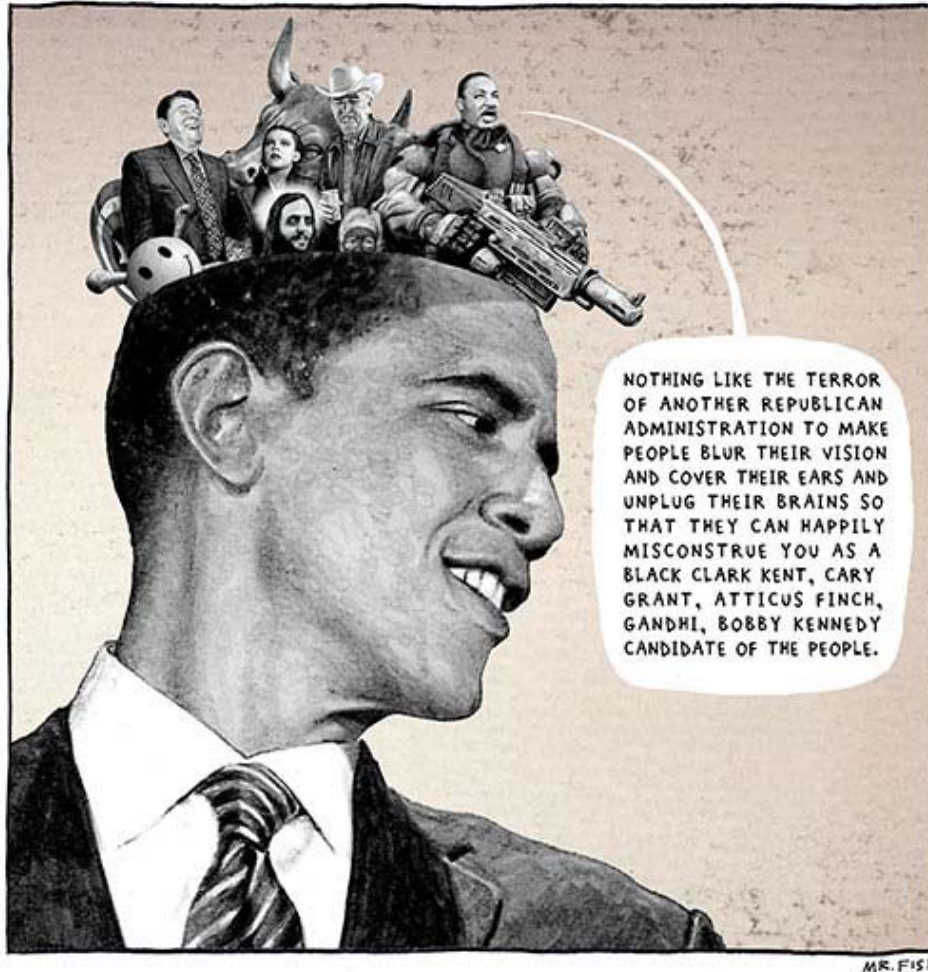


Military Resistance 10J3



**Stupid In Command:
Army Says ‘Social Network’ Use Is
A Sign Of Radicalism:
“‘Risk Factors For Radicalization’
Identified”
“Among Them: ‘Youth’ ‘Social Networks’ Is
Another”**

October 2, 2012 By Spencer Ackerman, Wired.com [Excerpts]

These are some warning signs that that you have turned into a terrorist who will soon kill your co-workers, according to the U.S. military.

You've recently changed your "choices in entertainment." You have "peculiar discussions."

You "complain about bias," you're "socially withdrawn" and you're frustrated with "mainstream ideologies." Your "Risk Factors for Radicalization" include "Social Networks" and "Youth."

These are some other signs that one of your co-workers has become a terrorist, according to the U.S. military.

He "shows a sudden shift from radical to 'normal' behavior to conceal radical behavior." He "inquires about weapons of mass effects." He "stores or collects mass weapons or hazardous materials."

That was the assessment of a terrorism advisory organization inside the U.S. Army called the Asymmetric Warfare Group in 2011, acquired by Danger Room.

Its concern about the warning signs of internal radicalization reflects how urgent the Army considers that threat after Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan shot and killed 13 people at Ford Hood in 2009.

But its "indicators" of radicalization are vague enough to include both benign behaviors that lots of people safely exhibit and, on the other end of the spectrum, signs that someone is so obviously a terrorist they shouldn't need to be pointed out.

It's hard to tell if the group is being politically correct or euphemistic.

Around the same time, the Asymmetric Warfare Group tried to understand a related problem that now threatens to undermine the U.S. war in Afghanistan: "insider threats" from Afghan troops who kill their U.S. mentors.

In another chart, also acquired by Danger Room, an Afghan soldier or policeman ready to snap could be someone who "appears frustrated with partnered nations"; reads "questionable reading materials"; or who has "strange habits."

Admittedly, the U.S. military command isn't sure what's causing the insider attacks, but it'll be difficult for an American soldier who doesn't speak Pashto or Dari to identify "strange habits" among people from an unfamiliar culture.

The Asymmetric Warfare Group didn't purport to identify every factor leading to insider threats, from either Americans or Afghans, and cautions against using its assessments as "checklists." But it takes a broad view of both the causes of radicalization and what might make someone at risk for it.

Among Afghans, “Cultural Misunderstandings,” “Civilian Casualties,” “Global Events” or “Political Speeches or Upheaval” are listed as potential causes of “Grievance-Based Action.”

All of which seems intuitive, but it doesn’t help a commander, who may be preoccupied with the daily rigors of warfighting, from identifying which Afghans represent looming threats.

The “observable” indicators of those threats run the gamut from an “abrupt behavioral shift” to “intense ideological rhetoric” to blinking red lights that shouldn’t have to be pointed out to people, like “mak(ing) threatening gestures or verbal threats.”

American behavior is easier for Americans to understand, but the Asymmetric Warfare Group’s list of red flags from American troops is also problematic outside context.

Someone who “takes suspicious or unreported travel (inside or outside the United States)” could be linking up with a terrorist group.

Or he could be hooking up with a lover, or a going on a road trip with friends, or anything else.

Yet that’s an example of “Actions conducted by the subject that would indicate violent or terroristic planning activities that warrant investigation.”

The unreported aspect of the travel might be its most blatantly problematic feature.

Similarly, some of the “Risk Factors for Radicalization” identified here apply equally to Normal Soldier and Ticking Time Bomb.

Among them: “Youth,” which might be a difficult thing to mitigate against, unless the military wants to take former Pentagon official Rosa Brooks’ unorthodox recruitment advice.

“Social Networks” is another, and it’s probably alarmingly coterminous with Youth. Still others: “Emotional Vulnerability,” “Personal Connection to a Grievance” and “Conflict at Work or at Home.”

To be fair to the Group, the bonds within a military unit can make it difficult to be alert to sketchy behavior, let alone the chain of command to it. And that disinclination to report something isn’t limited to the military:

The FBI didn’t act on Hasan, even when he e-mailed the radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki seeking advice on the legitimacy of murdering Americans.

The Group repeatedly underscores the need to “notify the chain of command” about suspicious behavior, even about behavior as potentially benign as “chang(ing) type of off-duty clothing.”

A “single reportable indicator is enough to report,” it cautions, listing internal Army websites and phone hotlines to report a suspected Hasan 2.0.

If underreporting suspicious behavior is a problem within the U.S. military, soldiers and Marines in Afghanistan probably won't have a problem reporting their suspicious about Afghans now that over 50 U.S. and allied troops have been killed by their Afghan counterparts this year.

Marine Gen. John Allen, the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, told 60 Minutes on Sunday that he's “mad as hell” at the attacks, and while his troops are willing to sacrifice for the war, “we're not willing to be murdered for it.”

Woe to Afghans deemed “reclusive” or engaging in “peculiar discussions” in the eyes of troops who don't share their culture.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

2 US Troops Killed In Wardak Province

October 07, 2012 Associated Press

KABUL: Two American troops were killed on Saturday by insurgents in eastern Afghanistan, an area that has seen heavy fighting in recent months, the US military said.

But a US military official said two US special operations forces were killed by small arms fire in Wardak province, southwest of Kabul.

In the south, an Afghan policeman was killed and another was wounded when a remote-controlled bomb planted on a motorbike was detonated in Sangin district of Helmand province, according to provincial spokesman Ahmad Zarak.

In neighbouring Kandahar province, a roadside bomb killed another Afghan policeman in Kandahar city, said provincial spokesman Ahmad Jawed Faisal.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

MILITARY NEWS

Under The Hood Celebrates Hoodstock At JAX: On The 12th Anniversary Of War In Afghanistan, Help A Military Resource Center Stay Afloat; Hoodstock Benefit For Under The Hood Cafe

**Sunday, Oct. 7, 3-7pm
JAX Neighborhood Cafe,
2828 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas**



October 4, 2012 By Liz Williams, Austin Chronicle [Excerpts]

“We’re in for the long haul,” said Jim Turpin, a volunteer at Under the Hood Cafe and Outreach Center. On Sunday, Oct. 7, the 12th anniversary of the war in Afghanistan, the cafe will hold an Austin fundraiser – called Hoodstock – to support its military outreach program. “It’s incredibly important,” Turpin said, “that the cafe stay open.”

Under the Hood Cafe is modeled after the late 1960s anti-war cafe The Oleo Strut, which was also based near Fort Hood, and helped GIs returning from Vietnam.

Today, Under the Hood is one of only three anti-war veterans cafes in the world. With only one paid employee, Under the Hood is a largely volunteer nonprofit supported by several veterans’ organizations, the most visible being the Iraq Veterans Against War, active at the cafe since its opening in March 2009.

Its patrons include both active military and veterans, as well as family, friends, and community advocates who want to talk about the peace movement, inadequacies in military health care, and the redeployment of soldiers who are not fully recovered. "There's been a tsunami of soldiers coming back – active duty and vets," Turpin explained, "(who) are not getting the mental and behavioral health care they need."

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, in 2010, 18 veterans committed suicide each day. The link between military suicides and post-traumatic stress disorder has been firmly established and the military is struggling to cope with the numbers of affected soldiers.

"We're talking hundreds of thousands coming back with PTSD," Turpin said. "What we've been telling the brass at Fort Hood and around the country is 'stop redeploying traumatized troops.' When you do that over and over again, your suicide rates go through the roof. There [are] not enough counselors for the amount of soldiers coming back."

That's where Under the Hood comes in. As a nonmilitary safe space, the cafe allows open discussion and provides GI rights information, referrals for wellness services, and creative workshops such as Warrior Writers, in which soldiers and veterans come together to write or draw about their experiences. In addition, Under the Hood gives legal referrals that sometimes help soldiers achieve "conscientious objector" status, allowing them to leave the military for religious or ethical reasons.

"Most are just happy to get into a nonmilitary place and find that another service member has had the same experience," Turpin said. "They know that vet has been where they've been, and it's incredibly powerful."

On Oct. 7, it's the Austin public's chance to help the troops.

The Fourth Annual Hood-stock will be at JAX Neighborhood Cafe. Hoodstock will be headlined by the Djembabes, Huerta Culture, and Schmillion. The night will also feature various speakers, a silent auction, and Under the Hood merchandise. A \$15 donation is suggested at the door, and all proceeds will benefit the Under the Hood Cafe & Outreach Center.

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 war 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.

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

**I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace**

“The Revolution Was Born In The Poor Villages And Spread

**To The Vast Working Class
Areas Of All The Major Cities”
“As The Repression Grew More
Intense, Sections Of The Army
Mutinied And Turned Its Weapons
To The Defence Of The Popular
Movement”
“A Citizen Army Has Emerged, Often
Formed Around Groups Of Defected
Soldiers And Officers”
“Attempts By Western Powers, The US In
Particular, To Find "Friendly Forces"
Have Come To Little”**



The greatest myth about the Syrian revolution is that it is being armed and trained, and effectively working in the interests of the Western powers and its Arab allies.

If this is so, then the rebels are ill served by their masters.

October 2012 by Simon Assaf, Socialist Review [Excerpts]

It is a bitter war that has engulfed Syria - one that has transformed the Arab world's most popular revolution into a struggle that can only end in the defeat of Bashar Assad's regime, or the death of the revolution, and with it any hope of change.

At the heart of this revolution is the demand for an end to one-party rule, arbitrary detentions, repression, corruption and poverty.

The revolution was born in the poor villages and spread to the vast working class areas of all the major cities.

It has been marked by huge popular demonstrations, and the emergence of a national grassroots movement organised around Local Coordinating Committees (LCCs) and other similar bodies.

The revolution is united in the call for national unity. Its most popular slogan remains: "The Syrian people are one".

It is anti-sectarian, cuts across all ethnic and religious groups, and has been driven forward by the masses of workers, students and agricultural labourers who, inspired by the Arab Spring, are demanding social justice.

This is a popular revolution, its motor were the thousands of small and large protests that erupted most nights and after every Friday prayers. It carries with it an aspiration of change after 40 years of rule by the Assad clan.

However, unlike in Egypt and Tunisia, the regime of Bashar Assad was incapable of delivering even the mildest of reforms, and to the consternation of its allies, met every upsurge in popular anger with bloody repression.

Assad gambled from the beginning that sheer brutality would be enough to douse the rebellion. The few reforms he did offer were met with incredulity, designed as a sop to his supporters rather than to address any of the demands rising from the streets.

“As The Repression Grew More Intense, Sections Of The Army Mutinied And Turned Its Weapons To The Defence Of The Popular Movement”

As the repression grew more intense, sections of the army mutinied and turned its weapons to the defence of the popular movement.

In the face of such withering repression an armed uprising became the only option for many people. Growing numbers of revolutionaries joined the defectors to form brigades

known collectively as the Free Syrian Army (FSA). There are now over 100,000 fighters engaged in daily battles with regime forces.

As the armed uprising spread, regime forces became trapped in their bases.

Unable to seize back rebel areas, the regime resorted to a strategy of "massacre" - indiscriminate artillery barrages, tank rounds, warplanes, cluster bombs and the crude "TNT barrel bombs" dropped from helicopters.

Alongside these are the sudden sweeps of working class neighbourhoods that leave hundreds dead (often killed in their shelters). The recent massacre of between 800 and 1,000 people in the Damascus suburb of Daraya has been the bloodiest single incident of the revolution, but it is being repeated daily on a smaller scale in dozens of cities and towns.

Tallied next to the daily lists of the dead are the names of large numbers of factory workers, farmers, students and urban poor, testifying to the class nature of the rebellion.

In one incident regime forces massacred 150 in a raid on their factory, in another 15 sugar workers were killed. Such incidents are all too common.

The regime has reduced large parts of Syria to ruins, destroying factories, hospitals, markets, homes, shops and infrastructure such as water supplies and electricity in its war against the people. There are hundreds of thousands of refugees, both internally displaced and those who crossed the borders. Vast parts of Syrian cities are now deserted battlegrounds.

Over the past few months fighting has spread across hundreds of fronts in all major cities, towns and villages, pushing the death toll close to 30,000.

“A Citizen Army Has Emerged, Often Formed Around Groups Of Defected Soldiers And Officers”

The power of the FSA has been growing steadily since January 2012, but took a dramatic turn in July when thousands of fighters took the battle to the capital's Damascus, and Aleppo, Syria's largest city and its commercial centre.

The first wave of fighters that flooded into Aleppo came from the countryside, known as Reef Haleb, but students and workers soon swelled their ranks.

Since then a citizen army has emerged, often formed around groups of defected soldiers and officers.

Despite being outgunned, they withstood the first regime counter-offensive on the city, and have been gradually extending their control over its neighbourhoods. The tenacity and success of the rebel army in Aleppo have confounded all expectations.

The battle for Aleppo has exposed the limits of the regime's power. Short of reliable troops, and mistrustful of the conscripts, it has resorted to pressganging young men into service.

Regime forces have retreated to a series of heavily defended compounds, and used indiscriminate airpower and artillery to pound rebel neighbourhoods.

There is a glimpse of a future Syria away from the front lines.

In liberated areas forms of civilian control are taking root. These local councils are coalescing into a national network with the backing of the main rebel brigades.

The often confusing picture that is emerging on the ground testifies to the perseverance and difficulties the revolution faces, but also to the fact that it is forced to take the regime apart piece by piece.

The slow progress of the uprising belies the fact that the revolution has strong backers in the West and among some Arab regimes.

The greatest myth about the Syrian revolution is that it is being armed and trained, and effectively working in the interests of the Western powers and its Arab allies.

If this is so, then the rebels are ill served by their masters.

There is little evidence of a substantial amount of weapons coming in from Turkey (apart from the black market), less from across the Jordanian border, while old stock (much of it useless) is coming from Iraqi cities such as Fallujah and Samara.

A common complaint is that rebels have more volunteers than weapons. Many go into battle hoping to pick up a discarded rifle; others make near-suicidal raids on regime checkpoints to seize guns and ammunition.

“Attempts By Western Powers, The US In Particular, To Find ‘Friendly Forces’ Have Come To Little”

Attempts to set up client militias have also been met with limited success.

The Telegraph newspaper reported that the Saudis spent a small fortune on one brigade consisting of only 50 men. Qatar's efforts have also been limited. Both the foreign-sponsored brigades as well as the foreign Salafi fighters represent a fraction of the rebel army.

The FSA brigades have reacted with deep mistrust to any offers by outside powers to buy their loyalty, and have refused to accept the "conditions" on receiving arms even when supplies were desperately short.

Loyalty to the independence of the revolution has been a dominant feature of the uprising and continues to remain a strong part of it.

Similarly, attempts by Western powers, the US in particular, to find "friendly forces" have come to little.

The much-heralded launch of the Western-backed Syrian National Army (SNA), which aims to put all rebel battalions under central control, has also had limited success.

Key brigades have refused to recognise the SNA command, remaining loyal to the defectors' civilian councils that emerged in the early days of the armed uprising.

Since its outbreak the revolution has faced many dangers: the scale of the repression and bloodletting, the fear of sectarianism, the meddling of Western powers and the collapse of the country.

Yet this revolution has proved to be remarkably resilient and has maintained its independence.

The revolution is far from over, but it is facing many dark days, and as winter approaches so will the problems mount.

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email: contact@militaryproject.org

Marines Begin Crashing Ospreys On Okinawa



October 5, 2012 by G-Had, The Duffel Blog

OKINAWA, JAPAN –

The Marine Corps has begun crashing its MV-22 Ospreys on Okinawa, a top Marine general has confirmed.

Lieutenant General Terry Robling, the commander of Marine Corps Forces Pacific, told The Duffel Blog that Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 (HMM-265, Motto: Look Out Below!) had crashed its first Osprey on the island at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma on October 1 and will begin crashing additional Ospreys just as soon as they can be scraped off the tarmac of MCAS Iwakuni.

The MV-22 Osprey, known affectionately by its crews as The Flying Pinto, is a revolutionary vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft that can fly like a plane and hover like a block of cement.

It's operated with an exceptional safety record ever since the first one spontaneously blew up on the assembly line and has a history of outstanding operational crashes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, and Libya since the Marine Corps first began fielding them in 2005.

"If you use the key metric of crashes while in-flight, the Osprey is the safest aircraft ever fielded in history," General Robling said before adding that all of the Osprey's crashes have occurred on the ground.

General Robling also said that after an extensive crash-test program, the Ospreys had been cleared to pancake into Japanese houses, hospitals, nuclear power facilities, and other landmarks, as well as the occasional general officer's career.

"HMM-265 spent the last few months practicing orientation crashes on the (Japanese) mainland, so the crews could get used to crashing the aircraft in and around Okinawa," General Robling said.

"They've practiced low-speed crashes, high-speed crashes, day crashes, night crashes, crashes in any type of weather you can imagine."

Many of the pilots of HMM-265 are excited about the upcoming move.

"My grandfather actually crashed his F4U Corsair into Shuri Castle back in 1945, and my father crashed his CH-46 onto some of the same airfields I'm going to be flying into," said Osprey pilot Captain Sam Fulco.

Previously, the government of Okinawa had opposed allowing the Osprey to crash into Japanese soil after expressing concerns about its crash-worthiness.

Okinawa's governor, Hirokazu Nakaima, has argued that Japan has some of the highest crash standards in the world, many dating back to 1944.

“We don’t just allow anyone to crash their planes into our island without ensuring that they will do so in a way that takes into account both our history and culture,” Governor Nakaima said.

General Robling said that HMM-265’s Ospreys have been specially-modified for Okinawa crashes.

“We’ve installed extra-leaky hydraulics and special flight-control software, so that as soon as the nose impacts the ground the tiltrotors are automatically jettisoned in different directions, before exploding on their own, ensuring the maximum amount of damage.”

In addition, all Osprey crews will carry little rice cakes to hand out to any homeowners they inconvenience and have been repeatedly drilled on the proper Okinawan way to say “Forgiveness, please.”

General Robling said that while the Marine Corps will conduct its crashes in the most Japanese way possible, “we do respectfully refuse their request that at least 25% of our crashes be into American warships.”

“We won’t go any higher than 8%,” he added.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

The Presidential Debate



CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Movement From Below In Quebec Leads To Defeat Of Liberal Party Government:
“New Parti Québécois (PQ) Government Announced It Was Rescinding A Planned Tuition Hike And Repealing Most Of The Repressive Law 12 Aimed At Restricting The Right To Protest”
“By Conceding This, The PQ Hopes That Our Mobilization Will Cease”
“This Is Not Because They Are Kind-Hearted, Not Because They Will Inherently Defend Public Services; It's Because They Are Afraid”**

We are still paying for higher education. Instead of accepting this, CLASSE, since our foundation and throughout the strike, has put forward the demand of free higher education: both from tuition fees and corporate influence.

The new government is not only opposed to this model, but wants to push through on its promise to index tuition to the rate of inflation.

October 2, 2012 By Ashley Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Students in Quebec, whose strike shut down the province's higher education system for the first half of this year, celebrated the achievement of their top goals last month when the new Parti Québécois (PQ) government announced it was rescinding a planned tuition hike and repealing most of the repressive Law 12 aimed at restricting the right to protest.

Quebec's new Premier Pauline Marois took office on September 19 after former Premier Jean Charest and his Liberals suffered a humiliating defeat as a direct result of pushing for the tuition increase and trying to intimidate students to end their strike. Marois and the PQ immediately honored their campaign promises to students, though some parts of Law 12 will remain, and fees could still rise under a plan for indexing tuition to the rate of inflation.

Students have won a clear victory--and vindication for a movement that inspired people fighting austerity around the world. The heart of the fight was grassroots mobilization, led by the Coalition large de l'association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante (CLASSE).

After the walkout spread throughout the province, Charest tried to stifle the movement by passing Bill 78 (Law 12), which suspended school and restricted the right to picket and protest. The move backfired. Not only did students step up their demonstrations, but working people began participating.

Charest called an election in the hopes of winning a new mandate, but the PQ won a sweeping victory after campaigning on the promise to meet the students' demands.

CLASSE spokesperson Jérémie Bédard-Wien spoke with Ashley Smith about the victory--and what comes next.

[Ashley Smith]: HOW DOES CLASSE view the results in the recent election in Quebec?

[Jérémie Bédard-Wien]: The Liberal Party, which had pushed relentlessly for the tuition hike and imposed the repressive Law 12 to stop our strike, suffered one of its biggest defeats ever. Premier Charest lost his seat, lost the Liberal leadership and lost the premiership in one day.

The Parti Québécois (PQ), which won the election and now governs Quebec, has just fulfilled its promise to cancel the tuition hike and repeal parts of Law 12. These are both important victories for the student movement.

Why do I say that this victory belongs to us rather than a victory for the electoral process or for the PQ?

It's because these political parties respond to pressure. That's their basic nature.

Charest's Liberal Party responded very well to pressure from corporate boards, to pressure from university administrations, to pressure from the police, from big

capital throughout the strike. In turn, it responded to the strike to defend those interests.

The PQ operates a little differently.

Of course it answers to those lobbies that I just mentioned, but historically it has also been responsive to strong social movements. In 1996, for instance, when Pauline Marois, who was then Minister of Education, declared her intention to raise tuition, it was met by a general strike. It lasted two weeks. Under that pressure, she relented.

The PQ prides itself on maintaining social peace through conciliation, and as such they responded to the immense political, economic and popular pressure that we mounted this spring, our Maple Spring, by answering our basic demand--thus leading to the end of the tuition hike.

By conceding this, the PQ hopes that our mobilization will cease.

This is not because they are kind-hearted, not because they will inherently defend public services; it's because they are afraid.

They're afraid of further mobilization.

They're afraid that the thousands of students that put their trust in the electoral system would not take kindly to the PQ breaking their promises.

By conceding to our struggle, they have delayed the tuition hike. This does not mean, however, that tuition increases are behind us.

It is important to note that we never fought for the status quo. We do not accept the current status quo.

We are still paying for higher education. Instead of accepting this, CLASSE, since our foundation and throughout the strike, has put forward the demand of free higher education: both from tuition fees and corporate influence.

The new government is not only opposed to this model, but wants to push through on its promise to index tuition to the rate of inflation.

We are therefore committed to continuing the mobilization to push the government to deliver education as a social right that is free of cost.

We will continue to mobilize in the run up to the Education Summit, which the PQ has promised to hold in its first 100 days of government.

We must make sure first and foremost that the summit is not bogus, that it is not shaped by university administrations and the private sector.

That's who Minister of Education Pierre Duchesne will be inviting to the summit. We must also reach out to other stakeholders to discuss their own plans and boldly attempt to gather them under one banner: free education.

So the General Assemblies of the student unions will have to discuss the summit. We will have to answer a number of questions. Will it be rigged? Will we be able to put forward our demands? How do we see our participation? If it is rigged, would we hold an alternative summit or protest?

Regardless of what we decide in the General Assemblies, we know that we will need to bring strong leverage to the table, and that leverage is built by mobilization through demonstrations and further strikes. That's the reason we have accomplished what we have so far.

“As We Have Proved This Spring, Mass Mobilization--Our Demonstrations And Especially Our Strikes--Is The Winning Strategy”

How has the PQ victory and its repeal of the hike and Law 12 impacted the student movement? Has it dampened the energy of the movement?

Most students and members of CLASSE recognize the election results as a victory for the student movement rather than for PQ. I do not think this will deter further struggle. It may not be as large initially, but in our General Assemblies we've seen many motions supporting the idea of further moments of mobilization, further demonstrations ahead of the Education Summit.

CLASSE members are committed to projecting our demand for free education in the run up to the summit. As such, it's clear that an important sector of students want to keep up the incredible mobilization that began in the spring. That's because broad sections of the movement agree with the goal to change the very nature of our post-secondary institutions.

We see our achievements as a first step. This view is reflected in the General Assemblies, which are discussing what is the best way to keep putting a progressive vision of education on the table. No one really said, "Oh well, the PQ was elected, we can now go back to our usual conciliatory mood." That's not what CLASSE is about.

The other student union federations have, however, gone back to their usual mode of political action: politely being consulted. That's a shame. But I'm very confident we'll be able to attract many student unions around the idea of free education. CLASSE can only hope to be strengthened ahead of the summit and, more generally, ahead of the next big struggle.

How have these other union federations reacted to the PQ victory

The Student federations have already gone back to conciliation with the government. This is explained by the fact that, historically, the federations have been extremely close to the PQ. The PQ helped found them in the early '90s and so their relationship is very strong. The PQ will now in turn treat them as the prime representatives of the student movement.

We must try to establish that this is not the case.

In reality, CLASSE has been the driving force of the student strike.

Lobbying does not achieve concrete results. As we have proved this spring, mass mobilization--our demonstrations and especially our strikes--is the winning strategy.

CLASSE plans to be assertive with the new government. We've asked for a meeting between our negotiators and the government to find out more about the summit. Based on what we find out, we will then be able to take a stance. We know that the representation will be as follows: a third of the seats around the table will be given to students, which means all four national student unions; another third will be given to the government; and the last third will be given to what they call "civil society."

We are particularly worried about this catch-all term "civil society." It's a great way for the government to describe the elite allies they will want to invite. The government would much rather invite administrations and the private sector.

CLASSE, in stark contrast, has been asking for Estates-general of education to be held--gathering the broader university community. Those students and workers should decide the fundamental orientation of our education system.

What are the other union federations saying about the PQ proposal to index tuition to the rate of inflation?

The former president of FECQ, Léo Bureau-Blouin, ran on the PQ ticket and won. He is now a rookie MP and is telling the media that indexation is the consensus position. Suddenly, freezing tuition is a radical idea.

But indexation was never presented as such. We must see the Maple Spring as a step in a long movement for free education. We decided on a compromise: for now, we would demand a tuition freeze. A consensus position, certainly.

In reality, indexing tuition to inflation is a hike in disguise.

We in CLASSE completely reject retreating from the basic demands of hundreds of thousands of students. In fact, we are in favor of repealing all tuition in higher education.

What plans do CLASSE and ASSÉ have beyond the Education Summit?

First, we must make sure improvements to the governmental loans and bursaries program (AFE), initially designed to "compensate" for the tuition hike, are kept.

The end of the hike and the continuation of those programs are not mutually exclusive.

We hope to continue organizing with our English Canadian comrades. This is not something we used to do previously, as there were few links between the Canadian left and the Quebecois student movement. During the strike, we forged new relationships, as Canadian students were extremely interested in what we were doing.

They all started to ask, "Why are we paying more tuition in Canada than they do in Quebec?"

Our answer to them is simple: Quebec students have been struggling for years and have succeeded in maintaining a freeze, at the very least.

Now they are starting to discuss learning from our experience of struggle and doing the same kinds of things we do. There's a lot of outreach being done, and it will be one of our focuses, I expect, in the next year or so.

What has been the experience of organizing speaking tours to tell the story of the Maple Spring?

It's been quite amazing. I'm responsible for helping to organize those tours, and let me tell you it's been mind-boggling how many requests we get for speaking engagements-- in the rest of Canada, in the U.S. and internationally.

To assemble 20, 30, 50, 100 people in a room and to be able to speak in detail and in depth about this experience, about how it came about, about the organizing principles that lie behind it, will hopefully establish a stronger left in other countries, stronger social movements, and organizational ties with the students we are meeting.

Solidarity is an important first step, but it must be followed by action. If we are able to spark something by going on these tours, then it makes them all the more worthwhile.

That's our mission. Reaching out to students, telling them about the lessons we learned the hard way during the strike, but also learning from them and their experiences.

There are many social movements that are gathering steam in the rest of the world. It's important for CLASSE to continue linking those social movements with our own. We are part of an international struggle against the policies that are being imposed by every single government, whether led by social democrats or conservatives.

They all sponsor these same policies.

So we must mount a global response. In that sense, these speaking tours may light the spark in some places where perhaps the context is much more difficult for the left to organize.

“We Will Maintain Contact With Both Neighborhood Assemblies And Unions”

At the high point of the struggle, CLASSE raised the idea of a social strike, of broadening the movement beyond students and into the working class. What kinds of discussions have you have about pursuing that project?

I believe it's necessary for us to go beyond our core, student-focused demands.

If we are only concerned with the immediate material threats to students, then we will not be able to achieve that broader mobilization that will prove necessary to ever achieve serious social change.

Our strike did focus on the hike, yet it also represented broader resistance to the politics of the Charest government.

It really turned into that in April and May when organizations and affinity groups actually lost control of the movement's agenda. And that turned out to be a very good thing.

The movement was put into the hands of the broader population, which went into the streets every night to bang on casseroles in opposition to Law 12, among many other grievances against the government. It was certainly the most impressive moment of the strike.

Slowly, they regrouped under neighborhood assemblies.

The loosely organized groups are still functioning.

They are still holding meetings. Hopefully, they will strengthen in the next few years, attract a larger share of the population, and discuss perhaps political objectives for further mobilization around a variety of issues.

The assemblies will need to address broader political issues. Because the neoliberal attacks are not over, we must go further than simple reaction. We must put forward an alternative project for society. And these neighborhood assemblies--popular, alternative democratic spaces--are essential to the realization of that project.

We need to pay particular attention to the unions.

They are certainly changing. They have been changed by the strike. Never before have those big labor federations even discussed the idea of going on an illegal political strike in solidarity with the student movement.

That's a fantastic step for unions that had traditionally followed a business-union model.

At the same time, the leaderships of some of these national unions are threatened by our militant vision of unionism.

We must therefore deepen our relationship with the base of the unions to pressure their leadership to act in a militant fashion if they are going to act to stop further neoliberalization in Quebec.

We will maintain contact with both neighborhood assemblies and unions. We've already discussed how to integrate them in some of our structures. For instance, we want to attract as many groups as possible within our regional councils--any group can become members.

For instance, our regional council in Quebec City is very strong and represents all sorts of organizations, from community organizations to student unions and neighborhood assemblies.

So we work on mobilization around common political objectives. The strike may be over--for now--but these structures will be maintained over time. That's one of the great successes of the Maple Spring: It has led to the creation of those lasting structures, which we'll be able to count on when the next struggle comes around.

“So Far, Several Unions Have Decided That They Will Go On Strike On Every 22nd”

What plans does CLASSE have to continue the monthly strikes and demonstrations on the 22nd of every month?

So far, several unions have decided that they will go on strike on every 22nd.

Ironically enough, it seems one of the main victories of the student movement will have been to impose 12 new statutory strike days every year!

The demonstration we just had on September 22 focused on projecting our demand for free higher education.

We've been able to move beyond blocking this tuition hike. We can now finally concentrate on the core demand that the student movement has advocated ever since began in the 1960's--that is, free education.

The demonstration on the 22nd did not garner the same numbers as previous mobilizations did--and as such, it was violently repressed. However, our movement is not only about numbers.

It's about maintaining mobilization around a progressive, radically different vision: going beyond the unhealthy culture of consensus politics; reaching out to the broader population to seek support for a bold idea; and combatively building leverage to see them implemented.

We are at the very beginning of a long struggle for the transformation of education--in Quebec, Canada and the rest of the world.

Troops Invited:

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Toast



Bahraini anti-government protesters, masked against tear gas, throw bottles of paint and petrol bombs at a police water cannon truck during clashes with riot police in Sanabis, Bahrain, Oct. 5, 2012. Riot police used water cannons and tear gas on Friday to disperse hundreds of anti-government protesters trying to reach a heavily guarded site that was once the hub of their uprising. (AP Photo/Hasan Jamali)

**“Demonstrators Protest The
September 2 Killing Of Unarmed
23-Year-Old Mario Romero”
“One Police Officer Emptied The First
15-Round Clip Into The Car, Ejected
The Clip And Reloaded To Discharge
A Second Clip”**

“So Far, The Police Have Still Not Attempted To Collect The Testimony Of Those Who Witnessed Mario's Murder”

October 3, 2012 By François Laforge and Claire Douglas, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Some 50 family members and community activists fighting for justice for Mario Romero rallied September 20 at the Solano County District Attorney's office in Vallejo, Calif.

The demonstrators were protesting the September 2 killing of unarmed 23-year-old Mario Romero, who was sitting in his car when Vallejo police shot him dead.

The police fired 31 rounds, 11 of which struck Romero. Romero's brother-in-law Joseph Johnson was in the car next to Romero and survived, despite being hit by five bullets.

Since the day he was killed, Mario Romero's family and friends have been organizing to win justice. The Vallejo and Oakland NAACP, National Network in Action, and several Vallejo pastors and community groups took part in the September 20 action. Attorney John Burris described plans for a civil rights lawsuit against the Vallejo Police Department.

There have been several protests since September 2. About 150 supporters protested outside the Vallejo Police Department two days after the shooting. Hundreds gathered at the City Council on September 10 and 11 to voice their outrage that city officials have so far taken no action in response to the killing.

They were also protesting the mayor's position that he was "satisfied" with the police report.

Although police are spreading lies about how and why Mario Romero was killed, family members and others witnesses have remained consistent:

The police never turned on a siren or verbally identified themselves. They turned the corner and came upon the two young men in the car, and minutes later, Mario was dead.

Mario's family members say that Mario never got out of the car. Mario's sister Cynquita was watching from a distance as her brother was gunned down. She began yelling as one police officer emptied the first 15-round clip into the car, ejected the clip and reloaded to discharge a second clip.

The cops were so intent on their assault that one jumped on the hood of the car to get a better angle on Mario as he moved across the car to protect his brother-in-law.

As family friend and activist Shawana Lord said, "If the cops really feared for their life, why did they jump on the hood of the car? Why didn't they call for backup?"

It's possible that without Mario's efforts, his brother-in-law Joseph might also have been killed. "He is a hero," says Cynthia Mitchell, Mario's mother, of her son. "He was shot so many times, yet he used his body to shield another body."

Gunning down Mario in cold blood was bad enough, but police went one step further. "We would like to bury my brother, but they are hiding him," said Mario's sister about the refusal of police to release Mario's body to his family.

When Cynthia went to see her son at the hospital, police denied her access and instead allowed someone else to identify the body. It has been three weeks, and still Mitchell has not seen her son's body.

So far, the police have still not attempted to collect the testimony of those who witnessed Mario's murder.

As in many other cases around the country, police are stalking Mario's family members in an attempt to intimidate them. Meanwhile, the officer who shot Mario is on administrative leave.

To date, police have made several claims about what happened during the early hours of September 2, and their story is full of holes, inconsistencies and outright lies.

According to official police press releases, officers shone a spotlight on Mario, and he then exited his vehicle and stood behind the door. Police claim he reached toward his waistband, and only then did they start firing.

The cops claim Mario got back into the car and reached across the vehicle--all while they continued firing. In a "subsequent search," they claimed to find an "airsoft" replica of a pistol.

"That's their story--that he got out of the car--when everyone else said he never got out," said Shawana Lord.

"Now does that make sense to you? If confronted by police with a spotlight, would anyone pull out an airsoft pistol?"

"How can they expect anyone to believe that story? They didn't even say they found the pistol in his hand or waistband, but somewhere in the car in a 'subsequent search.'"

Though police immediately cast suspicion on Mario as a gang member, his sister Cynquita described how Mario was one of the millions of working-class people to have lost a job since the 2008 recession:

Mario was a loving person, if you needed anything, any help, he'd be there. He put his family first. He was a peacemaker...He had just moved back to Vallejo a month before the police shot him. He had been a warehouse worker in Sacramento, but was recently laid off. Police accused him of being a Lofas gang member, but he wasn't involved in gang activity at all.

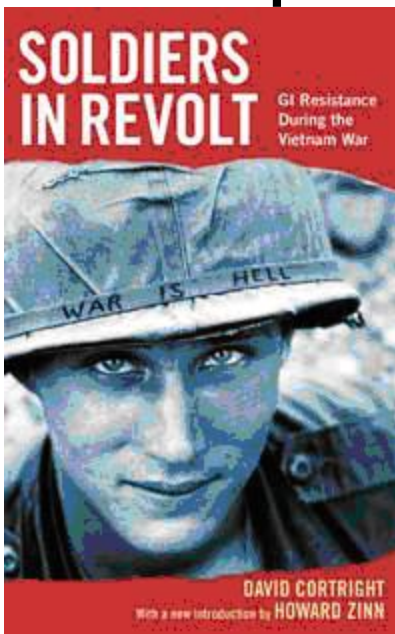
As civil rights attorney John Burris said at the press conference, "Who he was doesn't matter. They drove around a corner, he was in a parked car doing nothing, and they shot and killed him within minutes."

Mario is not the exception, by any means. A report by the Malcolm X Grassroots movement documented that a Black person in the U.S. is killed every 36 hours by police, a security guard, or a self-styled vigilante.

But families are beginning to fight back.

Similar campaigns to expose other police murders have gained traction throughout the nation.

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