop some non-existent imminent attack on Iran has been an annual ritual for many years now, complete with heavy breathing, hysterical raving, tons of portentous emails, and, of course, fund appeals.

[The Black Panthers of old had the perfect phrase for all this lame, stupid bullshit; "Selling wolf tickets." T]

1.7.12 By Uri Avnery, Gush Shalom.org [Occupied Palestine] [Excerpt]

A QUESTION: why does our [Israeli] Chief of Staff long for a little war in Gaza, when he could have all the war he desires in Iran?

Not just a little operation, but a big war, a very very big war.

Well, he knows that he cannot have it.

Some time ago I did something no experienced commentator ever does. I promised that there would be no Israeli military attack on Iran. (Nor, for that matter, an American one.)

An experienced journalist or politician never makes such a prediction without leaving a loophole for himself. He puts in an inconspicuous "unless". If his forecast goes awry, he points to that loophole.

I do have some experience – some 60 or so years of it – but I did not leave any loophole.

I said No War, and now General Gantz says the same in so many words. No Tehran, just poor little Gaza.

Why?

Because of that one word: Hormuz.

Not the ancient Persian god Hormuzd, but the narrow strait that is the entrance and exit of the Persian Gulf, through which 20% of the world's oil (and 35% of the sea-borne oil) flows. My contention was that no sane (or even mildly insane) leader would risk the closing of the strait, because the economic consequences would be catastrophic, even apocalyptic.

It seems that the leaders of Iran were not sure that all the world's leaders read this column, so, just in case, they spelled it out themselves. This week they conducted conspicuous military maneuvers around the Strait of Hormuz, accompanied by the unequivocal threat to close it.

The US responded with vainglorious counter-threats.

The invincible US Navy was ready to open the strait by force, if needed.

How, pray?

The mightiest multi-billion aircraft carrier can be easily sunk by a battery of cheap land-to-sea missiles, as well as by small missile-boats.

Let's assume Iran starts to act out its threats. The whole might of the US air force and navy is brought to bear. Iranian ships will be sunk, missile and army installations bombed.

Still the Iranian missiles will come in, making passage through the strait impossible.

What next?

There will be no alternative to "boots on the ground".

The US army will have to land on the shore and occupy all the territory from which missiles can be effectively launched. That would be a major operation. Fierce Iranian resistance must be expected, judging from the experience of the eight-year Iraqi-Iranian war.

The oil wells in neighboring Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states will also be hit.

Such a war would go far beyond the dimensions of the American invasions of Iraq or Afghanistan, perhaps even of Vietnam.

Is the bankrupt US up to it?

Economically, politically and in terms of morale?

The closing of the strait is the ultimate weapon. I don't believe that the Iranians will use it against the imposition of sanctions, severe as they may be, as they have threatened. Only a military attack would warrant such a response.

If Israel attacks alone – "the most stupid idea I ever heard of," as our former Mossad chief put it – that will make no difference. Iran will consider it an American action, and close the strait.

That's why the Obama administration put its foot down, and hand-delivered to Netanyahu and Ehud Barak an unequivocal order to abstain from any military action.

That's where we are now. No war in Iran.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Notes From A Guantanamo
Survivor:**

**“Mr. Azmy Made Public A Number
Of American And German
Intelligence Documents From 2002
To 2004 That Showed Both
Countries Suspected I Was
Innocent”**

**“I Later Learned The United States
Paid A \$3,000 Bounty For Me”**

“I Left Guantánamo Bay Much As I Had Arrived Almost Five Years Earlier - Shackled Hand-To-Waist, Waist-To-Ankles, And Ankles To A Bolt On The Airplane Floor”



Turkish-born German citizen Murat Kurnaz vanished into America's terror detention system. (photo: AP)

I left Guantánamo Bay much as I had arrived almost five years earlier - shackled hand-to-waist, waist-to-ankles, and ankles to a bolt on the airplane floor.

My ears and eyes were goggled, my head hooded, and even though I was the only detainee on the flight this time, I was drugged and guarded by at least 10 soldiers.

This time though, my jumpsuit was American denim rather than Guantánamo orange.

I later learned that my C-17 military flight from Guantánamo to Ramstein Air Base in my home country, Germany, cost more than \$1 million.

When we landed, the American officers unshackled me before they handed me over to a delegation of German officials.

The American officer offered to re-shackle my wrists with a fresh, plastic pair. But the commanding German officer strongly refused: “He has committed no crime; here, he is a free man.”

I was not a strong secondary school student in Bremen, but I remember learning that after World War II, the Americans insisted on a trial for war criminals at Nuremberg, and that event helped turn Germany into a democratic country. Strange, I thought, as I stood on the tarmac watching the Germans teach the Americans a basic lesson about the rule of law.

How did I arrive at this point?

This Wednesday is the 10th anniversary of the opening of the detention camp at the American naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

I am not a terrorist. I have never been a member of Al Qaeda or supported them. I don't even understand their ideas.

I am the son of Turkish immigrants who came to Germany in search of work. My father has worked for years in a Mercedes factory.

In 2001, when I was 18, I married a devout Turkish woman and wanted to learn more about Islam and to lead a better life. I did not have much money. Some of the elders in my town suggested I travel to Pakistan to learn to study the Koran with a religious group there.

I made my plans just before 9/11. I was 19 then and was naïve and did not think war in Afghanistan would have anything to do with Pakistan or my trip there. So I went ahead with my trip.

I was in Pakistan, on a public bus on my way to the airport to return to Germany when the police stopped the bus I was riding in.

I was the only non-Pakistani on the bus - some people joke that my reddish hair makes me look Irish - so the police asked me to step off to look at my papers and ask some questions. German journalists told me the same thing happened to them. I was not a journalist, but a tourist, I explained.

The police detained me but promised they would soon let me go to the airport. After a few days, the Pakistanis turned me over to American officials. At this point, I was relieved to be in American hands; Americans, I thought, would treat me fairly.

I later learned the United States paid a \$3,000 bounty for me.

I didn't know it at the time, but apparently the United States distributed thousands of fliers all over Afghanistan, promising that people who turned over Taliban or Qaeda suspects would, in the words of one flier, get "enough money to take care of your family, your village, your tribe for the rest of your life."

A great number of men wound up in Guantánamo as a result.

I was taken to Kandahar, in Afghanistan, where American interrogators asked me the same questions for several weeks: Where is Osama bin Laden? Was I with Al Qaeda? No, I told them, I was not with Al Qaeda. No, I had no idea where bin Laden was.

I begged the interrogators to please call Germany and find out who I was.

During their interrogations, they dunked my head under water and punched me in the stomach; they don't call this waterboarding but it amounts to the same thing. I was sure I would drown.

At one point, I was chained to the ceiling of a building and hung by my hands for days. A doctor sometimes checked if I was O.K.; then I would be strung up again. The pain was unbearable.

After about two months in Kandahar, I was transferred to Guantánamo.

There were more beatings, endless solitary confinement, freezing temperatures and extreme heat, days of forced sleeplessness. The interrogations continued always with the same questions. I told my story over and over - my name, my family, why I was in Pakistan. Nothing I said satisfied them.

I realized my interrogators were not interested in the truth.

Despite all this, I looked for ways to feel human.

I have always loved animals. I started hiding a piece of bread from my meals and feeding the iguanas that came to the fence. When officials discovered this, I was punished with 30 days in isolation and darkness.

I remained confused on basic questions: why was I here? With all its money and intelligence, the United States could not honestly believe I was Al Qaeda, could they?

After two and a half years at Guantánamo, in 2004, I was brought before what officials called a Combatant Status Review Tribunal, at which a military officer said I was an “enemy combatant” because a German friend had engaged in a suicide bombing in 2003 - after I was already at Guantánamo.

I couldn't believe my friend had done anything so crazy but, if he had, I didn't know anything about it.

A couple of weeks later, I was told I had a visit from a lawyer.

They took me to a special cell and in walked an American law professor, Baher Azmy. I didn't believe he was a real lawyer at first; interrogators often lied to us and tried to trick us. But Mr. Azmy had a note written in Turkish which he had gotten from my mother, and that made me trust him. (My mother found a lawyer in my hometown in Germany who heard that lawyers at the Center for Constitutional Rights represented Guantánamo detainees; the center assigned Mr. Azmy my case.)

He did not believe the evidence against me and quickly discovered that my “suicide bomber” friend was, in fact, alive and well in Germany.

Mr. Azmy, my mother and my German lawyer helped pressure the German government to secure my release.

Recently, Mr. Azmy made public a number of American and German intelligence documents from 2002 to 2004 that showed both countries suspected I was innocent.

One of the documents said American military guards thought I was dangerous because I had prayed during the American national anthem.

Now, five years after my release, I am trying to put my terrible memories behind me.

I have remarried and have a beautiful baby daughter. Still, it is hard not to think about my time at Guantánamo and to wonder how it is possible that a democratic government can detain people in intolerable conditions and without a fair trial.

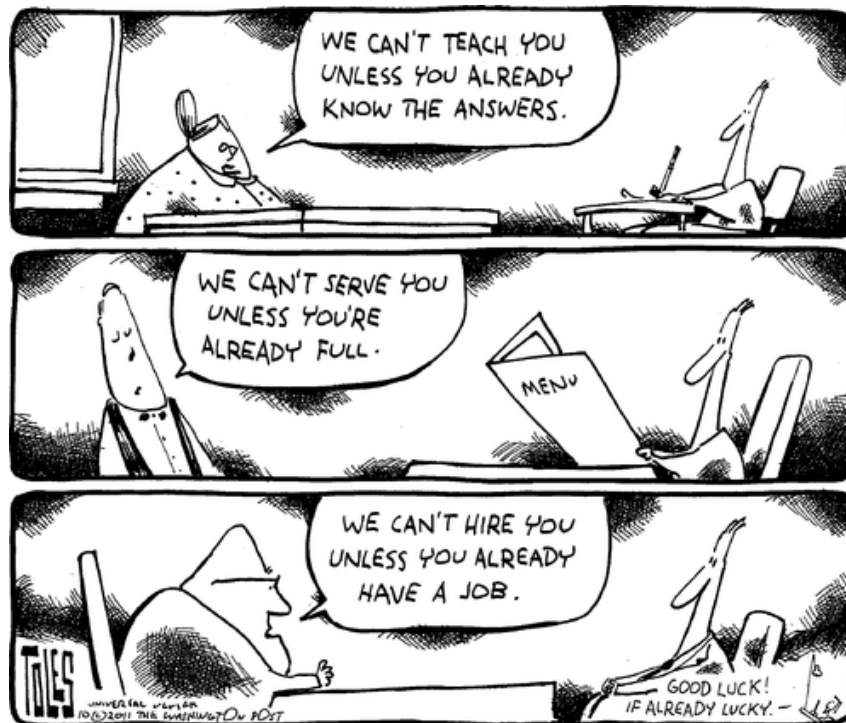
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“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.”

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Muslims And Christians In Several Nigerian Cities Banded Together To Protest The Government's Elimination Of A Popular Subsidy On Gasoline”

“‘We Will Treat You As Gadhafi,’ Read One Protester's Sign”



JANUARY 7, 2012 By DREW HINSHAW, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Members of a radical Muslim sect attacked a church in northeast Nigeria during a worship service Saturday, the latest in a series of assaults against a predominantly Christian ethnic group.

The attacks against Christians pose new challenges to President Goodluck Jonathan's government.

Underscoring the pressure on Mr. Jonathan — and contrasting with Friday's deadly Kalashnikov attack on the shopkeepers — Muslims and Christians in several Nigerian cities also banded together in a rare demonstration of interfaith unity to protest the government's elimination of a popular subsidy on gasoline.

On Thursday and Friday, hundreds of residents, politicians and religious leaders protested the Monday move, which more than doubled gas prices, from about 65 naira a liter (\$1.55 a gallon).

The protests carried echoes of recent antigovernment uprisings in northern Africa and beyond.

“We will treat you as Gadhafi,” read one protester's sign, in an image carried on local media.

Gas prices “are unifying the nation,” said activist and onetime vice presidential candidate Yunusa Tanko, who said some 1,000 people turned out Thursday in the northern city of Kaduna.

“Muslims were praying and Christians were protecting them during our protest march.”

The protests have the potential to be “very dramatic,” as Nigerians put aside differences to take on what they see as state corruption, said John Campbell, a former U.S. ambassador to Nigeria.

He cited reports of Muslim-Christian demonstrations in Kano, where anti-Christian riots broke out in April.

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.

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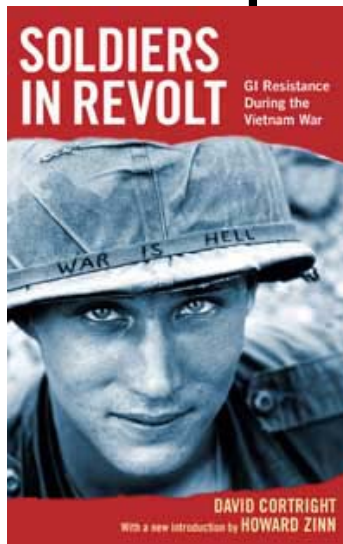
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Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties enlisted troops inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help organize resistance within the armed forces. We hope that you'll build a network of active duty organizers.

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FREE TO ACTIVE DUTY: A Vietnam Soldier Wrote The Book All About How An Armed Forces Rebellion Stopped An Imperial War



SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT

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