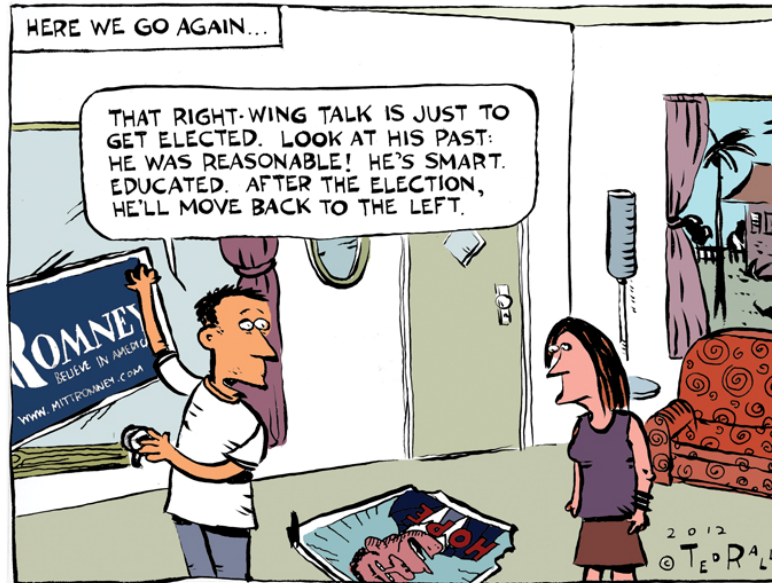


Military Resistance 10/11



**Working Class Strikes And
Demonstrations Spread In
South Africa:
Military Bases “On Alert Over
Fears That Suspended Soldiers
Were Preparing To Mobilize In
Support Of Striking Workers”
The Government “Feared The Speech
Would Incite Soldiers And ‘Mobilize
Them To Rise Against National
Defense Forces’”**

Around 60 Construction Workers “Setting Cranes And Vehicles On Fire” At State-Owned Electricity Provider “Producing About 90% Of The Country's Energy”

September 12, 2012 By DEVON MAYLIE, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

JOHANNESBURG—The world's biggest platinum producer shut five operations because of spreading protests on Wednesday, as South African military bases went on alert over fears that suspended soldiers were preparing to mobilize in support of striking workers.

Protesters blocked mine entrances at Anglo American Platinum Ltd., which accounts for about 40% of mined production of the metal.

Strikes also continued at Lonmin PLC and Gold Fields Ltd. mines, in a wave of protests that began with a walkout at a Lonmin mine on Aug. 10, when 3,000 workers put down their tools to call for better pay and conditions. Violence related to that strike has claimed at least 45 lives **[translation from the reporters' ass-kissing of the South African dictatorship: police engaged in a mass murder of striking miners at Lonmin. T]** and left the country's leaders trying to figure out how to stem the unrest.

The defense ministry put military bases on alert ahead of a speech by expelled African National Congress youth league leader Julius Malema to former soldiers, who were suspended following an illegal strike for higher wages in August 2009.

A spokesman for South Africa's President Jacob Zuma said the presidency supported the defense department's decision to put bases on alert.

The ministry feared the speech would incite soldiers and “mobilize them to rise against national defense forces,” spokesman Brig. Gen. Xolani Mabanga said, pointing to Mr. Malema's speeches to mining communities that spurred earlier protests.

Mr. Malema's speech to about 20 suspended soldiers in the south of Johannesburg ended quietly. “The soldiers don't think President Zuma has done anything for them.... Those feelings allow space that can be exploited by people like Mr. Malema,” said Bhekinkosi Mvovo, president of South African Security Forces Union.

Mr. Malema has called for a nationwide mining strike, and has been visiting mines in the country, most recently to speak to striking workers at Gold Fields on Tuesday.

The actions Wednesday drove platinum prices up 2.4%, at \$1,644.75 an ounce, just shy of a five-month high, and the South African currency down sharply at 8.33 rand against the dollar.

“The fact that so little caused such a big move (in the rand) over such a short period of time does tell you that there is a risk here for financial markets,” said Wike Groenenberg, head of emerging market strategy at Citigroup in London.

The mine strikes are slowing platinum and gold output in South Africa, which produces 80% of the world's platinum. The European auto industry is the biggest consumer of platinum, followed by China.

At the heart of the strikes is frustration by workers over pay and living conditions. Tense relations between the National Union of Mineworkers, which is allied with Mr. Zuma's African National Congress party, and the insurgent Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union have also fueled strikes.

At Anglo American Platinum, protesters blocked the entrance to one mining shaft overnight, and then spread to other parts of the mine.

The company said there wasn't a strike, and that the people who were threatening workers weren't employees, but it couldn't identify who they were.

The five mines that were shut employ 21,000 people and produce 2,100 ounces of platinum a day, about one-third of the group's total daily output, the company said.

Anglo American Platinum has said it is carrying out a review of its South African mines to determine their profitability, which could lead to the closure or possible sale of some mines. A protest by 100 workers last month was resolved without shutting down operations.

At Lonmin's Marikana mine Wednesday, workers remained on strike and protesters urged them to continue.

The Lonmin strike is in its fifth week, with Lonmin losing 2,500 ounces of platinum production a day.

The company said a group of about 8,000 people were marching through the mine on Wednesday.

Only 1.8% of Lonmin's roughly 30,000 workers showed up for work on Wednesday, the company said.

In the first incidence of violence at Gold Fields' KDC west mine, where about 15,000 workers have been on strike since Monday, strikers threw stones at employees who showed up for work, and mine security forces had to use tear gas to disperse the crowd. The strike has halted the mine's normal production of around 1,440 ounces of gold a day.

The tension at Gold Fields comes after Mr. Malema's visit to the mine on Tuesday. Gold Fields said his intervention “hasn't made things easier” in bringing parties together to resolve the strike at the mine.

Impala Platinum Holdings Ltd. said it, too, received a renewed wage demand from its workers last week, following a strike over wages that shut its largest mine for six weeks in February and March.

The company said mining continues and that management is meeting with workers and has agreed to undertake a wage review. Impala lost 120,000 ounces of platinum production during the strike earlier this year.

Vishnu Pillay, the executive head of Anglo American Platinum's joint-venture operations, said mining companies as a whole need to do more for their communities.

“Social responsibility is unfortunately at the periphery of what we're doing and that is something that has to change,” Mr. Pillay said Monday night before Anglo was hit with the protest.

“It is clear that the issues that are being raised by workers and communities indicate a failing...that mining houses have failed their workers...union leadership must also bear some responsibility.”

Elsewhere, state-owned electricity provider Eskom Holdings Ltd., which produces about 90% of the country's energy, said that a group of around 60 workers at a power plant under construction in Limpopo have been protesting, setting cranes and vehicles on fire, in response to a contract that was coming to an end for some of the workers.

The construction is being led by Murray & Roberts.

The protests started last week and all workers remain at home with construction stopped as a precaution.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

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

September 13, 2012 Reuters

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

Northern Colorado Says Goodbye To Sgt. Christopher Birdwell

09/07/2012 By Pamela Dickman, Loveland Reporter-Herald

As images of Christopher Birdwell serving in the U.S. Army flashed across a giant screen at Resurrection Fellowship, the patriotic words of singer Lee Greenwood pierced the silence: "And I'm proud to be an American, where at least I know I'm free. And I won't forget the men who died, who gave that right to me."

Staff Sgt. Birdwell, a 25-year-old Windsor resident, is one of those who gave that ultimate sacrifice for his country. Birdwell was killed by small arms fire in Afghanistan Aug. 27 when a Afghani soldier turned on American troops.

Friday, family and friends packed Resurrection Fellowship to remember the 2005 Windsor High School graduate, while neighbors and patriots waved flags outside the church and at the intersection leading into the Birdwell family's neighborhood in Windsor.

They paid tribute to a man who was proud to serve his country.

And they remembered a leader, a man with an infectious laugh and smile, a man who liked to live his life to the limits with fast motorcycles, snowmobiles and snowboards.

A display in the lobby of the church illustrated the life of Birdwell: His Windsor High School diploma.

His medals earned in the military.

His combat gear and boots.

His dog tags.

Two bottles of hot sauce.

A snowboard.

A helmet.

Photos with his family and friends.

Birdwell was born June 2, 1987 in Englewood to parents, Jim and Pam.

Friday, he was laid to rest in Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver next to men and women who served, and sacrificed, before him.

Birdwell and his three younger siblings, Dustin, Maley and Maegan were raised in Windsor, where his parents own an air conditioning business, where they went to school and where they attended Windsor Church of Christ.

Birdwell joined the Army in 2006, the year after his graduation, and began spreading his laughter, his love of life and his patriotism throughout the United States and overseas as his military service took him on three tours of duty in Afghanistan.

He earned a bronze star, a purple heart and about 20 other military honors.

Each time he returned home on leave, he would surprise family and friends. A phone message of his laughing voice played at his memorial service brought pictures to life: "Guess who's back," followed by happy laughter.

His uncle, Jeff Riley, described Chris as generous, selfless, fearless and courageous — as a man who thought of others before himself.

Riley recalled a hunting trip where his hands were freezing, and Chris offered his own gloves to his uncle.

"That's just the way he was," Riley said.

Birdwell was full of life, bold, vivacious, kind, caring, happy and beloved.

"Chris was a man of character and valor," his uncle said. "What you have is a hero. A hero who was willing to give his life." And those who knew him said they will never forget his life or the sacrifice he made to protect his family, his friends and his country.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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MILITARY NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



The remains of U.S. Army Private First Class Patricia L. Horne, Aug. 26, 2012, at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Horne, of Greenwood, Miss., was killed during combat in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

**Combat Veteran Killed In Libya
Attack Fought Religious Fanatics In
The U.S. Military:
“Doherty ‘Helped Me On Many MRFF
Client Cases Behind The Scenes To
Facilitate Assistance To Armed Forces
Members Abused Horribly By
Fundamentalist Christian Proselytizing”**”

09/13/2012 By Andrea Stone, Huffington Post [Excerpts]

One of the security guards killed during an attack on the American consulate in Benghazi, Libya, that may have been related to an incendiary anti-Muslim video was active in a group that fights religious proselytizing in the U.S. military.

Glen Doherty, 42, a former Navy SEAL, was one of the four diplomats who died Tuesday, according to a report by the WCVB Boston news site. He grew up in Winchester, Mass.

"He was the most wonderful person," his mother, Barbara Doherty, told WCVB in confirming that she had been told Wednesday night that he was among the dead. "We are all in pain and suffering."

Although U.S. officials now suspect the attack may have been a planned terrorist operation and not a spontaneous reaction to the anti-Islamic video -- itself now thought to be the work of a Coptic Christian in California -- Doherty himself had a history of opposing religious intolerance.

Doherty was an "extremely active" member of the advisory board of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), an advocacy group that fights inappropriate religious proselytizing inside the armed forces, said founder Mikey Weinstein, a retired Air Force lawyer.

"He confirmed for me how deeply entrenched fundamentalist Christianity is in the DoD Spec Ops world of the SEALs, Green Berets, Delta Force, Army Rangers USAF ... and DoD security contractors like the former Blackwater," Weinstein said in an email to The Huffington Post.

Doherty "helped me on many MRFF client cases behind the scenes to facilitate assistance to armed forces members abused horribly by fundamentalist Christian proselytizing."

According to Doherty's bio on the MRFF website, he was a veteran of multiple combat deployments during his nine years as a "highly decorated" Navy SEAL.

Weinstein said his "irreplaceable" friend was passionate about maintaining the wall of separation between the military and religion.

"Glen told me he took criticism from both current and former SEALs for being a part of MRFF (but) also received much support for doing so from other former and current SEALs," Weinstein said.

"He was also a close friend to me and my family. He will be sorely missed by us all. No dry eyes out here."

“Captain Umar In Syria Is A Rebel Fighter And An Alawite, And He Considers Assad A ‘Butcher’”

“He Abandoned His Unit After The Government Began Shelling Civilian Neighborhoods In His Hometown”

“I Just Couldn’t See Syrians Dying Anymore”

“He Refuses To Reveal How Many Alawite Officers Have Defected, But He Does Say The ‘Number Is Significant’”



Free Syrian Army rebel fighters run after attacking a Syrian army tank in Aleppo, Syria, on Sept 7, 2012. Manu Brabo—AP

September 10, 2012 By Steven Sotloff, Antakya, Turkey; TIME

The Alawites emerged in the 9th century.

Led by Muhammad ibn Nusayr, they broke with the Shi'ites, who now form majorities in Bahrain, Lebanon and Iran, embracing doctrines that remain largely obscure to this day. For centuries the Alawites were marginalized, deemed heretics by the larger Islamic community.

To avoid persecution, they established villages in the remote mountain chains of Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, far from the coastal areas and plains dominated by Sunnis. When the French moved to give Syria independence, some Alawites agitated for their own state — in vain.

However, in 1963, Hafez Assad, an Alawite, along with two other military officers, brought the sect to power in Syria.

The Alawites, also known as the Alawis, appeared to coalesce around the new regime, which promoted members of the sect to positions of influence and power in the government and, more importantly, the military. When Hafez Assad died in 2000, his son Bashar Assad succeeded him as President. Since March 2011, Bashar Assad has been trying to suppress an uprising that has become a civil war. For the most part, his fellow Alawites have stuck by him in the increasingly bloody fighting. But not all.

Sect members are increasingly breaking rank, as defections swell along with mounting uneasiness about the government's crackdown against what started as a peaceful protest movement.

Captain Umar in Syria is a rebel fighter and an Alawite, and he considers Assad a "butcher."

The officer no longer believes the regime's propaganda and says he abandoned his unit after the government began shelling civilian neighborhoods in his hometown.

But Umar says it is Assad who is injecting the conflict with a sectarian hue. "Bashar is telling us the Sunnis will slaughter us," he says via Skype from Syria. "He is scaring Alawis and pushing them to the edge. This is why the army is killing the people in the street. They are scared the Sunnis will massacre us."

Umar says that it was the military's daily shelling of civilian areas that pushed him to defect.

"I just couldn't see Syrians dying anymore."

He refuses to reveal how many Alawite officers have defected, but he does say the "number is significant."

Others with ties to the security forces have also turned their back on the Alawite leadership. Luban Mrai's father is a senior leader in the paramilitary organization known as the shabiha that targets civilians.

She recently left the country after experiencing “serious moral and ethical dilemmas” stemming from the targeting of civilians. Today she resides in Istanbul, trying to mobilize support for the rebels.

“The regime is using our religion for political ends,” she explains in a phone conversation. “Alawis are killing Syrians for no reason. This is wrong.”

Leading Alawite intellectuals have abandoned the regime as well.

Rasha Omran is one of Syria’s better-known poets and has been invited to read her poetry at literature festivals throughout Europe. Since the beginning of the uprising, she has lent her voice and pen to the cause. Omran announced her support of the revolution within days of its eruption on her Facebook page.

She marched in protests and spoke out against Assad. “This is a dictatorial regime,” she said in a phone call from Egypt.

“How can I support a government that kills its citizens?” Omran sees herself as a Syrian rather than as an Alawite.

She emphasizes that the country is composed of a number of minorities whose identity is shaped by the larger Syrian state. She believes Assad and his inner circle are destroying this delicate mosaic by stirring up ethnic hatreds.

“We are all Syrians. But Assad is working to demolish our country.”

Omran wanted to support the revolution by remaining in Syria. But her vocal protests embarrassed a regime trying to project sectarian unity. Because she belongs to a respected Alawite family, the government risked an Alawite backlash if it arrested her.

Instead, she says, intelligence agents pressured her to leave the country in a series of visits to her house. She finally left Syria at the beginning of the year.

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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

The Social-Democrats ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression no matter where it appears no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.”

-- V. I. Lenin; What Is To Be Done

“Movements Are Bound To Be Confused At The Beginning, Confused Because The Thinking Of The Masses At First Moves Among Contradictions, Lack Of Clarity, And Lack Of Cohesion, And Also Because Of The Role That Prophets Still Play In Them”

On The History Of Early Christianity, By Friedrich Engels, *Die Neue Zeit*, Vol. 1, 1894-95 [Excerpts]

And just as those who have nothing to look forward to from the official world or have come to the end of their tether with it — opponents of inoculation, supporters of abstemiousness, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists, nature healers, free-community preachers whose communities have fallen to pieces, authors of new theories on the origin of the universe, unsuccessful or unfortunate inventors, victims of real or imaginary injustice who are termed “good-for-nothing pettifoggers” by the bureaucracy, honest fools, and dishonest swindlers — all throng to the working-class parties in all countries — so it was with the first Christians.

All the elements which had been set free, i.e., at a loose end, by the dissolution of the old world came one after the other into the orbit of Christianity as the only element that resisted that process of dissolution — for the very reason that it was the necessary product of that process — and that it therefore persisted and grew while the other elements were but ephemeral flies.

There was no fanaticism, no foolishness, no scheming that did not flock to the young Christian communities and did not at least for a time and in isolated places find attentive ears and willing believers.

And like our first communist workers' associations, the early Christians, too, took with such unprecedented gullibility to anything which suited their purpose

In fact, the struggle against a world that at the beginning was superior in force, and at the same time against the innovators themselves, is common to the early Christians and the socialists.

Neither of these two great movements was made by leaders or prophets — although there are prophets enough among both of them — they are mass movements.

And mass movements are bound to be confused at the beginning, confused because the thinking of the masses at first moves among contradictions, lack of clarity, and lack of cohesion, and also because of the role that prophets still play in them at the beginning.

This confusion is to be seen in the formation of numerous sects which fight against one another with at least the same zeal as against the common external enemy.

So it was with early Christianity, so it was in the beginning of the socialist movement, no matter how much that worried the well-meaning worthies who preached unity where no unity was possible.

Starcraft Game Added To Military Officer Training Curriculum: Offers Realistic Leadership Simulation



July 1, 2012 By Jerry, The Duffel Blog. About The Author: Jerry, as a Marine veteran and habitual liar, has found a comfortable home for himself at The Duffel Blog. No one has told him you can't earn a living from volunteer work.

Quantico, VA –

After successful US Army use of video games to help soldiers navigate the stress of combat, Department of the Navy leadership has decided to try to adapt some of their training to the virtual world.

Amid growing concerns with professionalism, conduct, and leadership among Navy and Marine Corps officer ranks, a working group was assembled to improve leaders in the areas of tactical understanding, money management, and impersonal leadership methods.

In a memo from the working group released this week, it was concluded that officers need to undergo more tactical training sooner — and their unique recommendation for the training method: Starcraft.

Starcraft II, a strategy game made by Activision Blizzard, is a Real-Time Strategy (RTS) game. The player must choose when to focus on growing economy, when to raise a standing army, and how to counter the tactics used by the opposing player; all important skills for military officers and leaders of all levels.

The Starcraft brand is the most popular RTS series ever made, and features three distinct racial civilizations players can use: Terran, Protoss, and Zerg.

The Commanding Officer of Quantico's Communication School was excited to see the game molding future officers.

"I am very pleased to see this change go through. Most people don't realize the sorts of lessons that strategy simulations can give in real world situations," said Lieutenant Colonel Richard Stubbs.

"When I mentioned to my family the trouble we were having with the EFVs, my son asked why we would spend so much on an overpriced vehicle that isn't even an effective complement to our forces right now. I was amazed and asked where he came up with that argument.

"That's when I learned that people who aren't officers can apparently grasp obvious facts."

Officer Candidate Percy Jones says he has already learned much from the new training.

"It's pretty wild," he said. "So if I pay for five units right now, but they can only be built one at a time, then four of them are a waste of liquid assets? I never learned anything like that in accounting class — which may be because I paid someone to go to that class for me."

Other lessons have resonated with fellow students.

A former Staff Sergeant in Officer Candidate School has remarked that during all the time spent commanding his Protoss army, he has "never once been tempted to have sex with any subordinates," which, he claimed was a "first for him."

Still another candidate was shocked when he learned that his worker units (SCVs) would mine the minerals (the game's main form of currency) without his direct intervention.

"I spent forty-five minutes making sure all of my SCVs were mining efficiently, and it turns out that when I looked away, they kept right on working," said Officer Candidate Jose Gonzalez.

"I was surprised that constant micromanagement of menial tasks wasn't actually needed. I think this may be a bug in the game software."

To aid in the setup of the program, the team of officials invited some professional players from the North American team EG (Evil Geniuses) to Quantico to help kick off training.

Team members Geoff "iNcontrol" Robinson and Greg "idrA" Fields talked about their initial experience.

“It started off a nightmare,” said Robinson.

“The first guy I helped insisted on taking about 8% of his Drones away from mining to represent the ‘unemployment factor.’

“The second guy kept all of his higher-tier army units in his main base and sent only the first-tier fighting units to the battle. When I instructed him to keep all his forces together he laughed and said ‘that’s not how it works in real life.’”

Fields voiced similar concerns.

“I tried to tell one guy to move his damaged units to the back of the fight to preserve them longer, but he kept them on the front lines because they didn’t have a light duty chit.

“And then he said he couldn’t authorize a medevac because there was no clearly marked Landing Zone. There might be no hope for these guys. They’re just horrible.”

“In fact,” he added, “The only thing they really seemed to understand about the game is that Marines are super overpowered, and that winning only requires that you have more of them. They said it was a very realistic feature.”

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Palestinians Borrow Chant From Syria To Vent Rage At The Abbas Dictatorship:

“Another Striking Image Of The Day’s Protests In Hebron Was The Demonstrators Hurling Their Shoes At A Large Banner Of The Palestinian Authority’s Prime Minister”

September 10, 2012 By ROBERT MACKEY, The New York Times [Excerpts]

During protests in the West Bank on Monday, Palestinians adapted a protest anthem made popular by their neighbors in Syria last year to call for their president and prime minister to step down.

The original song, “Yalla Erhal Ya Bashar,” or “Come on Bashar, Leave,” calling for the departure of President Bashar al-Assad, was written last year in Syria. At a protest in the West Bank on Monday, protesters changed the words of the tune, to focus on President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad.

As Yousef Munayyer, the director of The Palestine Center in Washington, observed on Twitter, the borrowing completed a circle in a way.

“Palestinians have long taught other Arabs art of protest. W/ adaptation of #Syria protest chant, we’ve come full circle.”

Another striking image of the day’s protests in Hebron was the demonstrators hurling their shoes at a large banner of the Palestinian Authority’s prime minister.

As Reuters reported, the protesters were frustrated at the Palestinian Authority’s management of the economy in the parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank it administers. In the evening, there were clashes between the Palestinian Authority’s security forces and demonstrators in Hebron, Bethlehem and Nablus.

The Israeli-American journalist Joseph Dana, who is based in Ramallah, noted that video of the security forces hurling rocks at protesters looked quite a bit like images from Egypt recorded last year.

“While I watching this video from Nablus-shot earlier tonight-my flatmate asked why I was watching old videos from Egypt.”

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

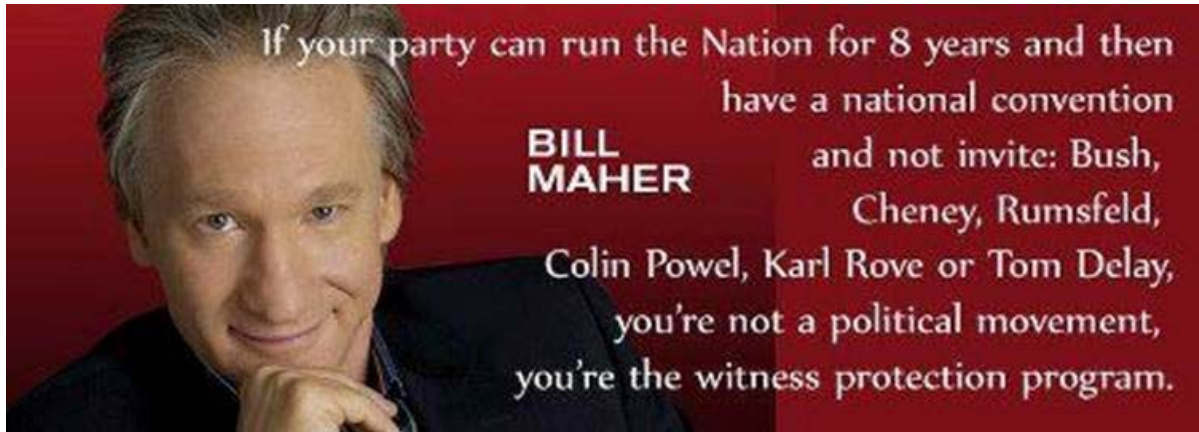
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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to David McReynolds]

**Former CIA Chief Says Obama's War On Terror Same As Bush's:
"Targeted Killings Have Continued, In Fact, If You Look At The Statistics, Targeted Killings Have Increased Under Obama"
"Obama's Kill List Has Even Included American Citizens"
"It Is That Practical Consensus That Has Fostered Such Powerful Continuity Between Two Vastly Different Presidents, George W. Bush And Barack Obama"**



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

“Despite a campaign that was based on a very powerful promise of transparency, President Obama, and again in my view quite correctly, has used the state secrets argument in a variety of courts, as much as President Bush,” Hayden said.

Hayden also noted that Obama, as an Illinois senator in 2008, eventually voted to legalize President Bush’s once-secret warrantless spying program adopted in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks.”

09.10.12 By David Kravets, Wired.com [Excerpts]

President Barack Obama has closely followed the policy of his predecessor, President George W. Bush, when it comes to tactics used in the “war on terror” — from rendition, targeted killings, state secrets, Guantanamo Bay to domestic spying, according to Michael Hayden, Bush’s former director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency.

“It is that practical consensus that has fostered such powerful continuity between two vastly different presidents, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, when it comes, when it comes to this conflict,” Hayden said Friday while speaking at the University of Michigan.

The comments come two months before the Nov. 6 elections, where Obama, a Democrat, faces off for re-election against GOP challenger Mitt Romney.

And Hayden's remarks give credence to what many who cared about the topic had already realized: Obama largely mirrors Bush when it comes to the war on terror.

Hayden, who oversaw the CIA's use of torture techniques against detainees and the expansion of the NSA to illegally spy on American citizens, admitted to an initial skepticism of Obama. He also publicly criticized the administration in 2009 for making public the Bush-era legal memos that attempted to re-define torture as "enhanced interrogation techniques."

But Hayden, in a nearly 80-minute lecture posted on C-Span, said Obama came to embrace Bush's positions.

Both Bush and Obama said the country was at war. The enemy was al-Qaida. The war was global in nature. And the United States would have to take the fight to the enemy, wherever it may be, he said.

"And yet, you've had two presidents, the American Congress, and the American court system, in essence, sign up to all four of those sentences," Hayden said.

Moments later, Hayden added:

"And so, we've seen all of these continuities between two very different human beings, President Bush and President Obama.

"We are at war, targeted killings have continued, in fact, if you look at the statistics, targeted killings have increased under Obama."

He said that was the case because, in one differing path between the two presidents, Obama in 2009 closed CIA "black sites" and ratcheted down on torturing detainees.

But instead of capturing so-called "enemy combatants," President Obama kills them instead, Hayden said.

"We have made it so politically dangerous and so legally difficult that we don't capture anyone anymore," Hayden said. "We take another option, we kill them. Now. I don't morally oppose that."

Obama's kill list has even included American citizens.

Hayden noted Obama campaigned on promises to close the detention center in Guantanamo Bay, and to bring more transparency to government.

Obama failed to close Guantanamo and continued the use of the often-cited "state secrets" defense in court cases challenging the government's policies on the war on terror.

"Despite a campaign that was based on a very powerful promise of transparency, President Obama, and again in my view quite correctly, has used the state secrets argument in a variety of courts, as much as President Bush," Hayden said. He noted that he appreciated Obama's invocation of the state secrets privilege, as Hayden himself was named as a defendant in some of the cases.

Hayden also noted that Obama, as an Illinois senator in 2008, eventually voted to legalize President Bush's once-secret warrantless spying program adopted in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. The measure also granted America's telecoms immunity from lawsuits for their complicity in the spy program.

The law authorizes the government to electronically eavesdrop on Americans' phone calls and e-mail without a probable-cause warrant so long as one of the parties to the communication is believed outside the United States. The communications may be intercepted "to acquire foreign intelligence information."

"The FISA Act not only legitimated almost every thing president Bush had told me to do under his Article II authorities as commander in chief, but in fact gave the National Security Agency a great deal more authority to do these kind of things," Hayden said.

The law, now known as the FISA Amendments Act, expires at year's end. The Obama administration said congressional reauthorization was the administration's "top intelligence priority," despite 2008 campaign promises to make the act more privacy-friendly.

As for the election, Hayden indicated it may not matter, at least when it comes to anti-terrorism policy. He seemingly confirmed that the rock band the Who was correct when it blurted "meet the new boss, same as the old boss."

Hayden, who said he was an adviser the Romney presidential campaign, said Romney would largely follow Obama's same path, too, if Romney was elected.

"If we're looking forward," Hayden said, "I actually suspect there is going to be some continuity between a President Romney and his predecessor, too, if that came to pass."

A Federal Judge On Wednesday Blocked The Government From Enforcing A Controversial Statute Allowing Indefinite Detention Without Trial: "A 'Historic' Repudiation Of Government Overreach"

“It’s An Absolute Guarantee Of Freedom Of Political Debate Even In A Time Of War”

September 12, 2012 By CHARLIE SAVAGE, New York Times [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — A federal judge on Wednesday blocked the government from enforcing a controversial statute about the indefinite detention without trial of terrorism suspects. Congress enacted the measure last year as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

The ruling came as the House voted to extend for five years a different statute, the FISA Amendments Act, that expanded the government’s power to conduct surveillance without warrants.

In the detention case, Judge Katherine B. Forrest of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York issued a permanent injunction barring the government from relying on the defense authorization law to hold people in indefinite military detention on suspicion that they “substantially supported” Al Qaeda or its allies — at least if they had no connection to the Sept. 11 attacks.

The United States has been detaining terrorism suspects indefinitely since 2001, relying on an authorization by Congress to use military force against perpetrators of the Sept. 11 attacks and those who helped them.

Last year, Congress decided to create a federal statute that codified authority for such detentions.

The new statute went beyond covering the perpetrators of the Sept. 11 attacks to also cover people who were part of or substantially supported Al Qaeda, the Taliban or associated forces engaged in hostilities against the United States or its allies.

Its enactment was controversial in part because lawmakers did not specify what conduct could lead to someone’s being detained, and because it was silent about whether the statute extended to American citizens and others arrested on United States soil.

It was challenged by Chris Hedges, a journalist who interacts with terrorists as part of his reporting, and by several prominent supporters of WikiLeaks.

They argued that its existence chilled their constitutional rights by creating a basis to fear that the government might seek to detain them under it by declaring that their activities made them supporters of an enemy group.

In May, Judge Forrest agreed, issuing a preliminary injunction barring the government from relying on the law to detain anyone without trial, and Wednesday she made that injunction permanent in a 112-page opinion.

The Obama administration fought the move, saying the law did not cover free-speech activities.

It also claimed that the statute created no new detention authority that did not already exist in the original authorization to use military force.

While Judge Forrest said she thought that it did expand detention authority, the fact that the government took the narrower view was “decisive” because it meant that “enjoining the statute will therefore not endanger the public.”

In an interview, Bruce Afran, an adjunct law professor at Rutgers University who helped represent the plaintiffs, called the ruling a “historic” repudiation of government overreach.

“It’s an absolute guarantee of freedom of political debate even in a time of war,” he said.

In Congress, the House voted, 301 to 118, to extend the FISA Amendments Act for five years. The law, first enacted in 2008, grew out of a once-secret Bush administration program of warrantless wiretapping. It is set to expire without new legislation at the end of 2012, and the Senate has yet to vote on it.

Republicans overwhelmingly supported the bill — just seven voted against it — while Democrats were split, with 74 voting for it and 111 voting against it.

Representative Lamar Smith, Republican of Texas, urged the Senate to quickly approve it as well, saying it was needed to protect the country. But Representative Jerrold Nadler, Democrat of New York, said Congress was not performing adequate oversight to protect civil liberties.

“The American people deserve better, and Congress has an obligation to exert more control over spy agencies than simply to give them a blank check for another five years,” he said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Vietnamese Capitalism In Deep Shit: “A Dangerous Cycle Where Banks, Saddled With Bad Debts, Are

Unwilling To Lend, Making It Harder For Businesses To Invest” “The Ho Chi Minh Stock Index Is Down 18% Since The Beginning Of May”

“People Familiar With Government Plans Say There Are Proposals To Let Foreign Banks Increase Stakes In Domestic Banks”



September 10, 2012 By JAMES HOOKWAY in Hanoi and ALEX FRANGOS in Hong Kong, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Until a few years ago, Vietnam was one of the world's hottest emerging markets. Now it faces an urgent task: fix a beleaguered banking system or watch its economy continue to slip behind faster-growing neighbors.

Piles of bad loans following the financial crisis have dragged down growth in Vietnam and left banks weakened and reluctant to lend.

A record number of firms are declaring bankruptcy, and in the sprawling urban areas encompassing Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, the landscape is littered with stalled construction projects as builders run out of cash or put on the brakes as demand for condominiums and office space dries up.

Vietnam fought off rumors in recent days that it was seeking an International Monetary Fund bailout for its banking system. An IMF spokeswoman said no requests for aid had been made. State Bank of Vietnam Deputy Gov. Le Minh Hung said in a statement on the government's website that the country had no intention of seeking a rescue.

However, the IMF and others have been advising Vietnam on how to implement a domestically financed bailout that would restore its banks to health. In its latest economic review the fund said that "quick and comprehensive action" was needed to solidify weak banks and put the economy on more solid ground.

Fears over Vietnam's banks intensified in August when one of the country's most prominent tycoons, Nguyen Duc Kien, was arrested for allegedly improperly lending money to real-estate projects.

Efforts to reach Mr. Kien, who now runs a number of private investment funds and owns Hanoi's main professional soccer club, have been unsuccessful. Stocks dropped in the days following the arrest, and the Ho Chi Minh Stock Index is down 18% since the beginning of May.

Vietnam shares fell 2.2% Monday, led by selling in property-related stocks after state media reports suggested real-estate developers are trying to cut prices to boost sales of apartments.

Economists warn that Vietnam has entered a dangerous cycle where banks, saddled with bad debts, are unwilling to lend, making it harder for businesses to invest. That feeds into slower growth, which in turn makes it harder for companies to pay back loans, again harming the banks.

People familiar with government plans say there are proposals to let foreign banks increase stakes in domestic banks from the current cap of 20% in some instances to as high as 49%. Another plan would allow majority stakes, but with a time limit of five years, after which the foreign banks would have to divest.

There are more than a dozen foreign banks with stakes in domestic banks, including HSBC Holdings PLC, Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. and Société Générale.

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