

Military Resistance 10J16



**Sierra Vista Residents Say
Soldier's Death A Tragedy:
"Those Mourning Savard's Death
Said Enough Is Enough"
"I Think We Should Call Them All Back
Home. Now"**

10/15/2012 KVOA, Tucson, AZ.

TUCSON-A man with close ties to Southern Arizona has died while serving our country.

Twenty-nine-year-old Sergeant First Class Ryan Savard from Sierra Vista was shot while on patrol in Afghanistan. Savard was stationed at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. He graduated from Buena High School in 2001.

The death of Savard struck a chord with people in Sierra Vista.

Although supporters of the war in Afghanistan said troops are needed there to keep the country from being a safe haven for terrorists, those mourning Savard's death said enough is enough.

Sierra Vista residents are calling Ryan Savard's death a travesty.

Just a few months after high school, Savard enlisted in the Army. After years of service, he was killed in Afghanistan.

"It hurts," said Vietnam Veteran John Ogao.

He said Savard's death hits close to home. "I lost a lot of buddies in the war, and you don't forget that," said Ogao.

He said he is still mourning his fellow soldiers. "I think we should call them all back home. Now," said Ogao.

Donna Doan grew up in Vietnam during the war. "When I was thirteen years old, I watched my father die," said Doan.

She said he was on his way to work when it happened.

"They drop the bomb, and I don't know...He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time," said Doan.

She said losing a loved one that way is a horrible thing and can sympathize with veterans like Ogao.

"It breaks my heart," said Doan.

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghans Who Collaborated With The Occupation Abandoned To The Taliban:

**“Some Interpreters Say They Have
Waited Years With Hardly A Word
From The State Department About
Their Applications”**

**“I Can’t Stop Thinking About It,” He
Said. “I Knew I Would Have To Wait,
But I Never Expected To Wait This
Long”**

“I Can’t Wait To Go To Vegas”

“The visa process is a black hole,” said one U.S. military official in Afghanistan who has helped 30 interpreters apply for visas.

“We haven’t heard a word about a single application. From what I’ve seen, they aren’t processing anything.”

October 25 By Kevin Sieff, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

KABUL —

Of the more than 5,700 Afghans who have applied for U.S. visas under a special program tailored for those who have supported the American war effort, just 32 have been approved, the State Department says, leaving the rest in limbo as foreign forces begin their withdrawal.

The growing, protracted backlog threatens to undermine congressionally approved legislation, as well as the longstanding guarantee that the United States will protect Afghans whose contribution to the American mission has left them hunted and

vulnerable.

In 2009, the Afghan Allies Protection Act allocated 7,500 visas for Afghans employed by the U.S. government, mostly as military interpreters. The legislation was intended to respond to a prospect that the interpreters knew well:

Some interpreters say they have waited years with hardly a word from the State Department about their applications.

The U.S. embassy's visa office in Kabul has been badly understaffed, according to immigration attorneys who have worked on interpreters' cases.

The long wait has been disheartening to thousands of men and women critical to the American mission, many of whom serve on the front lines with U.S. troops. Since 2007, at least 80 interpreters have been killed in combat.

Farhat, who would only allow his last name to be used because he fears for his safety, is among those living in limbo due to the backlog.

He said he has been working as an interpreter for the U.S. Army for three years, since he was 18. It was the best paying job he could find. It was also the most dangerous.

While he was translating Pashto in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, the Taliban had begun its resurgence, killing anyone seen as sympathetic to the U.S.-led war effort.

Insurgents sent letters to Farhat's family, he said. "You're an infidel," they said. "You are killing Muslims."

They kidnapped his cousin and called Farhat to say simply, "We warned you."

His cousin was eventually freed by Afghan police, Farhat said, but the threats kept coming.

Farhat said he could think of only one option.

He would apply for an American visa for himself and his wife.

When he applied in 2009, Farhat seemed a perfect candidate: a speaker of nearly unaccented American English, a man who had risked his life countless times for the U.S. mission.

But three years later, he's still waiting for a visa.

He checks the status of his application online almost every day. It always says the same word: "Pending."

"My life is on the line here, and I keep waiting and waiting," Farhat said.

For many interpreters, the easiest part of the visa application is citing the threats against their lives.

One of Farhat's colleagues, Atiqullah, wrote about the time insurgents chased him in his truck, firing AK-47 rounds, destroying the vehicle and nearly killing him.

Another colleague, Irshadullah, described how a Taliban member called his father's cellphone and said, "If your son doesn't stop working with coalition forces, we're going to remove his head from his body and burn your house."

To protect their identity, many interpreters use aliases when they're at work in the field.

Almost all of them have chosen thoroughly American names: Joe, Eric, Mark, Danny. They've spent years gleaning anecdotes about American culture, reading old surfing magazines, learning the relative merits of the East and West Coast and listening to country music.

"I can't wait to go to Vegas," Farhat said.

U.S. military officials say they're frustrated the visas have not come more quickly.

"The visa process is a black hole," said one U.S. military official in Afghanistan who has helped 30 interpreters apply for visas.

"We haven't heard a word about a single application. From what I've seen, they aren't processing anything."

"I get contacted daily by Afghan interpreters and the Americans they served beside, terrified about the consequences of not receiving their visas before the military withdrawal," said Becca Heller, the director of the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project.

During the three years Farhat has waited for a visa, he's seen the size of the U.S. military presence rise and fall.

"I can't stop thinking about it," he said. "I knew I would have to wait, but I never expected to wait this long."

MILITARY NEWS

"They Survived The Battlefields Of Iraq And Afghanistan. But They Did Not Survive The Homecoming"

“I Think The Checks And Balances On Our Soldiers After They Get Back Is Absolutely Disgraceful” “If He Hadn’t Been Ignored, He Would Have Never Gotten To This Point”

Sept. 29, 2012 By American-Statesman Investigative Team, Austin, Texas [Excerpts]

They survived the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. But they did not survive the homecoming.

The Statesman obtained autopsy results, toxicology reports, inquests and accident reports from more than 50 agencies throughout the state to analyze the causes of death for 266 Texas veterans who served in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and were receiving Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits when they died.

The Statesman investigation, which relied on 345 fragmentary death records provided by the VA — as well as obituaries and interviews with veterans’ families — reveals a phenomenon that has mostly been hidden from public view.

More than 1 in 3 died from a drug overdose, a fatal combination of drugs or suicide. Their median age at death was 28.

Nearly 1 in 5 died in a motor vehicle crash.

Of those with a primary diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, the numbers are even more disturbing: 80 percent died of overdose, suicide or a single-vehicle crash. Only two of the 46 Texas veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan operations who had a PTSD diagnosis died of disease or illness, according to the newspaper’s analysis.

The 345 Texas veterans identified by the VA as having died since coming home is equal to nearly two-thirds of the state’s casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan. But that only includes veterans who have sought VA benefits, meaning the total number of deaths is likely much larger.

The investigation highlights the problem of prescription drug overdose among veterans, which has received scant attention compared to suicides: Nearly as many Texas veterans died after taking prescription medicine as committed suicide.

VA prescriptions for powerful narcotics have skyrocketed over the past decade even as evidence mounted that such painkillers and PTSD make a dangerous combination.

The deaths represent a fraction of the nearly 53,000 Texas veterans of the conflicts who had applied for disability benefits as of 2011, and veterans groups say most former combatants re-integrate into the civilian world without major trauma.

Yet the autopsy reports and investigation narratives obtained by the Statesman paint a mosaic of pain, desperation and hopelessness among a significant number of Texas veterans.

Among them were:

Chad Mitchell, 40, a veteran of seven overseas deployments who had settled in Austin after leaving the Navy. He died in September 2010 with a half-dozen prescription drugs in his system, including anti-anxiety medication and powerful painkillers oxycodone and methadone prescribed by physicians in a private pain clinic and VA doctors.

Mitchell suffered from PTSD, chest pain from an earlier operation and nerve pain from a shoulder injury in Iraq.

The analysis revealed: 47 veterans died from drug overdoses or a toxic combinations of drugs — 40 of them after taking prescription medications. Five overdosed on heroin or cocaine and had no prescription drugs in their systems.

One died after huffing aerosol refrigerant and another after ingesting the illegal stimulant Ecstasy.

Some family members contacted by the newspaper said medical delays were a frequent frustration for veterans before they died.

In 2010, 22-year-old Clint Dickey drove from College Station to Waco to try to see a VA doctor for back pain caused by an injury he suffered in Afghanistan. They gave him an appointment for four to six weeks later.

He died of an accidental prescription drug overdose a few days later.

His widow, Samantha, suspects her husband's pain became so bad that he obtained oxycodone without a prescription.

"If he hadn't been ignored, he would have never gotten to this point," she said. "I think the checks and balances on our soldiers after they get back is absolutely disgraceful."

The VA also has struggled with balancing the benefits of strong prescription drugs with their risks.

Mirroring trends among civilian physicians, VA doctors over the past decade wrote dramatically more prescriptions for powerful painkillers — hydrocodone use among veterans jumped more than sixfold between 2001 and 2011, according to records the Statesman obtained under the federal Freedom of Information Act.

Yet recent research has demonstrated that what doctors once thought they knew about the addictiveness of the powerful prescription painkillers was wrong.

“The research shows they’re highly addictive, especially using them in young adults,” said Andrew Kolodny, chairman of the psychiatry department at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., and president of Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing.

A study published earlier this year in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that soldiers with PTSD were both more likely to be prescribed narcotic painkillers and to misuse them.

Dickey’s family and friends said he had a solid foundation for a new life. Dickey had started classes at Texas A&M University, and he and Samantha had gotten married and gone on a tropical honeymoon.

Samantha said her new husband, although in physical pain and battling PTSD, talked about it being one of the happiest chapters in his life.

“We were having a spectacular time,” she said.

At Dickey mother’s house in Waco, pictures of her youngest of four children line the walls.

Beverly Dickey says that when her son arrived home from war, she figured he was safe. His death, she said, has altered every part of her life, down to the prayers she says for the troops. “I ask that the Lord protect them while they’re over there, bring them home safely — and cast out their demons when they’re home.”

General Charged With “Forced Sex, Pornography, Violating An Order, Alcohol Use, Engaging In Inappropriate Relationships, Misusing A Government Travel Charge Card, And Conduct Unbecoming An Officer” “Questions About Whether His Case Is Being Treated Differently Because Sinclair Is A General Officer”



Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair faces possible courts martial on charges that include forced sex, pornography, violating an order, alcohol use, engaging in inappropriate relationships, misusing a government travel charge card, and conduct unbecoming an officer.

Contrary to previous practices, the Army and the Defense Department have repeatedly refused to release details of the charges against Sinclair, raising questions about whether his case is being treated differently because Sinclair is a general officer.

Oct 25, 2012 The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — An Army brigadier general will face charges of sodomy and sex crimes next month in a preliminary hearing to determine if there is enough evidence for him to be put on trial, Fort Bragg officials said Thursday.

The Article 32 hearing for Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair will be Nov. 5 at the sprawling post that is home to the 82nd Airborne Division, a statement said. Sinclair was deputy commander in charge of logistics and support for the division's troops in Afghanistan from July 2010 until he was sent home in May because of the allegations.

Sinclair has served five combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Sinclair has been charged with forcible sodomy, multiple counts of adultery and having inappropriate relationships with several female subordinates. Two U.S. defense officials told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity last month that the allegations involved female subordinates.

Sinclair also faces possible courts martial on charges that include forced sex; wrongful sexual conduct; violating an order; possessing pornography and alcohol while deployed; and misusing a government travel charge card and filing fraudulent claims.

Contrary to previous practices, the Army and the Defense Department have repeatedly refused to release details of the charges against Sinclair, raising questions about whether his case is being treated differently because Sinclair is a general officer.

In contrast, the Army quickly released charge sheets laying out the criminal charges against the soldier accused in March of gunning down 17 Afghan civilians, including children in their beds, in a massacre in southern Afghanistan.

The offenses in the gruesome rampage were detailed shortly after Staff Sgt. Robert Bales was charged.

Army spokesman George Wright said Thursday the Army may release details on Sinclair's charges after the hearing.

The Army can refuse to release the details because they could prejudice judicial proceedings, he said.

It was not immediately clear why those concerns are relevant in the Sinclair case, but not in Bales' premeditated murder case.

“Billions Of Dollars Have Been Spent And Wasted To Purchase Uniforms And The Associated Equipment For The Different Service Branches”

“This Has Been An Utter, Complete And Unquestionable Disaster”

“This Callous Disregard For The Taxpayer's Money Is Precisely What Is Wrong With Government Today”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
October 29, 2012

I laughed out loud when I read former Marine Gen. James Jones' assertion that a distinctive uniform was essential to a service's "integrity and morale" as if decade after

decade of wearing the same OD greens and battle dress uniform/Desert Combat Uniform somehow detracted from that.

So to make the individual services feel better about themselves, the Defense Department has spent 10 years making an effort to give each service branch its own distinctive camouflage pattern.

This has been an utter, complete and unquestionable disaster.

Since 2002, billions of dollars have been spent and wasted to purchase uniforms and the associated equipment for the different service branches, and it would seem that only the Marine Corps has managed to get it right.

Our massive national debt has been accurately referred to as a grave national security threat, yet here Gen. Jones has made it clear that he values some fanciful notion of "integrity and morale" over using the most efficient means of procuring equipment.

This callous disregard for the tax-payer's money is precisely what is wrong with government today.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Zlotow
Fort Riley, Kan.

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

**What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.
-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787**

The Origin Of The Golden Rule: [Those Who Have The Gold Make The Rules]

By Frederick Engels 1887. Source: Marx and Engels On Religion, Progress Publishers, 1957

The world outlook of the Middle Ages was substantially theological. The unity of the European world which actually did not exist internally, was established externally, against the common Saracen foe, by Christianity.

The unity of the West-European world, which consisted of a group of nations developing in continual intercourse, was welded in Catholicism.

This theological welding was not only in ideas, it existed in reality, not only in the Pope, its monarchistic centre, but above all in the feudally and hierarchically organized Church, which, owning about a third of the land in every country, occupied a position of tremendous power in the feudal organization.

The Church with its feudal landownership was the real link between the different countries; the feudal organization of the Church gave a religious consecration to the secular feudal state system.

Besides, the clergy was the only educated class. It was therefore natural that Church dogma was the starting-point and basis of all thought.

Jurisprudence, natural science, philosophy, everything was dealt with according to, whether its content agreed or disagreed with the doctrines of the Church.

But in the womb of feudalism the power of the bourgeoisie was developing.

A new class appeared in opposition to the big landowners.

The city burghers were first and foremost and exclusively producers of and traders in commodities, while the feudal mode of production was based substantially on self-consumption of the product within a limited circle, partly by the producers and partly by the feudal lord.

The Catholic world outlook, fashioned on the pattern of feudalism, was no longer adequate for this new class and its conditions of production and exchange.

Nevertheless, this new class remained for a long time a captive in the bonds of almighty theology.

From the thirteenth to the seventeenth century all the reformations and the struggles carried out under religious slogans that were connected with them were, on the theoretical side, nothing but repeated attempts of the burghers and plebeians in the towns and the peasants who had become rebellious by contact with both the latter to adapt the old theological world outlook to the changed economic conditions and the condition of life of the new class.

But that could not be done.

The flag of religion waved for the last time in England in the seventeenth century, and hardly fifty years later appeared undisguised in France the new world outlook which was to become the classical outlook of bourgeoisie, the juristic world outlook.

It was a secularization of the theological outlook.

Human right took the place of dogma, of divine right, the state took the place of the church.

The economic and social conditions, which had formerly been imagined to have been created by the Church and dogma because they were sanctioned by the Church, were now considered as founded on right and created by the state.

Because commodity exchange on a social scale and in its full development, particularly through advance and credit, produces complicated mutual contract relations and therefore demands generally applicable rules that can be given only by the community — state-determined standards of right — it was imagined that these standards of right arose not from the economic facts but from formal establishment by the state.

And because competition, the basic form of trade of free commodity producers, is the greatest equalizer, equality before the law became the main battle-cry of the bourgeoisie.

The fact that this newly aspiring class's struggle against the feudal lords and the absolute monarchy then protecting them, like every class struggle, had to be a political

struggle, a struggle for the mastery of the state, and had to be fought on juridical demands contributed to strengthen the juristic outlook.

But the bourgeoisie produced its negative double, the proletariat, and with it a new class struggle which broke out before the bourgeoisie had completed the conquest of political power.

As the bourgeoisie in its time had by force of tradition dragged the theological outlook with it for a while in its fight against the nobility, so, too, the proletariat at first took over the juristic outlook from its opponent and sought in it weapons against the bourgeoisie.

The first elements of the proletarian party as well as their theoretical representatives remained wholly on the juristic “ground of right,” the only distinction being that they built up for themselves a different ground of “right” from that of the bourgeoisie.

On one side the demand for equality was extended so that equality in right would be completed by social equality; on the other, from Adam Smith’s proposition that labour is the source of all wealth but that the product of labour must be shared with the landowner and the capitalist the conclusion was drawn that this sharing was unjust and must be either abolished or modified in favour of the worker.

But the feeling that to leave this question on the mere juristic “ground of right” in no way made possible the abolition of the evil conditions created by the bourgeois-capitalistic mode of production, i.e., the mode of production based on large-scale industry, already then led the major minds among the earlier socialists — Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen — to abandon entirely the juristic-political field and to declare all political struggle fruitless.

Both these views were equally unsatisfactory to express adequately and embrace completely the working class’s desire for emancipation created by economic conditions.

The demand for the full product of labour and just as much the demand for equality lost themselves in unsolvable contradictions as soon as they were formulated juristically in detail and left the core of the question — the transformation of the mode of production — more or less untouched.

The rejection of the political struggle by the great Utopians was at the same time the rejection of the class struggle, i.e., of the only form of activity of the class whose interests they represented.

Both outlooks made abstraction of the historical background to which they owed their existence; both appealed to feeling: some to the feeling of justice, others to the feeling of humanity.

Both attired their demands in the form of pious wishes of which one could not say why they had to be fulfilled at that very time and not a thousand years earlier or later.

The working class, who by the changing of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode was deprived of all ownership of the means of production and by the mechanism of the capitalist mode of production is continually engendered anew in that hereditary state of propertylessness, cannot find an exhaustive expression of its living condition in the juristic illusion of the bourgeoisie.

It can only know that condition of life fully itself if it looks at things in their reality without juristically colored glasses.

But Marx helped it to do that with his materialist conception of history, by providing the proof that all man's juristic, political, philosophical, religious and other ideas are derived in the last resort from his economic conditions of life, from his mode of production and of exchanging the product.

Thus he provided the world outlook corresponding to the conditions of the life and struggle of the proletariat; only lack of illusions in the heads of the workers could correspond to their lack of property. And this proletarian world outlook is now spreading over the world.

Congressman Horrified To Learn Soldiers Issued Green Fleece Caps



October 28, 2012 by ArmyJ, The Duffle Blog. About The Author: ArmyJ does not sleep....he waits. Occasionally he can be seen wandering around in a military uniform, but he flees when approached by those of higher rank.

WASHINGTON, D.C. –

A congressman reported today that he was horrified to learn that the Army has been issuing its soldiers green fleece watch caps since 2006. The shocking revelations came during a drive through downtown Washington, where Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) observed a unit of Army reserve soldiers out for a run.

“The first thing I thought was ‘those are the stupidest things I’ve ever seen!’ Then I realized they were American soldiers and I almost threw up in my mouth,” said Levin, after adjusting his flag lapel pin.

“Then I of course thanked them for their service.”

The oversized headgear replaced a more popular, civilian-modeled black version that was widely loved among soldiers, after Army leadership observed the soldiers wearing the caps off-duty in all types of outdoor situations.

“I mean, I remember when they had those black caps, and they looked great with everything. After the incident this morning, I did a little research. These things don’t match a single uniform we have in the inventory!” said Levin.

“What kind of dipshit would authorize something like this?”

Duffel Blog reporters tracked down Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler, to confront him on the issue.

“It’s all about value and appearance. When we gave soldiers the black cap, they would use them to ski, hunt, and pretty much anything else outdoors without looking like a jackass. On the Army’s dime! Well not on our watch,” stated Chandler with a smirk.

“That’s why we changed it to this over sized piece of garbage. No one would be caught dead in this thing! Plus the chemical runoff we use to dye these is actually cheaper than the warm, tight fitting micro fiber in the old caps. The switch cost the Army over ten million dollars, but the savings per unit will make sure we get our money back in less than 24 years! You can’t beat a deal like that.”

When asked why the color didn’t match anything currently worn by Army soldiers, Chandler was quick to flip open his ever present notebook and read from a section of highlighted notes on uniforms.

“Since the color doesn’t go with anything in the inventory, it will always break up the outline and color patterns of the soldier!” recited Chandler, who then removed a handwritten page from the company who manufactured the caps. “Furthermore... this is the best watch cap in the history of watch caps. Guaranteed!”

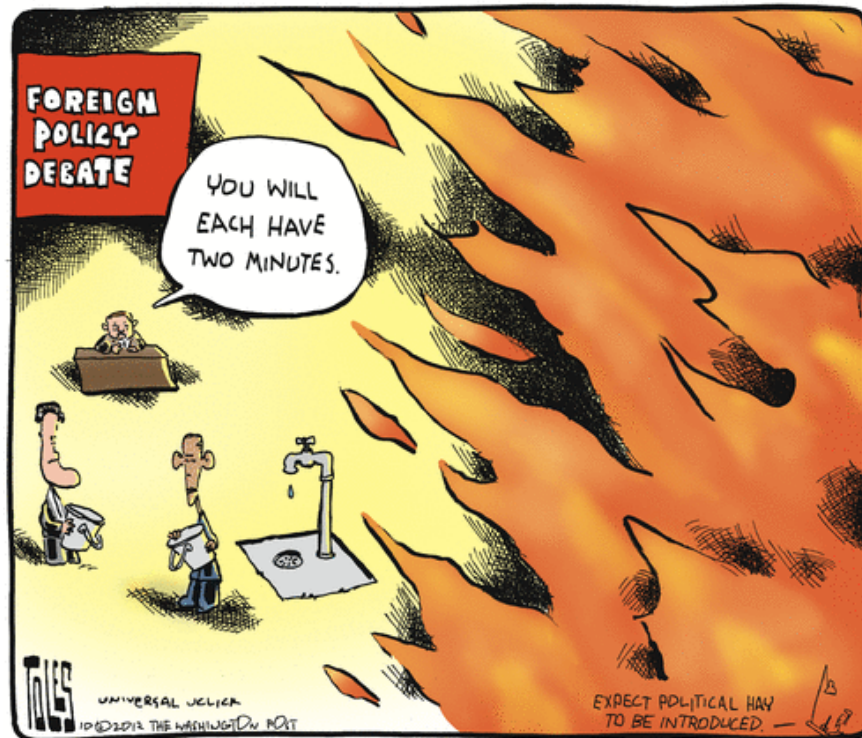
After being asked about the recent cases of frostbite attributed to soldiers in the field during sub-zero weather when they weren’t authorized to wear the misshapen, gnome-like caps, his answer was simple.

“I remember back at the Sergeants Major Academy. One of the first courses was how to identify and outlaw efficient gear. This was just a natural progression at the Big Army

level. We do our best to keep these things away from any environment where they might actually be needed.”

Chandler refused to comment on the apparent hypocrisy of issuing intentionally deficient gear that can't be used when needed.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“Thousands Of British Workers
Took Part In Mass Marches
Against Austerity In London,
Glasgow And Belfast On October
20”**

**“Several Media Estimates Put The
Number Of Marchers In London As
High As 150,000, Much Higher Than
Had Been Expected”**

**“The Government Is Making Life
Desperately Hard For Millions Of People**

Because Of Pay Cuts For Workers, While The Rich Are Given Tax Cuts"

October 23, 2012 By James Illingworth, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Tens of thousands of British workers took part in mass marches against austerity in London, Glasgow and Belfast on October 20.

The protests, organized by Britain's national labor federation, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), featured the latest in a series of direct actions by activists protesting cuts in disability benefits. Police turned out in large numbers to protect Starbucks coffee shops after it was rumored that the anti-cuts group UK Uncut intended to target the chain for avoiding taxes.

Several media estimates put the number of marchers in London as high as 150,000, much higher than had been expected. Thousands more marched in Belfast and Glasgow.

Speaking from the stage in London, TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber emphasized the march's "A Future that Works" slogan. "We are sending a very strong message that austerity is simply failing," Barber said.

"The government is making life desperately hard for millions of people because of pay cuts for workers, while the rich are given tax cuts."

The coalition government, which includes the Conservative Party and the smaller Liberal Democrats, came to power in 2010 due to mass disillusionment with the way in which the Labour Party had handled the economic crisis.

Since then, Prime Minister David Cameron and Chancellor (or finance minister) George Osborne have pursued a relentless campaign of cuts in public spending and attacks on working-class living standards.

Although the stated aims of this austerity agenda were to cut Britain's budget deficit and spur growth in the private sector, neither has been accomplished. The British economy went into a double-dip recession earlier this year, and unemployment remains at over 8 percent.

The scale of austerity in Britain does not match the attacks in Eurozone countries like Greece, Portugal and Spain. But Cameron is presiding over the deepest cuts ever made to the British welfare state.

So far, tens of thousands of public-sector workers have lost their jobs thanks to the cuts, and economists estimate at least 700,000 will do so before 2017. If this figure becomes a reality, the Tories will have taken state employment to one of its lowest levels since the Second World War.

For now, the unions represent the best hope for a genuine resistance to austerity. The public sector strikes of last year successfully mobilized over 2 million workers and


showed a real willingness to fight. Moreover, as British socialist Richard Seymour wrote in the Guardian last week, these unions are well positioned to lead a broad coalition against the cuts. Public-sector workers can, Seymour noted, "link their direct material interests with those of every other group aggrieved by Tory policies."

In signs that a real escalation may be on the cards, the TUC has apparently begun consulting its member unions about the viability of a one-day general strike to protest the cuts. On Saturday, two of Britain's most militant union leaders--Mark Serwotka of civil servants' union PCS and Bob Crow of the railworkers' RMT--received loud cheers from the crowd when they called for such an action.

If it were to take place, this would be Britain's first general strike since 1926 and would involve up to 6 million workers.

Coming on the heels of a new wave of strikes in Greece, this weekend's mass marches may indicate that British workers are about to embark on their own season of struggle.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



U.S. TROOPS WILL STAY IN AFGHANISTAN UNTIL AT LEAST 2024

SOMEDAY THIS WILL ALL BE YOURS

**YOUR NAME HERE
AFGHANISTAN
2009-2022**

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Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. 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 war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

“Significant Rebel Gains In The Strategically Vital Northern City Of Aleppo”

“Kurdish Fighters Who Had Been Aligned With The Regime Switch Sides And Join Rebels”

“Rebels Had Seized Control Of Several Areas In The Heart Of The Front-Line City”

“The Free Syrian Army Had Swept Into Key Christian And Kurdish Neighborhoods That Were Considered Government Strongholds”

The advances appeared to put the rebels in control of most of the city center at a time when the government’s supply routes have been disrupted by recent opposition gains in the nearby province of Idlib.

October 25 By Liz Sly and Ahmed Ramadan, Washington Post [Excerpts]

BEIRUT — A tenuous truce went into effect in Syria on Friday after the government and the rebel Free Syrian Army said they will observe a four-day ceasefire to coincide with a major Muslim holiday, amid reports of significant rebel gains in the strategically vital northern city of Aleppo.

The cease-fire announcement coincided with indications that the rebels had seized control of several areas in the heart of the front-line city of Aleppo, where government forces have been battling since July to hold back a rebel offensive.

Activists in Aleppo said the Free Syrian Army had swept into key Christian and Kurdish neighborhoods that were considered government strongholds.

Fierce fighting was continuing in some of the areas, and the reports were confusing and difficult to verify.

Aleppo activist Amer Halabi said Kurdish fighters who had been aligned with the regime switched sides and joined rebels in an advance into the Kurdish neighborhood of Ashrafiyeh.

Other reports said the fighters with the Kurdish PYD, or Democratic Union Party, had simply vacated their checkpoints overnight, enabling the rebels to overrun the area.

The rebels also advanced Thursday into the upscale Christian neighborhood of Siryan al-Jadidah but were encountering resistance from Syrian army units, said a resident who escaped to Beirut and asked not to be identified out of concerns for her safety.

She said the usual daily shelling of the city had largely subsided, replaced by fierce hand-to-hand street fighting.

The advances appeared to put the rebels in control of most of the city center at a time when the government's supply routes have been disrupted by recent opposition gains in the nearby province of Idlib.

Continued clashes were reported late into the night, and government artillery in the mountains overlooking Damascus also fired at least six shells into a southern suburb of the capital hours before the cease-fire was due to go into effect, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The rebels' biggest fear is that the government will take advantage of the lull to reinforce its flagging positions in the north.

But with the rebels on the advance and the government clearly under pressure, the cease-fire is of little benefit to the opposition, said Syria expert Joshua Landis, a history professor at the University of Oklahoma. He expressed doubt that it would succeed.

"I don't think the rebels take it seriously, and I don't think the Syrian government takes it seriously," he said.

But with the setbacks in Aleppo, "the negotiating power of the government has just fallen dramatically."

150,000 Out Of Kuwait Population Of 3 Million March Against The Dictatorship:

“Since Last June, Kuwaiti Parliament Has Been Frozen By The Amir And Then Dissolved By The Constitutional Court For ‘Wrong Procedures’”

“The Opposition Has Been Protesting Since But Was Never Able To Gather Such A Huge Crowd”

23 October 2012 by Mona Kareem, Global Voices [Excerpts]

Tear gas and stun grenades were used to disperse a protest in Kuwait against changes to the electoral law. .

The call for the Karamat Watan (A Nation’s Dignity) march, which took place on Sunday, was made on Twitter, and attracted about 150,000 out of the country’s population of 3 million.

Media outlets considered this number to be the biggest in the small Gulf emirate’s history.

The protest came in reaction to the Amir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah decree to change the electoral law, making a citizen vote for one candidate instead of four, as it used to be in the elections of Kuwaiti parliament.

The protest was not only an objection for making such a change but more importantly to protest the change of a law without the parliament or the people having their say in it.

Since last June, Kuwaiti parliament has been frozen by the Amir and then dissolved by the constitutional court for ‘wrong procedures’ in dissolving the parliament before it.

The opposition has been protesting since but was never able to gather such a huge crowd; even the liberal “Tahalof” and Pan-Arabist “Manbar” took part in Sunday’s demonstration despite their disagreement with the Islamist-Conservative opposition.

In a unique step, this demonstration was organized through Twitter. The account @KarametWatan [ar] (which translates to A Nation’s Dignity) was started to call for the protest.

As usual, Kuwaitis used Twitter to post pictures and videos of the protest.



On Twitter, @NforNaser says the police asked him to drop this sign or else they would beat him up.



Picture of the crowds marching posted by @nourah_ibrahim

On Monday (Oct 22)], Sabr Online Newspaper reported that all detained protesters have been released:

MORE:

**“The Autocracy In Kuwait Is
Stopping True Democratic Life.
We Must Fight Autocracy First”
“Fully Veiled Women Marched
Alongside Others Wearing Jeans And
Their Hair In Ponytails”
“Men In The Traditional White Robes Of
The Gulf Chanted With College-Age
Students In T-Shirts”**

10.27.12 By HUSSAIN AL-QATARI, Associated Press [Excerpts]

KUWAIT CITY —

For Kuwait’s embattled rulers, clashes earlier this week with anti-government protesters were more than just a sign tensions may be mounting.

The crowds themselves showed the widening nature of the Gulf nation’s political crisis:

Stirrings of a rare alliance of convenience between liberals and Islamists against Kuwait’s Western-backed leadership [translation: U.S. Government backed dictatorship].

While it’s not the first time Middle East protests have brought together political foes — Cairo’s Tahrir Square last year and Iran’s postelection unrest in 2009 had a full spectrum of voices — Kuwait’s tiny size means that the coalescence of such varied groups could make for an opposition that punches far above its own weight.

[T]he emerging alliance underscores the complicated challenges for Kuwait’s ruling family as the oil-rich country moves toward Dec. 1 parliamentary elections.

Simultaneous pressure from liberals and Islamist conservatives could push Kuwait deeper into a political morass that has already disrupted the economy and raised questions about stability in one of Washington’s most critical military footholds in the region.

Kuwait's importance to the Pentagon rose sharply after the U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq in December. It is now the hub for American ground forces in the Gulf, where the U.S. and its Arab allies seek to counter Iran's military buildup.

Islamists and their allies want power. They are pressing hard to reclaim their hold on the country's legislature, which is the most politically empowered among the Gulf Arab states.

Meanwhile, liberals are rallying around claims the rulers are overreaching.

Many have strongly objected to the government's hard-ball political efforts over the past months that included disbanding the opposition-controlled parliament.

This has become the meeting point for the unusual joint onslaught — that could become the most broad-based challenge to Kuwait's leadership since it was restored by the 1991 U.S.-led invasion that drove out Saddam Hussein's forces.

"Today we unite together in fighting a bigger entity. The autocracy in Kuwait is stopping true democratic life. We must fight autocracy first," said Lama al-Othman, a human rights activist and liberal columnist for Aljarida newspaper.

"As a liberal, my fight with the Islamist opposition is always ongoing," she continued. "I refuse repression, I refuse it when it's practiced by the opposition and I also refuse it when it's practiced by the government."

At last Sunday's protest rally, which drew thousands of people, fully veiled women marched alongside others wearing jeans and their hair in ponytails. Men in the traditional white robes of the Gulf chanted with college-age students in t-shirts.

Riot police used tear gas and stun grenades against protesters who defied orders to limit the rally to a site in front of the parliament building. Dozens were reported injured or overcome by the gas clouds.

Kuwait's government later ordered a ban on any public gatherings of more than 20 people, while loyalist groups issued a statement pledging support for the 83-year-old emir, Sheik Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who has ruled since 2006.

The country's emir controls the government payouts and generous cradle-to-grave benefits that are linchpins of the nation's social pact.

But Kuwait's rulers are also grappling with the most politically charged landscape among Gulf Arab nations.

Parliament has wide powers and opposition lawmakers often make public charges of corruption against Cabinet members, who are mostly hand-picked by the emir.

Here, political battles stand out in comparison with the country's Gulf partners such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, where public dissent is rare and is quickly muzzled.

The current upheavals began in February elections, when Islamists and backers from sympathetic tribes took control of the 50-seat parliament.

They quickly demanded key posts in the Cabinet and debated possible laws such as banning construction of new churches and mandating a death sentence for anyone convicted of blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad.

The emir later disbanded the opposition-led parliament and unsuccessfully tried to challenge voting district changes that appeared to give anti-government forces an edge. For months, Kuwait was without a working parliament.

For the next election, however, the government has changed the electoral system from one permitting multiple ballots by each voter to a one-person-one-vote arrangement.

Opposition groups claim this hurts them because they will not be able to form pre-election coalitions.

They also say parliament should be the only venue to change voting rules.

Al-Othman, the rights activist, said the move pushed some liberals to join the Islamist-led protests.

"It's more important for me to fight a repressive government that refused to admit that the majority of the people have voted for Islamists," she said.

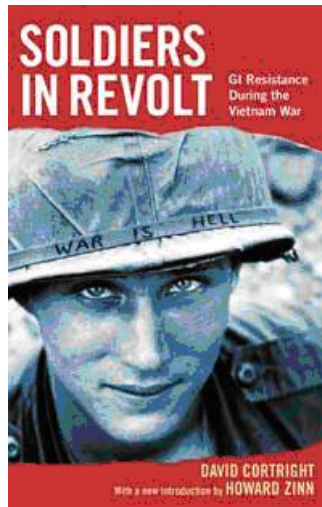
Fay al-Qassar, a 25-year-old political science graduate who favors liberal causes, said she was angered by the crackdowns on last week's protest marchers. "I realized we have to be more proactive if we want things to get better," she said.

Mohammed al-Dallal, a member of Kuwait's branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, claimed the Islamists do not seek to bring strict Muslim codes to Kuwait.

But the now-disbanded parliament pushed for laws that demanded "modest" dress for women and sought to make Islamic law the exclusive source for all future legislation.

"Our battle against autocratic rule can take years, but we will go with it," he said.

FREE TO ACTIVE DUTY: A Vietnam Soldier Wrote The Book All About How An Armed Forces Rebellion Stopped An Imperial War



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