

## Military Resistance 10H7



## Who Really Wins

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Sent: August 12, 2012  
Subject: Who Really Wins

**Written by Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade; United Auto Workers GM Retiree**

### Who Really Wins

On point, Stan enters the village and an old mamason runs up and says , No VC, No VC as the Soldiers behind him spread out and poke around for caches of buried rice hid below the ground in 55 gallon barrels, enough to feed an army or new weapons buried just below the ground, enough to arm an army and Andy asks mamason, "How come there are just old women like yourself, old men and young women with their children in your village ?" Andy asks a little boy, "Where is your father ?" the boy does not answer. It's just another VC village

just like the last one, just like all of them.  
Jimmy asks a little girl, "Is your daddy in a bunny hole making a booby trap to blow off both of my legs ?"  
Then Ricky asks a young mother, "Why are we here, since you love Uncle Ho so much ?"  
So we are fighting for nothing? No No VC, we want to make you capitalists instead of communists.  
Make you work in factories making shirts for Penny's that they sell for \$50 in the USA malls. Make you work in a Ford factory making parts for trucks that sell for \$35,000 + by the Ford dealer not far from the USA malls or make baseball hats for all kinds of companies that they sell for \$25. Jim gives a little girl a magazine called Better Homes and Gardens. Here is an old John Deere tractor papason that you can give to your great, great grandson who doesn't even know about the American war and nobody will tell him, it's a secret bad part of history that they can live without.  
John says "Hey little one, do you know a little girl like you in Saigon will go to a Catholic Alabama community with mamasons and papasons and the weather is hot just like in Vietnam. But they can not be adopted by a Vietnam vet who killed a little girl like you and wants to make up for his guilt ?"  
Sarge shouts, "OK Soldiers, lets move out to the next VC village." Who really wins in war ?

Shock Poetry written by Dennis Serdel for Military Resistance

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

# **US Forces Suffered 77 Combat Casualties In The Week Ending August 7, Raising The Total To 35,358**

Aug 8, 2012 [www.michaelmunk.com](http://www.michaelmunk.com) [Excerpts]

US military occupation forces in Afghanistan under Commander-in-Chief Obama suffered 77 casualties in the week ending August 7.

AFGHANISTAN THEATER: US forces suffered 77 combat casualties in the week ending August 7 raising the total to 35,358.

This includes 18,728 dead and wounded from what the Pentagon classifies as "hostile" causes and 16,630 dead or medically evacuated (as of May 7!) from what it calls "non-hostile" causes.

**US media divert attention from the actual cost in American life and limb by reporting regularly only the total killed (6,556 -- 4,489 in Iraq, 2,067 in Afghanistan) but rarely mentioning those wounded in action (49,322 -- 32,227 in Iraq, 17,095 in Afghanistan).**

They ignore the 58,948 (42,752 in Iraq, 16,196 in AfPak (as of May 7!) military casualties injured and ill seriously enough to be medevac'd out of theater, even though the 6,539 total dead include 1,396 (962 in Iraq, 434 in Afghanistan) who died from those same "non hostile" causes, including 314 suicides (as of May 7) and at least 18 in Iraq from faulty KBR electrical work.

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## **Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced**

August 11, 2012 AP

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

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## **Bragg Special Forces Soldier Dies From Combat Injuries Suffered Last Month**

Aug 12, 2012 The Associated Press

A Special Forces soldier died last week of injuries he suffered in an attack last month in Afghanistan, the Defense Department said Saturday.

Master Sgt. Gregory R. Trent, 38, of Norton, Mass., died Aug. 8 at the military hospital in Bethesda, Md. Trent was injured July 31 when his unit came under fire in Shindand province, the military said in a news release.

Trent was a Special Forces intelligence sergeant, assigned to Company B, 4th Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, at Fort Bragg, N.C. Before his latest deployment in January, he served previously in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Trent enlisted in 1998 and volunteered for Special Forces in 2006. He received the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and numerous other awards.

Trent is survived by his wife, a daughter, his parents and a brother, the Army Special Forces Command said in a news release.

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## **Shelby Township Soldier, 25, Slain During Combat In Afghanistan**



Spec. Kyle McClain, a 25-year-old Army soldier and 2005 Rochester High School graduate, died in Salim Aka, Afghanistan, during combat operations. / Family photo

August 3, 2012 By Tammy Stables Battaglia, Detroit Free Press Staff Writer

An Army soldier from Shelby Township has been killed and four Michigan soldiers were injured Wednesday in an explosion during combat operations in Afghanistan, the Defense Department said today.

Spec. Kyle McClain, 25, died in Salim Aka, Afghanistan.

McClain was assigned to 1433rd Engineer Company, 507th Engineer Battalion, 177th Military Police Brigade in Kalamazoo.

They are being treated at a military hospital in Kandahar, Afghanistan, and all are expected to survive. Ninety members of the 1433rd Engineer Company were deployed in May 2012 to spend a year in Afghanistan.

McCain's mother, Geraldine McClain, said the combat engineer had been in Afghanistan for about six weeks after tours in Korea and Iraq. The soldiers were clearing roadways of IEDs when he was killed, she said.

"They had to get out of the vehicles and had to do foot search and that's when he met the IED," his mother said. "That's the part of the story that's hard to tell. But he is a hero to us."

Adopted from Korea, McClain spent his first year of service in the country, his mother said.

“He was a gift to us; all through his 25 years has presented himself as a wonderful treasure,” his mother said, adding that the tour of Korea cemented his dedication to his home country. “He said he was so glad to be an American and there was no finer place to be than America.”

McClain attended Rochester Community Schools and was part of the Falcon drum line in Rochester High Schools’ marching band.

After graduating from Rochester High in 2005, he attended two years of college, majoring in engineering at Ferris State University before joining the Army.

He and his wife, Lisa Morgan, who he met at Rochester High, were married in October 2010 and lived in Shelby Township.

McClain enjoyed hunting and fishing with his father, Michael, and friends. He’s also survived by a sister, Kristyn, 33, his mother said.

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## **SAN BERNARDINO: Local Soldier Lost**

07 August 2012 DAVID OLSON; The Press Enterprise STAFF WRITER

Jesus “Jonny” Lopez’s family urged him not to go to Afghanistan.

“Just because of the danger you hear on the news,” Jose Lopez said. “He’s my brother, you know.”

On Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2½ months after Lopez arrived in Afghanistan, an Army chaplain and sergeant walked up to the door of the family’s San Bernardino mobile home to tell them Lopez had been killed by an explosion. He was 22.

Lopez will be buried Monday, Aug. 13, at Riverside National Cemetery.

Jose Lopez, 25, said his brother joined the Army in 2010 for new experiences.

“He wanted to be something different from out here,” Lopez said as he sat on the porch of the family’s tan-colored, well-kept home. “That’s why he said he wanted to go to Afghanistan.”

Despite the family’s warnings about the risks of deploying to a war zone, Jesus Lopez — better known as “Jonny” — was never afraid, family members said.

“He was brave,” Jose Lopez said. “He said he didn’t care. He said he had his brothers — he called them his brothers — and they looked out for each other. He was happy out there. He liked what he did.”

Jonny Lopez was engaged to Eileen Rivera, 18, of Rialto. The couple, who met in 2010, planned a May 2013 ceremony after Lopez returned from Afghanistan, Rivera said. They were planning to raise a family, a boy and a girl, Rivera said through tears.

"I liked his personality," Rivera said, two dog tags with Lopez's name dangling from her neck. "He was polite. He was a gentleman. He was very respectful to my family."

Lopez graduated from UEI College in San Bernardino after studying business, said his brother Cristian Lopez, 19. He wanted to learn how to run a business so he could open a tattoo parlor after leaving the Army, he said.

Jonny Lopez loved to draw everything from bees to birds to space aliens with one eye, Cristian Lopez said.

"He just had an imagination, a wild imagination," said Jonny Lopez's best friend, Omar Romero, 21, of Riverside.

Romero laughed as he recalled the jokes the two would play on each other, like painting the other's face with a black marker or lipstick when one of them dozed off.

"He always liked to joke around," he said. "I miss him a lot."

Lopez was the son of Jose Lopez, 51, and Maria Lopez, 49.

He died after the explosion struck his patrol in Paktika province in southeast Afghanistan. Also killed was 1st Lt. Todd W. Lambka, 25, of Fraser, Mich.

Both men were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.

## **POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE BLOODSHED**

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

# **Afghan Policeman Attacks Foreign Military Forces; "At Least" Two Foreign Servicemembers Wounded**

August 13, 2012 The Associated Press & TOLONews

An Afghan policeman opened fire on foreign military forces in the fifth such assault in a week.

At least two foreign soldiers and one Afghan National Directorate of Security personnel were injured in the attack carried out by an Afghan policeman in eastern Nangarhar province on Monday, a provincial police spokesman said.

No service members were killed in the latest attack.

A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for the shooting in the eastern province of Nangarhar, claiming the attacker was a police officer who had been in contact with insurgents before the assault.

At least seven American service members have been killed in the past week by either their Afghan counterparts or attackers wearing their uniforms.

NATO spokesman Charlie Stadlander said there were no NATO deaths but would not say if any international service members were wounded in the attack, citing coalition policy.

At least one Afghan intelligence agent was wounded in Monday's shooting, according to according to Ahmad Zia Abdulzai, spokesman for the Nangarhar provincial governor.

"The shooter has escaped, and Afghan security forces are looking for him," Abdulzai said.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid issued a statement Monday afternoon praising the shooting. He said the police attacker had been "waiting for such an opportunity to attack" international forces.

**MORE:**

## **How Many “Combat Deaths” Have, In Fact, Been Caused By Insider Attacks?**

**“Why Would Military Brass Cover Up  
Such Growing Treachery?”**

**“There Is Evidence It Has Hidden The  
Attacks In Casualty Notices”**

August 12, 2012 By PAUL SPERRY, NEW YORK POST [Excerpts]

After Afghan security forces gunned down four American soldiers last week, the US military downplayed the insider attacks as “isolated incidents” and not a problem of Taliban infiltration.

However, the fatal ambushes brought to at least 30 the number of coalition troops killed just this year by their uniformed Afghan counterparts.

Americans made up more than half — 17 — of the deaths in 2012, meaning one out of every 12 Americans killed in Afghanistan this year have died at the hands of their trusted partners.

And it wasn't even the only attack last week. Two men wearing Afghan army uniforms killed a US soldier and wounded two others in another city.

The Pentagon doesn't keep official tallies of so-called green-on-blue attacks, in which Afghan security forces training alongside US troops have turned their US-issued weapons on them.

In fact, there is evidence it has hidden the attacks in casualty notices.

**Take the case of Marine Lance Cpl. Edward J. Dycus, who died earlier this year from a gunshot wound while serving in Afghanistan.**

**In his official death announcement, the Pentagon said Dycus died “while conducting combat operations.”**

**In fact, an Afghan soldier shot the 22-year-old Marine in the back of the head while standing guard at an Afghan-US base. The Pentagon made no mention of the treachery in the notice it released to the public.**

How many other “combat deaths” have, in fact, been caused by insider attacks?

**The International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan has kept at least partial count of insider attacks going back to 2007. Based on its figures, Afghan security forces have killed more than 80 American and NATO service members.**

**By the count of respected military blogger Michael Yon, however, the death toll is closer to 200.**

The Pentagon has claimed most of the attacks are motivated not by support for the Taliban but personal reasons, such as drugs and depression.

But a Taliban video, released Tuesday, casts doubt on that claim.

It features a Afghan soldier, Ghazi Mahmood, who says he is responsible for a May attack on US troops. He is cheered by his village, and garlands are put around his neck.

“I opened fire on three Americans who were sitting together,” he says, smiling for the camera. “The reason I killed them is because they have occupied our country. They are enemies of our religion.”



**Why would military brass cover up such growing treachery?**

**The rush to stand up a national army has led to lax personnel and base security, exposing US soldiers to attack by Taliban infiltrators.**

**If Afghan forces are infested with Taliban insurgents and sympathizers, the US, in effect, is arming and training terrorists to take over the country, while sharing with them valuable intelligence.**

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## **Bomb Kills District Governor in Laghman: “Mr Zwak Said He Believed The District Governor Was The Direct Target Of ‘Enemies’”**



The wreckage of a vehicle after a roadside explosion on the outskirts of Laghman province east of Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 12, 2011. The roadside bomb killed a district chief and three of his bodyguards. (Photo: Los Angeles Times)

12 August 2012 TOLONews & 13 August 2012 Wakht News Agency

The governor of Laghman’s Alisheing district was killed along with his three bodyguards in a bomb blast on Sunday, a local official said.

The attack took place at midday, when Faridullah Neyazai, the governor of Alishing district of Laghman province, was on his way to the district capital of Mehtarlam, said

provincial spokesman Sarhadi Zowak. He said the remote-controlled explosive specifically targeted Neyazai.

"The district governor was driving to a meeting when his Toyota Corolla was blown up in the road," he said.

Mr Zwak said he believed the district governor was the direct target of 'enemies.' He did not provide any extra details about who those enemies might be.

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Four Afghan policemen were killed in a roadside bomb blast in eastern Paktia province on Saturday evening, a local official said. Two other policemen were injured in the attack. The incident happened yesterday in the provincial capital Gardez when the vehicle they were travelling in struck a roadside bomb, provincial spokesman Rohullah Samoon said.

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Unidentified militants killed three policemen in eastern Nangarhar province, an official said Monday. Police chief spokesman, Mohammad Mashreqwal told Wakht News Agency the three policemen carrying food for iftar (breaking fast) from Chaparhar district headquarter to their center by a Rikshaw were killed last evening.

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

## **MILITARY NEWS**

**Obama Regime Limiting Legal Rights  
Of Guantanamo Suspects To Meet  
With Their Lawyers:  
"The Government Alone Should Decide  
When The Prisoners Deserve Regular  
Access To Their Counsel"**

August 7th, 2012 By Bill Mears, CNN Supreme Court Producer

The Obama administration has begun limiting the legal rights of terror suspects held at the Guantanamo Bay military prison in Cuba, telling a federal judge Tuesday the government alone should decide when the prisoners deserve regular access to their counsel.

In a 52-page filing, Justice Department lawyers said they have started restricting when Guantanamo prisoners can challenge their detention in a Washington-based federal court. If approved, any relaxing of the rules would be made on a case-by-case basis at the exclusive discretion of military officials, not by the courts.

At issue is whether a Supreme Court decision on detainee rights from 2008 gives federal courts the ultimate power to control so-called "habeas" petitions from foreign combatants in U.S. military custody. Volunteer private lawyers say they deserve regular access to their imprisoned clients, even if there is no active habeas challenge pending in court, or any pending charges.

**Under the proposed changes, the Navy base commander at Guantanamo would have sole veto power over attorney access, as well as access to classified material, including information provided directly by the detainees from interrogations.**

"The dispute thus before the Court, though important, is quite narrow," said the government in its legal filing. "The only question presented is whether detainees who have neither current nor impending habeas petitions are entitled to" challenge continued access to counsel. "The answer to that question is 'no.'"

The case is before Chief Judge Royce Lamberth. His court has been handling the many appeals filed by the prisoners.

**There are currently 168 detainees - all male - in the Guantanamo facility, most of whom do not have pending charges.**

Five Muslim men labeled "high-value detainees" are being prosecuted before a military commission for their alleged leadership roles in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

In the so-called Boumediene ruling in 2008, the high court said "enemy combatants" held overseas in U.S. military custody have a right to a "meaningful review" of their detention in the civilian legal justice system.

It would force the government to present evidence and justify keeping the prisoners indefinitely, without charges. But a federal appeals court in Washington has since refused to order the release of any detainee filing a habeas corpus writ, in some cases rejecting such orders from lower-court judges.

The administration has argued it does not seek to restrict lawyers who have an active legal appeal, but that the rights of detainees shrink once they have filed their first habeas challenge.

**The military says lawyers must now agree to the new conditions in order to have continued access to their clients and to any classified information the military would deem to release.**

**And lawyers would be prohibited from using any information they gather that might help the prisoners appearing before a Periodic Review Board. PRBs are newly designed panels of military officials to decide whether a Guantanamo inmate should continue to be held, and whether that person is a national security threat.**

Those boards were put in place by President Barack Obama by executive order, but have not been fully implemented.

"Executive Order 13,567 does not provide detainees who undergo PRB review with a judicially enforceable right to counsel, or any justification for asking the Court to impose a counsel-access regime on the PRB process other than the one developed, per the Order's direction, by the Secretary of Defense," said the government. "As a general matter, executive orders are viewed as management tools for implementing the President's policies, not as legally binding documents that may be enforced against the Executive Branch."

The government said the court's power to intervene was limited, and urged Judge Lamberth to deny the request guaranteeing attorney access. A court hearing is set for August 17 on the legal question.

## **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.**

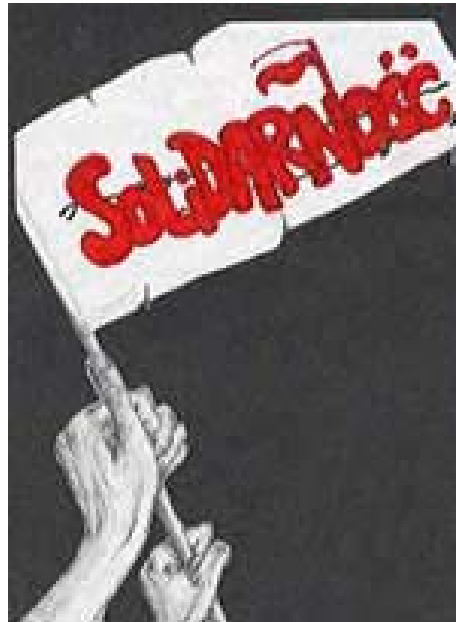
**Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.**

**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**

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

**August 14, 1980:  
Polish Workers Strike Against  
Dictatorship:**

# “They Had Illusions In The Army, And Did Not Make Any Serious Effort To Win Over Rank-And-File Soldiers”



After months of labor turmoil, more than 16,000 Polish workers seized control of the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk.

Carl Bunin Peace History August 13-19 [Excerpts]

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9 August 2000 BY CHRIS SLEE, Green Left Weekly [Excerpts]

Twenty years ago, on August 14, a strike began at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk, Poland, which led to the birth of the independent Solidarity trade union movement. This movement went on to play a crucial and contradictory role in the restoration of capitalist rule in Poland at end of the 1980s.

The initial issues that sparked the shipyards strike were wages and the sacking of a militant worker, Anna Walentinowicz. The strike quickly spread to other workplaces, reflecting the widespread discontent with the system of bureaucratic “socialism” established in Poland in the late 1940s.

The authorities were forced to negotiate and, in an agreement signed at Gdansk on August 31, conceded a list of demands including the right to form independent trade unions. Solidarity was formally established as a trade union on September 17.

Solidarity developed into a mass social movement challenging Poland's Stalinist regime. It was violently suppressed in December 1981 when martial law was declared by General Jaruzelski, who held the posts of Communist Party first secretary, prime minister and defence minister.

Remnants of the movement continued to organise illegally, re-emerging into legality in the late 1980s. The movement was then converted into a right-wing political party which won the elections in June 1989 and formed a government that set out to restore capitalism.

How did a movement that grew out of a working-class struggle against Stalinism become an agent of capitalist restoration?

Part of the answer lies in the ideological limitations of the leadership. Lech Walesa, the main leader of the Gdansk strike and subsequently the central leader of the union, was a militant worker, but also a socially conservative Catholic. The same was true of many other working-class activists in the union. The striking workers at Gdansk sang hymns and held mass in the shipyard.

Religious beliefs do not necessarily prevent political leaders from playing a progressive role. But the fact that the dominant section of Solidarity's leadership belonged to a church committed to the defence of private property, and hailed its right-wing social teachings, was a problem. It became an even bigger problem when this leadership became the government of Poland and began to implement those teachings.

Another component of Solidarity's leadership was a group of intellectuals who had been active in KOR (the Committee for the Defence of the Workers), an organisation that had carried out solidarity with workers' struggles during the 1970s.

The key figure in this group was Jacek Kuron. In the 1960s he and Karol Modzelewski had called for the seizure of power by the working class. But by the time Solidarity was formed, Kuron had modified his ideas, replacing the perspective of revolutionary overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy with one of gradually reforming the state under pressure from mass organisations and struggles.

At that time, Kuron's perspective was still one of reforming the socialist state rather than restoring capitalism. Pressure for reform came mainly from Solidarity, which was then a mass workers' movement imbued with the idea that workers were entitled to control the factories and play a leading role in society.

But after this movement was crushed by Jaruzelski's repression, Solidarity's leadership (including both its Catholic and "leftist" components) adopted a perspective of capitalist restoration. (Kuron himself later became minister of labour in Walesa's pro-capitalist government). The adoption of a policy of capitalist restoration by Solidarity's leadership was made easier by the confused political outlook of most Solidarity activists.

During 1980-81, Solidarity grew to include 10 million members. The consciousness of the activists was mixed. They fought for immediate economic demands (e.g., wage rises) and democratic demands (e.g., freedom of speech). They also struggled for control of the factories, in many cases voting the factory directors out of office and replacing them with new ones.

These demands and struggles represented a progressive response to Stalinist bureaucratic rule. Yet there were also some less progressive elements in the workers' consciousness.

In addition to the socially conservative attitudes promoted by the Catholic church, many workers were impressed by the relative prosperity and democratic rights existing in the advanced capitalist countries and failed to see that the prosperity and freedom of a few imperialist countries is based on the exploitation and repression of people in the Third World.

Not understanding imperialism, they failed to solidarise with Third World struggles for national liberation. While expressing a general sympathy with workers everywhere, most did not take much interest in workers' struggles in the West. Solidarity's newspaper had hardly any international news.

Solidarity lacked a clear program and strategy for overthrowing the bureaucratic regime and creating a democratic worker-ruled society. The organisation's draft program made reference to socialism as one source of inspiration, along with Christianity and democracy.

Solidarity activists carried out a struggle for self-management in many workplaces, but did not have a clear understanding of the need for socialist planning.

**They had illusions in the army, and did not make any serious effort to win over rank-and-file soldiers.**

While Solidarity was not a consciously socialist organisation, neither was it consciously anti-socialist. As British academic Martin Myant observed in *Poland: a Crisis for Socialism* (1982): "It advocated equality and was particularly emphatic about the need for an adequate assured minimum income and an end to special privileges for a wealthy minority. Many of the specific demands were, even if the authors of the program avoided making the point, quite incompatible with capitalism."

**During 1980-81, neither the government nor the leadership of Solidarity could have carried out a program of capitalist restoration, even if they had wanted to.**

**This was because the workers would not have allowed it. Workers in the factories were attempting to bring the enterprises under their own control, and would not have accepted handing them over to capitalist owners.**

**The crushing of this working-class upsurge created the conditions in which capitalist restoration could be carried out with little resistance a few years later. In the demoralisation following martial law, pro-capitalist attitudes were able to become dominant in Polish society.**

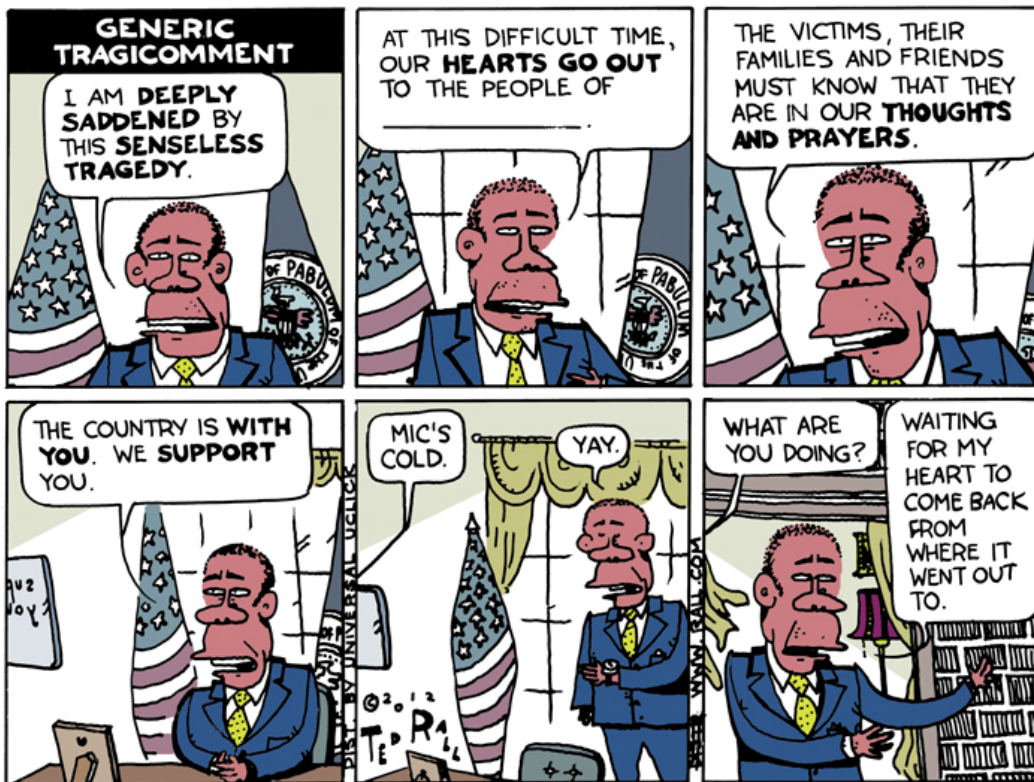
Today, there is a lot of discontent with the results of the restoration of capitalism in Poland and other former Stalinist-ruled states, but still no mass revolutionary parties with a clear socialist perspective.

A mass upsurge of working class and popular discontent is necessary but not sufficient. A struggle to win the movement to a clear socialist perspective is necessary.

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### DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Obama's Second Term Agenda -  
- Cutting Social Security,  
Medicare, And/Or Medicaid:**



**“This Election, Aside From Not Being Much Of An Election For Anyone But The Billionaire Funders Who Have The Real Votes, Doesn’t Really Matter”**  
**“The Two Candidates Are Speaking Not To The Voters, But To The Big Money”**  
**“They Hold The Same Views, Pursue The Same Policies, And Are Backed By Similar Interests”**

July 29, 2012 By Matt Stoller, a political analyst on Brand X with Russell Brand, and a fellow at the Roosevelt Institute; Nakedcapitalism.com [Excerpts]

**This is probably the least important Presidential election since the 1950s.**

**As an experienced political hand told me, the two candidates are speaking not to the voters, but to the big money.**

**They hold the same views, pursue the same policies, and are backed by similar interests.**

Mitt Romney implemented Obamacare in Massachusetts, or Obama implemented Romneycare nationally. Both are pro-choice or anti-choice as political needs change, both tend to be hawkish on foreign policy, both favor tax cuts for businesses, and both believe deeply in a corrupt technocratic establishment.

So while the election lumbers on like the death rattles of the wounded animal known American democracy, no one on either side is asking what the plan is for the next term.

For Obama, his team is going into rooms of donors and shouting “Supreme Court”, while mumbling something about bipartisanship and \$4 trillion, or Simpson-Bowles.

**What this means is that term two of the Obama White House will be organized around cutting entitlements.**

**The White House already tried cutting all three main entitlement programs, last year (cuts to Medicaid are actually cuts to Obamacare, for what it's worth, since an expansion of Medicaid was a key plank of the new health care law).**

The White House agreed to cut at least \$250 billion from Medicare in the next 10 years and another \$800 billion in the decade after that, in part by raising the eligibility age. The administration had endorsed another \$110 billion or so in cuts to Medicaid and other health care programs, with \$250 billion more in the second decade. And in a move certain to provoke rebellion in the Democratic ranks, Obama was willing to apply a new, less generous formula for calculating Social Security benefits, which would start in 2015.

**Going after entitlements is in fact a tradition of Democratic politicians since the 1980s.**

**Barack Obama continues in this fine tradition of Democratic policymaking, and his advisors are quietly laying plans to cut Social Security, Medicare, and/or Medicaid in the second term of his administration.**

Obama appointed Erskine Bowles, who now works for a Wall Street boutique, to head up his commission on fiscal responsibility. Bowles, along with an old man named Alan Simpson, came out with a set of proposals to cut the programs. And while Obama couldn't get the Republicans to agree to it in 2011, he will try in his second term. Here's the New Yorker laying out the plan.

"There is a possibility that a second Obama term could begin with major deficit reduction and serious reform of taxes and entitlements. A similar opportunity arose in the second terms of Reagan (who in 1986 signed into law a historic tax-reform bill) and Clinton (who in 1997 reached a significant budget deal with Republicans). Although both victories occurred when the two parties were less polarized, many White House officials regard the successes as encouraging precedents.

"Several senior Clinton officials involved in the 1997 deal now work for Obama, including Jacob Lew, Obama's chief of staff, and Gene Sperling, the head of the National Economic Council."

**And sure enough, as Dean Baker points out, a gang of incredibly wealthy CEOs are planning to gut entitlements regardless of which candidate wins in 2012.**

**It's not just CEOs, of course, it's also the usual gang of corrupt Democratic establishment folk.**

Here's Steven Pearlstein describing one riveting meeting of the designated austerity group.

"In addition to Cote, Dimon and Bertolini, the charter business members include Sandy Cutler of Eaton, Gregg Sherrill of Tenneco, Marty Flanagan of Invesco, Gary Loveman of Caesars, Thomas Quinlan of R.R. Donnelley & Sons and financiers Steven Rattner and Pete Peterson.

"Later that evening, at Honeywell's Washington office, over a salmon dinner with the floodlit Capitol dome as a backdrop, the executives huddled with their political co-

conspirators: Simpson and Bowles, Warner and Saxby, and Rep. Steny Hoyer, the No. 2 Democrat in the House. Also on board: Simpson-Bowles commissioners Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, and Andy Stern, former president of the Service Employees International Union.”

It’s Senate leader Dick Durbin, House leader Steny Hoyer, and a bevy of CEOs and political leaders.

**As for non-CEO non-politicians, Andy Stern is a key tell. Back in 2009, when he led the powerhouse union SEIU, Stern visited the White House more often than anyone else. Back when he was trying to woo bloggers in the mid-2000s, Stern invited me on a trip around the country to see the union.**

**On that trip, he told me that SEIU was growing so quickly he wished he could cash out and take it public.**

**Since retiring from SEIU, Stern is now on the board of a bio-weapons company and his political connections are what he sells.**

**So he’s one of the links between shutting down liberal opposition to this plan, the White House, and the business community.**

**That level of self-serving cynicism has become the basis of our political system, and it’s an important cultural element in delivering austerity to a public that doesn’t want it.**

It’s useful to remember, this election season, that the way the debate is framed matters.

**That Obama isn’t choosing to discuss in public what he will do to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and that Romney isn’t specific about it either, should show you who this election is for.**

But in addition, that both Bush, Clinton, and Obama (in his first term) failed at cutting Social Security means that an aroused public can stop austerity, when politicians feel their office is at risk. Clinton chose to abandon his plans to gut entitlements when facing impeachment and Bush chose to stop when his plan threatened the Republican Congress.

The Clintonistas didn’t manage to gut entitlements in the 1990s, but they will sure try again and again until they succeed or someone takes their keys to the White House away.

This election, aside from not being much of an election for anyone but the billionaire funders who have the real votes, doesn’t really matter.

But keeping in mind who is doing what does.

Because if there’s a chance to save anything for anyone who isn’t ultra-wealthy from 2013 going forward, it’s going to require being able to create credible threats to the politicians making the policy.

### 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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

## CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“Rebels Fighting In Aleppo Say They Are Angry At The West’s Unwillingness To Offer More Substantive Support”**

**“8,000 Fighters Have Received Just Two Shipments Of Weapons From**

# **Turkey, One Of 300 Rifles And Rocket-Propelled Grenades, And A Second With About 3,000 Hand Grenades”**

## **“Western Countries Have Been Hesitant To Send Arms, Especially Not Shoulder-Launched Antiaircraft Guided Missiles For Which Rebels Are Asking”**

August 12, 2012 By CHARLES LEVINSON, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

ALEPPO, Syria—Rebels here say their territorial gains and ability to hold territory are transforming their guerrilla campaign into a more traditional conflict, with opposition and Syrian regime forces squaring off for territory across a shifting but defined front line.

In Aleppo, Syria's largest city, rebels have grabbed a toehold since launching a two-pronged invasion in July, effectively dividing the city into rebel- and regime-held halves.

The rebels control a contiguous arc of territory stretching around the city from the northeast to the southwest. They remain locked in a fight for the Salaheddin neighborhood, a gritty street battle that rebel commanders say could prove decisive in the struggle for control of the city.

**Mr. Saleh and other rebels fighting in Aleppo say they are angry at the West's unwillingness to offer more substantive support. He scoffed at a pledge on Friday by British Foreign Secretary William Hague to provide \$7.8 million of communications gear, body armor and medical supplies to rebel forces.**

**He waved his red cellphone in the air, saying, "My Nokia works just fine. I don't need walkie-talkies. That's like giving a dying man sunglasses."**

So far, he says his 8,000 fighters have received just two shipments of weapons from Turkey, one of 300 rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, and a second with about 3,000 hand grenades.

**Western countries have been hesitant to send arms, especially not shoulder-launched antiaircraft guided missiles for which rebels are asking.**

The rebel leaders in Aleppo were little-known until recently. They include Mr. Saleh and Abdel Aziz Salama, 47, who heads the so-called Revolutionary Council of Aleppo and the Countryside.

Many are sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood, which waged a bloody uprising against the regime in the 1980s.

Asked which country he hoped a post-Assad Syria would be modeled on, Mr. Saleh didn't hesitate. "Turkey," he said.

In an interview at his headquarters in the village of Tel Refaat north of Aleppo, Mr. Salama said, "We are the ones fighting on the ground, we are the ones who need the weapons."

**The rebel leaders say al Qaeda hasn't infiltrated their ranks, but openly cooperate with a handful of fighting groups that espouse a more fundamentalist and militant Islamist ideology.**

The rebels' coordinated assault on Aleppo in July marked a tactical shift.

The assault was in many ways their first big coordinated and sustained offensive of the 17-month struggle. Before that, the fight for Syria consisted mostly of local bands of fighters fending off government attacks on their neighborhoods and villages.

The fall of the northern half of the province in July galvanized the rebel coalition there.

They decided to defy many of the defected rebel commanders trying to steer the fight from abroad, who urged caution. Instead, these commanders decided to take their fight to Aleppo.

Neighborhoods in the northeast and east of the city fell quickly as they moved in, surprising commanders who expected stiffer resistance from loyalist fighters on the ground. "We didn't expect it to fall so easy," said Mr. Salama. "They didn't stand and fight. They fled."

Rebel commanders estimate that between 65% and 70% of the city is in their hands. A local cab driver who traverses daily between the regime- and rebel-controlled halves of the city, separated by checkpoints that in some cases are just 200 yards away from each other, said rebels control perhaps 40%.

In one rebel-controlled neighborhood on Aleppo's southern side on a recent day, grocery stores were open, and shoppers and vegetable carts bustled about.

A few blocks closer to the bloody front line, the streets were largely empty.

Rebel fighters rested at an intersection, staying clear of a side street manned by a regime sniper, who shot an occasional round into stone walls nearby.

The rebels coaxed a terrified elderly couple, aiming to escape their battle-scarred neighborhood, across the sniper-patrolled street.

**Hanging over the fight for Aleppo is the question of just how much support the rebels really enjoy among residents of Syria's richest city.**

**Most of the rebel fighters here hail from the northern countryside and are dismissed by Aleppo's urban elite. Indeed, two of the top rebel commanders are Messrs. Saleh—a seed trader— and Salama — a honey farmer.**

Some of that disdain works both ways. The battle-hardened veterans of the countryside say the Aleppans joining their ranks aren't combat ready.

"As soon as Aleppo fighters get bombed, they turn and run," said Saleh al-Kaffo, a 22-year-old rebel fighter. "We have experience and know we have to hold our ground until support arrives. They don't even know how to deal with the wounded, how to plug wounds."

Many of Aleppo's residents had little firsthand contact with the uprising or those leading it until just a few weeks ago, when rebels stormed into their city.

A woman walking through the narrow cobblestone streets of Aleppo's old city, where rebels are manning a cordon around the eastern half of the city's citadel, a medieval castle at the heart of the city manned by regime fighters, said she was withholding judgment.

**"I think I'm glad the rebels came, but I'm not happy about all the bloodshed," she said.**

**"We are with the side of right. The regime is not right. We're waiting to see if the rebels are right."**

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**RECEIVED:**

## **Come Out to Support Activist Kawana Jasper**

From: Jay Arena

To: NOLA\_C3

Subject: All Out to Defend Kawana Jasper--Tuesday, Aug 14, 8:30 AM

Date: Aug 13, 2012

**Tuesday,  
August 14**

**8:30 AM  
Criminal Court House  
Judge Julian Parker, Section G  
Tulane and Broad  
[New Orleans]**

**Kawana Jasper, who has been a leading activist in public housing, anti-police brutality, and other struggles now needs your support as well.**

**She is facing fabricated assault charges from the same local police and judicial authorities that oversaw the assault on her home and those of thousands of other poor people in the city.**

**Please come out tomorrow, Tuesday, August 14, to Judge Julian Parker's court to let authorities know that we will not allow Kawana Jasper to be railroaded, that we have her back.**

**Your presence in the courtroom will send a strong message that the cops and courts need to drop the charges and end the persecution of this important activist.**

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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**

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