

Military Resistance 10F14



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

“The Army’s Rank And File Is Filled With Frustration, With Soldiers Saying Their Peers Are Promoted With Little Job Knowledge Or Leadership Capability”

“How Can You Expect Your Soldiers To Be Honest When You Paid 300 Bucks For Some BS College

Transcripts So You Can Get Promoted?”

“I Would Love To See Subordinates Given The Opportunity To Rate Their Superiors”

Jun 17, 2012 By Jim Tice - Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

The Army's rank and file is filled with frustration, with soldiers saying their peers are promoted with little job knowledge or leadership capability.

The Army's top enlisted soldier gave them a chance to vent — and they did.

In a recent post on his Facebook page, Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler asked soldiers if they felt the new point system is fair and accurately portrays the total soldier concept.

“What, if anything, would you like to see changed?” he asked soldiers.

The current system does not test for knowledge of your MOS,” said James Dennis. “In my nine-year career, I could not count the number of times I have (run) into (incompetent) seniors. Just because you can memorize a few board questions doesn't make you a leader. ... We need a system that covers the total soldier concept.”

“A soldier can be a PT stud and score 300 plus, can shoot 40 out of 40 in the rain, sleet or snow and still cannot lead a group of nuns in prayer,” said Vernon Oneil.

“This is where the platoon sergeant, first sergeant and (command sergeant major) have to conduct an evaluation of the soldier and have the intestinal fortitude to tell a soldier they are not ready to lead.”

Combat points are relevant to being a leader. How are you going to outrank me and teach me combat medicine all the while wearing a slick right sleeve? This is a 10+ year war. If you haven't deployed yet, it's because you're trying not to. Don't be upset because my deployment gave me 24 extra points while you were hiding in some nondeployable unit.

— Josh Bates

I would love to see subordinates given the opportunity to rate their superiors, much like we do in a Command Climate survey.

No one knows a leader like his/her subordinates, and no one works directly with a leader more than they do. ... If we could make these evaluations completely objective, they could be used by the leadership (in conjunction with other factors) to determine if an NCO is ready to be boarded for the next rank.

— Matt Martin

I believe that the system should be a hybrid system consisting of both merit and MOS proficiency. I am tired of seeing substandard NCOs attempting to mentor fresh soldiers that deserve better. How can you expect your soldiers to be honest when you paid 300 bucks for some BS college transcripts so you can get promoted?

— Jason Hartness

Instead of having said soldier meet time-in-grade/time-in-service criteria and being (Department of the Army) selected, the soldier should also be looked over, (Enlisted Record Brief) (physical training) test and MOS proficiency.

Case in point, a specialist was promoted to sergeant a few months back with absolutely no schooling (Army and civilian education) and was horrible at his job.

But he met the TIG/TIS criteria and was promoted. He had the mentality of “I don’t need to go to the board, I’ll just get automatically picked up,” and now we have a new “horrible leader.”

— Gregory Nicholas Benjamin

I fully believe that after experiencing 12 years of dealing with NCOs from all MOSs, we need to bring back the specialist 5, 6 and 7 ranks. I have had soldiers under me that couldn’t lead a horse to water but somehow made it to the ranks of (staff sergeant) in a combat MOS.

— Timothy J. Burrus

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed In Khost

June 20, 2012 From Masoud Popalzai and Barbara Starr, CNN

In Khost city a bomber on a motorcycle targeted U.S. and Afghan security forces. The town is in the province of the same name.

The U.S. Embassy in Kabul said three soldiers and an Afghan interpreter died in Khost.

A Western official told CNN the soldiers are Americans.

Three Men In Afghan Police Uniform Kill U.S. Soldier Monday; Nine More Wounded By RPG

June 19, 2012 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 512-12 & By Deb Riechmann - The Associated Press

On Monday, three gunmen dressed in Afghan police uniforms killed one American service member and wounded nine others in Kandahar's Zhari district, U.S. officials said,

Pfc. Jarrod A. Lallier, 20, of Spokane, Wash., died June 18 in Zharay, Kandahar province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when three men in Afghan Police uniforms turned their weapons against his unit.

The Kandahar province spokesman said the attackers fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the coalition forces, then fled the scene.

A Taliban spokesman said they had joined the Islamist movement .

Lallier was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Foreign Occupation "Servicemember" Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Tuesday: Nationality Not Announced

June 19, 2012 AP

A foreign servicemember died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

JBLM Soldier Killed In IED Blast In Afghanistan

Jun 17, 2012 The Associated Press

FLINT, Mich. — A 25-year-old combat engineer from Flint has been killed in an insurgent attack in Afghanistan.

WJRT-TV says Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Lilly was part of the 18th Engineer Company from Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington state.

Lilly's aunt Martha Alexander says her nephew was on patrol Tuesday when he was injured by an improvised explosive device. She says he died Thursday on a medical flight from Afghanistan to Germany.

Lilly was a graduate of Carman Ainsworth High School and was on his first tour of duty in Afghanistan. Alexander says her nephew also served a tour in Iraq.

He's survived by a wife and 3-year-old son.

The News Tribune of Tacoma, Wash., says Lilly is the third engineer from Joint Base Lewis-McChord killed in Afghanistan within a week.

Bragg-Based Soldier Dies In Afghanistan Combat

Jun 17, 2012 The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — The military says a 31-year-old paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg has died in Afghanistan.

The Defense Department said Sunday that Staff Sgt. Nicholas C. Fredsti of San Diego, Calif., was on patrol Friday in Spedar when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire. He died from his injuries after being evacuated.

He was promoted posthumously to staff sergeant and awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. Fredsti joined the Army in August 2000, graduating from the U.S. Army Airborne school later that year.

He deployed twice to Afghanistan and once to Iraq before leaving again for Ghazni, Afghanistan, earlier this year.

He is survived by his father and mother, Carl and Sherry Fredsti of San Diego.

New Windsor Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Attack



This undated photo provided by the Department of Defense shows U.S. Army Spc. Bryant Luxmore, 25, of New Windsor, Ill. The department said Tuesday, June 12, 2012, that Luxmore died June 10 from injuries he suffered from small enemy arms fire in Panjwai, Afghanistan. Luxmore was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga. (AP Photo/Department of Defense)

Jun 13, 2012 GateHouse News Service

NEW WINDSOR —

A New Windsor man was killed in Afghanistan on Sunday after his patrol came under attack.

Bryant “BJ” J. Luxmore, 25, had been in the U.S. Army for 14 months and was on his first deployment when he was killed.

He and other soldiers were on patrol with Afghan National Security Forces near Panjwai when they were attacked. Luxmore suffered a fatal gunshot wound, according to an Army spokesman.

He was assigned to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, based at Fort Stewart, Ga. The unit had arrived in Afghanistan in March to begin a nine-month deployment. While in Afghanistan, the BCT was helping with counterinsurgency operations and the training of Afghan security forces.

He is survived by his wife and one son.

Services are pending at Dennison Funeral Home in Viola.

Luxmore was posthumously promoted to corporal and awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Combat Infantryman Badge, according to the Savannah (Ga.) Morning News.

Luxmore was a 2005 Sherrard High School graduate and attended Monmouth College for two years, where he played baseball in 2006 and 2007 before transferring Illinois College in Jacksonville, where he graduated in 2010.

His high school football coach, Pat Elder, told the Quad-City Times a soldier's death is always difficult.

"Its a pretty heavy heart," he said. "You're always so thankful for what the service people do for us. When its someone like this that you know and care about, it just brings it a little closer to home."

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U.S. Base Attacked Near Kandahar; “Fewer Than 10 U.S. Troops Were Wounded”

June 19 By Deb Riechmann - The Associated Press & Sayed Salahuddin, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

Insurgents attacked a U.S. base before dawn Tuesday in Kandahar's Shah Wali Kot district, the U.S.-led coalition said.

Fewer than 10 U.S. troops were wounded

Under the cover of darkness and armed with heavy weapons, seven Taliban fighters, including bombers, launched the assault Tuesday.

The attack was apparently carried out by insurgents wearing Afghan military uniforms who breached the perimeter of the operating base and were quickly engaged by forces inside.

The attack at the base appears to have been “at least facilitated — potentially facilitated — by an individual dressed in the Afghan national police uniform,” Kirby said.

Some working at the camp, including a foreign contractor, were wounded in the attack, an Afghan official said.

The strike caused some damages to the facilities inside the camp, he added.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

Resistance Action:

June 19, 2012 By Sayed Salahuddin, The Washington Post & By Deb Riechmann - The Associated Press & June 18, 2012 Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

A group of Taliban fighters, dressed in police uniforms, fired on a joint NATO-Afghan police post in an area of Kandahar city.

Three policemen were killed and nine others were wounded during an hour-long gunbattle that ensued, according to the Ministry of Interior. Four militants also died.

In other violence Tuesday, gunmen assassinated two local government employees in the Chaparhar district of Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan, said the governor's spokesman, Ahmad Zia Abdulzai.

KABUL, Afghanistan — In a show of strength by insurgents in a province from which French troops are soon to depart, a remote-controlled bomb killed six on Monday, including a local police commander, Afghan officials said.

The blast in Kapisa province was the second deadly attack in less than two weeks, following on the heels of a suicide bombing that killed four French troops on June 9.

Monday's bombing, in the restive Tagab district of Kapisa, came as France's ambassador to Afghanistan was visiting the nearby provincial capital, but authorities said there was no indication he was an intended target.

The Kapisa police chief and the Interior Ministry said the six dead included four members of the Afghan Local Police, a U.S.-trained village force, one of them a commander named Karimullah.

Monday's attack coincided with fresh declarations by Western military officials that the insurgency is divided and losing strength.

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

“An Army Commander Obstructed An Inquiry Into Reports Of Abuses At Afghanistan’s Main Military Hospital” “He Feared The News Would Embarrass President Barack Obama Before The 2010 Elections”

The congressional committee will also look into whether Marine Gen. John Allen, who took over as commander of U.S.-led international forces in Afghanistan in July, knew of the allegations of political interference by Gen. Caldwell.

June 18, 2012 By MARIA ABI-HABIB, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

KABUL—A congressional committee asked the Pentagon to investigate allegations by senior U.S. officers that an Army commander obstructed an inquiry into reports of abuses at Afghanistan’s main military hospital because he feared the news would embarrass President Barack Obama before the 2010 elections.

The commander, Army Lt. Gen. William Caldwell, commanded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Training Mission-Afghanistan, or NTM-A, from late 2009 until late 2011.

He now leads U.S. Army North, the command responsible for U.S. homeland defense.

Gen. Caldwell said in an email he would need more time and coordination with the military’s public affairs personnel to provide a response to these “very serious allegations.”

Under Gen. Caldwell, NTM-A — which focuses on building up Afghan security forces — funded the Dawood National Military Hospital in Kabul and mentored its staff.

Allegations of abuses at the hospital by Afghan staff, including depriving Afghan soldiers of basic care, in some cases starving them to death, were the subject of a Wall Street Journal article in September.

Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R., Utah), in a letter sent on Friday to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta on behalf of the House Committee of Oversight and Government Reform, cited statements by several senior officers that Gen. Caldwell delayed a request by them and others to call in the Department of Defense inspector-general to investigate, so that news of alleged abuses at the hospital wouldn’t surface before the 2010 midterm elections.

The witnesses interviewed by the committee include four colonels, among them U.S. Air Force Col. Schuyer Geller, former senior mentor to the Afghan military surgeon general.

According to a witness cited in the letter, Gen. Caldwell chastised officers under his command for calling in the inspector general “during an election cycle,” allegedly explaining that President Obama “calls me Bill.”

According to the letter, Gen. Caldwell withdrew the request for an inspector-general inquiry and tried to keep the investigation “in house” within NTM-A.

Gen. Caldwell’s subordinates argued the NTM-A didn’t have the expertise to investigate the hospital.

The request was resubmitted to the Pentagon, eight days after the 2010 elections.

Gen. Caldwell’s deputy at the time, Brig.-Gen. Gary Patton, also allegedly participated in attempts to suppress the inquiry, according to several officers cited in the letter.

“He indicated he would recommend to LTG Caldwell not to proceed until after the elections,” Col. Geller wrote.

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MILITARY NEWS

Troops Suffering From Battery Fatigue:

“A Typical Soldier May Carry A Dozen Devices And 70 Batteries On A Three-Day Patrol”

“A Typical Soldier Or Marine Today Carries More Than 100 Pounds On His Back, Roughly Twice As Much In World War II”

June 14, 2012 By KEITH JOHNSON, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Since at least the time of Alexander the Great, military leaders have sought to dominate logistics.

Today, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps are grappling with a unique logistical challenge that has mushroomed in the past decade: the proliferation of electronic devices and batteries required to keep the average foot soldier in the fight.

The explosion in electronic gear in the modern military, from radios and GPS equipment to night-vision goggles, means a typical soldier may carry a dozen devices and 70 batteries on a three-day patrol.

That adds weight — 16 pounds or so — to already-overburdened warriors.

A typical soldier or Marine today carries more than 100 pounds on his back, roughly twice as much as dogfaces did in World War II.

A typical infantry company of roughly 150 soldiers requires more than 6,600 batteries, weighing more than 1,400 pounds, for 72 hours of operation.

All that weight slows down soldiers on foot, tethers them to constant resupply, and contributes to a rash of muscular and skeletal injuries caused by excessively heavy packs.

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

**A revolution is always distinguished by impoliteness, probably because the ruling classes did not take the trouble in good season to teach the people fine manners.
-- Leon Trotsky, History Of The Russian Revolution**

**“From All Points Of The
Compass, Revolt, Even
Revolution, Is In The Air As
Libya’s Former Rebel Towns Go
Their Own Way”**

**““We Got Rid Of Gaddafi, But Not
The Regime,’ She Tells Me”**

**“We Didn’t Do A Revolution And Our
People Did Not Die To Bring A New
Dictatorship”**

**“If We Don’t Like The New Government,
Well, Now We Know How To Do
Revolution”**

9 June 2012 By Chris Stephen, The Observer

National flags from around the world flutter in the bright sunshine by a city gate made of shipping containers painted in the Libyan national colours. A uniformed militiaman examines my passport, then waves me through with a smile.

Welcome to the Republic of Misrata.

Libya's third largest city, recipient of a six-month pummeling during last year's revolution against the regime of Muammar Gaddafi, has transformed itself into what is an independent state in all but name.

Libya is due to hold national elections in 10 days, but these look like they may be delayed as any sense of post-Gaddafi national unity dissipated long ago.

Misrata is divorced from the new government, which it views as secretive, dictatorial and heavy-handed, and, as a city with a long tradition of trading, is going its own way.

Shops and restaurants are being fixed up, business is brisk, and there is enough traffic on the pockmarked streets to create honking traffic jams.

Qasr Ahmed, Libya's biggest container port, is the jewel in the city's crown.

The harbour that once spouted the geysers of incoming rockets is now jammed with shipping, and I get a tour in the only tug in Libya that can do something complicated with its engines that allows it to move sideways.

The port authority has decided to run the place without reference to central government, which means that the port is open 24 hours a day, and also means that Misrata gets to keep the tugboat.

"In the old days there would be 12 forms and it would take 10 days to pay all the bribes," says Nasser Mokhtar, who printed photographs of the shaheed – martyrs – in the war in his print shop and is now back at his clothing import business.

Now, he explains, there are no bribes; customs officers fear the wrath of the port authority if they try it on.

Misrata held its own city elections in February, the first anywhere in Libya for four decades, and the new council is now busy organising the police, army, education and health services.

And that is the problem.

The price of this success has been a divorce from a central government. "We don't want to be independent, we want Libya to be like us," says Farouk Ben Amin, a former rebel fighter now working in the family import business, who has shaved off his rebel beard and looks 10 years younger.

It's not just Misrata. From all points of the compass, revolt, even revolution, is in the air as Libya's former rebel towns go their own way.

More than 100 miles from Misrata is Zintan, a humble metropolis nestling in the cool foothills of the jagged Jabal Nafusa mountains.

In the war, Zintan's rebels were one half of the pincer movement – Misrata was the other – that captured Tripoli.

Its units poured out of the mountains and into the west of the city, while Misrata's units punched in from the east.

Now the mood in both cities is suspicious about the ruling National Transitional Council; not least about what it is doing with the £1bn a month now being earned as oil exports pick up.

Zintan's uneasiness has seen it change its mind about handing over Libya's top war crimes suspect, Saif al-Gaddafi, son of the late dictator, who continues to languish in a fortified villa on the edge of town. "It is safer to hold his trial here; the government is very weak, they can't control their country," said Attaher Eturki, the ever-smiling city council leader, his crisp English a product of a degree in engineering in Leicester a couple of years ago. "We have good security here."

To the south, meanwhile, battles between the Tibu, a people who inhabit a large stretch of the Sahara, and Arab tribes have left 200 dead and the towns divided into war zones.

The most serious challenge to central authority is Benghazi, where the revolution began in February last year.

Like Misrata, Benghazi held its own elections earlier this year, and like Misrata the city council is busy assuming powers for itself at the expense of central government.

Some in the city want to go further. Benghazi is the capital of Cyrenaica, which with the regions of Tripolitania and Fezzan make up Libya, and many citizens are unhappy that the province gets only 60 of the 200 seats in the national elections. A self-proclaimed Council of Barqa – the Arab name for Cyrenaica – is urging a boycott of the national elections unless it gets a bigger slice of seats.

Benghazi is a good place to feel the continuing heartbeat of the revolution: teams of teenage volunteers collect the rubbish, fix up the streets and paint white lines on the highways.

Those white lines zigzag alarmingly, but the citizens appreciate the effort; a vivid contrast to the potholed roads of Tripoli.

It's not independence but democracy that the people want, says Hanna El Gallal, a human rights activist.

"We got rid of Gaddafi, but not the regime," she tells me.

She points to the secrecy of the NTC, which, despite promising democracy, keeps its meetings secret and refuses even to disclose its full membership. “We didn’t do a revolution and our people did not die to bring a new dictatorship.”

When the NTC does issue decrees, Libyans are aghast; last month it issued law number 37, making it a criminal offence to criticise the “17 February revolution”.

Human Rights Watch pointed out in a scathing report that the law is, word for word, almost the same as Gaddafi’s rule banning criticism.

In London last month, Libyan prime minister Abdurrahim el-Keib insisted that the law would soon be cancelled, but failed to explain why the government had introduced it in the first place.

“The NTC don’t mean to act this way,” said an official with a western embassy in Tripoli. “But they don’t know any other way.”

The NTC took power in the chaos of last year’s revolution in Benghazi, led by Mustafa Abdul Jalil, a career judge, and the only politician in Libya to enjoy widespread support.

That support comes from the mark he made when he resigned as Gaddafi’s justice minister in 2010, making the announcement on live television, an unheard of event in the former dictatorship. But Jalil’s star is starting to wane, with Libyans divided about whether he is responsible for the NTC’s heavyhandedness, or too weak to stop it.

And then there is history: Libya is a young country, named as such by its Italian occupiers only in 1934. Before that, Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan were separate provinces.

There is wild talk of a second uprising on the streets of former rebel towns, but the weapon of choice is not the gun but the ballot box. City elections have been rushed through while the central authorities dither with the national election, and the municipalities adopt their own powers. El Gallal explained that, if the elections nationally go well, all will be fine. If not, Benghazi will fall back on its own city administration.

“If it (the national election) goes wrong, we don’t need the national congress,” she said.

Back in Tripoli, the signs are that the national elections are going very wrong indeed.

The NTC insists that the vote will take place, as promised, on 19 June. But staff at the election commission tell me that they have yet to agree the list of candidates. Giving Libya’s enthusiastic political parties only a few days to campaign will cause uproar. But so will a delay, stoking fears by the rebels that the NTC plans to hang on to power.

None of which is good for business: Foreign companies are staying away from Libya, scared off by all the uncertainties.

Meanwhile, unemployment remains high, pensions and wages are often unpaid, and rubbish mounts up in vast piles outside the gates of Gaddafi's ruined palace of Bab Azizia.

And then there are the militias.

Nowhere has the government's failure to convince Libyans of its good intentions been more visible than with the security forces.

The decision to staff the grandly named National Army with Gaddafi-era generals has, unsurprisingly, seen no recruitment from the former rebels.

Instead, security is being entrusted to a national gendarmerie, the 60,000-strong Special Security Committee (SSC).

The pay is good and rebels and former Gaddafi units have joined en masse, but the force is distrusted by the armies of Misrata and Zintan.

SSC units last month kidnapped and tortured a prominent health ministry official and, despite pleas from the minister, the government has not called them to account.

Nor has the SSC dared to move against Islamist units in eastern Libya who have vandalised Commonwealth war graves, launched bomb attacks on a UN convoy and a Red Cross office, and last week bombed the US consulate in Benghazi.

And it was Tripoli militia units, not the SSC, which took back control of the international airport last week after it was stormed by a militia group from Tarhuna who were upset about the abduction of their commander.

At Tripoli's luxurious Rixos Hotel, I meet NTC member Musa al-Koni amid rolling lawns and burbling fountains. The fondness of NTC executives for rooms here, at taxpayers' expense, is a staple of the capital's booming media.

"We made so many mistakes, so many," Koni says. He was once Libya's ambassador to Mali, until the revolution broke out, and in March last year he decided to jump ship after being ordered to recruit mercenaries to come to Gaddafi's aid.

"Old people are the problem," he says. "Old people stole the revolution in Tunisia, they stole it in Egypt, and they are stealing it here," he says.

A few days after we met, he announced that he had quit. Two new NTC members had taken his place, he said, though their identities were being kept secret.

Around the back of the Rixos is a unit of former rebels, the national guard, which is part of the Libyan National Shield, a loose alliance of Libya's militias that bypasses the defence ministry.

I hitch a lift with them from positions around Bani Walid, a still restive former Gaddafi town. Arriving at the hotel, an argument starts with men across the road in the sprawling blue-collar Abu Salim neighbourhood.

Like Bani Walid, Abu Salim spent the war backing Gaddafi, and now they shout at the guard, accusing them of being out-of-town interlopers. As the argument worsens, several guardsmen come forward and shout back that they are from Tripoli, and the revolution is safe. The shouting gets worse. Traffic stops. The guardsmen cock their weapons.

A tall, bearded, middle-aged guardsman, who worked before the revolution for an oil company in Paris and London, leads me away through the hotel grounds. "I want to leave Libya," he says.

"Why?"

"These people," he says, gesturing to Abu Salim. "They are poor. Gaddafi had all this oil and he gave them nothing. And still they love him."

Diplomats in Libya worry about where all this is going: not least because while the NTC has the power – and the oil – it is the former rebel militias who have the guns.

In the first public in-depth study of Libya's militias, Oxford University researcher Brian McQuinn says that militias in Misrata and Zintan are well organised and disciplined.

Misrata alone accounts for just under half the total militia units in the country, with slightly more than half of Libya's heavy weapons, including 820 tanks. Both are enthusiastic members of the National Shield, which now has four regional divisions.

"Unions of revolutionary brigades from across the country have, in co-ordination, created a national army-in-waiting," he writes.

Exactly what they are waiting for remains to be seen.

Much hangs on the elections. If the NTC botches them, or tries to use its proxies to hang on to power, Libya will be in trouble.

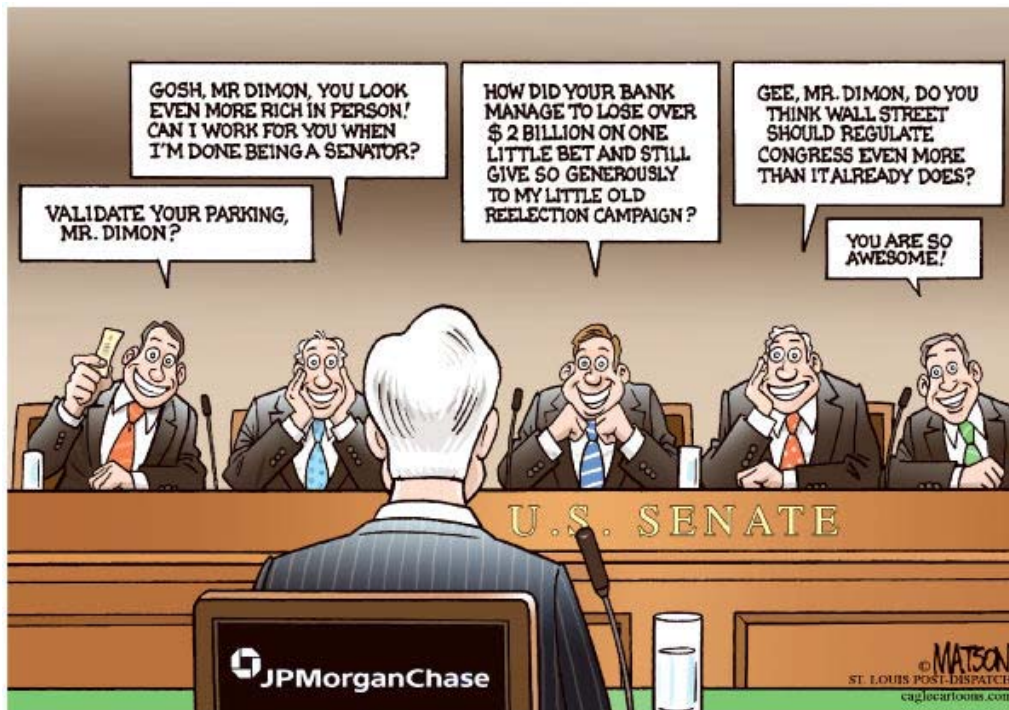
At best, the former rebel cities will go their own way, creating administrative gridlock for the country and an economic nightmare.

At worst, as a rebel militiaman told me last year on the frontline at Ajdabiya, south of Benghazi: "If we don't like the new government, well, now we know how to do revolution."

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Bomber Kills U.S. Government-Allied South Yemen Army Chief

6.18.12 By Mohammed Mukhashaf, Reuters [Excerpts]

ADEN - The commander of military forces in the south of Yemen was killed by a bomber in the port city of Aden on Monday, days after troops drove Islamist militants from their southern strongholds.

The killing of Major General Salem Ali Qatan highlighted the tenuous grip of Yemen's central authorities on the south despite a month of U.S.-supported bombardments and airstrikes aimed at crushing the militants.

The Defence Ministry said a bomber hurled himself at Qatan's vehicle, also killing two soldiers escorting him. It identified the bomber as a Somali but gave no other details.

Pools of blood coated the street where the bomber struck.

A doctor at the hospital where Qatan died said 12 other people, nine of them soldiers, were wounded in the attack in Aden, a port city overlooking oil shipping lanes fewer than 100 km (60 miles) from several cities which Islamists flying al Qaeda's banner recently controlled.

Most of that territory is in Abyan province, where fighters calling themselves Ansar al-Sharia seized towns last year, taking advantage of protests against the three-decade rule of then president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Saleh, who gave way to his deputy in February under a U.S. and Saudi-brokered power transfer, had redeployed some of his forces from the south in a bid to put down protests, ultimately killing hundreds of demonstrators.

Abyan has been the focus of a month-old offensive by Yemen's army mounted with support from the United States, which is waging its own campaign of drone and missile strikes against alleged al Qaeda members.

Qatan was a central figure in plans to restructure Yemen's military, which split into warring factions during the struggle over Saleh's fate. His appointment to the southern command was one of the first moves by President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi against the former president's loyalists in the army.

Yemen's state news agency quoted Hadi as telling the head of the U.S. Central Command, James Mattis, in a meeting in Sanaa on Monday that the assassination would not affect Yemen's "counter-terrorism" cooperation, but that it needed economic assistance to deny militants a constituency among unemployed youth.

The Yemeni military said last week it had driven Islamist fighters from territory they had held for over a year, including Zinjibar, capital of Abyan province, and another city, Jaar.

It is now attacking Islamists in another southern province, Shabwa, where fighters who quit towns in Abyan have fled.

Provincial officials said two soldiers were killed in an ambush on Monday in Ataq, by fighters trying to reach the town of Azzan, where Islamists retain a presence.

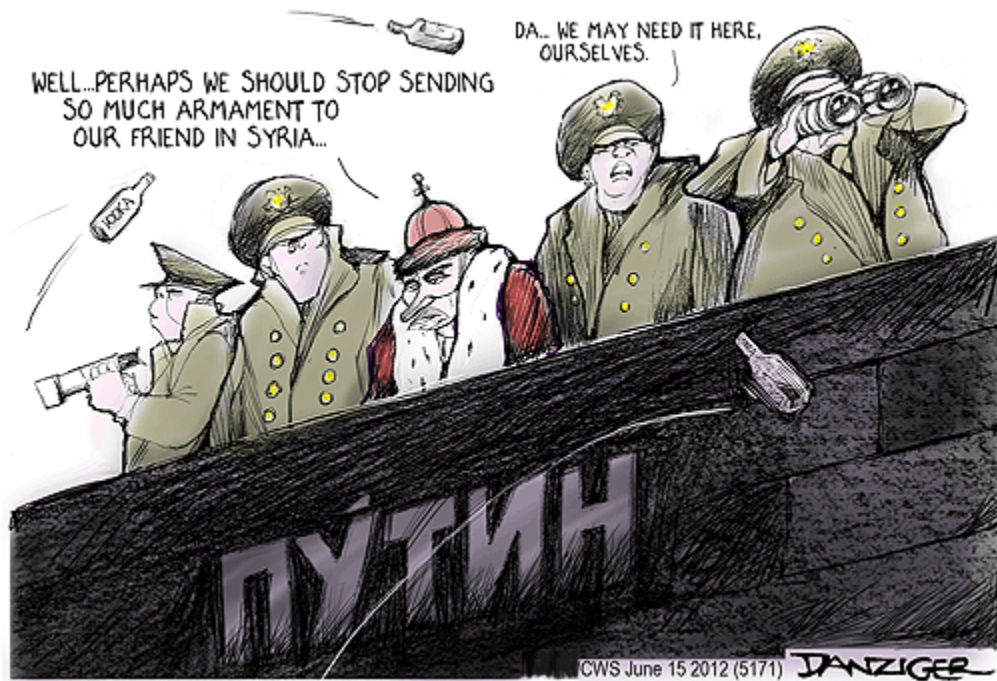
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CLASS WAR REPORTS



On The Offensive, Rebels Push Syrian Military Out Of Cities Around Homs:

“The Fighting Around Homs Suggests Syrian Troops In The Area Are Largely Demoralized”
“Many Of The Soldiers Ran Away When The Attacks Began”

“They Are Using Helicopters More Frequently Now Because They Can’t Control The Ground”

“We didn’t imagine they had these numbers and so much equipment,” said a man who identified himself as a Syrian army captain who surrendered to the rebels in Talbiseh last week and was allowed to join them.

June 17, 2012 By David Enders, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

TALBISEH, Syria — This city is almost completely empty after a week of heavy shelling by the Syrian government. But it is empty of government forces as well.

The shelling, which killed 20 civilians and five rebel fighters, failed to dislodge rebels who had driven the Syrian military out of nearly a dozen bases and checkpoints in the city over a period of two days earlier this month.

Syrian president Bashar Assad has promised a new offensive to drive rebels from their strongholds in the center of Homs, the country’s third largest city, as the civil war in Syria grinds on. Opposition activist groups reported that Syrian troops bombarded Homs on Sunday with mortar rounds and heavy machine guns, leaving at least 11 people dead.

The site of the worst violence in the country since a peaceful uprising against Assad became an armed rebellion last year, Homs has been preparing for more fighting as Syrian troops massed around rebel-held neighborhoods there over the weekend.

But the troop buildup belied the fact that more of the countryside around Homs – which includes Talbiseh – had fallen out of the government’s control.

Syrian troops were also driven out of Rastan, a city of similar size to Talbiseh about 10 miles to the north, earlier this month. The victory came at a heavy cost as some parts of the city were entirely destroyed.

Both Rastan and Talbiseh lie on the north-south highway that is the country’s main artery and connects the capital of Damascus, south of Homs, to Aleppo, the country’s largest city and economic hub, in the north.

“We have a plan to control this area,” said Abdel Rizaq Tlass, the leader of the Farouq Brigade, one of the largest groups of rebels in Homs province that operates under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army, the name taken by the majority of armed rebels in Syria.

The fighting around Homs suggests Syrian troops in the area are largely demoralized as highly motivated and increasingly well armed and organized rebel forces go on the offensive.

The fighting in Talbiseh involved hundreds of rebels.

“We didn’t imagine they had these numbers and so much equipment,” said a man who identified himself as a Syrian army captain who surrendered to the rebels in Talbiseh last week and was allowed to join them.

He asked not to be named for his protection.

“Many of the soldiers ran away when the attacks began,” said Mahmoud Najjar, a spokesman for the Farouq Brigade in Talbiseh.

Farouq’s group of fighters in Qusayr, southwest of Homs, launched attacks on checkpoints all over that city on Friday and Saturday, reportedly driving the military out of the southern part of the city. Qusayr, the largest city between the Lebanese border and Homs, had been split between the rebels and the government’s forces for months.

The takeover of Qusayr was impossible to verify independently.

In both Rastan and Talbiseh, destroyed Syrian tanks and armored personnel carriers remained on the streets – including one near Talbiseh that remained in the median of the highway.

“We captured two armored personnel carriers and used them before the government destroyed them with helicopters,” Najjar said, adding that the cannons and heavy machine guns salvaged from some of the destroyed APCs would be mounted on rebel pickup trucks.

Tlass, who is based in Rastan, said the group had seized tanks from the Syrian military, and on Saturday, Farouq fighters in Qusayr sent footage to the Al Jazeera television network that showed them in possession of a tank and captured anti-aircraft weaponry.

Najjar said that Farouq’s fighters in Talbiseh had managed to capture large amounts of ammunition in the offensive there, and were in possession of anti-tank rockets bought from weapons smugglers and captured from the military.

Rebels said casualties on the government side were far higher than those for the rebels.

“We killed about 40 soldiers here,” said Najjar, as he walked around a school in Talbiseh the Syrian army had used as a base. “Seven soldiers from the Free Army were killed.”

The Syrian military continued to shell Talbiseh and Rastan on Saturday and Sunday, killing a civilian and fighter there. At least four people were killed in Farhaniyeh, a village on the highway between Talbiseh and Farhaniyeh, by a helicopter strike on Saturday that hit a bakery.

“They are using helicopters more frequently now because they can’t control the ground,” Najjar said.

In both Rastan and Talbiseh, rebels were making plans to destroy Syrian army positions that were still being used to shell the area. FSA fighters had surrounded the closest Syrian military base to Rastan and said they were waiting to see if the soldiers would surrender before launching attack.

On Sunday, rebels captured five Syrian soldiers who attempted to leave the base for supplies.

“The soldiers are scared of us,” said Najjar.

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

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

“The People Want The Downfall Of The Regime”

Protests Against Unpopular Government Austerity Measures Spread In Sudan:

**“Protests Reportedly Initiated June 16
By Female Students At The University Of
Khartoum, In Response To Price
Increases For Meals And Transportation”**



A Sudanese man asks a protester if his wounds are from the recent war with South Sudan in Heglig. He says, "No, University of Khartoum". Cartoon by Khalid Albaih.



Sudanese women in the protests #sudan #السودان #UofKpic.twitter.com/At817okr.
Photo: Sherehan Abdulmutti

June 19 Al Jazeera [Excerpts]

Sudan saw a weekend of protesters returning to the streets, this time to march against unpopular austerity measures.

The protests were reportedly initiated on June 16 by female students at the University of Khartoum, in response to price increases for meals and transportation.

A speech by President Omar Al Bashir discussed the measures, including reduction of fuel subsidies and cuts to regional governments, and did little to appease the demonstrations.

A video from the protests uploaded Sunday shows students being teargassed and chanting, "The people want the downfall of the regime".

The main reason behind today's #KhartoumUniv protest: Sudan Raises Transport Costs 35% Amid Plan to Cut Fuel Subsidy

Ending fuel subsidies is particularly contentious due to fears of further fueling inflation, which is already at 30 per cent.

Though previous demonstrations at the University of Khartoum have not gained momentum among the broader population, opposition politicians reportedly said they too will protest the planned end to fuel subsidies.

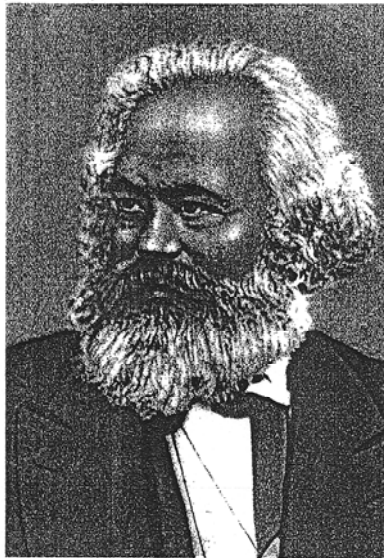
Pictures tweeted by Sudanese activists showed demonstrators met with force by university police.

The protests spread to other universities and to other parts of Khartoum.

Protests reported today: Kalakla (alQubba); Ahliya Uni. (Hamd Nil St. closed); Juba Uni. (Kadaro complex), UofS (South wing)

As the protests continued without attention from international media, the lack of coverage was a focus of netizens' frustration.

Karl Marx MasterCard A Hit In Germany



Jun 15, 2012 Reuters

Two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, some eastern Germans are once again carrying round images of Karl Marx - if only in their pockets.

The disappearance of communist former East Germany has not deterred them from using credit cards emblazoned with the image of the man who foretold the end of capitalism and the triumph of communism.

More than a third of customers at Sparkasse bank in Chemnitz opted for the picture of a bronze bust of the bearded 19th century German-born philosopher, bank spokesman Roger Wirtz said.

Marx's stern face is depicted gazing towards the logo of Mastercard.

Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, citizens of Chemnitz - then known as Karl-Marx-Stadt - and the rest of East Germany would have seen Marx's face on their 100-Mark banknotes.

Flattened during World War Two, Chemnitz was rebuilt as a model socialist city and still boasts a seven meter-tall bust of Marx in its center. The city has been economically depressed since the end of the East German regime and its population has shrunk by 20 percent.

The east has witnessed a wave of nostalgia in recent years for aspects of the old East Germany, or DDR, where citizens had few freedoms but were guaranteed jobs and social welfare.

The trend is not limited to the region.

"We've even received inquiries from clients in western German states asking whether they could open a local account with us to get a card bearing Marx's features," Sparkasse's Wirtz told Reuters.

A 2008 survey found 52 percent of eastern Germans believed the free market economy was "unsuitable" and 43 percent said they wanted socialism back.



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