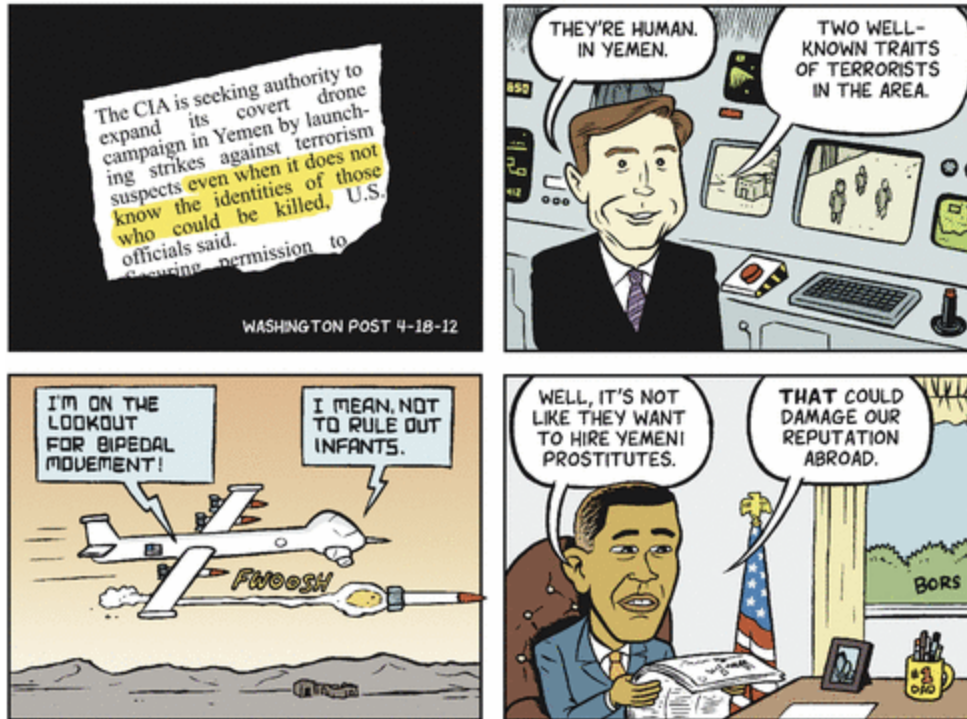


Military Resistance 10E12



**Proposed New
Grooming Rules
Infuriate Soldiers:
Raising The Most Ire Are Rules
Addressing Attire And
Grooming When Soldiers Are
Off Duty Or On Leave;**

**“Under The ‘Are You Kidding Me’
Department: Clean-Shaven 24/7,
Even When On Leave?”**

**“We Do Not Need To Be Looking
Over Our Shoulder At Daytona Beach
Wondering If The ‘Shaving Police’
Are Watching Us While Playing In
The Sand With Our Families”**

**“There Is No Recorded History That
Indicates A Lack Of Discipline, Manners,
Or Disrespect Would Be Directed To Our
Beloved Country For Not Shaving On
The Weekend!”**

Tattoos could not extend below the wrist line and not be on the hands. Soldiers were allowed to sport such ink in recent years. Rules had been relaxed because the Army needed to fill the ranks.

Some are now angry, asking why these tattooed troops were good enough for war, but not for the new Army.

5.21.12 By Lance M. Bacon, Army Times [Excerpts]

Pending changes to at least 17 grooming regulations have evoked a flood of passionate responses from the ranks, for and against — but mostly against. The comments have been prevalent in blog and Facebook posts as well as letters to Army Times.

Army Times received more than 100 letters complaining that the proposed new rules were too much to impose on a force that has weathered a decade of back-to-back deployments, more than 44,000 casualties and more than 5,000 dead.

Raising the most ire are rules addressing tattoos and attire/grooming standards when soldiers are off duty or on leave.

The pending tattoos rule would not allow ink to be visible above the neckline when the physical fitness uniform is worn.

Tattoos could not extend below the wrist line and not be on the hands. Sleeve tattoos would be prohibited, though this rule may be grandfathered.

Soldiers were allowed to sport such ink in recent years. Rules had been relaxed because the Army needed to fill the ranks.

Some are now angry, asking why these tattooed troops were good enough for war, but not for the new Army.

Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler said their argument misses the mark.

“Anyone who has served at any time is worthy of dignity and respect and they are worthy of the things that they get for their service,” Chandler told Army Times in early April.

“But I do not believe in my heart that we owe somebody something just because of their service other than ‘thank you’ and the benefits of service.

While Sgt. Matthew Thomas agrees with most of the proposed changes, he took exception to the tat policy, saying “it alienates a large portion of the American population for something superficial.”

“The Army has to have rules to maintain order, but leaders must not forget that our organization represents a broad cross section of our diverse society, and one thing that almost all American subcultures share is tattooing,” he said.

“I stand in PT formation every morning and realize not having tattoos I am in the minority. Retired senior leaders have already published findings warning of recruiting troubles ahead because of a lack of physical capability and willingness among upcoming generations.

“Now we’re alienating another potential group of soldiers because of something society as a whole is seeing as more and more acceptable? Hopefully that change goes the way of the black beret.”

Capt. Richard Heintz took issue with rules governing attire and grooming standards when on leave.

“Under the ‘are you kidding me’ department: Clean-shaven 24/7, even when on leave?” he asked.

“Vacations are designed for a reason: Relaxation. Let down the stress of life and daily activities.

“We do not need to be looking over our shoulder at Daytona Beach wondering if the ‘shaving police’ are watching us while playing in the sand with our families. There is no recorded history that indicates a lack of discipline, manners, or disrespect would be directed to our beloved country for not shaving on the weekend!”

Other changes under consideration include:

- **Shorter sideburns.**
- Hair grooming standards will become more restrictive and better defined.
- No visible body piercings will be allowed on or off duty. Men will not be allowed to wear earrings at any time. Ear gauging will be unauthorized.
- **Civilian clothes standards, both on and off post, will be better defined.**
- **Soldiers will not eat, drink, smoke, or talk on cellphones while walking.**
- Men will be authorized to carry a black umbrella with the Army Service Uniform.
- **Army Combat Uniforms will not be commercially pressed; only hand ironing will be authorized.**
- Women will be allowed to put hair into ponytails during physical training.
- Men will be prohibited from wearing cosmetics, to include nail polish.
- Women may wear cosmetics “conservatively.” That means no unnatural or exaggerated appearance, and no more fake eyelashes. Nail polish will only be worn in service, mess or dress uniforms.
- Women’s fingernail length will not exceed one quarter-inch. No fake nails, add-ons or extensions will be authorized.
- **Bags worn over the shoulder must be black or the color print of the uniform, without logos.**
- **No dental ornamentation or gold teeth will be authorized.**
- **Soldiers may wear authorized ballistic eyewear in garrison.**
- Officers will be authorized to wear nonsubdued rank on their headgear in garrison.

The pending changes are part of a comprehensive review of Army Regulation 670-1 led by Chandler, who has said the goal is to project a uniform and professional Army.

Chandler and his board of directors, which is composed of key command sergeants major, will hash out the final details in coming weeks.

Final approval must come from Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno and Secretary John McHugh.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



U.S. soldier in Bejjia village Iraq, Feb. 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

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AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Kentucky Mourns Loss Of Pfc. Dustin D. Gross, Killed In Afghanistan



May 16, 2012 by Thomas McAdam, The Arena

Gov. Steve Beshear has directed that flags at all state office buildings be lowered to half-staff on Thursday, May 17, 2012, in honor of a Kentucky soldier who died while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

According to the Department of Defense, Pfc. Dustin D. Gross, 19, of Jeffersonville, Ky. died May 7, in Ghazni province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device.

He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. Also killed were Sgt. Jacob M. Schwallie, 22, of Clarksville, Tenn., and Spc. Chase S. Marta, 24, of Chico, Calif.

Last year, Dustin Gross graduated from Montgomery County High School in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. He joined the Army and soon deployed on his first tour, to serve in Afghanistan. The high school brought in Counselors to the school after the students were notified of his death.

Pfc. Gross' family, also devastated by the loss of their young soldier-son, released this statement: "We love and are very proud of Dustin. This is very hard for us. We appreciate all the prayers, love and support from our family, friends and the community. We just need to mourn our loss in private at this time."

Funeral services for Pfc. Gross will held on May 17 at 11 a.m. Eastern time at Montgomery County High School in Mt. Sterling. Burial services will immediately follow at Machpelah Cemetery in Mt. Sterling. Gov. Beshear is encouraging individuals, businesses, organizations and government agencies to join in this tribute.

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

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

Top U.S. Commander Has “Good News” From Afghanistan: 160 Afghan Government Security Forces Arrested “In The Last Few Months” For Plotting Attacks On Foreign Troops

May 21, 2012 The Ticket [Excerpts]

How badly are things going in Afghanistan?

The top U.S. commander, Gen. John Allen, told reporters it was “good news” that Afghan authorities had arrested 160 people in the last few months for plotting so-called “green-on-blue” attacks by Afghan security forces on their foreign troops.

Allen was describing how the alliance and the government in Kabul have responded to a spate of deadly insider attacks.

“Now, there's a good-news story here, and that is that the Afghans have arrested more than 160 individuals in the last several months that they believe could have been in the throes of planning for an attack on ISAF forces,” Allen said Sunday.

Allen also said that fewer than half of the perpetrators of insider attacks were “Taliban infiltrators.”

“So it's important to understand and be able to recognize the nature of that self-radicalization in the ranks. “

Just days ago, two British soldiers were killed by members of the Afghan police force.

New Zealand Will Withdraw Troops From Afghanistan A Year Earlier Than Planned

5.22.12 AP

New Zealand says it will withdraw its small contingent of troops from Afghanistan a year earlier than planned.

Prime Minister John Key told reporters Tuesday that the 145 New Zealand troops stationed in Bamiyan province will come home in late 2013 rather than 2014. New Zealand has stationed troops in the war-torn country since 2003, with five dying there during that time.

FUTILE EXERCISE: ALL HOME NOW!



U.S. soldiers from 5-20 infantry Regiment attached to 82nd Airborne walk while on patrol in Zharay district in Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan, April 24, 2012.
REUTERS/Baz Ratner

MILITARY NEWS

One-Star Relieved Of Command In Afghanistan “Pending The Outcome Of A Criminal Investigation”

5.28.12 By Kathleen Curthoys, Army Times [Excerpts]

A one-star general has been reassigned from Afghanistan to Fort Bragg, N.C., pending the outcome of a criminal investigation, according Army officials.

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair was removed from his job as the 82nd Airborne Division's deputy commanding general for support in Afghanistan on May 3, a post he had held since July 2010. Fort Bragg spokesman Ben Abel said no information is available about why Sinclair is being investi-gated but said Sinclair was reassigned soon after the investigation began.

Sinclair is now serving as special assistant to the 18th Airborne Corps commander Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick, a role created for Sinclair while the investigation is ongoing, according to Abel.

Sinclair could not be reached for comment by press time May 18.

Jeffrey Castro, a spokesman for Criminal Investigation Command, which is conducting the investigation, would not comment on it.

"It's our policy not to release information concerning an ongoing investigation to protect that investigation," he said. "We do not charge anyone, and if someone's charged, it comes through the proper legal channels." The Fayetteville Observer first reported that Sinclair had been reassigned.

In Afghanistan, Sinclair served under Maj. Gen. James L. Huggins in the 82nd Airborne Division headquarters, which is in charge of NATO's Regional Command South at Kandahar.

The Defense Department announced May 2 that Brig. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire was reassigned as deputy division commander. McGuire was deputy chief Army legislative liaison and had taken the 3rd Brigade Combat Team to Iraq for a year.

RC-South includes the provinces of Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul and Daykundi.

Under the 82nd Airborne Division are troops from the NATO nations of Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom, as well as non-NATO nations Australia, Jordan and Singapore.

Sinclair was commissioned through ROTC in December 1985 after graduating from West Virginia University, according to his official biography. Sinclair has seen multiple combat deployments and led the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

“Stop The VA From Shifting The Authority To Make Decisions On Purchasing Artificial Limbs From

Prosthetics Specialists To The Contracting Officers Who Buy VA's Pens, Light Bulbs And Toilet Paper" "Every Day That Goes By For A Veteran Without A Prosthetic, Without A Wheelchair, Shame On Us"

5.28.12 By Patricia Kime, Army Times [Excerpts]

Veterans groups are asking Congress to stop the Veterans Affairs Department from shifting the authority to make decisions on purchasing artificial limbs from prosthetics specialists to the contracting officers who buy VA's pens, light bulbs and toilet paper.

VA officials say the change will bring prosthetics purchases in line with federal contracting procedures and improve control — oversight determined to be needed after VA's Inspector General found the department overpaid limb manufacturers by \$2.2 million in 2010.

Under the new program, VA would continue to make in-house more than a third of the roughly 5,500 artificial limbs used by veterans each year. But buying authority for privately made limbs costing more than \$3,000 would be moved from prosthetics purchasing agents to contracting specialists.

Veterans groups argue the switch will impair the ability of doctors to prescribe appropriate hardware for their patients and could delay care.

"A warrior needing a new leg or wheelchair should not have to wait longer than necessary. ... Prosthetics are specialized medical equipment; they should be prescribed by a clinician and promptly delivered to veterans," retired Army Capt. Jonathan Pruden, an amputee and a spokesman for the Wounded Warrior Project, told a House panel May 16.

Rep. Ann Marie Buerkle, R-N.Y., who chairs the House Veterans' Affairs health subcommittee, said VA should have consulted veterans groups before launching the change and asked VA to provide her committee with more information before making a decision.

She raised concerns about VA's ability to ensure timely care for a relatively small group, mainly Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who receive high-tech prosthetics to maintain their quality of life.

"Every day that goes by for a veteran without a prosthetic, without a wheelchair, shame on us," she said. "As soon as we take away the personal piece of this, you run the risk of the government bureaucracy taking over."

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.”

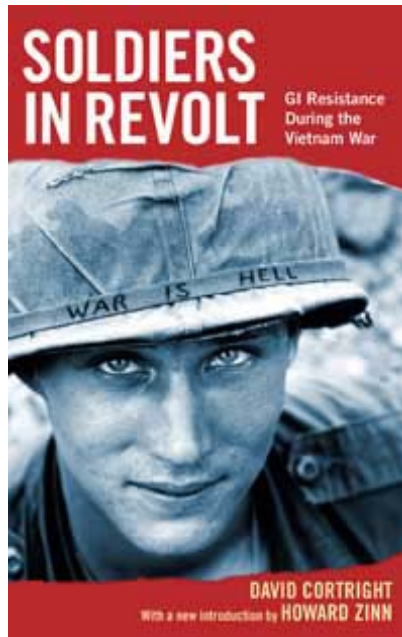
Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

“The Courts Have Issued Several Judgments Which For The First Time

Permit The Distribution Of Political Literature Within Military Installations”

“In A Sweeping First Amendment Decision, The Court Declared That The Military Did Not Have The Right To Restrict Access To Parts Of An Installation Generally Open To The Public”



From: **SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1975.** [Now available in paperback from Haymarket Books]

We have seen numerous examples in which not a lack of authority but its very excessiveness have increased dissension and unrest.

Stern discipline has frequently only exacerbated internal difficulties and strengthened GI resistance.

Servicemen rooted in a society increasingly skeptical of authority and established institutions must inevitably rebel against the arbitrary punitive methods of the military establishment.

The present, medieval system is also fundamentally incompatible with the changed nature of modern military forces. The increasing pace of technological change and introduction of new and sophisticated military job specialties have changed the demands of military service, requiring greater abilities and more individual, initiative on the part of each soldier.

Military discipline and training, derived from times when armies had to be forced into open fire in mass infantry lines, can only impede the individual responsibility required in many modern military occupations.

Moreover, an increasing number of servicemen work in a bureaucratic or technical environment similar to that found in many civilian jobs. Indeed, many now live off post and commute to their forty-hour-a-week military job very much in the manner of the average civilian.

To claim that strict discipline is necessary for proper job performance is absurd.

One of the most controversial subjects of military reform is the administrative discharge system.

Nearly five hundred thousand Vietnam-era veterans have received less-than-honorable separations, often resulting in a lifelong barrier to GI benefits and decent employment.

Since adaptability to the military has little or no relation to one's ability to function in civilian life, the permanent deprivations of a "bad" discharge constitute a vindictive and senseless form of oppression.

Given the frequency with which commanders resorted to discharges as a means of eliminating political opponents, many punitively released veterans must be counted among those who resisted the military and the Vietnam War.

Similarly, the disproportionate number of blacks who received "bad" discharges were often leading activists in the GI movement and in many cases were victims of overt discrimination and repression.

Some may object that proposals for military democracy are hopelessly utopian, that military authorities will never yield to demands for GI rights.

While the ultimate goals of the GI movement are admittedly distant, the resistance effort has not been without impact.

Indeed, the pressures of continuous political struggle have resulted in important gains in recent years.

Perhaps the clearest example of progress in the campaign for enlisted rights is the increasing influence of civilian federal courts in the affairs of military discipline — what might be termed “the civilianization of military law.”

In the past decade, servicemen have pushed relentlessly for Bill of Rights protections, and, through an unprecedented wave of GI court suits, have persuaded federal judges to assume jurisdiction over many crucial areas of military justice.

The vaguely worded catch-alls, Articles 133 and 134, have been seriously challenged; court-martial defendants have won the right to individual counsel; various unjust and discriminatory regulations have been nullified; the right to on-post distribution of political literature has been granted; etc.

The intrusion of civilian legal standards into the world of the military marks an important and potentially fundamental change in the nature of military law.

There have been literally hundreds of GI court cases, and it would be impossible for us to discuss even a fraction of them here. Rather, we shall review a few of the recent landmark decisions with greatest consequence.

One of the most important of these involved two Fort Ord soldiers, Don Amick and Ken Stolte, who in 1968 distributed a leaflet urging fellow GIs to join an anti-war union. The two were court-martialed under Article 134 for “disloyal statements” and sentenced to three years in prison.

In January 1973, however, Washington Federal District Judge Aubrey Robinson ruled that the Army had incorrectly interpreted the article in charging the two and threw out their convictions.

The Robinson decision was extended two months later, when a Washington Appeals Court declared that Article 134 was in fact unconstitutional because of vagueness and inadequate standards of guilt.

The case involved Marine Pfc Marl Avreeh, who had been convicted in Da Nang, during 1969, of anti-war activities.

The courts have issued several judgments which for the first time permit the distribution of political literature within military installations.

In November of 1972, the Supreme Court ruled that the conviction of antiwar activist Tom Flower for distributing literature at Fort Sam Houston was unconstitutional.

In a sweeping First Amendment decision, the court declared that the military did not have the right to restrict access to parts of an installation generally open to the public.

In a following case, *Jeness v. Forbes*, a Rhode Island district court decided that Socialist Workers Party candidate Linda Jenness could not be prevented from distributing political literature at Quonset NAS.

**“One, Two, Three, Fuck The
Bourgeoisie, Four, Five, Six, Fuck
The Bourgeoisie”**

“Man This Old Dude Is REALLY Rad!”

**“Life Is Simply Too Short To Not Find
Time To Have Fun, Even If You Are
Sitting Among Piles Of Dirty Dishes,
Soiled Diapers, Broken Promises, And
Lost Chances”**

To: Military Resistance Newsletter

Subject: Chicago

Date: May 22, 2012

By Robert Gabrielsky

I think the following anecdote which actually happened to me captures the mood of the anti NATO demos in Chicago as I experienced it on the ground:

For the record I am 69 years old and have a severe heart condition.

We were marching around after the anticapitalist rally on Saturday night, which turned out to be bigger than the “moderate” Nurses rally early in the afternoon. About a week before I had tweeted a chant that I had learned from Tom Condit in 1964, though I had never actually heard it chanted.

It goes: One, Two, Three, Fuck the Bourgeoisie, Four, Five, Six, Fuck The Bourgeoisie. Apparently it had gone viral as the hundreds of people on this march were all chanting it.

At around 6:30 we were swarming around the Blackstone and Hilton hotels where most of the NATO diplomats were staying. Black Blockers (and it's a good thing they are not more organized than is the case) were urging people to continue to march.

I mentioned to someone next to me that we ought to just sit down in the street right where we were all night, and pay special attention to blocking the entrances. Nobody in, nobody out. That way, I argued, the limos could not pick up the diplomats and the meeting could not take place. The woman next to me started screaming “Mic check, Mike check! Listen to this man. This man's got something to say.”

At that point I repeated my whole argument as loudly as I could with appropriate breaks for the human mike.

People came up to me afterwards and started calling me Mr. Radical and saying “Man this old dude is REALLY rad!”

Unfortunately at that point the Black Bloc was already leading the group hither and yon and there were not enough people left for an effective blockade. Ultimately we ended up deep in South Chicago. Blues Country. Then my feet gave out and I could go no further.

I found a spot of grass in front of a bank where a couple of other worn out Occupiers were resting. Then a couple of black dudes came along who had heard my rap at the hotels and they started calling other people from the neighborhood over to talk to me.

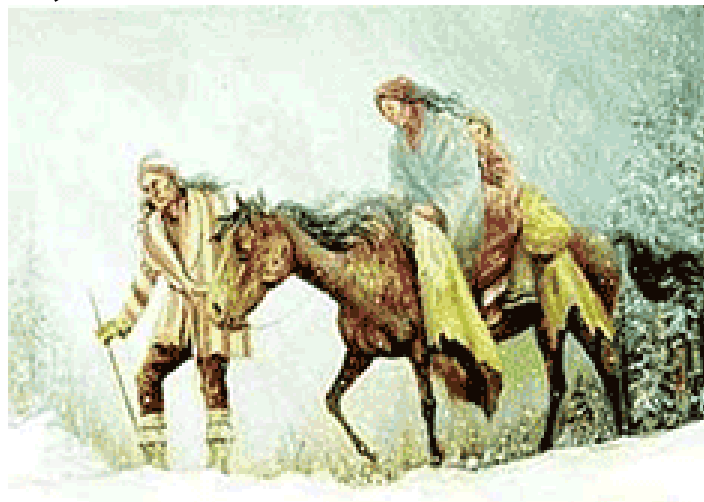
Somebody offered me a blunt and they thought it was hilarious when I took it.

Not having smoked grass for several years I became instantly high. A 19 year old girl told me if there was anything I wanted she would get it for me. “Anything?” I said. “Anything” she said. I laughed and shook my head.

Life is simply too short to not find time to have fun, even if you are sitting among piles of dirty dishes, soiled diapers, broken promises, and lost chances.

ANNIVERSARIES

May 23, 1838: Infamous Anniversary

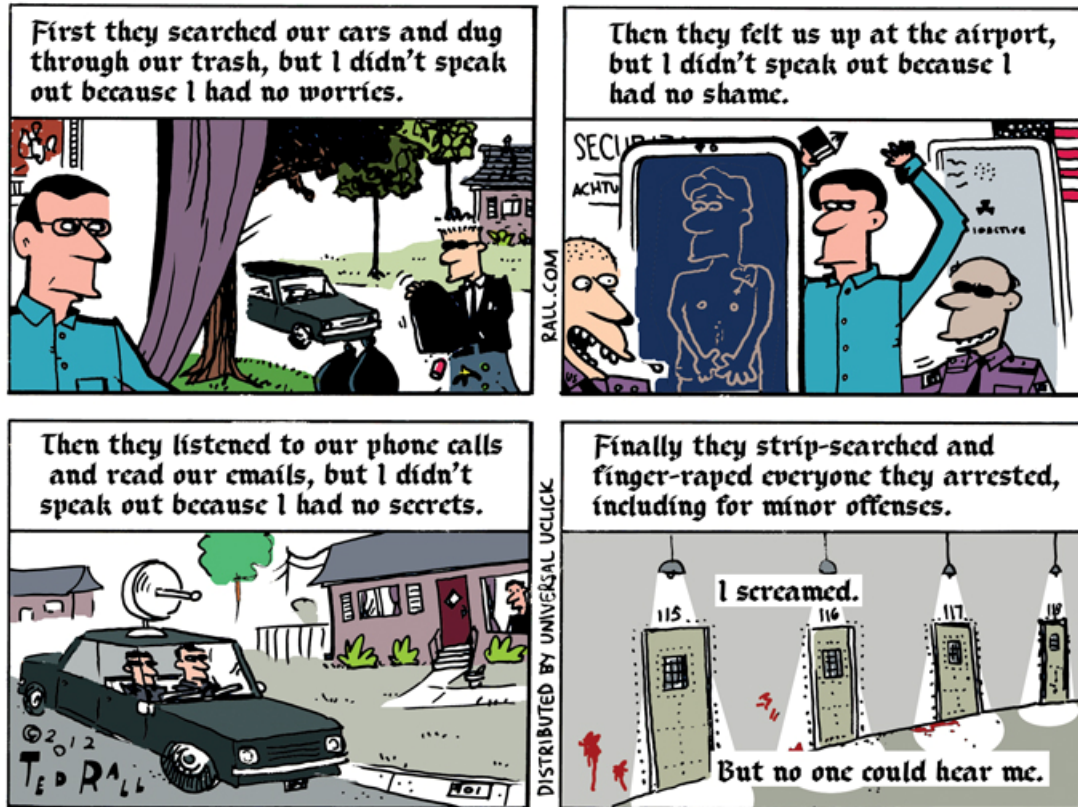


Carl Bunin Peace History May 21-27

U.S. General Winfield Scott ordered the forced removal of the Cherokee Indians from the east to the “Indian Nation” (what is now Oklahoma).

Approximately one quarter of the 10,000 died on this march called “The Trail of Tears.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Win One For Our Side:
“The Justice Department Took An
Important Stand Last Week, Declaring
That Citizens Have A First Amendment
Right To Videotape The Actions Of
Police Officers In Public Places And That**

Seizure Or Destruction Of Such Recordings Violates Constitutional Rights”

May 20, 2012 Editorial, The New York Times

The Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department took an important stand last week, declaring that citizens have a First Amendment right to videotape the actions of police officers in public places and that seizure or destruction of such recordings violates constitutional rights.

The Justice Department made the statement in a federal lawsuit brought against the Baltimore Police Department by Christopher Sharp, who used his cellphone to take video of the police arresting and beating a friend at Pimlico on the day of the 2010 Preakness.

The officers took Mr. Sharp’s cellphone while he was recording and wiped the phone clean of all videos before returning it to him.

The Courts of Appeals for the First and Seventh Circuits have wisely found that the Constitution protects the right to videotape police officers while they perform official duties.

The video taken by another witness of the beating at Pimlico shows that the right to record is crucial to holding police accountable for their actions.

Mr. Sharp sued for damages to his personal property and for injunctive relief in the form of a clear policy on videotaping consistent with the Constitution and also training for the police. The judge hearing the case arranged a settlement conference for May 30, though the case is far from being settled.

Last November, the Police Department issued an order paying lip service to the right of citizens to make “video recording of police activity.”

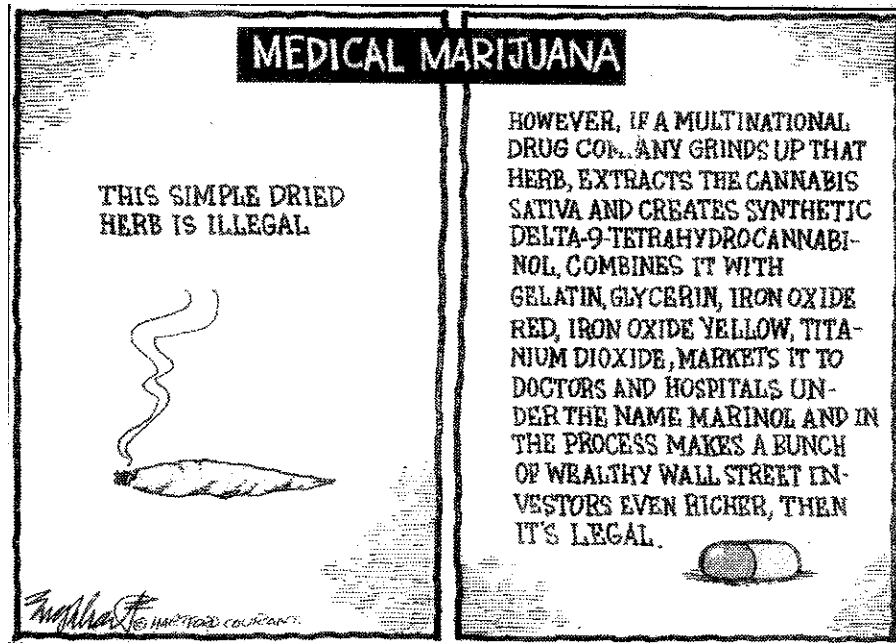
But the day after that order became public, as The Baltimore Sun reported, police officers were caught on video threatening to arrest for loitering a man who was recording them as they surrounded and held someone on the ground.

It is essential that the Justice Department and federal courts make clear that police departments will be held liable for violating this constitutionally protected right.

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CLASS WAR REPORTS



“The Greek Politicians Demand That The Population Pay For The Huge Budget Deficit”
“What They Don’t Say Is That A Major Cause Of That Deficit Is Greece’s Enormous Military Budget And Weapons Purchases”

May 14, 2012 The Spark

The Greek politicians demand that the population pay for the huge budget deficit. What they don't say is that a major cause of that deficit is Greece's enormous military budget and weapons purchases. Over the past decade, Greece, with a population of 11 million, has been one of the top five arms importers in the world.

In the five years up to 2010, the Greek government purchased more of Germany's arms exports than any other country, accounting for 15 per cent of all German weapons makers' exports. The Greek government is also the top buyer in Europe of France's

arms manufacturers. These huge weapons purchases continued when the big debt crisis hit in 2008. In fact, the Greek government increased its military spending from 6.24 billion euros in 2007 to 7.1 billion euros in 2010.

This was no accident. It is well known that the German and French governments, acting in the interests of their own big weapons manufacturers, imposed new arms deals on the Greek government, even as politicians the world over bemoaned the Greek debt crisis. In particular, there was concerted pressure from France to buy several stealth frigates. Germany sold 223 howitzers and completed a controversial deal on faulty submarines. Not to be left out, U.S. weapons makers have sold the Greek military F-16 jets and M-1 Abrams tanks.

All the austerity measures imposed on the Greek population – the enormous cuts in social spending, jobs, the minimum wage, pensions – are just a way to rob the Greek working population and the poor in order to enrich the biggest capitalists all over the world.

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**Palestinian Marxist Activist
Describes The Tyrant Assad's
Prisons:
“Jailed In Syria For Nearly Three
Weeks Described The Facilities As
‘Human Slaughterhouses’”**

“We Were Not Allowed To Go To The Restroom Still, We Were Beaten If We Urinated In Our Sleep”



In a May 20, 2012 photo, Palestinian writer Salameh Kaileh is seen during an interview with the Associated Press in Amman, Jordan. The prominent Palestinian writer, who was jailed in Syria for nearly three weeks, described the facilities as “human slaughterhouses,” saying security agents beat detainees with batons, crammed them into stinking cells and tied them to beds at night. Photo: AP / AP

Days later, Kaileh said he was admitted to a government hospital to treat his leg wounds. There, the conditions were “worse than in the detention centers.”

“It was filled with body stench, dirt, urine and stool. Two people shared small beds and were tied to them, the food was lousy and we couldn't eat properly because our hands and feet were handcuffed day and night.”

May 22, 2012 JAMAL HALABY, Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — A prominent Palestinian writer who was jailed in Syria for nearly three weeks described the facilities as “human slaughterhouses,” saying security agents beat detainees with batons, crammed them into stinking cells and tied them to beds at night.

Salameh Kaileh, 56, was arrested April 24 on suspicion of printing leaflets calling for the ouster of Syrian President Bashar Assad, who is fighting a 15-month-old uprising against his rule. Kaileh's story offers a rare inside glimpse into the conditions faced by detainees held by the country's feared security services.

“It was hell on earth,” Kaileh told The Associated Press on Sunday, nearly a week after Syrian forces released him and deported him to Jordan. Speaking at his friend's home

in an Amman suburb, Kaileh had bluish-red bruises on his legs, which he said were the result of beatings with wooden batons that were studded with pins and nails.

“I felt I was going to die under the brutal, savage and continuous beating of the interrogators, who tied me to ropes hung from the ceiling,” said Kaileh, a soft-spoken man with a shock of white hair who appeared frail, barely able to stand on his feet.

Born in Birzeit, West Bank, Kaileh has suffered under the regime in Damascus before.

He was imprisoned by the Syrian government in 1992 for eight years because of his alleged links to underground Syrian communist and leftist opposition groups. A well-known leftist, he has written books on subjects ranging from Marxism to Arab nationalism.

This time, he was held in at least four detention centers after security forces arrested him at his home in Damascus, the Syrian capital where he's lived for more than 30 years.

Kaileh denied printing the leaflets, which he said angered the regime because they read: “For Palestine to be free, Syria's regime has to fall.”

Syria often has touted its support of the Palestinian cause to boost its credentials as a bastion of Arab nationalism.

Kaileh's detention caused an outcry by Arab intellectuals, who called for his release and lashed out at Assad — whose crackdown has not spared other intellectuals and artists.

Ali Ferzat, a political cartoonist whose drawings expressed Syrians' frustrated hopes for change, was beaten by masked gunmen as he left his Damascus studio last August. The assailants broke his hands and dumped him on a road outside Damascus.

A group of intellectuals and artists, including Syrian actress May Skaff, were rounded up and jailed for a week last summer after holding a protest in Damascus.

Recalling his arrest, Kaileh said Syrian intelligence stormed his house in an upscale Damascus district shortly after midnight.

“They handcuffed and blindfolded me, took my three laptops, cell phones and any shred of paper they could lay their hands on.”

“I told them I had nothing to do with the leaflets, but the interrogators insisted that they had information I was distributing them and that I had printed them out,” he said.

He said Syrian security wanted to intimidate him by being “disdainful to Palestine and the Palestinian people, cursing us and saying the Israelis were better than us.”

In one of the detention facilities in Mazeh — a Damascus suburb — Syrian security threatened they will “rape me and tape it to put the clip on the Internet,” he said.

Rights groups have accused the Syrian government of torture of detainees. Claudio Grossman, the chairman of the U.N.'s Committee Against Torture, said this month that the Syrian government has carried out widespread killings, torture in hospitals, detention centers and secret detention facilities, as well as torture of children and sexual torture of male detainees.

Kaileh said he shared a cell with at least six army defectors and several doctors who had treated wounded civilians.

At night, he said he heard other prisoners “cry and scream while they were beaten.”

Days later, Kaileh said he was admitted to a government hospital to treat his leg wounds. There, the conditions were “worse than in the detention centers.”

He said he was squeezed into a small room with 30 other prisoners, mostly activists who allegedly participated in anti-government protests.

“The room was barely enough to accommodate five people,” he said.

“It was filled with body stench, dirt, urine and stool.

“Two people shared small beds and were tied to them, the food was lousy and we couldn't eat properly because our hands and feet were handcuffed day and night.”

“We were not allowed to go to the restroom,” he said. “Still, we were beaten if we urinated in our sleep.”

“The detention facilities I was taken to were human slaughterhouses,” Kaileh said.

MORE:

More About Salameh Kaileh: [Written Before His Release From Prison]

**“It Is Because Salameh Is An
Independent Voice And Is An Active
Presence For The Future Of Syria That
The Mafia Capitalist Regime Of Assad
Decided To Muzzle Him In Custody”**



[Image of Salameh Kaileh. Source unknown]

April 26, 2012 by Omar S. Dahi and Vijay Prashad, Jadaliyya

At 2am on Tuesday April 24, the Palestinian-Syrian intellectual and activist Salameh Kaileh was arrested from his home “without explanation,” as his lawyer Anwar Bunni of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research put it.

This is not Salameh Kaileh’s first time in a Syrian prison. He was a guest of the Assad family in its several jails for eight years and eleven days in the 1990s.

Born in 1955 in Birzeit in the West Bank (Palestine), Salameh studied in Baghdad (Iraq) and Damascus (Syria).

Salameh emerged out of the University of Baghdad in 1979 with a BA in Political Science, already as one of the brightest Marxist thinkers and as a brave fighter for universal freedom.

His reputation would soon span across Syria, in Palestine, around the Arab world and elsewhere. He wrote many books on a variety of themes, on imperialism, on Marxism, on the limitations of the Arab nationalism movement, on globalization, on Zionism, and on the legacy of the scientific method.

Some of his books (in Arabic) include Arabs and the National Question (1989), Critique of Mainstream Marxism (1990), Imperialism and the Plunder of the World (1992), Socialism or Barbarism (2001), The problems of Marxism in the Arab World (2003), and The Problem of the Arab Nationalist Movement (2005).

Although Arab Nationalism and the Arab resistance movements have received their fair share of criticism, Salameh’s criticism was always from the left-wing and always constructive – it was toward building a new Left force for a freedom movement that would drink deeply from the powerful heritage of Marxism and Communism.

Trenchant critiques of the Arab and Palestinian Left, as well as the Marxist Left itself, kept his allies on their toes; as the revolutionary from Guinea-Bissau Amilcar Cabral said, “tell no lies, claim no easy victories.” This was the touchstone of such an intellectual and political project.

Salameh's main critique of the Arab Left was that it consistently played the role of "following the other," or hitching its wagon to larger social forces such as Arab Nationalist movements and Ba'athism, which ended up discrediting the Marxist Left when these movements came to power.

Their failures, in authoritarianism and repressive regimes and in accommodations with the domestic and international bourgeoisie, tarnished the heritage of the Left.

Salameh sharpened his intimate critique of Arab Nationalism and of Marxism by his simultaneous and unrelenting criticism of Western imperialism, the conservative Arab regimes, and centrally, Zionism.

Salameh went to jail in the 1990s when he renewed his criticism of the suffocation of the Ba'ath regime and its collusion with imperialism.

Many have forgotten that in the Gulf War of 1991, the Syrian government participated alongside the Grand Coalition of the West against the Iraqi regime.

As a gift for this participation, the West turned a blind eye to another round of reprisals by the Assad regime against its domestic opposition (as well as consolidating Syrian power in Lebanon).

Salameh went to prison then.

Since his release in the late 1990s, Salameh has continued to fight for a democratic political opening in Syria and in the Arab world in general.

When the first demonstration of the current phase took place on March 15, 2010, Marxists such as Salameh were right there in the thick of the struggles. The Syrian Communist Party has lain at the feet of the Assad regime since the 1960s, and has not represented the currents of genuine Marxist dissent and revolution for several generations.

Many Syrian Marxists have sought, therefore, alternative platforms to struggle against the mafia-capitalism promoted by the Assad regime.

In February of this year, Salameh laid out the potentiality of this uprising for the Left,

"These communists who have been taking part in the uprising believe that bringing the regime down is the main objective, and have no belief in the possibility of reform. They know that the struggle of the poor classes will continue until the replacement of the regime is made by the workers, farmers, and all the public classes, which suffer from a lack of a political representation.

"This is because there is no answer to their problems except through getting rid of all the liberal parties, and the collapse of the mafia-capitalist governing class, and the traditional bourgeoisie that work within the regime now and aim to control it.

“This capitalist mafia brought in the Baath Party and made some achievements when they first got to power, but these achievements were captured and this regime is synonymous with the capitalist mafia now.

“In order to achieve the goals of the uprising today, there must be a new vision based on a Marxist analysis, and that represents the interests of workers and farmers, which, in turn, can allow a new party to be set-up that would undertake a genuinely transformative programme. It is this possibility which has been opened through the uprising. Marxists therefore, must start forming the workers and farmers party, in order to establish a democratic republic, which reflects the public interest.”

Interestingly Salameh, though unequivocal of his support for the Syrian revolution, has criticized for different reasons both the Syrian National Council (mainly external opposition) as well as the National Coordination Council for Democratic Change (mainly internal opposition) as not truly representing the revolutionary masses.

For Salameh, these sections of the Opposition are unified by two things: neither of them trusts the capacity of the people to achieve change, and neither of them believe that the Syrian regime can be toppled by the Syrian people.

The National Coordination council’s call for reform and dialogue with the regime to achieve change misses the revolutionary moment and aspirations of the people. By lowering the bar, they lost the support of the masses. On the other hand, the SNC’s call for military intervention also belies a lack of belief in the Syrian people to achieve change.

Both of those bodies, Salameh added were composed of members who had lost faith in the capacity for revolutionary change and before the March 15th uprising, had done their best to accommodate to the ‘reality’ of the Syrian regime.

It is because Salameh is an independent voice and is an active presence for the future of Syria that the Assad regime decided to muzzle him in custody. That is the only explanation.

This is our statement on the career of Salameh. There is much to be said, and much more to be written. This is also an invitation for others to join us, to sign this statement of appreciation for his work, and to demand that the mafia capitalist regime of Assad immediately release Salameh.

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