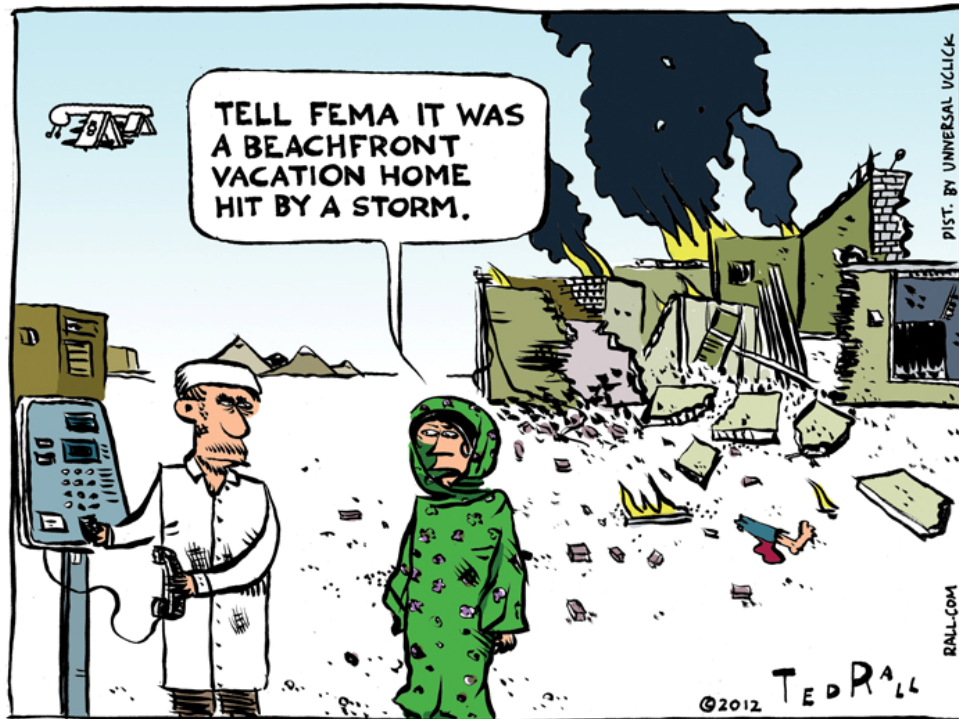


## Military Resistance 10K5



**“Evidence Is Piling Up That The Ever-Increasing Use Of Dangerous Psychiatric Medications May Be Fueling The Funeral Pyre Of Military Suicides And Other Unexplained Deaths”**

**“These Medications Are A  
Chemical Lobotomy”  
“The Psychiatrists Have No Clue  
About What They’re Doing”  
“It’s Psychiatry That Runs Mental Health  
In DoD”**

October 11, 2012 by Kelly Patricia O’Meara, Citizens Commission on Human Rights International [Excerpts]

**Dr. Bart Billings, Ph.D., a retired Army Colonel and former military psychologist and founder and director of the military-wide Human Assistance Rapid Response Team (HARRT) program, has no doubt that the cause of the suicides among the troops is the direct result of the use of psychiatric drugs.**

Kelly Patricia O’Meara is an award winning investigative reporter for the Washington Times, Insight Magazine, penning dozens of articles exposing the fraud of psychiatric diagnosis and the dangers of the psychiatric drugs – including her ground-breaking 1999 cover story, *Guns & Doses*, exposing the link between psychiatric drugs and acts of senseless violence.

She is also the author of the highly acclaimed book, *Psyched Out: How Psychiatry Sells Mental Illness and Pushes Pills that Kill*. Prior to working as an investigative journalist, O’Meara spent sixteen years on Capitol Hill as a congressional staffer to four Members of Congress. She holds a B.S. in Political Science from the University of Maryland.

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Anxiety, sleeplessness, nightmares, stress and depression is affecting the troops serving in America’s longest war no less than those who’ve served in previous wars.

One glaring difference, though, lies in the “treatment” soldiers are receiving. Based on data released by those responsible for the health and well-being of the troops, it seems that pharmacology has replaced compassion. The days of talk therapy, a kind of willingness to stand in the warrior’s boots by listening to his experiences, has been replaced by the quick pop-a-pill fix.

But these pharmacological potions may be producing unintended consequences, and evidence is piling up that the ever-increasing use of dangerous psychiatric medications may be fueling the funeral pyre of military suicides and other unexplained deaths.

According to recent data released by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), in the first 155 days of this year, 154 soldiers committed suicide — about one per day – compared to the 139 soldiers who died in combat in the same period.

This is an incredible 18 percent increase from the previous year and an unbelievable 25 percent increase from the year before.

More disturbing, though, is that the increased suicides are occurring at a time when, with the withdrawal of troops from Iraq, U.S. combat forces are at significantly reduced numbers and, according to the DoD data, nearly one-third of the suicides in the military occurred among those who had never seen combat duty.

These data suggest that the “epidemic” of suicides in the military is not exclusive to those suffering from the physical and emotional strain of combat, so one has to ask what is responsible for the increased suicides...what is the common denominator among military personnel that may assist the top brass in combating this seemingly elusive and unidentifiable foe?

The following data may offer insight.

**From 2001 to 2009, the Army’s suicide rate increased more than 150 percent while orders for psychiatric drugs rose 76 percent over the same period and according to Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center, mental health disorders were the leading cause of hospitalization of active-duty service members in 2007, 2009 and 2011, with nearly \$2 billion being spent on psychiatric drugs since 2001.**

Despite the enormous increase in expenditures for psychiatric drugs and the growing number of mental health professionals recruited to care for the troops, “mental illness” remains the leading cause of hospitalization for active-duty troops.

More to the point, why are the troops taking their lives at record levels?

**Dr. Bart Billings, Ph.D., a retired Army Colonel and former military psychologist and founder and director of the military-wide Human Assistance Rapid Response Team (HARRT) program, has no doubt that the cause of the suicides among the troops is the direct result of the use of psychiatric drugs.**

**“I’m 100 percent convinced,” says Dr. Billings, “I’ve seen it and talked to hundreds of these guys. These medications really interfere with the brain’s ability to normalize itself and adjust. It’s hard to make a choice on how to recover if your brain isn’t operating the way it should be.”**

“It’s kind of like working with someone who is drunk,” explains Dr. Billings, “you’re not going to get very far. It would be like me spinning you around fifty times and then asking you to walk a straight line. It’s not going to happen.

“These medications are a chemical lobotomy.”

So what are the medications Dr. Billings is referring to as a “chemical lobotomy” and peddled to the troops as magic mental health bullets?

**According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, during the last decade, nearly \$850 million has been spent on Seroquel, an antipsychotic, prescribed to the troops for sleep disorders at a rate of 6.6 million prescriptions.**

**Seroquel was approved by the FDA for the treatment of Schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, yet, the military wrote more than fifty-four thousand Seroquel prescriptions last year, with 99 percent of those prescriptions written off-label – for disorders not approved by the FDA.**

**More astounding, though, is that the FDA’s approved Medication Guide for Seroquel lists “Risk of Suicidal Thoughts or Actions,” as one of Seroquel’s “serious side effects.”**

Anyone with four stars on the old epaulette might want to add this piece of information to the “good clue” column.

**And, while suicidal thoughts and actions are at the top of the list of risks associated with Seroquel, there are others just as frightening, including, but not limited to: hallucinations, worsening mental or mood changes (e.g., aggressiveness, agitation, anxiety, depression, exaggerated feeling of well-being, hostility, irritability and panic attacks).**

The question that comes to mind after reading this abbreviated risk list, and command may find it prudent to inquire, is how would a soldier know if these reactions are his (because of his alleged disorder) or actually are being caused by the mind-altering drug?

**More importantly, how would anyone (least of all a psychiatrist) be able to make this determination, given there is no science behind any psychiatric diagnosis.**

Given the direction of mental health care over the last decade, it doesn’t take a battle field commission to figure out who’s giving the orders.

Dr. Billings is all too aware of the military’s apparent surrender to psychiatry’s pharmacological assault.

Despite the growing interest among military brass and lawmakers, Dr. Billings doesn’t have high hopes for answers unless major changes occur within the military mental health complex.

“The psychiatrists have no clue about what they’re doing,” says Dr. Billings, “and it’s psychiatry that runs mental health in DoD and the VA. DoD has to stop trusting them.”

Dr. Billings reasons that “any organization in the world whose leadership continually fails and loses money, in this case lives, would fire them. Why hasn’t psychiatry been fired? They are responsible for mental health (in the military) and have done nothing to stop these suicides.”

**“If I was a platoon leader, says Dr. Billings, “and I took my platoon out and I came back with 50 percent casualties and all the other platoon leaders are coming back with five percent casualties, I’d be fired – I’d be looking at court martial for negligence. They aren’t doing that to psychiatry. I’ve been trying to convince**

**people that psychiatrists are nothing but legal drug dealers, and they're dealing drugs that don't work and actually kill people."**

The data regarding the increased drugging of military personnel and their families seems to support Dr. Billings' conclusions.

**The atypical antipsychotic drugs, such as Seroquel (which has been implicated in a number of deaths of combat veterans and of late is being referred to as "Serokill") and Risperdal, showed the most dramatic increase – a jump of more than 200 percent – with annual spending quadrupling between 2001 to 2011 from \$4 million to \$16 million.**

It's hardly a secret that these powerful mind-altering drugs cause the very symptoms that they are reported to treat, as the psychiatric drugs now being prescribed to soldiers long have been scrutinized for their possible serious adverse reactions and has been public record for nearly a decade.

In 2007 the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, updated its 2004 black-box warnings, the federal agency's most serious warnings, on all of the antidepressants on the market—all of which are part of the military and VA formulary.

The FDA warning reads in part "Suicidality and Antidepressant Drugs: Antidepressants increased the risk compared to placebo of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in children, adolescents, and young adults in short-term studies of major depressive disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders...."

**The FDA's warnings about the potential for increased suicidal thoughts and behavior associated with antidepressants and antipsychotics (the apparent backbone of psychiatry's military pharmacological arsenal), leads one to wonder why, according to the Army's highest-ranking psychiatrist, Brig. Gen. Loree Sutton, seventeen percent of the active-duty force and 6 percent of deployed troops are on antidepressants.**

**More distressing, though, is these data do not represent the number of troops who are prescribed cocktails of psychiatric mind-altering drugs, which many believe is an alarming number, literally receiving multiples of prescriptions.**

Such deadly elixirs only add to the soldiers' inability to identify which, of the many, mind-altering drugs may be responsible for their behavior, postponing recovery or, worse, causing greater harm and even death.

The military and VA have dramatically increased the numbers of mental health professionals, at the same time there has been a dramatic increase in psychiatric drug prescriptions among the troops, funding for both is skyrocketing and, still, the mental health of our nation's warriors continues to deteriorate.

**Until military command can acknowledge that they may have been out maneuvered by the psychiatric community, the nation's soldiers will be forced to navigate a dangerous and deadly treatment mine field one terrifying step at a time.**

**MORE:**

**Confirmed!**  
**“Only One Treatment Method —  
Exposure Therapy — Has Been  
Proven To Help PTSD In Studies  
By Objective Researchers”**  
**Previous Research Finding  
Confirmed By Atlanta V.A. Test  
Program;**  
**“81% Showing ‘Clinically Significant  
Improvement,’ Which Was Still At 81  
% Six Months Later”**

[From GI Special 6G17]

July 28, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times

Three new studies looking at combat stress have found group exposure therapy seems to work, that troops with traumatic brain injuries are more likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder, and that stress debriefings held after traumatic events don't appear to prevent PTSD.

The research comes as the Department of Veterans Affairs works to find the best treatment methods for combat veterans.

**It follows a report by Rand Corp. that showed only one treatment method — exposure therapy — has been proven to help PTSD in studies by objective researchers.**

The first study looked at a program that had been in place for four years at the Atlanta VA Medical Center. The center's Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team began researching group-based exposure treatment.

**Past studies have shown group therapy to be ineffective on veterans with PTSD, but authors of this study, published in the April issue of the Journal of Traumatic**

**Stress, said the amount of exposure therapy — 60 hours — in this group may be the key to why it works.**

First, nine to 11 people get to know each other and talk about their experiences before they joined the military. Then, they spend several weeks talking about their wartime experiences.

**A total of 93 Vietnam veterans, four Gulf War veterans, one Korean War veteran and two Iraq war veterans took part in the study, with 81 percent showing “clinically significant improvement,” which was still at 81 percent six months later.**

And the study found something else: VA clinicians indicated to researchers that they do not use exposure therapy out of concern for possible increases in suicide ideation, hospitalizations and dropout rates, but “we found the opposite to be true,” the study’s authors said.

**Many patients said hearing others’ traumatic experiences evoked painful recall of what had happened to them, but “none reported any negative lasting effects, and many indicated that this process helped them put their own experience into better perspective,” the study said.**

For example, one-third of the group members said they had frozen under fire. “Learning how common this was helped reduce the shame and guilt that many patients had felt for decades,” researchers said.

**MORE: From GI SPECIAL 6E15:**

# **This Information Could Save Your Sanity, Or Your Life: If Somebody Tries To Drug You Or A Buddy Or Family Member, The Fact The Information Below Appeared In Army Times Can Be A Powerful Weapon Of Self-Defense**

**Comment: T**

**Because of the extreme importance of this information to every member of the armed forces, for or against the war, it is being reprinted again from a previous GI Special.**

**This news report below makes clear that there is now new evidence based research about what works and what doesn't work for troops experiencing PTSD.**

**The credibility and importance of this research -- initiated by the Department of Veterans Affairs -- is underlined by publication of the findings in Army Times, rather than appearing on some obscure web site or other as somebody or other's opinion.**

**The V.A. has long practiced drugging troops with all kinds of very dangerous pills as a "treatment" for PTSD. As this article documents, that's useless. And dangerous: overdoses can kill. Benzodiazepines [Valium & Librium are well known examples] are viscerously addictive and potentially deadly drugs handed out to troops like bags of popcorn.**

**As the article below reports, the only effective treatment for PTSD so far is "exposure therapy; reliving a traumatic experience by writing or talking about it."**

**A lot of quacks, including at V.A. facilities as well as privately, are hustling other bullshit phony treatments, ranging from moving your eyeballs around to eating herbs and weeds.**

**Excuse a personal note, but I've been working professionally with traumatic stress survivors for over 30 years, both military and civilian, both at VA and private facilities, and can testify that the research finding reported in this article is 100% right: the only effective treatment for PTSD so far is "reliving a traumatic experience by writing or talking about it."**

**But you don't have to believe that.**

**Here's the report, from Army Times.**

**Assuming you give a shit about whether troops live or die, send it around, word for word, and be sure to mention it comes from Army Times in case some idiot thinks you sucked it out of your thumb.**

**Most important, if somebody in command or at the V.A. tries to drug you or a buddy or family member, the fact this information appeared in Army Times can be a powerful weapon of self-defense:**

**MORE:**

**“Research Has Not Shown Serotonin Re-Uptake Inhibitors, Such As Prozac, Zoloft Or Celexa, To Be Effective In Treating PTSD”**



# “Exposure Therapy -- Reliving A Traumatic Experience By Writing Or Talking About It -- Is The Only Therapy Proved Effective By Independent Research”

April 14, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

“Problems related to getting troops adequate mental health treatment cannot be resolved unless two issues — stigma and access — are addressed,” Todd Bowers, director of government affairs for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, told the House Veterans’ Affairs subcommittee on health on April 1.

Almost 59,000 veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been diagnosed with PTSD by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Army post-deployment health assessments have found that 20 percent of active-duty and 40 percent of reserve-component troops had symptoms of PTSD, and some experts say the real numbers could be much higher.

But because PTSD hasn’t been addressed until fairly recently — the first scientific paper about the disorder in veterans of the 1991 Persian Gulf War didn’t come out until five years after that war ended — VA and Pentagon officials say much needs to be done to determine good screening techniques and therapies.

“This is the first war where DoD and VA recognized the psychological impact going in,” said Army Col. Charles Hoge, chief of psychiatry and neuroscience at the Walter Reed Institute of Research.

Combat vets are not sleeping, experience startle reactions and are hyper-alert.

“All of these things that we label as symptoms are things they need in combat,” Hoge said. “No sooner are they transitioned back home than they’re right back in rotation.”

At the House hearing, Hoge said an Army assessment last summer showed that the numbers of soldiers with PTSD is going up with each deployment.

“There’s a direct connection between mental health and multiple deployments,” he said, adding that troops also need more time between deployments.

**David Matcher, of the Institute of Medicine’s Committee on Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, said a recent study found that research has not shown serotonin re-uptake inhibitors, such as Prozac, Zoloft or Celexa, to be effective in treating PTSD.**

**Exposure therapy — reliving a traumatic experience by writing or talking about it — is the only therapy proved effective by independent research, he said.**

Other treatments exist, but they have been tested mainly by the same people who developed them.

That's an important point because the Defense Department and VA use several such methods, including group and drug therapy, to treat combat veterans.

## **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.

## **MILITARY NEWS**

# **Déjà Vu All Over Again: “A Unit Of Army Special Operations Soldiers Was Recently Deployed To Iraq”**

[Thanks to John Gingerich, who sent this in.]

September 24, 2012 By TIM ARANGO, New York Times [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — The civil war in Syria is testing Iraq's fragile society and fledgling democracy, worsening sectarian tensions, pushing Iraq closer to Iran and highlighting security shortcomings just nine months after American forces ended their long and costly occupation here.

While some Congressional leaders have threatened to cut off aid to Iraq if the flights do not stop, the United States is trying to speed up weapons sales to Iraq to secure it as an ally, said Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr., the American commander in charge of that effort.

As regional security deteriorates, the United States is finding it hard to deliver the weapons — especially anti-aircraft systems — quickly enough to satisfy the Iraqis, who in some cases are looking elsewhere, including Russia.

The United States is providing Iraq with refurbished anti-aircraft guns, free of charge, but they will not arrive until June.

**At the request of the Iraqi government, according to General Caslen, a unit of Army Special Operations soldiers was recently deployed to Iraq to advise on counterterrorism and help with intelligence.**

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



**“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.**

**“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.**

**“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”**

**“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”**

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

**Nothing has more revolutionary effect, and nothing undermines more the foundations of all state power, than the continuation of that wretched and brainless régime, which has the strength merely to cling to its positions but no longer the slightest power to rule or to steer the state ship on a definite course.  
-- Karl Kautsky; ‘The Consequences of the Japanese Victory and Social Democracy’**

**“We Must Make Every Possible Use Of The One Slogan That Can Unite The Army With The Revolutionary People: ‘Down With The War!’”**

**“We Must Do This So That The Officers, On The Decisive Day, Will Not Be Able To Trust The Soldiers, And The Soldiers Will Have The Same Distrust Of Their Officers”**

**“The Result Is That Nothing Remains But Mechanical Discipline; There Is No Longer Any Faith That Things Must, Or Even Can, Continue In The Old Way”**

**“Everything Else Depends On The Street, Where The Last Remnants Of The Hypnosis Induced By The Barracks Will Dissolve In The Revolutionary Enthusiasm Of The People”**

From “Up To The Ninth Of January,” 1905; By L. Trotsky [Excerpts]

**One of the main elements of military hypnosis is the faith energetically promoted among the soldiers that they are invincible, mighty, and superior to all the rest of the world.**

**The war has killed that faith everywhere.**

Soldiers and sailors were sent to the East without any hope of victory.

And when an army loses faith in its own invincibility, it is already halfway to losing faith in the invincibility of the social order it serves.

The one leads to the other.

In the current war, tsarism has shown itself for what it really is.

War is an event that focuses not just the public interest, but also the professional interest of the army. Our ships are slower; our guns have a more limited range; our soldiers are illiterate; our non-commissioned officers have neither compass nor map; our troops are barefooted, naked and hungry; our Red Cross steals; the commissariats steal — and the news and rumours of all this naturally penetrate the army and find eager listeners.

Every such rumor acts like an acid that eats away at the corrosion of moral drill.

**Years of propaganda work during peacetime could never accomplish what is achieved by a single day of warfare.**

**The result is that nothing remains but mechanical discipline; there is no longer any faith that things must, or even can, continue in the old way.**

**The less faith there is in autocracy, the greater is the likelihood of faith in the enemies of autocracy.**

**We must make the most of this state of mind.**

We must explain to the soldiers the meaning of the mass working-class action being prepared by the Party.

We must fix this knowledge in their consciousness with a continuous stream of pamphlets.

**We must make every possible use of the one slogan that can unite the army with the revolutionary people: 'Down with the war!'**

**We must do this so that the officers, on the decisive day, will not be able to trust the soldiers, and the soldiers will have the same distrust of their officers.**

Everything else depends on the street, where the last remnants of the hypnosis induced by the barracks will dissolve in the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people.

Of course, it is easier to fire over people's heads than to refuse to fire altogether or to hand over one's rifle to the insurgent masses. That is a fact.

But the difference is not so great as it may first appear to be.

The same soldier who yesterday fired into the air will tomorrow hand over his rifle to a worker, provided he is confident that the people are not just being 'rebellious' but are able and determined to hold the bridges until they win recognition of their rights.

**That confidence can and will be instilled in the soldiers by the numbers and the enthusiasm of the crowds in the street, supported by the entire people, and by the news of simultaneous action throughout every region of Russia.**

Therefore, in order for the proletariat's political strike, once transformed into demonstration by the entire people, to become the starting point for a victorious revolution, a sympathetic attitude must be widespread throughout the army.

### **Troops Invited:**

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

## **Confused WWII Veterans Demand To Know Why Rommel On Presidential Ballot**



November 6, 2012 by G-Had, Duffel Blog. About The Author: G-Had. G-Had hates your freedom.

BETHESDA, MD – A group of elderly World War II veterans at the Bethesda Naval Medical Center have written a letter to the Federal Election Commission asking them to explain the presence of German Field Marshal Erwin “Mitt” Rommel on this year’s election ballot.

“While we applaud the American people for their willingness to vote for a centenarian, particularly a decorated war hero who turns 121 this month, we have serious questions about Mr. Rommel’s eligibility to be president and precisely what his platform consists of.”

Rommel, popularly known as ‘The Desert Fox’, was a German commander in World War II and died in 1944.

He has nothing in common with actual presidential candidate Mitt Romney, other than an obsession with Benghazi, Libya, and his universal healthcare program: Rommelcare.

The letter goes on to demand that Mr. Rommel produce a birth certificate showing his eligibility to serve as president, per Article II of the Constitution, as well as charges that he may have been involved in certain Nazi activities in the past, specifically the conquest of North Africa.

However, despite the strident tone of the letter, a series of interviews conducted by Duffel Blog reporters at Bethesda Naval Medical Center have revealed sharp divides in the pro- and anti-Rommel groups.

“All I’ve been hearing on the radio for the past six months is ‘Rommel this’ and ‘Rommel that’,” complained D-Day veteran Jackson Webb. “That magnificent bastard, people must have read his book!”

“Most people don’t know that eight out of our first nine presidents were not only born in a foreign country, but even swore allegiance to a foreign king, yet were allowed to take the oath of office,” said Ken Webster, a 92 years-young veteran of both Sicily and Anzio.

Alexander Ness, who fought in World War II, Korea and Vietnam and was strangely shot in the foot each time, chimed in that George Washington had even served as an officer in a foreign army, actions which should have automatically led to his citizenship being revoked.

“I don’t see why Rommel should be held to a higher standard than George Washington,” Ness added. “Plus anybody would be better than our current president.”

Anthony Laurito, who briefly served under General Patton before being hospitalized for a series of slap-induced concussions, said he wasn’t planning on voting for Rommel.

“My grandson was telling me Rommel wants to strengthen ties with ‘our traditional allies like Japan’. Doesn’t he know that Japan makes up just one part of what I like to call the ‘Axis of Evil’, like Iran, Iraq and North Korea? And all this talk about having less ships

than we did in 1917? Maybe if he brought it up to present-day 1945 levels I would at least consider voting for him.”

“That’s why I’m voting for President Osama.”

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

# **Zionist Occupation Army Kills An Unarmed Mentally-Ill Palestinian: Refuses To Let Ambulance Help Him For “A Couple Of Hours”**

05 November 2012 Palestine News Network

On Sunday evening 4th November, Israeli occupation forces opened fire at Palestinian who approached a fence near the Israel-Gaza border in the Gaza Strip.

**Palestinian medical sources said that the 22-year-old man was a mentally-ill person, unarmed and that Israel had banned an ambulance from reaching the place, and they had waited a couple of hours for permission to pick him up, early on Monday.**

**They suspected he died of injuries for which he might have been treated.**

An Israeli military spokesperson said that Israeli army opened warning shots when a man was walking west of the border and the man hasn't responded, so soldiers were allowed to shoot immediately.

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

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# **A New Labor Union Champions Workers’ Rights In Occupied Palestine:**



# “Arab Workers Across Israel Experience A Culture Of Exploitation”

“If We Go To The Labour Courts It Can Take Months Or Years. If We Are Organized, We Can Strike And Win”



Members of the Women’s Platform demonstrate in Nazareth (photo: Wehbe Badarneh/ Arab Workers Union in Israel)

November 4, 2012 By Alon Aviram, +972 [Excerpts]

NAZARETH – Security cameras and a heavy metal door secure the otherwise inconspicuous apartment.

This is the office of the Arab Workers Union in Israel (AWU).

Photographs of local demonstrations and flags of international trade unions drape the interior walls. Wehbe Badarneh, 43, from the village of Arabah, is the general secretary of the trade union. He prepared coffee over an open gas stove and offered freshly baked pastries.

Fadwa Ali, 42, of the village of Kaukab Abu Al-Hija, arrived shortly after. Fadwa is one of the main organizers of the Women’s Platform, an affiliated section of the AWU. We sat

down to discuss issues effecting Israeli Palestinian women workers, and the trade union's related activities.

The AWU in Israel is a young, independent trade union which primarily organizes and defends Palestinians citizens of Israel who work in factories in Nazareth, Haifa and the Galilee, along with women working in agriculture. The trade union is run solely by volunteers and relies on donations from trade unions internationally in order to sustain itself.

It runs awareness campaigns to inform Arab workers of their labor rights, organizes them across workplaces, and provides legal representation in labor courts.

The Women's Platform is the largest section of the union, dedicated to promoting the rights of Arab women workers. Fadwa spoke of pervasive work-related problems affecting Arab women, explaining that "many are simply unaware of their labor rights, or are too afraid to organize and to demand their often legally entitled rights."

"Arab workers across Israel experience a culture of exploitation, we see and hear that every day from the people who come into the office to complain against employers," said Wehbe.

Over half of all Arab families in Israel are classified as poor, while between one-fourth and one-fifth of the general population of Israel lives below the poverty line. Approximately 21 percent of Arab women in Israel are employed, in contrast to roughly 60 percent of Jewish women.

Despite an gradual increase in recent years, Arab workforce participation rates among women in Israel are lower than the entire Middle East, barring Yemen and Palestinian women in the occupied Palestinian territories. Even Saudi Arabia has a higher female employment rate, of 22 percent.

Arab women who manage to find work in agriculture can expect to earn roughly NIS 80-100 shekels for an eight-hour day – that's roughly \$20 to \$25, well below the minimum wage.

"Arab workers built all the Israeli towns, from Eilat to the Galilee," exclaimed Wehbe. But most Arab communities find themselves on the geographic periphery, far from prosperous centers in Israel.

**Fadwa spoke of how official statistics don't reflect the true extent of exploitation. The AWU has documented numerous employers declaring to tax authorities that they pay employees minimum wage, while underpaying through cash in hand. A reported "87 percent of women working in locally run cafes in Nazareth do not earn the minimum wage" said Wehbe.**

The Women's Platform works on a community level on such issues.

The AWU seeks to make a difference on a number of fronts, from retrieving workers' unpaid wages to helping overthrow the Wisconsin plan, a localized welfare-to-work program, in which the government outsourced the provision of certain welfare benefits to private companies and left many without income support.

The case of Ms. Awwad is but one example of the AWU successfully defending Arab women workers.

Like many other single women in their 20s in the Galilee, she had only ever found temporary work in factories. Ms. Awwad had worked eight months in a dairy factory in Shimshit near Nazareth, on an hourly wage of NIS 11 (\$2.83), while the Israeli minimum hourly wage was NIS 22.95.

On her behalf, the AWU filed for financial compensation through the Nazareth Labor Court. In October 2011, the court ruled that her former employer had to compensate Ms. Awwad NIS 7,500, the extra amount she would have received had she earned minimum wage.

Despite the few but significant legal victories, “The main activity is to establish local committees of workers that are linked to the Union.” Wehbe reiterated that the AWU prefers not to focus on legal battles in labour courts, or to invest scarce resources on lobbying the Knesset. They instead dedicate their activities to informing workers of their labor rights, and in establishing a network of local worker committees across the region.

“We normally get thrown out of the factories as we hand out leaflets informing workers of their rights,” he said.

Lacking the funds for large-scale promotion, support for the AWU comes as a result of word of mouth and through cultivated interpersonal relationships. “We hold lectures for women in their homes,” says Fadwa. “Our experience with women in the past years shows us that this work is important, because working women are not aware of their rights.”

As a result of such initiatives, “there are small factories with 70 to 80 working women across the Galilee that now have local committees for the women who work there.”

**Factory administrations have used various methods to try and undermine this small but growing network of committees and any attempts by them to collectively bargain.**

**Wehbe explained that factory and agricultural bosses have argued that only the Histadrut, Israel’s confederation of trade unions, has the right to organize workers.**

**This despite the fact that the Arab Workers Union has a member majority in these workplaces, legally entitling it to engage in collective bargaining as is dictated by Israeli labor law.**

The Arab women of the Galilee have suffered greatly from the mass outsourcing of production to neighbouring countries. In the past decade alone, over 30,000 textile workers in the region have lost their jobs. Neo-liberalization policies spurred the new high-tech based economy, and displaced traditional employment sectors in Israel.

Fadwa described the closure of a local Nazareth textile factory. “One day, the women came to work and everything was closed, no salaries, no pay.”

Closed without any notice, the factory's former employees never received any severance pay despite demonstrations and appeals. Fadwa says there are other similar cases throughout the Galilee.

Fadwa and Wehbe remain resolute in their commitment to an independent trade union among Arab workers.

"We are not an organization of lawyers, we prove to workers why it's important to be organized.

"If we go to the labour courts it can take months or years. If we are organized, we can strike and win," Wehbe says.

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## The Tyrant Assad Kills 7 More Palestinians In The Al-Yarmouk Refugee Camp



Image By Yarmok News

November 05, 2012 by Saed Bannoura, IMEMC News

**Palestinian sources in Syria reported Monday that 7 more Palestinian refugees were killed by a Syrian army shell targeting their vehicle while driving near the Al-Yarmouk refugee camp, near Damascus.**

A Palestinian refugee living in the camp told the Maan News Agency that the killed refugees were moved to Palestine and Al-Bassel Hospitals, before they were buried in the Ash-Shuhada' graveyard.

The refugee added that the situation is currently relatively calm, but the residents fear further escalation.

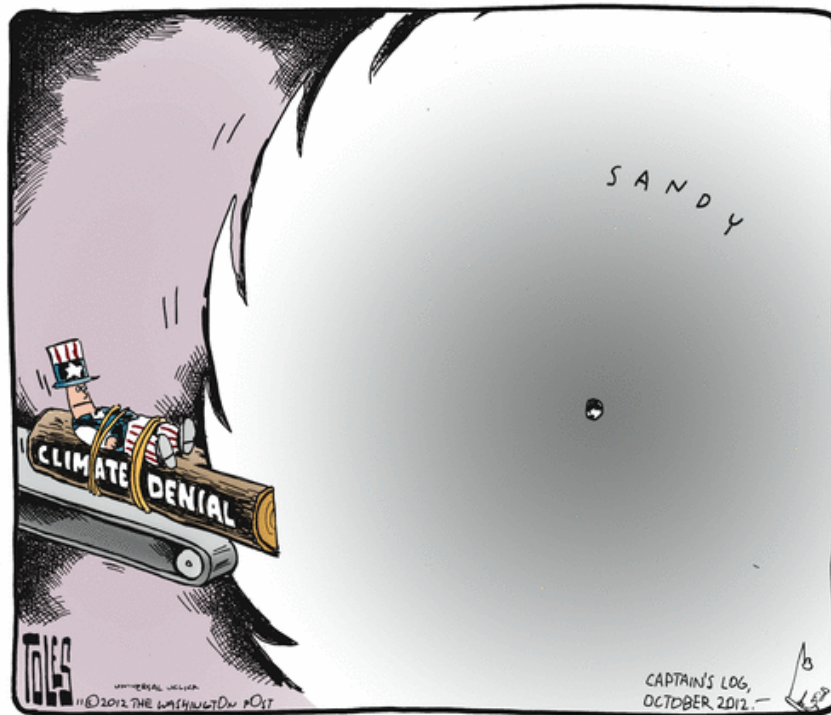
**It is worth mentioning that at least 16 Palestinian refugees were killed, Sunday, by Syrian army shells targeting the camp.**

**The Al-Yarmouk refugee camp was repeatedly shelled by the Syrian army, an issue that led to dozens of casualties.**

There are approximately half a million refugees living in Al-Yarmouk refugee camp, most of them were forced out of their homes and lands when Israel was established in the historic land of Palestine in 1948.

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## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

# **“At Least 50 Syrian Security-Force Members Killed In Car Bombing”**

## **“The Outpost Housed 200 To 250 Security-Force Members And Served As A Detention And Interrogation Center, An Ammunition Depot And A Base For Long-Range Artillery”**

November 5, 2012 By SAM DAGHER, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

BEIRUT—At least 50 Syrian security-force members were killed in a car bombing claimed by an extremist group on Monday, as opposition figures met in Qatar in a U.S.-backed effort to unite rebel groups and stem the rising influence of such extremists.

The attack, on an outpost near the central city of Hama, came amid strikes that killed dozens more people, including the bombing of a regime enclave of the capital, Damascus, and government attacks on rebels around the city and elsewhere.

Extremist group Jabhat al-Nusra, in coordination with another rebel faction called the Battalions of Ahrar al-Cham, claimed responsibility for Monday's suicide car bomb attack against a government checkpoint about 50 miles northwest of Hama.

The bombing leveled the compound, according to rebels and antiregime activists.

Syrian state media said the suicide attack involved nearly a ton of explosives but killed two people and wounded 10, making no mention of the military nature of the target.

It is common for the regime to play down attacks against sensitive targets.

The attack was a big blow for the regime because of the outpost's strategic location, said Mousab al-Hamadee, a member of the activist network known as the Local Coordination Committees and of the Revolutionary Military Council in Hama.

**The bomber rammed into a multistory building next to the checkpoint, in the village of Ziyara, Mr. Hamadee said.**

**The outpost housed 200 to 250 security-force members and served as a detention and interrogation center, an ammunition depot and a base for long-range artillery, Mr. Hamadee said.**

Asked about the role in the attack of Jabhat al-Nusra, which has been linked to al Qaeda, Mr. Hamadee said rebels had no option but to collaborate with such groups given what he viewed as a lack of meaningful support by the West.

**"When your son is killed and your house is brought down over your head, you do not care much about who comes to your rescue, be it al Qaeda or the devil," he said.**

In the capital, Damascus, the regime used heavy artillery and helicopter gunships to target pro-rebel suburbs as well as several districts on the southern fringes of the city, according to activists and residents. Some described it as the worst day for Damascus since July, when heavy clashes engulfed the capital after the assassination of four regime security leaders.

The regime was retaliating for a series of coordinated rebel attacks Sunday, an opposition activist said.

These attacks targeted checkpoints manned by government forces and loyalist militias known as the Popular Committees in the capital and surrounding suburbs where rebels have been active.

**Also in Damascus, a car bomb hit the Alawite, loyalist enclave of Mezze 86 on the southwestern side of the city, killing at least 11 and wounding dozens, according to Syrian state media.**

State television broadcast footage of gutted buildings and mangled cars at the scene of the explosion as well as scenes of bloodied children and women being treated at a hospital.

The area, which is close to the presidential palace, is considered a bedrock of support in the capital for Mr. Assad's Alawite-dominated regime.

**Recently, a large poster at a checkpoint at the entrance to the area showed members of the Assad family, and declared: "Those that do not accept Assad as the light of their eyes are not worthy of being dirt under his feet."**

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## **Bahrain Royal Dictatorship Attacked With Street Bombs: "The Attacks Monday Came Less Than A Week After A Ban By The Regime On All Protest Gatherings"**

# “Over The Past Few Months The Government Has Widened Its Pursuit Of Leading Members Of The Opposition, Imprisoning And Detaining Several”

November 5, 2012 By ALEX DELMAR-MORGAN, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Five bombs exploded in districts of Bahrain's capital popular with tourists and Westerners, killing two expatriates and escalating tensions between the government and its opponents in the Persian Gulf monarchy.

Shiite youth activists in Bahrain — many demanding the downfall of the monarchy — have grown more radical in the past year, and some have used homemade weapons, including bombs, to attack police.

The incident was the first since the height of antigovernment protests last year in which coordinated bombs have been planted in busy areas of the capital.

"It's been a pattern, but five in one day—we haven't seen that in 20 months," said Fahad al Binali, spokesman for the Information Affairs Authority.

One expatriate was seriously injured in addition to the two deaths, according to the Information Affairs Authority. The Ministry of Interior said the victims were Asian, but didn't specify nationality.

The mainstream opposition group Al Wefaq voiced concern about the bombings, and blamed the escalation of violence on the lack of progress toward a political solution to the tensions between the government and opposition.

Bahrain, a strategic ally of the U.S., has been roiled by unrest since last year's demonstrations.

**Since rallies were put down forcibly in March 2011 with the backing of troops from Saudi Arabia, discontent has simmered and protests — often marked by violent outbursts and harsh responses from authorities — have continued almost daily.**

Western powers have been urging Bahrain to implement reforms to ease the pressure.

The mainly Shiite Muslim protesters demand more political representation, better jobs and housing, and an end to what they say is discrimination from the Gulf island's wealthy Sunni Muslim monarchy.

The government has enacted some political changes, such as giving parliament more power to question ministers, but the overwhelmingly Shiite opposition and the Sunni rulers haven't been able to agree on a path forward.



Western powers such as the U.S. and U.K. have urged political changes in Bahrain. The government has been unwilling to consider opposition demands for deep changes such as an independent judiciary and a fully elected parliament.

**Bahrain is under pressure to implement the recommendations of a report by a team of international lawyers and human-rights experts that accused the government of widespread torture and violence against protesters during the unrest last spring.**

**The report found 35 people had died in the violence last year.**

**Opposition groups and rights activists say the figure is well over double that now.**

Over the past few months the government has widened its pursuit of leading members of the opposition, imprisoning and detaining several high-profile Shiite activists as it seeks to stamp out a rebellion that is hurting its international reputation and its economy.

**Nabeel Rajab, a prominent Shiite activist and head of a Bahraini human-rights center, was jailed in August for three years for organizing illegal protests. Mr. Rajab said he wasn't guilty.**

Last month, the government took the rare step of questioning Wefaq leader Ali Salman over remarks the cleric made on a visit to Egypt. The government said it asked Mr. Salman whether he had been involved in "sectarian activities," a charge he denied.

The attacks Monday came less than a week after a ban by the Sunni regime on all protest gatherings, a move that drew widespread international criticism, including from the U.S., which stations its naval Fifth Fleet in Bahrain.

Political stagnation is fueling extremism, analysts say.

**"People are increasingly desperate and it's a race to make a big statement," said Justin Gengler, a Bahrain researcher based in Doha.**

**"If the only way to draw international attention is to kill and blow something up, then that's the way it's going to go."**

## **MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL**

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# **Opposition To Kuwaiti Royal Dictatorship Gathering Force;**

**“I Swear To God That It Was Not  
The 10,000 Dinar Bail That Got Me  
Out Of Prison, But Your Loud  
Voices”**

**Frightened Regime “Announced That  
It Will Ban The Organization Of All  
Rallies In The Future”**

**“Day After Day, The True Ugly Nature Of  
The Security Apparatus Is Showing, Not  
Only Before The Kuwaiti People, But  
Before The Whole World”**



Supporters of detained opposition figure Musallam al-Barrak held banners and shouted supportive messages in Kuwait City October 30, 2012. Barrak was released on bail shortly thereafter. (Photo by REUTERS/Stephanie McGehee)

**“Security forces are storming into houses, terrorizing people in their own residential areas, and using smoke bombs and tear gas in houses and meeting houses. Many people — mostly youth — were wounded and arbitrarily arrested, and are constantly being tracked down.**

**“This is the authorities’ new approach, which is threatening to turn Kuwait into a police state where there is no freedom, constitutional guarantees are violated, people’s dignity is violated, and where tyranny and corruption prevail”**

Nov 2, 2012 by Al-Khaleej (U.A.E.) Translated by: Naria Tanoukhi and Sahar Ghoussoub [Excerpts]

While people are no longer interested in running in the elections, as the number of candidates decreased to nine yesterday (Nov. 1), the Court of First Instance defused the situation when it released “opposition hawk” MP Musallam al-Barrak on bail of 10,000 Kuwaiti dinars (\$35,480) following charges of undermining the status of the emir.

**The square facing the central prison in the al-Salibiya region turned into a celebration parade, as thousands of Barrak supporters gathered, carrying him on their shoulders as soon as he was released.**

**The day before, this very same square witnessed deadly clashes between security forces and protesters, who surprised the Ministry of Interior by holding an unannounced massive march towards the central prison, followed by another rally in the al-Riqqa region.**

The protests aimed at dispersing the security forces’ efforts, which is the same tactic “the opposition is likely to follow in its rally on Sunday, as it has yet to announce the rally’s time, place and destination. However, according to leaked information, six major rallies are to be held in all of the provinces.”

Following his release, Barrak said: “I swear to God that it was not the 10,000 dinar bail that got me out of prison, but your loud voices. By God, I have not and will never betray your trust.”

**After a long night of hit-and-run confrontations, the opposition forces finally gathered Nov. 1 at the meeting house of former MP Waleed al-Tabtabai, where they issued a statement calling for “an end to the unprecedented repressive security practices, the release of all detainees and an end to all security prosecutions of dissidents and young people participating in peaceful protests.**

The statement added: “Day after day, the true ugly nature of the security apparatus is showing, not only before the Kuwaiti people, but before the whole world.

“The security apparatus is seeking to abolish the constitution and the electoral system.

“This is proven by the protests that are being repressed, as happened during the sit-in on al-Sahafa Street, not to mention the spontaneous peaceful protests that took place in the districts of Sabah al-Nasser, al-Firdous, and al-Sabahiya, among other places that have witnessed crack downs.

**“Security forces are storming into houses, terrorizing people in their own residential areas, and using smoke bombs and tear gas in houses and meeting houses. Many people — mostly youth — were wounded and arbitrarily arrested, and are constantly being tracked down.**

**“This is the authorities’ new approach, which is threatening to turn Kuwait into a police state where there is no freedom, constitutional guarantees are violated, people’s dignity is violated, and where tyranny and corruption prevail,” the statement said.**

The statement added that, “While we affirm our opposition to the authorities’ oppressive approaches, and the constitutional violations at the hands of the security forces, we support peaceful protests and reject any irrational and irresponsible reactions. We urge the authorities to defuse the situation by taking the following measures:

**“First: Put an end to the unprecedented repressive security practices.**

**“Second: Release all detainees and end all security prosecutions of dissidents and young people participating in peaceful protests.**

**“Third: Abolish the amended decree-law of Article II of Act 42 of 2006, providing for the redrawing of electoral districts, and carrying out parliamentary elections according to their constitutional schedule in accordance with the law and without any amendment.**

**“Fourth: Stop the incitement, defamation and slander campaigns being waged by the authorities through their media outlets. This is the only way to defuse the crisis, ease the political tension and prevent further deterioration of the situation.**

**“There is no other way. Until these measures are taken, we affirm our support for all forms of peaceful expression opposing the authorities’ approach, including the ‘Dignity of the Homeland’ demonstration scheduled for the evening of Sunday, November 4.**

The statement was signed by the majority bloc, the Nahj movement, the National Front for the Protection of the Constitution and Achievement of Political Reforms, the Islamic Constitutional Movement (Muslim Brotherhood), the Kuwaiti Progressive Current, the Kuwaiti Reformist Movement (Hirak), the Umma Party, the Civil Democratic Movement (Hadam), the Salafist movement, the Fundamentals of the Nation movement and the National Union of Workers and Employees of Kuwait.

**Former MP Mohammed Khalifa warned of the consequences of the excessive force used by the Ministry of Interior and its disregard for women and children.**

**“Homes are private places. What happened in Sabah Al Nasser had nothing to do with maintaining security. To the contrary, the Interior Ministry is threatening security,” he said.**

Former MP Mubarak al-Waalan said: “We condemn the beatings that took place after the withdrawal of the peaceful rally and the attack — perpetrated by the Ministry of the Interior — against unarmed youth following their withdrawal.”

**Former MP Riad al-Adsani said that the invasion of the privacy of homes, use of stun grenades and tear gas and the intimidation of children, women and the elderly is totally unacceptable.**

**Dr. Ajeel al-Nashmi, former dean of the Faculty of Shariah and Islamic Studies at Kuwait University and president of the Shariah Scholars League in the GCC countries, described the shaving of Barrak's head as an "offense" that has not been condemned yet. Nashmi said that "insulting Barrak by shaving his head is punishing a suspect who has not been proven guilty."**

For its part, the Ministry of Interior said that it would strictly enforce the law on anyone who organizes, incites and participates in illegal rallies, or threatens the security and safety of the nation and its citizens, adding that they will be pursued, arrested and brought to justice.

**The ministry announced that it will ban the organization of all rallies in the future.**

**It denied that the central prison is witnessing a rebellion, or the involvement of foreign forces to disperse the rallies.**

**"These marches were covered by photographers and television crews, and mobile phones were seized from rioters, showing the gravity and extent of the damage inflicted by these persons on the security of their homeland and the safety of themselves and others," the statement said.**

The statement added: "There was an attempt to kill an officer from the al-Jahra police force by running him over by a Ford car. The car has been seized and its driver was arrested on the scene immediately after the attack. This reveals a scheme to influence youths, incite them to commit crimes, riots and violent acts, as well as assault security men, destroy facilities and block roads, and disrupt businesses."

The Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of a number of rioters and instigators who organized a rally that passed through several residential areas. This led to the closure of key intersections, main roads, by-roads and streets, blocking traffic, disrupting public and private businesses and stirring anxiety, panic and fear among families living in the areas through which the rally passed. The ministry said that (the suspects) were referred to investigation.

**The ministry warned of the consequences of breaking the law and violating order and moral codes, adding that it will prevent the organization of all rallies in the future.**

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