

Military Resistance 10C4



“The Number Of U.S. Troops Who Lost Limbs Reached A War-Time High In 2011”

“The ‘Most Dramatic Changes’ In The Wounds Coming Out Of Afghanistan Were The Increased Number Of Troops With Above-The-Knee Amputation Of Both Legs, Triple And Quadruple Amputations, And Genital Injuries”

March 12, 2012 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

The number of U.S. troops who lost limbs reached a war-time high in 2011, according to data from the Defense Department, but along with the spike come advances in medicine

and technology that have enabled troops with devastating wounds to survive and, in some cases, return to duty.

In 2011, 240 deployed troops had to have at least an arm or a leg amputated, compared with 205 in 2007, the height of the surge in Iraq, according to data published by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center.

The increase in 2011 coincides with the surge of troops in Afghanistan, who often dismount on foot patrols in the country's austere and rugged terrain.

Troops wounded in Afghanistan also have suffered the loss of multiple limbs — of the 187 service members with major limb loss in 2010, 72 of them lost more than one limb, according to the report from the Army's Dismounted Complex Blast Injury Task Force.

That's an increase from 2009, when of the 86 troops with major limb loss, 23 had multiple amputations, according to the task force's report.

The "most dramatic changes" in the wounds coming out of Afghanistan were the increased number of troops with above-the-knee amputation of both legs, triple and quadruple amputations, and the associated genital injuries, the task force reported.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



US soldiers at a police station in Kandahar, south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Feb. 20, 2012. A car bomber attacked the police station, killing one police officer. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)...

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

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

**Somalia Militants Vs. Kenya
Occupation Army:
“Al-Shabaab Has Resorted To The
Time-Honoured Tactics Employed
By Guerrillas”
“It Would Be Hard To Tell Them Apart
From The Rest Of The Locals”
“Tabda Administrators Abdirahman
Shariff And Ibrahim Mohamud Are
Naturally Worried About The Presence
Of Al-Shabaab Sympathisers Amongst
The Locals”**

March 4, 2012 BY JOHN NGIRACHU, Horn of Africa News [Excerpts]

One Sunday a few weeks ago, the Kenya Defence Forces were patrolling the area around Tabda town, about 77 kilometres inside Somalia. Suddenly a young man stepped out of the bushes and stood in their way.

This encounter was far enough from the village marked as a permanent centre by the iron roofing sheets and the mosque to raise the soldiers' suspicions.

The man was stopped, asked to identify himself, frisked by the soldiers and led towards the town, where the officer in charge, a lieutenant, was talking to the Transitional Federal Government forces that police the area.

The soldiers found that the man was wearing a pair of shorts under his trousers, had three mobile phones and a kitchen knife.

Their suspicions were raised further when they discovered a mobile phone SIM card sewn into a pocket and several packets of what appeared to be tobacco wrapped in pieces of dirty newspapers.

Questioned, the man claimed to have been with a group of herders originating from the town and was headed back home for something.

But to the soldiers, he might as well have been on reconnaissance, checking out the location of their patrol base on the instructions of Al-Shabaab.

Fortunately for him, one of the women in the village said she knew him, had seen him earlier in the day and could therefore offer a guarantee of sorts that he was not on a suspicious mission.

For the soldiers in the towns in the Central Sector that have been liberated from Al-Shabaab (Dhobley, Hawina, Tabda and Belesc Qoogani), anything that strays from the normal is checked thoroughly.

The population in some of the towns has increased since Operation Linda Nchi began in October 2011. Hawina was initially a ghost town but has come back to life and Hosingow's population has tripled from 150 to 450.

While some may see this as reflecting the stability brought about by the removal of Al-Shabaab, there are signs that the militia retains a presence.

Two weeks ago, a KDF convoy was ambushed just outside Hawina on its way to Tabda.

One soldier was killed, another sprained his ankle and the rest were saved by their reflexes and the quick action of the lieutenant in charge, who shot one of the attackers as he took aim at the troops from a tree.

The patrol base at Tabda was under attack the same evening, with several mortar bombs fired from a distance.

The nature and execution of the two attacks suggest some element of coordination and intelligence, with the very possible chance there were Al-Shabaab operatives among the locals.

Al-Shabaab knew that there was a convoy on that route that day, and used their knowledge of the terrain to stage an ambush at a location that was conveniently bushy, making it difficult to see more than a few metres on either side of the road.

“It Would Be Hard To Tell Them Apart From The Rest Of The Locals”

This coordination and intelligence is expected, given Al-Shabaab has controlled the area since it was pushed out of Mogadishu in the north in 2007.

Tabda administrators Abdirahman Shariff and Ibrahim Mohamud are naturally worried about the presence of Al-Shabaab sympathisers amongst the locals, most of whom migrated back when the militia lost control of the town.

It would be hard to tell them apart from the rest of the locals.

Unlike a bunch of Al-Shabaab fighters that were killed when they attacked KDF in Hosingow two weeks ago, they do not wear military uniforms.

Those on reconnaissance missions rarely carry weapons. The kitchen knife would have served the man well in hand-to-hand combat.

There are about 80 families now resident in Tabda, and most of the pastoralists lost a large chunk of their livestock in the drought that ravaged the Horn of Africa region for most of last year.

Pastoralists switch their dependence from their livestock to relief food when there is no longer enough pasture for their hardy cattle and goats.

Optimism aside, peace remains a forlorn hope if the liberated [translation: occupied] areas are not policed effectively and Al-Shabaab pushed away or eliminated.

Residents of Tabda say the mortar bombs aimed at the KDF patrol base were likely fired from beyond the town.

In an unconventional war, where the enemy can neither be seen nor identified by his stripes, each side relies heavily on intelligence, says Lt Col Nyagah.

“Al-Shabaab Has Resorted To The Time-Honoured Tactics Employed By Guerrillas”

On the Kenyan side, intelligence gathered from the locals and a variety of other sources enables the KDF to carry out airstrikes on Al-Shabaab positions.

Al-Shabaab has resorted to the time-honoured tactics employed by guerrillas, who know they would not survive the face-to-face approach favoured by forces that are equal in military might.

The effects of an IED are on display at Tabda, where the mangled shell of a Toyota Land Cruiser lies. Six TFG [U.S.-backed government] soldiers died when the sturdy Japanese 4x4 drove over an anti-tank mine.

Lt Col Nyagah says each KDF patrol base assumes the stature of a legitimate target for Al-Shabaab, who bet on hitting a target as they fight “by trial and error”.

“This war does not have a frontage. It is hard to identify the force (Al-Shabaab) as they are not in uniform and do not carry their weapons openly if they are on a reconnaissance,” says Lt Col Nyagah.

Although, Al-Shabaab doesn't have a well-established command structure, a local commander can carry out a mission without the knowledge or authorisation of his overall commander.

The Kenya Army refers to this scenario as “centralised control and decentralised execution of mission”.

The upshot of fighting in this manner also means that the war — the military prefers to call it an ‘operation’ — could be long and drawn out.

KDF have also said they will not rush to take control of the bigger towns of Kismayu and Afmadow.

Lt Col Nyagah says they need to pacify the liberated [translation: occupied] areas to allow the locals to set up their administration and access humanitarian assistance.

The Kenyan commanders reckon that although the two large towns remain legitimate targets, pushing Al-Shabaab further away from the Kenyan border continues to serve the mission's interests.

According to Lt Col Nyagah, although it would be easy to push Al-Shabaab farther with the right tactics, it would not be necessary as Al-Shabaab can be contained by cutting off its supply routes and bombing their bases.

Rushing forward could also create the opportunity for Al-Shabaab to go behind the approaching forces, take back the liberated [translation: occupied] areas and cut off supply lines.

Intensive foot patrols in the liberated [translation: occupied] towns and continuous pacification have also helped counter the threat posed by the bands of 15 to 20 fighters who organise the ambushes and roadside explosives.

Despite being considerably weakened, there are no signs that Al-Shabaab is giving up, though.

The patrol base at Tabda was woken up by the chatter of machine-gun fire at about 3.30am on a Wednesday morning as the soldiers in the trenches emptied their machine guns into the darkness.

It went on for about 10 minutes, meaning those were not the usual customary warning shots fired when a possible threat is detected.

In the morning, three camels lay dead a few metres from the first trenches, another on its knees and groaning, injured by the bullets. Its throat was slit by one of the local men later in the day.

Soldiers in the trenches said the camels appeared to have been deliberately herded towards the patrol base in the dead of the night.

They had seen about six figures using the animals as a shield. As the animals drew the soldiers' attention, the attackers fired from the flanks.

A trail of blood and boot prints that led into the nearby bushes suggested someone had been hit.

The men would not have taken any chances. A herd of camels had crossed the ground before the patrol base minutes before the mortar bombs were fired towards it the previous Wednesday.

A week later, a recce company from the Somalia National Army unearthed an improvised explosive device 12 kilometres from Tabda on the road towards Belesc Qoogani.

It consisted of plastic explosives packed in a box measuring one square foot squared and about six inches thick linked to a small battery of the sort used in motorcycles, with the whole apparatus tied to the detonators with a bandage.

It had the capability to blow up a Toyota Land Cruiser to pieces or lift an Armoured Personnel Carrier a few feet off the ground, but not destroy it.

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

<p>It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it. -- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers</p>
--

**“Today The Big Powers Pretend
They Are Concerned About
Assad’s Policy”
“But He Is In Power With Their
Blessing, Like His Father Was Before
Him”
“Doing Their Dirty Work In This Part Of
The World”**

The Spark; February 20 - March 5, 2012

On February 14th, Syrian government forces fiercely assaulted the city of Homs. According to the Syrian Institute of Human Rights, two rockets were launched per minute on densely populated neighborhoods in this working class city of 500,000.

The past 12 days had left 300 dead, and thousands of people packed into shelters are scarcely able to survive.

For almost a year since the first demonstrations against the regime, the opposition against Bashar al-Assad has continued to grow. Repression has become more and more violent. At least 6,000 people are estimated to have been killed. The army has taken control of the entire country. Arbitrary arrests, violence and torture have increased.

The West’s embargo on Syrian oil is supposed to deprive the Assad regime of money, but, of course, the main victims are the population.

In cities where 70% of the population lives, bread is getting scarce and the price of goods soars, as does the price of gas and heating oil.

The U.N. and the Arab League dispatched some “observers,” who recommended that Assad accept the Arab League’s plan. The plan requires all military action to cease, with power transferred to some of the opposition groups against the regime.

The Syrian population is caught in the pincers between a desperate dictatorship, which continues to benefit from the support of the majority of the regular army, Saudi Arabia and Qatar – whose intentions are anything but humanitarian – and the Western powers, which have never ceased to pillage the Middle East for their profit.

Today the big powers pretend they are concerned about Assad’s policy. But he is in power with their blessing, like his father was before him – doing their dirty work in this part of the world.

MORE:

Arab Spring, Syria And The Left:

“No Support For Authoritarian Regimes, No Support For Imperialism”

“We Have To Be Vigilant On Two Fronts: (1) To Not Let Our Anti-Imperialism Lead To The Defence Of Authoritarian Regimes”

“(2) To Not Let Our Enthusiasm For Rebellion Lead To Cheering On The Cruise Missiles From US Warships”

Leftists who are outside the confines of Syria must give their full and active solidarity to the Syrian people, particularly to the Syrian new left in formation.

Class-consciousness is not a thing that emerges fully formed and in perfect condition. It emerges in struggle, filled with errors and dangers, wearing the clothes it finds, learning to walk before it can run.

March 2, 2012 By Vijay Prashad, Jadaliyya [Excerpts]

The Syrian people threw off the violent regime of imperial France in their Great Revolt from 1925 to 1927.

The revolt inaugurated a trek into Arab nationalism, whose most eloquent energies were absorbed and distorted by the Ba'athist party that has ruled Syria since 1963.

Nonetheless, the Syrian people incubate a thirst for freedom from their suffocation by the Ba'ath regime. The problem has been that the power of the Syrian state and the enchainment of geopolitics of the region have denied them, for now.

In his recent piece for Al Jazeera, Dabashi makes several important points, driving home what should be by now a leftist consensus concerning the ensemble of the right – the United States, Europe, Gulf Arab states and Israel.

Dabashi suggests that this right is eager to poke its fingers into a rebellion only if it is able to fumigate all the independent rebellious elements and produce a new regime in its image.

But then Dabashi pivots and turns his eye to the left.

His accusation here is that both the right and the left are “statists”, interested only in who is able to take “control of the state apparatus, of state power, of steering (or more accurately trying to steer) the falling regimes of power to their own direction”.

The problem here is not whether Dabashi is right or wrong. The problem is in the generality of his exposition.

I agree with him that the “right” is an entity. What divides it is not essential from the standpoint of the left. There are certainly non-interventionist “America First” types (such as Pat Buchanan) who would not line up neatly next to hyper-interventionists such as US ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice. Given the balance of forces within the right, however, Buchanan barely makes a blip on the radar screen of power. The rightist consensus is for what they like to call a “muscular” foreign policy.

The left, which is infinitely weaker, is therefore unable to forge such an easy consensus. The diversity in the left is far more important because, at present, no current has a hold on the discourse of the left.

This is relevant given the difference between the character of the debate outside and inside the Syrian left.

The latter's principle purpose is to settle accounts with the Ba'ath regime and to move the revolution in the people's favour.

Whereas, the character of the debate outside the Syrian left must aim, among other things, to lift the boot of imperialist suffocation off the necks of the Syrian people and to prevent an imperialist intervention that makes the task of the Syrian left even harder.

“Much Of The Left Recognises That The Ba’ath Regime Is Neither Anti-Imperialist Nor Anti-Capitalist”

Regarding Syria, the first divide in the left is in the characterisation of the Ba’ath regime.

One section, a very small one, takes the view that the Ba’ath regime led by Bashar al-Assad is a revolutionary regime, whose politics is made visible through its position vis-à-vis Israel (anti-) and Iran (pro-).

In this camp (inside Syria) lies the exhausted Syrian Communist Party and (outside Syria) sits the website Global Research.

Both the SCP and Global Research take their anti-imperialism into territory that occludes the authoritarianism of imperialism’s adversaries -- a classic case of my enemy’s enemy is my friend.

Only the most inhumane among us would not see the bombardment of Homs as unconscionable.

Those who say this is a civil war and try to defend the attack on the city forget that even if this were a civil war and if the regime were actually progressive, it should not bomb civilian neighbourhoods in such an indiscriminate manner.

The habit of the Ba’ath is to raze cities and call it national integration (this is what al-Assad Senior did in Hama in 1982). No leftist can be cavalier about Homs.

Much of the left recognises that the Ba’ath regime is neither anti-imperialist nor anti-capitalist.

It recognises that al-Assad’s government has most often played the border guard for Israel, and undoubtedly evokes no revolutionary good feelings amongst the Palestinians in either Lebanon or the West Bank (perhaps a small current in Gaza, until Hamas’ Ismail Haniya threw his support with the Syrian people against the al-Assad regime).

Among the Palestinian left the fundamental break with Syria took place during its betrayal of their cause in its invasion of Lebanon in 1975.

Most of the left is also aware that the Ba’ath Party was the enemy of both Nasserism (which banned the Ba’ath during the union of Syria and Egypt between 1958 and 1961) and the original Syrian Communist Party (when it was in its heyday before the military coup in 1961).

During its peak, the SCP did impressively well in the 1954 elections, scaring a British intelligence official who moaned, “The increase in communism in Syria during 1954,

taken in conjuncture with the general trend to the left and the government's reluctance to take any really effective measures against it, is an unfortunate development."

In 1944, the Ba'ath's intellectual godfathers Michel 'Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar declared, "Communism is alien and foreign to everything Arab."

It was the ideological anvil on which the Ba'ath smashed the SCP into mute submission.

And it has been the Ba'ath polices over the past 25 years that have created a neoliberal elite in Syria's cities, engaging the population in what Bassam Haddad calls the "political economy of authoritarian resilience."

"Leftists Who Are Outside The Confines Of Syria Must Give Their Full And Active Solidarity To The Syrian People"

If the bulk of the left is sympathetic to an undoing of the Ba'ath regime in Syria, there is yet no consensus on strategy. Most of us in the Atlantic left are, of course, not directly involved in the Syrian opposition's active and vibrant debates, which seek to find a way forward. Here there is a prior question to be asked: could we even characterise the Syrian opposition as being of the left?

The steadfastness of this new movement and the resistance to the Ba'ath regime has taken the older Syrian left by surprise.

Among the older leftists the struggle has opened up a period of reflection on the long-term implications of this opening. There are a group of intellectuals who traverse what might loosely be called the left and the liberal left.

There is also a Syrian leftist revolutionary current, but it is largely outside the country and lacks a mass base. Some of them are in leadership positions for a movement that is askance from them, with its own tempo and its own energy.

What is the character of this movement on the ground? What are its debates? Has it a position for the future beyond the horizon of the departure of al-Assad? What is its social vision toward the diverse matrix of Syria?

These are the kinds of questions that require further investigation. However, these are often the kinds of questions that are put into amber during an armed struggle, unless the armed struggle (like the Algerian National Liberation Front) emerged out of a protracted ideological and political process. Syria, with its Romania-like asphyxiation of the Ba'ath, perforce had a different trajectory to insurrection than Algeria.

Leftists who are outside the confines of Syria must give their full and active solidarity to the Syrian people, particularly to the Syrian new left in formation.

Class-consciousness is not a thing that emerges fully formed and in perfect condition. It emerges in struggle, filled with errors and dangers, wearing the clothes it finds, learning to walk before it can run.

What those who are outside have to support is not this or that tendency but the integrity of the full Syrian left as it engages in a complex discussion about the most effective strategy forward in a time of war.

The debate in the left outside the immediate Syrian left should not be “military intervention versus no military intervention”.

That is a debate framed by the right, to which the left in the Atlantic world too often succumbs.

Such a debate treats as neutral the barbarism of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in places such as Iraq and Libya.

Additionally, it suggests that cruise missiles can simplify the contradictions on the ground in places such as Syria.

That human rights activists in Syria -- such as Haytham al-Maleh, who is also close to the Muslim Brotherhood -- favour bombardment of Syria says more about the demoralisation of Syrians in the face of 40 years of dictatorship and brutality than necessarily about the most effective way to both begin to uproot the Ba'ath regime by maintaining the integrity and nascent dreams of the Syrian people.

It is here that a valid political intercession should be welcomed.

It is time to assess the character of the forces arrayed against the Syrian people, and whether hope for an external intervention is either realistic or to be sought.

On the one hand, Asharq Al-Awsat quotes an unnamed US military official that the US plans for an aerial blockade of northern Syria. On the other hand, when asked about a NATO role in Syria, its chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen said, “I don't envision such a role for the alliance.”

The Atlantic powers ramp up their rhetoric at the same time as they keep their swords sheathed.

To talk about the geopolitics that surrounds Syria (the Russian and Chinese UN veto) and the cynicism of Israel and the United States (who are not keen on the departure of the Ba'ath regime) is not to deny the aspirations of the people.

Saudi and Qatari special forces will not be sufficient to take on the Syrian army, unless it cracks open and releases defectors by the hundreds each day.

The left groups inside the nations of the Arab world are trying to navigate a new terrain where the popular forces have energy but the institutional and ideological space is occupied by clericalism of one kind or another.

The left outside has to commit itself to fight against imperialism's habits, as the United States and its North Atlantic allies try to re-erect their four pillars: oil, Israel, stable allies (i.e. the Gulf Arab monarchies) and the encirclement of Iran.

We have to be vigilant on two fronts: (1) to not let our anti-imperialism lead to the defence of authoritarian regimes in the region and (2) to not let our enthusiasm for rebellion lead to cheering on the cruise missiles from US warships.

These two sirens should worry us as we make our hesitant way alongside the rebirth of a new left in the Arab world.

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.

ANNIVERSARIES

March 7, 1932 -- Bloody Work: Five Ford Workers Killed And Nineteen Wounded By Police And Company “Security” Armed With Pistols, Rifles And A Machine Gun



The Ford Hunger March began on Detroit's East Side and proceeded 10 miles seeking relief during the Great Depression.

Facing hunger and evictions, workers had formed neighborhood Unemployed Councils. Along the route, the marchers were given good wishes from Detroit Mayor Frank Murphy as well as two motorcycle escorts, and thousands joined the marchers along the route.

At the Detroit city limit, the marchers were met by Dearborn police and doused by fire hoses.

Despite the cold weather, they continued to the Employment Office of the Ford River Rouge plant, from which there had been massive layoffs.

Five workers were killed and nineteen wounded by police and company "security" armed with pistols, rifles and a machine gun.

According to Dave Moore, one of the marchers, "That blood was black blood and white blood.

One of the photos that was published in the Detroit Times, but never seen since, shows a black woman, Mattie Woodson, wiping the blood off the head of Joe DiBlasio, a white man who lay there dying . . . It's been 75 years, but when you drive down Miller Road today, your car tires will be moistened with the blood that those five shed."

Grave markers with the words "His Life for the Union" pay tribute to them in Woodmere Cemetery on Detroit's West Side.

March 7, 1965: Noble Anniversary: The First March From Selma: A Day That That Shook The World



Alabama police attack Selma-to-Montgomery marchers

Carl Bunin Peace History; Americaslibrary.gov [Excerpts]

March 7, 1965

When 525 people started a planned march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, on Sunday March 7, 1965, it was called a demonstration. When state troopers met the demonstrators at the edge of the city by the Edmund Pettus Bridge, that day became known as "Bloody Sunday."

In Selma, African Americans made up almost half the population, but only two percent were registered voters. Discrimination and intimidation tactics aimed at blacks kept them from registering and voting. The demonstrators marched to demand fairness in voter registration.

The sheriff warned the people that they had two minutes to break up the march, but the deputies attacked sooner. The demonstrators were tear-gassed, clubbed, spat on, whipped, trampled by horses, and jeered by others for demanding the right to register to vote.

Television and newspapers carried pictures of the event that became known as "Bloody Sunday."

The images sickened, outraged, and electrified people throughout the country.

Within 48 hours, demonstrations in support of the marchers were held in 80 cities. Many of the nation's religious and lay leaders, including Martin Luther King, flew to Selma. After one more failed attempt, King led a peaceful march from Selma to Montgomery. Congress responded to these events by enacting the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

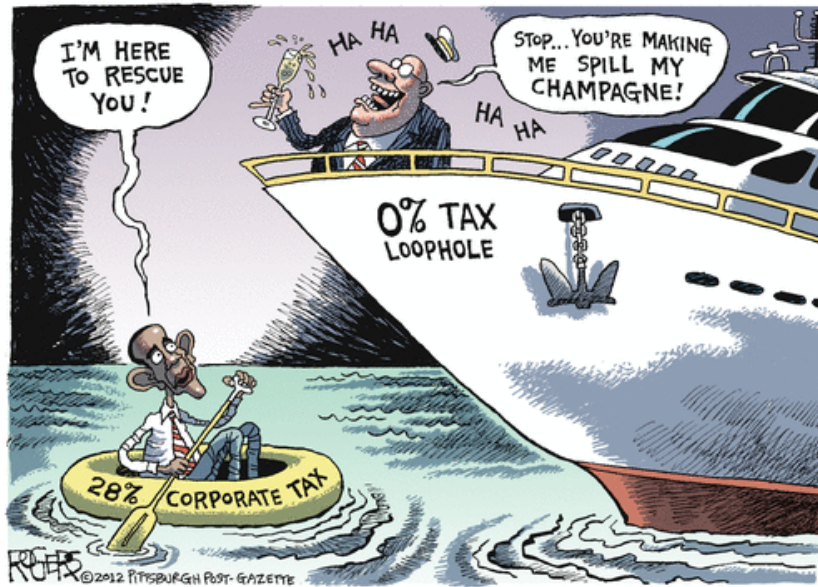


Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email:

contact@militaryproject.org

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Russians Protest Election Fraud



Sergei Udaltsov, leader of opposition party Left Front, speaks to the media before a protest demanding fair elections in central Moscow March 5, 2012. International monitors said Russia's presidential election was clearly skewed to favour Vladimir Putin. REUTERS/Denis Sinyakov

Coordinated Insurgent Offensive In Anbar Province Kills “At Least” 27 Government Forces: “This Is Not Just A Breach, It's A Catastrophe”

3.5.12 Reuters & ASSOCIATED PRESS

FALLUJAH, Iraq - Insurgents disguised as police raided checkpoints and homes in western Iraq on Monday, killing at least 27 members of the security forces.

The 27 dead included a lieutenant colonel and a captain who were dragged out of their homes in Haditha and killed, the police source said.

The violence began with an attack on a suburban checkpoint around 2 a.m. in Haditha, a town 190 km (120 miles) northwest of Baghdad, and ended with the insurgents disappearing into the desert a half hour later.

Iraqi officials described a systematic plot to kill police, with attackers disguising themselves in military uniforms and driving cars painted to look like Iraqi interior ministry vehicles.

The insurgents claimed they were military officials with arrest warrants for city police. They were stopped at a checkpoint outside Haditha, where they took away the guards' mobile phones before shooting nine of them, he said.

Their convoy, described by one Haditha police lieutenant as stretching 13 cars long, then stopped at the homes of two Haditha police commanders, including the colonel who served as the city's SWAT team leader. Brandishing the fake arrest warrants, the insurgents forced the commanders into the convoy, and shot both less than a quarter-mile (400 meters) away,

A police source, who had been ferrying victims to the hospital morgue, said insurgents had driven from checkpoint to checkpoint slaughtering police'

“The attackers used security vehicles and from 2:00 a.m. (2300 GMT) until 3:30 a.m. they carried out attacks on checkpoints in central Haditha and the nearby town of Barwana,” the police source, who did not give his name because he was not authorised to speak to the media, told Reuters in Fallujah.

A curfew was imposed on the town and its exits were sealed off.

One attacker was killed in the attacks, the source said. Three policemen survived the attacks with wounds and were being treated at Haditha hospital.

Iraqi political analyst Ibrahim al-Suamidaie blamed the decentralised security structure in the country for the ease with which insurgents are able to exploit weaknesses in the police forces.

“The fact that the security portfolio is not centralised is the biggest reason. This is not just a breach, it's a catastrophe,” he told Reuters.

Tension has risen between Anbar and the central government in recent months, following an arrest campaign against former members of the banned Baath party.

By going after police, the militants demonstrate to the residents of Haditha, a desert city closer to the Syrian border than to Baghdad, how isolated they are from the central government's protection and intimidate those who want to join the security forces.

Most of the gang escaped, fleeing north into a desert area in bordering Ninevah province known as Jazeera, according to a police lieutenant in Haditha. On the way out another two policemen were killed at a checkpoint on Haditha's outskirts.

The Jazeera desert area is also a few hours from the Syrian border.

Iraqi intelligence officials say weapons smugglers and fighters have secretly crossed into Syria to fight alongside local opposition forces against Assad.

Authorities in Haditha quickly locked down the city with a curfew and deployed the Iraqi army there to keep order.

For many Iraqis, the city is a symbol of some of the worst atrocities during the war.

In 2004, after US forces pulled back their protections, insurgents executed dozens of local policemen in a soccer stadium. US troops returned to Haditha with force in 2005, but at least 20 Marines and an interpreter were killed in separate attacks.

But it was a November 2005 bombing that touched off an attack that still has people in Haditha seething.

A Marine convoy hit a roadside bomb in Haditha that day, killing three US troops.

Incensed, the surviving Marines shot five men by a car at the scene and stormed several nearby houses, where they cleared rooms with grenades and gunfire. Twenty-four Iraqis were killed, including unarmed women and children. Only one Marine was convicted, although he was spared prison time.

The dominant Sunni tribe in Haditha are the Al-Jughaifi.

The SWAT team leader, Col. Mohammed Hussein, was a Al-Jughaifi tribesman, and was also a founding member in Haditha of the Sahwa militiamen, or Awakening Councils, that joined forces with the US military at the height of Iraq's insurgency. The Al-Jughaifi are traditionally farmers or smugglers who live in the area between Haditha and Al-Qaim.

GET MILITARY RESISTANCE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

If you wish to receive Military Resistance immediately and directly, send request to contact@militaryproject.org. There is no subscription charge.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Tens Of Millions Of Workers Took Part In A One-Day General Strike In India On February 28 In The Country's Largest Industrial Action Since Its Independence In 1947”

March 1, 2012 By Snehal Shingavi, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Tens of millions of workers took part in a one-day general strike in India on February 28 in the country's largest industrial action since its independence in 1947.

This is the first time that India's main trade union federations, which are all affiliated to one or another political party, have come together to protest “neoliberal economic and labor policies” pursued by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), the governing coalition led by the Congress Party.

The action was also supported by more than 5,000 independent unions.

Among the demands that the unions made were the establishment of a national minimum wage, the end of temporary employment (what are called “contract laborers” in India) in favor of permanent jobs, more efforts to curb runaway inflation (the official rate is hovering at around 7.5 percent), guaranteed pensions, and an end to the privatization of publicly owned companies.

The banking and insurance sectors were hit hardest by the strike, but other workers, including dockworkers, postal workers and transportation workers, were heavily involved.

The coordination of a national strike on this scale marks the beginning of a new stage in the confrontation between labor and capital in India, as the benefits of India's boom has produced an economy in which the benefits accrue to the few at the top.

Despite threats from the central government and a last-minute offer to negotiate, the strike took place and brought out millions.

In Kerala, the state government threatened workers with a “dies non” order (no work, no pay), while in other places like New Delhi, the government attempted to enforce the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to force workers in industries like power generation back to work.

In West Bengal, members of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) party also attacked and injured strikers.

According to current estimates, the Indian economy grew at around 7 percent last year and is projected to grow again at a similar rate in 2012.

At the same time, the benefits of that growth have been massively skewed.

Mumbai, the symbol of India's new economic power and famous for its massive film industry, is now commonly referred to as “Slumbai”--more people live in slums in Mumbai than don't. Many of these slum dwellers work in the hyper-exploitative informal economy--if they work at all.

Agricultural reforms implemented in the past 20 years have immiserated people in the countryside. Desperate farmers then migrate to the larger cities and towns where they form the massive reserve army of the unemployed, which drives down wages.

The national strike was a response to these conditions and the pinch that workers are feeling throughout the country.

Last year, there were some spectacular job actions at places like the Maruti Suzuki auto plant in the Delhi suburb of Gurgaon, where workers fought a pitched battle for wages and occupied the factory for almost two weeks.

At the same time, the official line of the Congress Party-led government and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is that neoliberal economic policies are going to continue.

At the heart of the fight with the unions is the controversial pensions bill now before parliament, which would tie workers' retirement benefits to market-driven financial instruments and put employee retirements in jeopardy.

But also at issue are Singh's plans to sell off major state holdings in order to finance repayments on international loans and budget deficits. Singh did, after all, cut his teeth as the economic architect of India's neoliberal reforms, which began to be implemented when he was the finance minister under former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

All this puts twin pressures on unionized workers in India. On one side is the threat of being pushed into the growing underclass, which labor is trying desperately to unionize. The other peril comes from neoliberalism and the attack on union rights.

This has produced the conditions for greater worker militancy in India.

However, this confrontation between labor and capital in India will not be decisive. To start with, the unions have only put forward a tentative one-day strike, with a long and vague list of demands. Moreover, the official trade unions are all connected to various political parties, and these massive days of protest are usually connected to political gamesmanship that the parties play against one another.

The unions at the head of the strike were led by the official left in India, which is still dominated by Stalinist and Maoist political organizations.

Since many of these parties are no longer revolutionary, they tend to play a dampening role on the class struggle, rather than developing it.

This isn't to say that workers don't fight back. They do, but the unions do their best to limit their struggles.

In 2006, there was an attempt to form a federation of Independent Trade Unions called the New Trade Union Initiative, which holds out some of the best possibilities for an independent trade union movement in India. Many of these unions also participated in the recent one-day action.

Second, there are also reactionary trade unions, like the Hindustan Mazdoor Sabha run by the right-wing Bharatiya Janati Party (BJP), and the Bhartiya Kamgar Sena, run by the ultra-right-wing Shiv Sena. Both of these unions also participated in the strike, largely because the leftist unions kept the slogans vague enough that the right wing could use the one-day strike as cover for purported populist politics.

Part of the reason that the right and the left were able to come together (as they have in the past, under the Janata Party government in the 1970s) is because they are both now in the opposition to the Congress Party's UPA coalition that runs the central government.

In fact, despite agreeing early on to support the strike, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC, run by the Congress Party) withdrew after the party leadership put substantial pressure on it. "The strike is politically motivated and illegal. We will oppose it on Tuesday," said Ashok Chaudhary, the national president of the INTUC.

But this alliance between left and right can only be temporary and opportunistic, as the BJP and Shiv Sena are both pursuing neoliberal policies in the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra respectively, where both play much larger regional roles. The left-right labor alliance is also dangerous, since the right wing has not been shy about stoking up ethnic and communal hatred in times of economic contraction.

Part of the reason that the strike took place in as spectacular a way as it did was because the traditional left was routed at the polls in the last elections.

During the time that the left was in power in places like Kerala, Tripura and West Bengal, they were able to play a dampening role on industrial actions. But once they were removed from office, they found it possible to allow the discontent of their members to be expressed in order to embarrass the current government. But only to a point:

Too much worker militancy threatens their own ability to contain mass anger. Indeed, these parties have, in the past, used their ability to keep a lid on struggle to lure capital investment to their economically impoverished states.

Thus, in those traditional leftist strongholds, the strike was strongest, and it went beyond industrial work stoppages to actually disrupt traffic and business in major cities. In other places, such as Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, and Karnataka, the effects of the strike were not as strongly felt.

But the most significant showdown was clearly in West Bengal, where Chief Minister Banerjee attempted to flex her muscle against what she called “the politics of bandhs” (protests that shut down entire cities). Having recently beaten the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at the polls, Banerjee is now in the position of having to do the bidding of large capital, despite having organized strikes and bandhs herself in the past.

In Kolkata, the police were out in droves, attempting to get people back to work, while Banerjee's TMC party sent many of its members to break up rallies and pickets throughout the city.

Ironically, Banerjee came to power on the basis of an electoral backlash against the CPM when it tried to raze entire villages in order to make way for a manufacturing campus in the countryside for industrial giants like Tata Motors.

Now, Banerjee is doing the work of the same capitalists she claimed to oppose--an opportunistic about-face that will only expose her to greater challenges.

What the general strike reveals is that although working-class anger at the economic and political system in India is growing, the major left parties have been unable to deliver anything but symbolic and token changes in their lives.

The general strike revealed that the working class in India is quite large and has muscle. But to take the struggle forward, workers will need new forms of political and union organization.

**Bolivia:
Loathsome Piece Of Shit Morales
Orders “Police Beating, Pepper
Spraying And Arresting The Disabled
To Keep Them Away From The
Presidential Palace”
“Money Is Still Going To The Elites:
Bankers, Agribusiness, Etc. Are The
Ones Getting The Favors”**



Bolivian riot police attack disability rights protesters in La Paz

February 29, 2012 By Jason Farbman, Socialist Worker

Bolivian riot police battled disabled protesters in the streets outside Evo Morales' presidential palace on February 23, a stark sign of the right turn of Bolivian President Evo Morales.

Hundreds of demonstrators had met a march of about 50 disabled Bolivians, who completed a 560-mile journey to the capital city of La Paz.

The protesters' demands included meager support for the most vulnerable in an already impoverished nation. They want an annual state subsidy of about \$400 for disabled Bolivians--the currently subsidy is about a third of that--and passage of anti-discrimination laws.

The march had left 100 days earlier from Trinidad, taking participants on a winding route into the highlands toward La Paz. Three months later, the marchers reached their destination, streaming in wheelchairs and on crutches into the streets leading to the Bolivian presidential palace.

They were greeted by rows of riot police blocking the streets.

The police were ready for a march of impoverished and disabled: They wore riot helmets and shields, and held their batons at the ready, determined not to let the march close to the palace.

But protestors had not come 560 miles--depending on help from strangers along the way--to be stopped.

They refused to back down.

Videos of the incident show a number of protestors waving sticks and crutches at the police, who replied with tear gas and pepper spray.

Even then, the crowd did not retreat, but only became more enraged. In a Facebook account, a journalist for LaMalaPalabra described the scene:

“The handicapped BEAT THE SHIT OUT OF THE COPS. The cops only covered themselves with their shields. They didn't do shit. The handicapped went loco, BUT REALLY LOCO. Hardcore, they were blowing up firecrackers in (the cops') faces and helmets barely protected them. They threw real rocks at them...

“(O)ne of them got on to one of the police trucks and using only his fists, he fucking destroyed the windshield, there was also the guy that passed him a big rock A BIG ROCK so he could finish his job, with cops inside the car that the only thing they were doing was protecting their face. The dog that was with the handicapped bit two cops, but not like when they just stick their teeth in you and that's it, he SHOOK them intense intense intense...”

The media was present at the scene in force, and photos and videos spread quickly. Viewers across the world saw the courage of these disabled, sometimes legless Bolivians and the cowardice of Morales and his riot police.

By the end of the melee, eight disabled activists were arrested. The Urban Teachers Union issued a statement of support: “The comrades have been beaten. We demand the immediate release of all detainees. Urban teachers support the disabled, because they asked for a miserable bonus that won't be missed.”

All those arrested were released several days later after one fell into an epileptic seizure during a court hearing. Still, the police tried to intimidate the disabled protesters. As Bolivia Weekly reported, “The activists and their families returned to their vigil on the corner of Plaza Murillo where they are surrounded by police officers.”

Nearly 15 percent of the Bolivian population is disabled. Preventable diseases and high malnutrition are common reasons--most of the causes stem in one way or another from the country's extreme poverty.

Mentions of Bolivia are frequently followed by the phrase "South America's poorest nation."

Thus, the Bolivian minister of the economy and public finance played up Bolivia's poverty in explaining why the demand for a larger subsidy was out of the question: "We have emergencies and natural disasters to deal with, then we have social programs that are already under way and we cannot discontinue them. In sum, it would be a huge blow to the Treasury."

If this were the case, that would be one thing.

But in Morales' first years in office, Bolivia enjoyed the kind of fiscal conditions that neoliberals love: government budget surpluses, low inflation rates, and a big growth in international currency reserves. But there was almost no change in poverty rates or social inequality during this time.

What's more, Morales has pushed ahead with an aggressive plan to build a highway through an environmentally sensitive park and through indigenous peoples' lands.

When the local population protested last summer, armed supporters of Morales' ruling Movement for Socialism (MAS) party moved in to crack heads.

As Jeffrey Webber points out in *From Rebellion to Reform in Bolivia: Class Struggle, Indigenous Liberation, and the Politics of Evo Morales*, "(T)he share of national income taken home by workers, having dropped consistently over the 2000s, continued to do so under Morales, from 30.1 to 24.6 percent in 2006, to 24.7 percent in 2007, and to 23.7 percent in 2008."

This shrinking share of the wealth stands in sharp contrast to a number of recently exposed lavish expenditures by Morales' administration.

For example, Morales announced that the town of his birth would house a \$5 million Museum of the Democratic and Cultural Revolution. Morales claimed, "It will not be the Museum of Evo Morales, but of the democratic and cultural revolution." The museum will house gifts given to Morales over his six years as president.

One might think that throwing all his extra stuff into a \$5 million storage unit would free up space at the presidential palace. But Morales has still found his home of the last six years "very small." Over the next three years, he will be moving into a building on a nearby lot that the state purchased, which will have its very own helicopter landing pad.

Thus, on the march to La Paz, a sign taped to one man's wheelchair read, "Evo wants a heliport, I want my rights."

More bizarrely, the Morales government announced the creation of the Bolivian Space Agency on February 10. Its first satellite, the Tupac Katari, will be launched into space within three years--at a cost of up to \$300 million.

That is about six times what Bolivia spends every year on public education.

The new Bolivian space program is part of a 2009 agreement with China that will put the country deeply in debt. This is a dangerous road for Bolivia. Unpayable debt in the developing world translates to even more leverage for the already powerful developed nations.

For example, Bolivia's neoliberal plunge in 1985 was very much due to massive foreign debt to the U.S. The resulting economic "shocks" engineered by Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs resulted in the dismantling of nearly every safety net for working Bolivians. Millions suffered greatly in years where living conditions were so bad, they sparked massive uprisings from 2000 to 2005. Morales and his MAS party owe their rise to power to these uprising.

Marcela Olivera--a veteran of the explosive Bolivian social movements since the 2000 Water War in Cochabamba, when labor unions and community organizations rose up to prevent privatization of their local water sources--had this to say about the situation in Bolivia today:

"Things are still the same, and in some cases worse. Money is still going to the elites: bankers, agribusiness, etc. are the ones getting the favors. That's why there is no articulated right-wing movement in Bolivia, as there was in Morales' first years. Because they're all okay with what's going on."

Now the people fighting Evo are indigenous, teachers, health workers, the disabled. Morales' once historically high approval ratings have plummeted, from 70 percent in January 2010 to exactly half that this past October.

With riot police beating, pepper spraying and arresting the disabled to keep them away from the presidential palace, that approval rating is likely to fall further.

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

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

*This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



*Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org*

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

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

**“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

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/military-resistance-archives/>; news@uruknet.info;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a “fair use” of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice. Go to:**

www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.