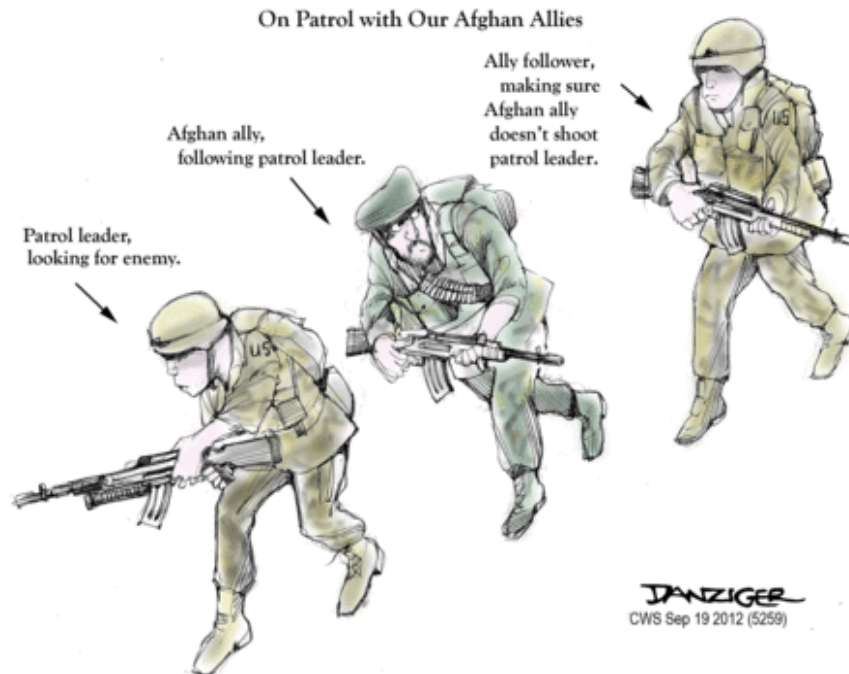


## **Military Resistance 10/16**



**“Don’t Talk To Me About Kicking Out An E-6 Who Has Deployed Three Times Downrange Due To Drawdowns”**

**“I Can Look In The Commander’s Office And See A Flat-Screen Television That He Is Supposed To Be Using To Keep Up With World Events, And Yet For Some Reason Is Always Tuned To ESPN”**

# **“Don’t Talk To Me About Raising The Retirement Age To 50 When I See Brand-New Leather Chairs In The Conference Room”**

## **“And Even When They Do Try To Tighten Things Up I See Commanders Tap-Dancing On Their Lawyers’ Desks Trying To Make Them Come Up With The Right Language So They Can Go Skiing In Garmisch”**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times  
September 24, 2012

What concerns me about the drawdown is that everyone is talking about cutting personnel, retirement benefits, Tricare, etc., and yet I see no efforts to measure commanders’ financial stewardship during this time.

Don’t talk to me about kicking out an E-6 who has deployed three times downrange due to drawdowns when I can look in the commander’s office and see a flat-screen television that he is supposed to be using to keep up with world events, and yet for some reason is always tuned to ESPN.

Don’t tell me I need to pay extra for Tri-care when I retire, when I’ve got commanders throwing hissy fits if they don’t get their \$5,000 worth of commander’s coins.

Don’t talk to me about raising the retirement age to 50 when I see brand-new leather chairs in the conference room.

Unless and until we have such things measured quantitatively in our leaders’ Officer Evaluation Reports and Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports, nothing will change.

And even when they do try to tighten things up, such as when they changed the Army conference policy to lower costs, I see commanders tap-dancing on their lawyers’ desks trying to make them come up with the right language so they can go skiing in Garmisch during their quarterly training conference or pay for four-star hotels for Army spouses conferences.

It’s a big lie, and the big guys at the top are willing to look the other way.

There is not a single person I know who would rather that everyone have a fancy coffee mug with the unit crest instead of a job.

Master Sgt. Karen Carlson  
Fort Jackson, S.C.

**MORE**

**“My Fear Is My Husband Being Cut And  
Not Being Able To Pay Our Bills And  
Afford Our 2-Year-Old’s Medical Care”**

My fear is my husband being cut and not being able to pay our bills and afford our 2-year-old’s medical care without Tricare Prime.

My other fear is if NCOs are asked who is a good/bad soldier, it could turn personal.

Also, I worry about where the costcutting is going to come from — fewer groceries stocked at the commissary or a higher surcharge?

Is the PX going to have its hours cut, or will more items be out of stock?

I hope housing won’t suffer too many cuts or make residents pay more than what their Basic Allowance for Housing is.

Sandi Chesworth  
Fort Lewis, Wash.

**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**

# **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

## **Family Remembers Fallen Dubois County Marine**

Sep 11, 2012 By Araceli Thiele, WFIE

DUBOIS CO, INDIANA

A Dubois County family received word of a fallen Marine who was killed in Afghanistan.

The young Marine from Dubois, Indiana was deployed in April, and on Tuesday night, family and friends are remembering Lance Corporal Alec Terwiske.

21-year-old Alec Terwiske was on his first tour in Afghanistan. His family expected to see him in less than two months for the holidays, but unfortunately Alec never made it home.

"He was like a big giant teddy bear," said Alec's sister, Ashlee Gramelspacher.

Alec, a Northeast Dubois High School graduate, joined the Marines in 2010. His mother, Sandy, says it was always what he wanted. Even today, she says you could find toy soldiers and tanks under his bed.

His two sisters and brother knew it as well.

"He was always really proud, really proud to be a Marine. He always said he loved what he did," said Alec's siblings.

Even though Alec was the second youngest sibling and younger than his brother, Brant, he was always referred to as the younger older brother.

"He was my sidekick every time we'd go out, or 'Alec, can you help me with this?' Yes, he'd always be there helping me," Brant said.

His family says the thing they'll miss most is Alec's smile.

"He was a little jokester. He was always pulling tricks on the kids," said Alec's mother, Sandy Terwiske.

"He always picked on me. We were really close growing up," said Codi Terwiske, Alec's sister.

"When he came back from boot camp, Codi was kind of the person he would show us the moves he learned on, and Brant as well," Gramelspacher said.

"He was always the one to keep everybody laughing," Sandy said.

With more than half of his tour behind him, his siblings thought they had been through the worst of it and thought for sure, Alec would be home November first.

"He was very optimistic about coming home, very sure of himself very sure he was coming home," Gramelspacher said.

We will pass along those messages to the family and keep you updated on any funeral arrangements.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE  
BLOODSHED  
THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE  
WAR**

## **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**

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004**

## **[Pussy Riot Closing Statements To The Court]**

**“It Was Not Until They Delivered  
These Closing Statements That  
Their Supporters — And  
Opponents — Heard What These  
Three Brave Women Stand For”**

**“This Repressive Act Is Executed  
Based On Political Orders From  
Above That Completely Dictate The  
Words, Deeds, And Decisions Of  
These Three Judicial Figures”**

# **“Our Performances Are A Kind Of Civic Activity Amidst The Repressions Of A Corporate Political System That Directs Its Power Against Basic Human Rights And Civil And Political Liberties”**



Maria Alyokhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Yekaterina Samutsevich

**The price of participation in the creation of history is immeasurably great for the individual. But the essence of human existence lies precisely in this participation. To be a beggar, and yet to enrich others. To have nothing, but to possess all. One considers the OBERIU dissidents dead, but they are alive. They are punished, but they do not die.**

13 August 2012 n+1

Translated by Maria Corrigan and Elena Glazov-Corrigan.

Read the translators' statements here:

On August 8th, the three members of Russian feminist punk band Pussy Riot delivered their closing statements at the Moscow Khamovniki District Court.

Charged with “hooliganism motivated by religious hatred,” Maria Alyokhina, Yekaterina Samutsevich, and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova were first arrested on March 3, a day before the controversial re-election of Vladimir Putin.

Meanwhile, they had committed their crime on February 21, when five members of Pussy Riot staged a guerrilla performance on the altar of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow.

For less than a minute, the women danced, singing “Our Lady, Chase Putin Out!” and crossing themselves until they were apprehended by security guards.

In a country that was willing to sic its secular court on a “religious” cause, Pussy Riot are true revolutionaries.

**Nonetheless, it was not until they delivered these closing statements that their supporters — and opponents — heard what these three brave women stand for.**

Although they are being crushed in the jaws of the system — and know it! — their courage and steadfast sincerity are sufficient cause for (impossible) hope.

If not for the Russian state, then at least for the Russian people.

—Bela Shayevich

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### **#3: Nadezhda Tolokonnikova**

**By and large, the three members of Pussy Riot are not the ones on trial here.**

**If we were, this event would hardly be so significant.**

**This is a trial of the entire political system of the Russian Federation, which, to its great misfortune, enjoys quoting its own cruelty toward the individual, its indifference toward human honor and dignity, repeating all of the worst moments of Russian history.**

To my deep regret, this poor excuse for a judicial process approaches Stalin’s “troikas.”

We too have only an interrogator, a judge, and a prosecutor.

Furthermore, this repressive act is executed based on political orders from above that completely dictate the words, deeds, and decisions of these three judicial figures.

What was behind our performance at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior and the subsequent trial? Nothing other than the autocratic political system.

Pussy Riot’s performances can either be called dissident art or political action that engages art forms.

**Either way, our performances are a kind of civic activity amidst the repressions of a corporate political system that directs its power against basic human rights and civil and political liberties.**



**The young people who have been flayed by the systematic eradication of freedoms perpetrated through the aughts have now risen against the state. We were searching for real sincerity and simplicity, and we found these qualities in the yurodstvo (the holy foolishness) of punk.**

**Passion, total honesty, and naïveté are superior to the hypocrisy, mendacity, and false modesty that are used to disguise crime. The so-called leading figures of our state stand in the Cathedral with righteous faces on, but, in their cunning, their sin is greater than our own.**

**We put on political punk performances in response to a government that is rife with rigidity, reticence, and caste-like hierarchal structures.**

It is so clearly invested in serving only narrow corporate interests, it makes us sick just to breathe the Russian air.

**We categorically oppose the following, which forces us to act and live politically:**

**—the use of coercive and forceful methods for regulating social processes; a situation when the most important political institutions are the disciplinary structures of the state: the security agencies (the army, police, and secret services), and their corresponding means of ensuring political “stability” (prisons, pre-emptive detention, all the mechanisms of strict control over the citizenry);**

—imposed civic passivity among the majority of the population,

—the complete dominance of the executive branch over the legislative and judicial.

Moreover, we are deeply frustrated by the scandalous dearth of political culture, which comes as the result of fear and that is kept down through the conscious efforts of the government and its servants (Patriarch Kirill: “Orthodox Christians do not attend rallies”); the scandalous weakness of the horizontal ties within society.

We do not like that the state so easily manipulates public opinion by means of its strict control over the majority of medial outlets (a particularly vivid example of this manipulation is the unprecedentedly insolent and distorted campaign against Pussy Riot appearing in practically every Russian media outlet).

Despite the fact that we find ourselves in an essentially authoritarian situation, living under authoritarian rule, I see this system crumbling in the face of three members of Pussy Riot.

**What the system anticipated did not occur; Russia does not condemn us, and with each passing day, more and more people believe in us and that we should be free, and not behind bars.**

**I see this in the people I meet. I meet people who work for the system, in its institutions, I see people who are incarcerated. Every day, I meet our supporters who wish us luck and, above all, freedom.**

**They say what we did was justified.**

More and more people tell us that although they had doubts about whether we had the right to do what we did, with each passing day, more and more people tell us that time has shown that our political gesture was correct — that we opened the wounds of this political system, and struck directly at the hornet's nest, so they came after us, but we. . .

These people try to relieve our suffering as much they can, and we are very grateful to them.

**We are also grateful to everyone who speaks out in support of us on the outside. There are many supporters, and I know it. I know that a great number of Orthodox Christians speak out on our behalf, the ones who gather near the court in particular. They pray for us; they pray for the imprisoned members of Pussy Riot.**

We've seen the little booklets the Orthodox pass out containing prayers for the imprisoned. This fact alone demonstrates that there is no single, unified group of Orthodox believers, as the prosecutor would like to prove.

This unified group does not exist. Today, more and more believers have come to the defense of Pussy Riot. They don't think that what we did warrants a five-month term in a pretrial detention center, let alone three years in prison, as the prosecutor has called for.

**Every day, more people understand that if the system is attacking three young women who performed in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior for thirty seconds with such vehemence, it only means that this system fears the truth, sincerity, and straightforwardness we represent.**

We have never used cunning during these proceedings. Meanwhile, our opponents are too often cunning, and people sense this. Indeed, the truth has an ontological, existential superiority over deception, and this is described in the Bible, particularly the Old Testament.

The paths of truth always triumph over the paths of cunning, guile, and deception. Every day, truth grows more victorious, despite the fact that we remain behind bars and will probably be here for a long time.

Yesterday, Madonna performed in Moscow with "Pussy Riot" written on her back. More and more people see that we are held here illegally, on false pretences.

This amazes me. I am amazed that truth really does triumph over deception. Despite the fact that we are physically here, we are freer than everyone sitting across from us on the side of the prosecution. We can say anything we want and we say everything we want. The prosecution can only say what they are permitted to by political censorship.

They can't say "punk prayer," "Our Lady, Chase Putin Out," they can't utter a single line of our punk prayer that deals with the political system.

Perhaps they think that it would be good to put us in prison because we speak out against Putin and his regime.

They don't say so, because they aren't allowed to. Their mouths are sewn shut. Unfortunately, they are only here as dummies. But I hope they realize this and ultimately pursue the path of freedom, truth, and sincerity, because this path is superior to the path of complete stagnation, false modesty, and hypocrisy. Stagnation and the search for truth are always opposites, and in this case, in the course of this trial, we see on the one side people who attempt to know the truth, and on the other side people who are trying to fetter them.

A human being is a creature that is always in error, never perfect. She quests for wisdom, but cannot possess it; this is why philosophy was born. This is why the philosopher is the one who loves wisdom and yearns for it, but does not possess it.

This is what ultimately calls a human being to action, to think and live in a certain way. It was our search for truth that led us to the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. I think that Christianity, as I understood it while studying the Old and especially the New Testament, supports the search for truth and a constant overcoming of oneself, the overcoming of what you were earlier. It was not in vain that when Christ was among the prostitutes, he said that those who falter should be helped; "I forgive them," He said. I do not see this in our trial, which takes place under the banner of Christianity. Instead, it seems to me that the prosecution is trampling on religion.

The lawyers for the (official) "injured parties" are abandoning them—that is how I interpret it.

**Two days ago, (one of the "injured parties' lawyers) Alexei Taratukhin made a speech in which he insisted that it should be clear that under no circumstances should anyone assume that the lawyer agrees with the parties he represents.**

**In other words, the lawyer finds himself in an ethically uncomfortable position and does not want to stand for the people who seek to imprison Pussy Riot.**

I don't know why they want to put us in prison. Maybe they have the right to, but I want to emphasize that their lawyer seems to be ashamed. Perhaps he was affected by people shouting "Executioners! Shame on you!" I want to point out that truth and goodness always triumph over deception and malice.

**It also seems to me that prosecution attorneys are being influenced by some higher power, because time after time, they slip up and call us "the injured party."**

Almost all of the lawyers have accidentally said this, and even prosecution attorney Larisa Pavlova, who is very negatively disposed toward us, nonetheless appears to be moved by some higher power when she refers to us as "the injured party." She does not say this about those she represents, but about us.

I don't want to label anyone. It seems to me that there are no winners, losers, victims, or defendants here. We all simply need to reach each other, connect, and establish a dialogue in order to seek out the truth together. Together, we can seek wisdom and be philosophers, instead of stigmatizing people and labeling them. That is the last thing a person should do. Christ condemned it. With this trial, the system is abusing us.

Who would have thought that man and the state he rules could, again and again, perpetrate absolutely unmotivated evil? Who could have imagined that history, especially Stalin's still-recent Great Terror, could fail to teach us anything?

The medieval Inquisition methods that reign in the law enforcement and judicial systems of our country, the Russian Federation, are enough to make you weep. But from the moment of our arrest, we have stopped weeping.

We have lost our ability to cry. We had desperately shouted at our punk concerts. With all our might, we decried the lawlessness of the authorities, the governing bodies. But now, our voices have been taken away. They were taken from us on March 3, 2012, when we were arrested.

The following day, our voices and our votes were stolen from the millions at the so-called elections.

During the entire trial, people have refused to hear us. Hearing us would mean being receptive to what we say, being thoughtful, striving toward wisdom, being philosophers. I believe that every person should strive for this, and not only those who have studied in some philosophy department.

A formal education means nothing, although prosecution attorney Pavlova constantly attempts to reproach us for our lack of education. We believe the most important thing is to strive, to strive towards knowledge and understanding. This is what a person can achieve independently, outside the walls of an educational institution.

Regalia and scholarly degrees mean nothing. A person can possess a great deal of knowledge, but not be a human being. Pythagoras said extensive knowledge does not breed wisdom. Unfortunately, we are here to affirm that.

**We are here only as decorations, inanimate elements, mere bodies that have been delivered into the courtroom. When our motions, after many days of requests, negotiations and struggles are not given any consideration, they are always denied.**

Unfortunately for us and for our country, the court hears a prosecutor who constantly distorts our words and statements with impunity, neutering them.

The foundational adversarial principle of the legal system is openly and demonstratively violated.

**On July 30th, the first day of the trial, we presented our reaction to the prosecutors' indictments. At that time, the court categorically refused us the right to speak, and our written texts were read aloud by our defense lawyer, Violetta Volkova.**

**For us, this was the first opportunity we had to express ourselves after five months of incarceration.**

**Until then we had been incarcerated, confined; we can't do anything from there, we can't write appeals, we can't film what is happening around us, we have no Internet, our lawyer can't even bring us papers because even that is forbidden.**

On July 30th, we spoke openly for the first time; we called for making contact and facilitating dialogue, not for battle and confrontation. We reached our hands out to the people who, for some reason, consider us their enemies, and they spat into our open hands.

"You are not sincere," they said to us. Too bad. Do not judge us according to your behavior. We spoke sincerely, as we always do — we said what we thought. We were unbelievably childlike, naïve in our truth, but nonetheless we are not sorry for our words, and this includes our words on that day. And having been maligned, we do not want to malign others in response. We are in desperate circumstances, but we do not despair.

We are persecuted, but we have not been abandoned. It is easy to degrade and destroy people who are open, but "When I am weak, then I am strong."

Listen to our words and not to what (pro-Putin television journalist) Arkady Mamontov says about us.

Do not distort and falsify what we say. Allow us to enter into a dialogue, into contact with this country, which is also ours and not only the land of Putin and the Patriarch.

**Just like Solzhenitsyn, I believe that in the end the word will break cement.**

**Solzhenitsyn wrote: "Thus, the word is more essential than cement. Thus, the word is not a small nothing. In this manner, noble people begin to grow, and their word will break cement." (Solzhenitsyn, The First Circle)**

**Katya, Masha and I may be in prison, but I do not consider us defeated.**

**Just as the dissidents were not defeated; although they disappeared into mental institutions and prisons, they pronounced their verdict upon the regime.**

The art of creating the image of an epoch does not know winners or losers. It was the same with the OBERIU poets, who remained artists until the end, inexplicable and incomprehensible.

Purged in 1937, Alexander Vvedensky wrote, "The incomprehensible pleases us, the inexplicable is our friend." According to the official death certificate, Aleksandr Vvedensky died on December 20th, 1941. No one knows the cause of death. It could have been dysentery on the train on the way to the camps; it could have been the bullet of a guard. It occurred somewhere on the railroad between Voronezh and Kazan.

Pussy Riot are Vvedensky's students and heirs.

His principle of the bad rhyme is dear to us. He wrote, "Occasionally, I think of two different rhymes, a good one and a bad one, and I always choose the bad one because it is always the right one."

“The inexplicable is our friend”: the highbrow and refined works of the OBERIU poets and their search for thought on the edge of meaning were finally embodied when they paid with their lives, which were taken by the senseless and inexplicable Great Terror.

Paying with their lives, these poets unintentionally proved that they were right to consider irrationality and senselessness the nerves of their era. Thus, the artistic became an historical fact.

**The price of participation in the creation of history is immeasurably great for the individual. But the essence of human existence lies precisely in this participation. To be a beggar, and yet to enrich others. To have nothing, but to possess all. One considers the OBERIU dissidents dead, but they are alive. They are punished, but they do not die.**

Do you remember why young Dostoyevsky was sentenced to death? His entire guilt lay in the fact that he was fascinated by socialist theories, and during meetings of freethinkers and friends — which met on Fridays in the apartment of Petrashevsky — he discussed the writings of Fourier and George Sand.

**On one of the last Fridays, he read Belinsky’s letter to Gogol aloud, a letter that was filled, according to the court that tried Dostoevsky (listen!) “with impudent statements against the Orthodox Church and the State government.”**

After all the preparations for execution and “ten agonizing, infinitely terrifying minutes awaiting death” (Dostoyevsky), it was announced that the sentence was changed to four years of hard labor in Siberia followed by military service.

Socrates was accused of corrupting the youth with his philosophical discussions and refusing to accept the Athenian gods.

He had a living connection with the divine voice, and he was not, as he insisted many times, by any account an enemy of the gods. But what did that matter when Socrates irritated the influential citizens of his city with his critical, dialectical thought, free of prejudice?

Socrates was sentenced to death and, having refused to escape Athens (as his students proposed), he courageously emptied a cup of hemlock and died.

Have you forgotten under what circumstances Stephen, the disciple of the Apostles, concluded his earthly life? “Then they secretly induced men to say, ‘We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.’ And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council. They put forward false witnesses who said, ‘This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law.’” (Acts 6:11-13)

He was found guilty and stoned to death. I also hope that you all remember well how the Jews answered Christ: “It is not for good works that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy.”(John 10:33) And finally we would do well to keep in mind the following characterization of Christ: “He is demon-possessed and raving mad.” (John 10:20)

If the authorities, tsars, presidents, prime ministers, the people, and judges understood what “I desire mercy, not sacrifice” meant (Matthew 9:13), they would not put the innocent on trial.

Our authorities, however, still rush with condemnations, and never reprieves. To this point, I would like to thank Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev for providing us with the following excellent aphorism. He summarized his presidential term with the statement: “Liberty is better than non-liberty.” Thus in line with Medvedev’s apt words, Putin’s third term can well be characterized by the aphorism “Prison is better than stoning.”

I ask that you consider carefully the following from Montaigne’s Essays, which were written in the 16th century, preaching tolerance and the skeptical rejection of any unilateral system or doctrine: “It is putting a very high value on one’s conjectures, to have a man roasted alive because of them.”

Is it worth it to pass judgment on living people and put them in prison based on conjectures not substantiated by the prosecution?

**Since we truly have never harbored any religious hatred or animosity, our accusers have to rely on false witnesses.**

**One of them, Matilda Ivashchenko, became ashamed of herself and did not appear in court.**

**Then there were the false testimonies of Mr. Troitsky and Mr. Ponkin, as well as Mrs. Abramenkova.**

**There is no other proof of our hatred and animosity except for the so-called “expert evaluation,” which the court, if it is honest and fair, must consider unacceptable as factual proof, as it is not a rigorous and objective text but a dirty and false little paper reminiscent of the Inquisition.**

There is no other evidence that can confirm the existence of a motive.

The prosecutors have refused to voice excerpts from Pussy Riot interviews, since these excerpts would only further prove the absence of any motive.

Why wasn’t the following text by us—which, incidentally, appeared in the affidavit—presented by the prosecution? “We respect religion in general and the Orthodox faith in particular. This is why we are especially infuriated when Christian philosophy, which is full of light, is used in such a dirty fashion. It makes us sick to see such beautiful ideas forced to their knees.”

This quote appeared in an interview that The Russian Reporter conducted with Pussy Riot the day after our performance. We still feel sick, and it causes us real pain to look at all this.

**Finally, the lack of any hatred or animosity toward religion and the religious is affirmed by all character witnesses called in to testify by our lawyers. Apart from all these character references, I ask you to consider the results of the**

**psychological and psychiatric evaluations in jail number 6, ordered by the prison authorities.**

**The report revealed the following: the values that I embrace are justice, mutual respect, humaneness, equality, and freedom.**

This was written by a court expert, a person who does not know me personally, though it is possible that Ranchenko, the interrogator, desired a different conclusion.

But it seems that there are more people in our world who love and value truth than those who don't.

The Bible is correct in this. In conclusion I would like to read the words of a Pussy Riot song, that, strange as they may be, proved prophetic.

**We foresaw that “the Head of the KGB and the Chief Saint of the land place the protesters under guard and take them to prison.” This was about us.**

**Neither myself, nor Alyokhina, nor Samutsevich were found to have powerful and stable affects or other psychological values that could be interpreted as hatred toward anything or anyone.**

**So:**

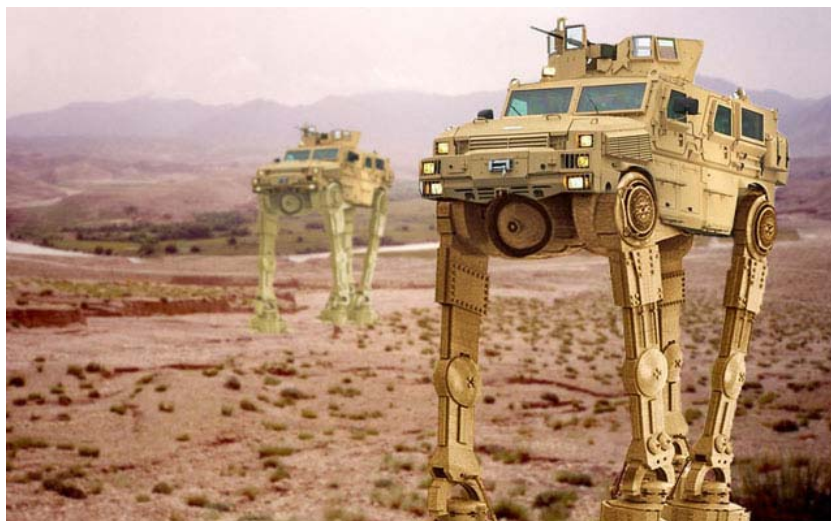
**“Open all the doors, tear off your epaulets**

**Come, taste freedom with us.”**

**That is all.**

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## **Army To Field Mine Resistant Ambush Protected-Walker Vehicle**





September 22, 2012 by Tony, The Duffle Blog

RED ROCK RIVER, TX – The Army has recently announced their plans to replace the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle with an updated vehicle dubbed the MRAP-Walker, or MRAP-W.

The Army MRAP has been the subject of intense defense budget debates, most of which trend toward austerity.

The options have run the gamut of scrapping the 26,000 strong fleet, selling to willing buyers like Israel and Saudi Arabia, or even to re-invading Iraq, with limited success.

However, some recent advancement in robotics technology have offered the Pentagon another means of preserving the MRAP fleet as what can only be described as Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Walkers (MRAP-W).

The initial \$5.7 million plan from BAE Systems calls for the retro-fitting of 4 heavy armor fifty-foot legs in place of the already gargantuan wheels. There were also new offensive weapons mounted into the front of the walker, so as to provide offensive means both forward and underneath the vehicle. An unnamed official at the Pentagon stated the plan was “the most efficient and bitchin’ thing we’ve seen since the first MRAP rolled off the line.”

The Osh Kosh Corporation is also planning to introduce a smaller Mine Resistant All Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV), a two-legged version for the Marine Corps later this year.

“We’re extremely excited,” said Kevin Fahey, a contractor with U.S. Army Program Executive Office on a recent tour of Red River Depot.

“This vehicle has saved a lot of lives. While that was its intended purpose, with the mission in Iraq over and the drawdown in Afghanistan well under way, we had to pull out all the stops to not only save the program, but increase the vehicle’s overall effectiveness, and strike terror into hearts our enemies. That’s a twofer.”

Veteran commanders of the Iraq War are also expressing their optimism. Major General Rick Lynch explained the original 14-ton MRAP was responsible for saving countless Soldier and Marine lives in Iraq. Due to the time consumed in devising Improvised Explosive Devices to counter it, the vehicle allowed Coalition Forces more time to catch them in the act.

“Think of the intimidation factor alone,” said Maj. Gen. Lynch. “This will also have all sorts of conventional warfare cross over appeal as well. I wouldn’t want to be a North Korean or Chinese infantryman, if this thing came stalking on to the battlefield. That alone makes it worth the exorbitant cost.”

At the troop level, the old MRAP had received mixed reviews.

It’s complex, contractor-only maintenance and increased rollover tendency, not to mention almost uncanny ability to get stuck on undeveloped roads made it the subject of derision — but it’s low casualty rate made it indispensable.

The new design however, has the doubters beginning to see the light.

“We didn’t really use it for situations that would entail contact,” said Staff Sergeant Manuel Ramos, an Army Cavalry Scout who deployed to Iraq with the 3rd Infantry Division in 2007.

“This however, could be a game changer. You’d solve the rollover problem and maybe this trap door in the bottom, with some rappelling line would solve any egress problems. Plus, you’d scare the shit out of people, so right there, you have more offensive capability than the old design.”

There have been some challenges in the early tests of the new MRAPs.

The four legged variant suffered a nasty accident, tripping over local power lines. The two legged variant failed to negotiate a rugged terrain course of rolling logs. Nevertheless, BAE says it is on schedule to deliver the first MRAP-Ws by Fiscal Year 2025. Osh Kosh Corp. has said their two-legged variant design will be fielded no later than FY 2020.

In a related story from the Taliban, intelligence officials have intercepted recent purchase orders for far less expensive “speeders with harpoons and tow cables” from Iran.

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## **ANNIVERSARIES**

**September 23, 1939:  
Disgusting Imperial Anniversary;  
Hitler Sells Lithuania, Stalin Buys**



Hitler-Stalin

Carl Bunin Peace News 9.23 – 9.30

Nazi-led Germany [capitalists pretending to be “National Socialists”] and the Communist Soviet Union [capitalists pretending to be Communists] considered enemies at the time, negotiated an addendum to the Hitler-Stalin Pact ceding Lithuania, the small independent country on the Baltic Sea, to the Soviets’ sphere of influence [translation: to the Russian Empire] in exchange for 7.5 million gold dollars.

Josef Stalin, the Georgian who was General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, and Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of Germany, had agreed the previous month to allow Germany free reign [translation: to expand the German Empire] in eastern Europe, leading to Germany’s invasion of Poland.

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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**A Week Of Protests:  
“For The Past Week Or More,  
Demonstrations In West Bank Cities  
Against The High Costs Of Living  
Were Growing As Government**

**Employees, Union Workers, And  
Students All Participated”  
“The Numbers Of People Demonstrating  
Rose, The Demographics Of Citizens  
Who Participated Widened, And The  
Frequency Of The Protests Intensified To  
The Point Where It Was Not Uncommon  
To See Multiple Demonstrations In A  
Single Day”**



Photo by Lazar Simeonov.

September 18, 2012 By James Knoop, Palestine Monitor [Excerpts]

For the past week or more, demonstrations in West Bank cities against the high costs of living were growing as government employees, union workers, and students all participated.

The protesters chanted slogans that called for the resignation of the Palestinian Prime Minister Salem Fayyad. They complained about the high cost of food and fuel.

**As the days passed, chants that decried the all too cozy relationship between the Palestinian Authority and Israel to maintain the status quo were openly heard. The focal point of their chanting and demonstrations was the infamous Paris Protocol, an economic offshoot of the Oslo Accords seen as the prime document that represses the Palestinian economy.**

**The protests grew, escalating into a bigger beast that threatened to precipitate a genuine social crisis. The numbers of people demonstrating rose, the demographics of citizens who participated widened, and the frequency of the protests intensified to the point where it was not uncommon to see multiple demonstrations in a single day.**

**Ramallah, the de facto capital city of the West Bank, saw afternoon protests turn into weekend fires at the al Amari refugee camp, blocking the main road to East Jerusalem on two successive evenings.**

The fires were attended largely by children, but clearly tolerated by the authorities. At about 11 pm, a lone security official in plain clothes came to clear the gathering and the children quickly ushered back towards their homes.

A few minutes later, some older members of the camp had come out and surrounded the security official which led to a shoving match.

**The crowd swarmed to see the burgeoning skirmish, when the security official decided to pull out a gun and pop off a round into the air. Amazingly, this did little to persuade the crowd to leave and so he fired a second time.**

One elderly man in his pajamas simply walked through the crowd carrying his laundry and ignored the entire show. Fire officials put out the fires and cleared the roads and soon cars were making their way again through the busy thoroughfare.

On Monday, as the working week began, demonstrators set fire to the entrance and exits of town early in the morning, near Birzeit University and al-Amari refugee camp.

Crowds gathered to watch streams of black smoke billow from burning tires, and cars were prevented from going to work, although some nervously tried to run the blockades.

Although largely peaceful, last Monday's demonstrations in Hebron saw around 50 protesters pelting the police station, the municipality building and a fire truck with stones.

The PA riot police fired tear gas to disperse the crowds, and up to 80 demonstrators were reported injured by the Red Crescent Society in Hebron. A similar scenario unfolded in Nablus that resulted in 60 people injured, including the town's mayor. In Bethlehem, taxi drivers and truckers blocked the streets causing several incidents of civil clashes as commuters simply wanted to go home.

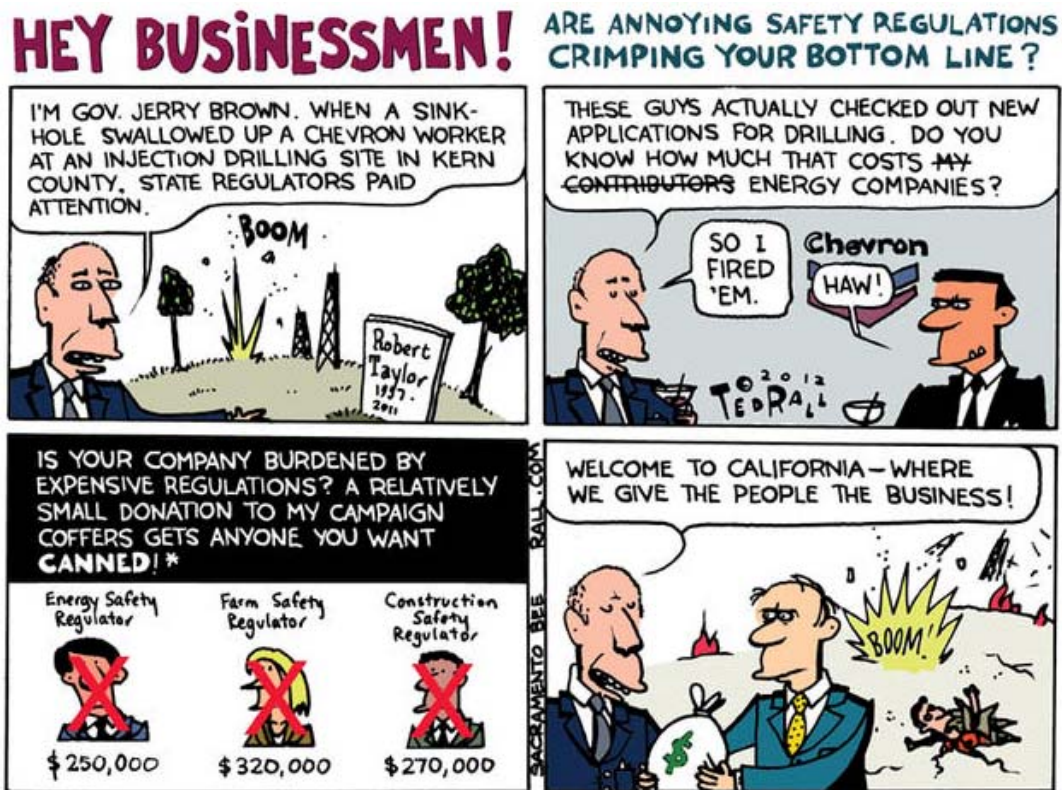
**The following morning, workers, union members and even some of the politicians gathered early at the office of Prime Minister Fayyad in the government district in**

Ramallah. This led to the subsequent announcement from Fayyad that there would be small concessions granted on price rises and salaries.

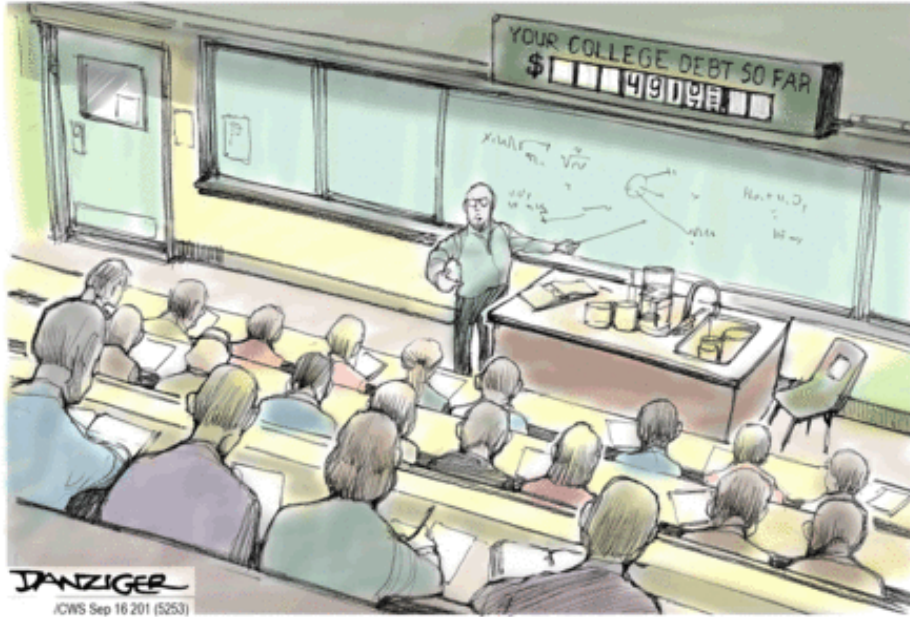
Later on in the afternoon, another demonstration saw a crowd of young professionals march from the main square in town to the compound of Yassar Arafat, the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority. Watched over by police and security officials, this crowd was vocal and even expressed anti-Abbas and anti-PA sentiment as they reached the Muqata'a compound where police had their hands locked together, blocking the entrance to the building.

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

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



## CLASS WAR REPORTS



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# **The Chicago Teachers Strike: Militant Workers Holds Off Parts Of A Ruling Class Attack On Free Public Education; New Contract Leaves Teaches Worse Off Than Before; With Student And Community Backing, They Limit Losses, Conducting A Skillful, Fighting Retreat**

September 18, 2012 By Alan Maass, Elizabeth Schulte and Lee Sustar, Socialist Worker  
[Excerpts]

The teachers' strike has rocked Chicago to its core and given the world a too-seldom-seen glimpse of working people's power in the heart of the U.S.

It has been solidarity in action--an outpouring of public support for the teachers' fight for a fair contract, and a display of the teachers' determination to fight for their students, their schools and the communities they serve.

**Since Friday, teachers have been debating a contract proposal that turned back the harshest items on the school reform list.**

**But the contract also contains painful concessions.**

[A] majority of Chicagoans--and an even larger majority of parents of CPS students, according to polls--don't buy Emanuel's claims to care about "the children."

The reaction of teachers during these discussions ranged from enthusiasm for the seeming gains in the contract to bitter anger at the setbacks.

There are some clear-cut wins.

CPS dropped its proposal for merit pay--a central element of the school reform agenda. Teachers will keep their "steps and lanes" pay structure that gives additional salary increases based on seniority and education.

The contract is for three years, instead of the four-year deal the city sought.

Base pay will rise by 3 percent in the first year and 2 percent in the second and third--and the contract bars CPS from unilaterally rescinding these pay hikes, as it did with the previously bargained 4 percent increase last year.

**But the yearly increases in base salary won't make up for an uncompensated increase in the length of the school year--though when steps-and-lanes raises are included, pay will be higher.**

The CTU fended off demands for a 40 percent increase in contributions from teachers for health insurance, freezing current costs, a rarity in labor contracts today.

**But under the proposed contract, CTU members will have to join the city's "wellness" scheme--an intrusive health insurance program that requires employees to surrender personal medical information. Teachers can opt out of the wellness program--but at a cost of \$600 a year.**

One big area of contention in negotiations was CPS's system for evaluating teachers. School officials wanted student test scores to count for half of a teachers' evaluation.

The union successfully pushed this back to the minimum 25 percent under state law, rising to 30 percent in the third year of the deal.

But many CTU members are troubled by the fact that the "test scores"--which determine where teachers fall in the four evaluation categories--are skewed toward the lower rankings.

**This will put more members at risk of losing their jobs due to poor evaluations. Union negotiators did, however, secure language making it possible for teachers to appeal certain rankings and move out of the lower-tiered ranks.**

These provisions gained by the union will soften the blow of the evaluation system.



Yet in discussions, many teachers expressed frustration that test scores are, as a result of a state mandate, part of evaluations at all.

They know from day-to-day experience that student performance on standardized tests is affected by factors they can't control. At Bass Elementary School on the South Side, a special education teacher spoke powerfully on Monday about how useless testing would be in measuring the progress she makes with her students.

**The provisions that may be toughest to swallow for CTU members are focused on the fate of teachers who get laid off. This will become an even more decisive question in the coming year, as CPS prepares to close or "turn around" a rumored 80 to 100 schools.**

**On the one hand, the contract guarantees that half of new teachers hired by CPS will be displaced CTU members--the first time the union's contract has had a concrete provision like this, according to CTU staff.**

**But the contract also cuts the time that laid-off teachers stay in the "displaced teacher" pool--during which they receive full pay and benefits--from 10 months to five.**

With Emanuel and CPS planning to shut down dozens of schools--and lay off teachers whose only "failure" was to be working in the wrong place at the wrong time--CTU members will have new, but untested, opportunities for recall.

**But they will unquestionably lose provisions that in the past protected them financially if the worst happened.**

While some of the union's presentations to the press chiefly emphasized the gains made in the contract, with members, leaders of the union have been upfront about the provisions they consider concessions.

**At the Sunday press conference, Karen Lewis refused to characterize the tentative agreement as "good" or "bad," but called it "the deal we could get."**

Meanwhile, the two major teachers unions, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association, are largely collaborating with the assault.

One common sentiment on picket lines on Monday was disappointment about the lack of enforceable contract provisions lowering class sizes.

Teachers and their supporters are right to be angry that CPS won't take up such a crucial issue for the success of public schools. But it's also important to remember that struggles like these won't end when the strike is over and a contract is signed. The strike itself is only a first step in battles that will have to go on long after.

The Chicago Teachers Union was facing a speeding locomotive of corporate school reform headed straight at them.

Teachers must now make a decision on a contract that includes disappointing concessions alongside its gains. But whatever they decide, they can be proud that they pushed back against the privatizers and union-busters--and they will emerge much stronger than before, and an inspiration to labor activists around the country.

This extraordinary struggle in Chicago could be the first step in a new movement for our schools.

Now, though, it's up to not only teachers but everyone who believes in social justice to continue that fight--and take the next steps together.

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**“For All The Talk About Foreign Flow  
Of Weapons And Support For The  
Revolutionaries, Nothing Of Any  
Substance Has Made It To The  
Fighters In Syria”**

**“The Power Of The Syrian People  
Themselves Has Proved To Be Greater  
Than All The Empty Talk Of Support  
Coming From The World Governments”**

September 20, 2012 By Yusef Khalil, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

For all the talk about foreign flow of weapons and support for the revolutionaries, nothing of any substance has made it to the fighters in Syria.

Most arms are acquired on the black market and smuggled into Syria with no official backing.

The regional conditions are not favorable to an increase in quantity and quality of state-supplied weapons, which would require operations in neighboring countries. Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq cannot host such operations without risking their own internal destabilization and getting dragged into a regional war.

As a result, only light weapons are making their way into Syria.

As for direct intervention by the U.S., Syrian Marxist Salamah Kailah explained that the Syrian revolution is happening in a new world.

This is not the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which left the U.S. as the greatest hegemonic world power. It is not pre-2008, when the U.S. adopted former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's theory of a revolution in military affairs, "which emphasized America's ability to wage two big wars and several smaller wars at the same time."

The U.S. is in a period of deep structural economic crisis, Kailah wrote, which has led to a "significant decrease in the Department of Defense budget, and in the number of American forces, including the Marines." The U.S. "can only wage one war (and it is now stuck in Afghanistan)."

Therefore, Washington will not intervene militarily at this moment because it is not prepared to deal with a potential regional war.

Western powers have furthermore declared that they will not provide arms to the revolutionaries.

Whatever little is trickling in is mostly logistical and non-lethal support to select groups, and even the extent of that aid is disputed.

In fact, the U.S. is blocking any transfer of heavy weapons by any party.

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian was categorical about it, stating recently: "Things are very clear: on the question of supplying weapons, the answer is no. France does not supply and will not supply the Syrian opposition with weapons."

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey are only sending light weapons or funds to groups who pledge allegiance to those countries.

The scale of foreign intervention currently in Syria is in the other direction--heavily weighed towards Russian and Iranian military and logistical support for the Assad regime.

The problem of foreign intervention in Syria is not due to Syrian revolutionary fighters who accept weapons from the outside in order to protect themselves and engage the regime's forces.

But regardless of the debates for or against intervention in Syria, it's obvious that Western powers are moved by questions of self-interest, not by lobbying efforts--especially when it comes to war.

**“We, Along With The Syrian Revolutionary Left, See The Strategy Of Betting On Foreign Intervention As A Danger That Threatens The Revolution”**

The point of saying this is not to place conditions on the Syrian Revolution, but because we want the revolution to succeed, and because we, along with the Syrian revolutionary left, see the strategy of betting on foreign intervention as a danger that threatens the revolution.

The power of the Syrian people themselves has proved to be greater than all the empty talk of support coming from the world governments.

This brings up another debate within the revolutionary movement about the wisdom of the resistance holding ground in civilian neighborhoods, with the associated regime attacks, civilian casualties and destruction, versus guerrilla hit-and-run tactics against regime positions.

But one thing is certain: the strategy of armed resistance was forced on the revolutionaries.

Some observers have mistakenly linked the armed struggle with religious sectarianism. This is not true. The Islamist armed groups that are trying to take advantage of the situation exist on the fringe of the revolutionary movement.

Yet it is not surprising that the regime is painting the whole revolution as the work of Islamic fundamentalist terrorists.

The government's aim was to prevent the revolt from spreading to areas dominated by religious and ethnic minorities and to isolate the resistance among Sunni Muslims, while also garnering international support (or at least acquiescence) for the brutal crackdown.

While the groups and brigades grouped loosely under the FSA have Islamic names that borrow from the area's rich history (and are sometimes designed to attract sources of material support), they are not driven by sectarianism.

**Actual sectarianism is fueled by the regime's deliberate massacres aimed at provoking such a response from the revolutionaries.**

**This is amplified by Gulf states selectively supporting groups with a shared ideology, which deflects any homegrown anger against their own dictatorial system.**

The problem we face, however, is that the regime's continued use of sectarian death squads and its attempts to implicate other minorities in its atrocities are in fact creating a fertile ground for sectarianism to take root in Syria--even among the opposition. This is a major challenge for the revolutionary forces.

Although there is nothing automatic about overcoming such challenges, the FSA and the revolutionary formations in Syria are correcting, adapting and learning how to work together.

Many armed groups inside the FSA have explicitly rejected sectarianism. The July edition of Frontline, a revolutionary leftist newspaper from Syria, gives the example of the military council in Deir el-Zour, which issued rules to the FSA fighters, including:

-- It is forbidden to set up checkpoints and inconvenience people.

-- It is forbidden to kill regime informants, but if you catch one, you can beat them and then deliver them to their family.

-- It is forbidden to interfere with or attack Alawites in Deir Ezzour.

-- Members of the FSA must pay for anything received from the people either by paying cash, or working: harvest the fields, build, etc.

In addition, in early August, the Local Coordinating Committees (LCCs) published a Code of Conduct for military operations, which included a pledge by fighters "not to exercise reprisals on the basis of ethnicity, sect, religion or any other basis."

**In September, fearing that foreign groups may take advantage of the Syrian situation to push their own agendas, the head of the FSA Military Council asked all foreign fighters to leave the country.**

"We don't want Syria to turn into an area for settling scores or proxy wars," he said, "We have enough experienced men to win the battle, but are lacking quality weapons which would help expedite the results."

### **“While The Resistance Fighters Have Captured Headlines, There Has Been A Proliferation Of Grassroots Councils”**

While the resistance fighters have captured headlines, there has been a proliferation of grassroots councils, some of them more democratic than others, which organize everything from protests to civil disobedience to flash mobs.

**In some places, they even function as local governments in the absence of the regime, taking up basic functions, such as garbage collection, civil defense, armed defense, evacuations, food and medicine distribution, and more.**

**These functions of self-government vary according to location.**

**In some cases, the tasks are carried out by committees that coordinate in the same council. Elsewhere, these efforts are more fragmented. Sometimes, the councils operate only on the scale of a small neighborhood. Other councils operate in a more structured manner on the scale of larger districts and cities.**

For example, several FSA groups may affiliate with a military council, which is then part of a larger revolutionary council, which also includes the Local Coordinating Committees and other groups. Sometimes, the memberships between the different groups are distinct, and other times, they overlap.

As Jamie Allinson put it, "The presence of these local committees, and their character, should not be taken as an argument that the Syrian workers' republic is nigh.

Rather they indicate that the dynamics in Syria are those--complicated, bloody, messy--of an actual revolutionary process and not simply an extrusion of armed gangs operating at the behest of external enemies."

Many people, including the revolutionary left in Syria, are calling to increase these grassroots organizations and make them more democratic. They are calling for the formation of popular brigades to protect neighborhoods and public institutions.

Everybody is discussing what to do when the regime falls.

What are the immediate tasks of the revolutionary government? Dismantling the security regime? Forming a constituent assembly with free elections based on proportional representation to draft a revolutionary secular constitution?

**The grassroots councils should play a main role in a free Syria. They are the legitimate representatives of the Syrian revolution. They are not only critical for the current fight against the regime, but they are also the hope for the future.**

**The stronger and more participatory they are, the harder it will be for anybody to force unjust laws and conditions on the Syrian people, regardless of who takes "official" power in Damascus.**

Moreover, the threat of Western cooptation or fear of Islamists coming to power needs to be understood in the current context of region-wide popular uprisings against dictatorships.

Syrians will not accept another dictator, backed by either East or West.

Syria also faces a deep economic crises that the Islamist parties cannot solve. The problem is not simply a matter of regime authoritarianism and corruption that needs to be cleaned up. The conditions that the majority of Syrians are rebelling against are due to fundamental problems with neoliberal economic policies.

It will be up to these committees organized on a local regional, and provincial level to meet these challenges and take on the tasks of fulfilling the potential of the revolution and the historic aspirations of the Syrian people.

These aspirations include, but are not limited to: freedom to speak our minds, practice our different religions, languages and cultural traditions, live in a truly secular society, have free elections for accountable representatives, and finally recognize the full rights of the Kurdish population including their right to self-determination.

Further, a revolutionary democratic Syria should press to liberate the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, support a free Palestine, reject economic policies and systems that concentrate wealth at the top of society and adopt economic policies and systems which serve the interests of the majority of Syrians--workers, peasants, students and youths. To that end, Syrians need the right to form independent unions and organizations of the working class to strengthen that struggle and carry it forward.

**The list goes on and on.**

**This is a very tall order.**

**Some of it is controversial, much of it in direct conflict with Washington's and Moscow's interests. But this perspective can only be discussed, debated and**

resolved in the course of a continued revolutionary struggle and a decisive victory over the dictatorship.

### **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.**

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