

Military Resistance 10L10

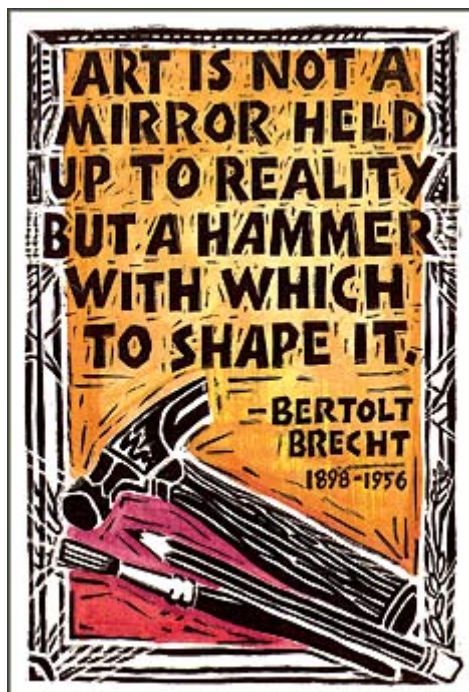
**WHEN IT COMES TO MARCHING
MANY DO NOT
KNOW**

**That their enemy is marching at their
head.**

**The voice which gives them their
orders**

**Is their enemy's voice and
The man who speaks of the enemy
Is the enemy himself.**

[Bertolt Brecht]



From: A German War Primer
By Bertolt Brecht

THOSE WHO TAKE THE MEAT FROM THE TABLE

Teach contentment.

Those for whom the contribution is destined

Demand sacrifice.

Those who eat their fill speak to the hungry

Of wonderful times to come.

Those who lead the country into the abyss

Call ruling too difficult

For ordinary men.

WHEN THE LEADERS SPEAK OF PEACE

The common folk know

That war is coming.

When the leaders curse war

The mobilization order is already written out.

**THOSE AT THE TOP SAY: PEACE
AND WAR**

Are of different substance.

But their peace and their war

Are like wind and storm.

War grows from their peace

Like son from his mother

He bears

Her frightful features.

Their war kills

Whatever their peace

Has left over.

ON THE WALL WAS CHALKED:

They want war.

The man who wrote it

Has already fallen.

THOSE AT THE TOP SAY:

This way to glory.

Those down below say:

This way to the grave.

THE WAR WHICH IS COMING

Is not the first one. There were

Other wars before it.
When the last one came to an end
There were conquerors and conquered.
Among the conquered the common people
Starved. Among the conquerors
The common people starved too.

THOSE AT THE TOP SAY COMRADESHIP
Reigns in the army.
The truth of this is seen
In the cookhouse.
In their hearts should be
The selfsame courage. But
On their plates
Are two kinds of rations.

**WHEN IT COMES TO MARCHING MANY DO NOT
KNOW**
That their enemy is marching at their head.
The voice which gives them their orders
Is their enemy's voice and
The man who speaks of the enemy
Is the enemy himself.

IT IS NIGHT
The married couples
Lie in their beds. The young women
Will bear orphans.

GENERAL, YOUR TANK IS A POWERFUL VEHICLE
It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.
But it has one defect:
It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.
But it has one defect:
It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.
He can fly and he can kill.
But he has one defect:
He can think.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Local Soldier Killed In Afghanistan



Dec. 11, 2012 By Andrew McGinn, Staff Writer, Dayton Daily News

A 2005 Tecumseh High School graduate who found out last month that his wife is expecting their second child has been killed in Afghanistan.

Staff Sgt. Wes Williams, 25, was killed Monday in combat while serving with the Army's 4th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, his wife, Krista Williams, said Tuesday.

The Army hadn't released any details by Tuesday evening, but it's believed Wes Williams, who grew up in Park Layne, was killed by an improvised explosive device, Krista Williams said.

He leaves behind a 1-year-old daughter, Faith, and his wife, who's eight weeks pregnant.

"I was just told last night I lost my best friend," Krista Williams explained. "I'm now a single mother with two kids."

While funeral arrangements are pending, Krista Williams said she'll be picking up her husband's body from Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Thursday — the same day as the couple's fourth wedding anniversary. "He died doing what he loved," she said.

A veteran of two tours in Iraq, Wes Williams deployed Nov. 15 to Afghanistan.

"He's a great soldier and was with a great group of guys," said Krista Williams, a 2006 graduate of Tecumseh High School.

But, she added, “It’s not like you plan on something like this happening.”

Krista Williams saw her husband via Skype last weekend — the first time they’d been able to do that since this most recent deployment began.

“This deployment was harder for him,” she said. “The last two, we didn’t have our daughter and I wasn’t pregnant. It was just he and I.”

Wes Williams is the fourth Clark County man to be killed during the 11-year-old War on Terror.

Marine Lance Cpl. Kevin S. Smith, 20, was killed in 2005 when an improvised explosive device hit his Humvee near the Iraq-Syria border.

Marine Sgt. David Christoff, 25, was killed in 2006 by a roadside bomb while on a foot patrol in Iraq.

Army Cpl. Jeremy Greene, 24, was killed in Afghanistan in 2007 in a noncombat shooting incident.

Wes and Krista Williams met in high school, as members of Tecumseh’s Air Force ROTC program.

“They became an item. Everything Wes did, Krista did,” said Master Sgt. Antonio Ruiz, an aerospace science instructor in the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Tecumseh. “They were always together.”

Ruiz on Tuesday remembered Wes Williams as an award-winning rifle spinner on the ROTC drill team and a likable leader who, by his senior year, had become the program’s recruiting officer in charge, promoting ROTC to incoming freshmen.

“He was a person who would take charge,” Ruiz said. “Wes will truly be missed.”

John and Karen White, who live across the street from Wes Williams’ parents in Park Layne, recalled the soldier as well-behaved growing up.

“It’s very sad,” Karen White said.

Wes Williams joined the Army immediately after high school, and was stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington state.

“He always wanted to be a soldier from the time he was little,” Krista Williams said.

In his spare time, he was addicted to the “Halo” series of video games, his wife said, and was particularly excited by the recent release of “Halo 4.” He also loved tattoos and enjoyed drawing, she said.

But, above all, he was a proud father.

“He was a really, really great father,” Krista Williams said.

Army Staff Sgt. Nicholas Reid, Rochester Native, Dies From Afghanistan IED



Staff Sgt. Nicholas Reid

December 15, 2012 By Dave Tobin, The Post-Standard

Staff Sgt. Nicholas J. Reid, 26, of Rochester, died Dec. 13 in Landstuhl, Germany from wounds suffered on Dec. 9, in Sperwan Village, Afghanistan, the Army announced today.

Reid was wounded when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device IED. He was assigned to the 53rd Ordnance Company (EOD), 3rd Ordnance Battalion, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Reid entered the Army in 2006. This was his second deployment to Afghanistan. He had been there since September.

Since 2001, 2,036 U.S. soldiers have died in Afghanistan; 18,137 have been wounded, according to the Department of Defense.

North Dakota Soldier Is Laid To Rest In Montana

December 11, 2012 Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. - A North Dakota National Guard soldier killed in Afghanistan was laid to rest on Tuesday, while the family of a second soldier who died prepared for his burial.

Services for Sgt. 1st Class Darren Linde, 41, of Devil's Lake, were held Tuesday afternoon in Sidney, Mont., where he grew up. The funeral for Spc. Tyler Orgaard, 20,

of Bismarck, is Thursday in that city. Linde will be buried in the Sidney Cemetery and Orgaard in the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery south of Mandan. Gov. Jack Dalrymple asked that flags be flown at half-staff on Tuesday and Thursday in honor of the fallen soldiers.

Linde was eulogized as someone who was proud to wear the uniform.

"He believed his efforts made a difference," said Lt. Col. David Johnson, who served as chaplain at Linde's funeral.

The two members of the Williston-based 818th Engineer Company died in a roadside bomb blast in southern Afghanistan on Dec. 3. A third soldier, Spc. Ian Placek, 23, of Bismarck, was wounded but is recovering.

Linde's widow, Adrienne Linde, said in a recent statement that she and their four children, Celina, Kayla, Alexis and Eric, "are all devastated by the loss of such an incredible husband and father."

"Though saddened and shocked, we are thankful to have wonderful memories and funny stories that will last a lifetime," she said. "I have always been Darren's number one cheerleader and I am enormously proud of him for his sacrifice and service to our nation. Darren gave his life so that others could pass through safely."

Linde originally enlisted in the North Dakota Guard in 1990. He served in the U.S. Army and Montana Army National Guard before returning to the North Dakota Guard in 2006. He deployed to Iraq with the Guard's 164th Engineer Battalion from August 2007 to April 2008. Since 2009, he served as a full-time instructor with the Guard's 164th Regional Training Institute at the Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake.

Linde and Orgaard were among about 100 members of the 818th who deployed in April for a year of duty overseas. The unit arrived in Afghanistan in June after undergoing final training at Fort Bliss in Texas. The unit handles combat engineer missions including route clearance, which the soldiers were doing when the attack occurred.

Orgaard's body was flown from Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to Bismarck on Monday and turned over to family.

**“Troops On Foot Now Find 80% Of IEDs Before They Detonate”
“Only Better Underwear Stands Between Troops And The 20% Of The Bombs That Remain Undetected”**

December 11, 2012 by Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON -- Fortified underwear is in high demand among troops in Afghanistan where any step on the battlefield can trigger a buried bomb that can blow off legs, destroy genitals and tear into their abdomens.

The Pentagon is rushing more Kevlar underwear, along with protective cups and strapped-on outergear, to ensure that soldiers and Marines in the field have six pairs of the equipment. The need is acute because insurgents continue to plant more than 1,000 bombs per month and troops on foot lack the protection of armored vehicles.

The underwear has resulted in a 40% reduction in wounds to troops' genitals, key arteries and abdomens, according to the Pentagon.

Troops on foot now find 80% of IEDs before they detonate, a three-percentage-point increase from last year.

Only better underwear stands between troops and the 20% of the bombs that remain undetected.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

**Death For Sale In Kabul Market:
Insurgents Can Easily Buy U.S.
Military Uniforms For Infiltration
Attacks;
“Using The Military Uniforms Is Part
Of Our Fighting Tactics. It’s An
Important Technique For The
Mujahedeen”**

“The ‘Bush Bazaar’ Specializes In Stolen Military Goods”



US uniforms, like those used in attacks on bases, still found in Kabul shops

December 13, 2012 By Heath Druzin, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

KABUL — When a shopkeeper at a Kabul market was asked if he had any U.S. military uniforms for sale, he answered, “Which unit?”

In the wake of yet another attack on a major coalition military installation by insurgents in American military uniforms, such uniforms can still be found with ease in the capital.

Within five minutes of the request for a uniform at the Kabul market known as the “Bush Bazaar” — which is named after the former U.S. president and specializes in stolen military goods — an Army combat uniform shirt and pants was brought out.

The price tag was \$50.

The uniforms were not on display that day, as Afghan police had raided the market hours earlier, confiscating some uniforms and warning shopkeepers not to sell them.

But by midday, sellers were offering them again, though now fetching them from hidden stocks.

Shopkeepers were coy about where the uniforms come from, but they said mostly young men — “bad guys,” one man specified — buy them, though they wouldn’t speculate on what the customers do with the uniforms.

On Dec. 2, insurgents dressed in American military uniforms launched a complex attack at Jalalabad Airfield, using car bombs, suicide bombers and foot soldiers. The attackers failed to penetrate the perimeter of the base, but killed at least one Afghan soldier and several civilians before U.S. troops quelled the assault, killing the attackers.

It echoed a successful attack on Sept. 14, when insurgents dressed as American troops managed to sneak onto Camp Bastion in Helmand province, kill two U.S. Marines and destroy or heavily damage eight fighter jets.

It was the greatest single-day loss of U.S. aircraft since Vietnam.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said fighters sometimes get Western uniforms by raiding logistics convoys, but that they are also easily available on the black market.

“Using the military uniforms is part of our fighting tactics,” he said. “It’s an important technique for the mujahedeen.”

U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, out of operational concerns, would not say how uniforms are shipped to Afghanistan, but denied that any had been stolen. **[Oh fuck no, not one! T]**

There are plenty of other military items still openly sold, including backpacks, physical training shirts, gloves, and boots favored by the Afghan security forces, and several Afghan troops could be seen shopping at the bazaar just hours after their comrades had raided it.

A spokesman for the Kabul Police, Hashmatullah Stanakzai, confirmed that officers had raided the Bush Bazaar, confiscated dozens of uniforms, and arrested several shopkeepers.

When told about the ease of buying a uniform just hours after the raid, he said driving the business underground was progress.

“Kabul has four main roads in, 19 smaller roads in and 5 million people,” he said. “We have just 14,000 police, and it’s really hard for us to put police at every entry point to the city.”

**Maj. Gen. Nicholson, Ops Head
For The U.S. In Afghanistan &
SecDef Panetta Caught Telling
Stupid Lies About War
Progress:**

“Panetta Said Violence Is Starting To Ebb” “Pentagon Report Released Monday Noted A Slight Uptick In ‘Enemy-Initiated Attacks’”

Nicholson Said Afghan Troops “Are Starting To Operate Unilaterally” But Pentagon Report Finds “Just One Of 23 Afghan Army Brigades Is Able To Operate On Its Own Without Air Or Other Military Support From The United States”

December 13, 2012 By Ernesto Londoño, Washington Post [Excerpts]

KABUL —With Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta in Kabul to take stock as the Obama administration weighs how quickly to draw down troops over the next two years, a senior U.S. military commander on Wednesday hailed the progress Afghan security forces have made.

Marine Maj. Gen. Lawrence D. Nicholson, the head of operations for the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan, said NATO troops have begun a radical shift in mission: doing the bare minimum to support Afghan troops, who, he said, are starting to operate unilaterally.

The assessment Nicholson offered, however, is far rosier than the one that U.S. officials have provided recently.

They have been citing the resilience of the Taliban and the shortcomings of the Afghan government and military.

Just one of 23 Afghan army brigades is able to operate on its own without air or other military support from the United States or NATO, according to a Pentagon report to Congress that was released Monday.

The former CIA director, making his eighth visit to Afghanistan in four years, said he was heartened by what he described as signs of progress.

Panetta said violence is starting to ebb after years of escalations, particularly in urban areas.

The Pentagon report released Monday noted a slight uptick in “enemy-initiated attacks” during the reporting period — April 1 through Sept. 30 — compared with the same time frame the previous year.

The report noted a sharp increase in attacks in provinces in the west and north, which have traditionally been safer than the south and east.

Adding to the challenges, a smaller number of insurgents are signing up for the Afghan government’s reintegration program, the Pentagon report said.

From April to September, 954 insurgents agreed to join the program, which seeks to place militants in alternative employment. More than 1,600 joined during the previous six-month period.

The report said the declining interest in reintegration, which was steepest in the east and south, was the result of insecurity in some areas and the meager financial incentive.

Reintegrated militants get \$120 a month for three months to aid their transition.

In a break with tradition, Gen. John R. Allen, the top commander of NATO troops in Afghanistan, is not expected to brief reporters traveling with Panetta.

The Marine general, who is expected to leave Kabul early next year, has been embroiled in a scandal involving social interactions between a socialite and senior commanders at U.S. Central Command in Tampa.

Afghanistan’s Jihad Museum In Herat Celebrates The Defeat Of Foreign Invading Armies: “It Has A Portrait Hall Of Fame Of Mujahedeen Commanders” “The Arsenal Of Weaponry Currently Being Supplied To Afghanistan By The American-Led Coalition Could One Day Be Piled Here, Too”



A groundskeeper at the Jihad Museum in Herat, Afghanistan, and a helicopter that was left behind from the Soviet Union's occupation of the country. Bryan Denton for The New York Times

December 11, 2012 By GRAHAM BOWLEY, New York Times [Excerpts]

HERAT, Afghanistan — For a country disfigured by decades of conflict, it seems fitting that Afghanistan should have a place set aside for reflecting on war.

The Jihad Museum on a forested hillside in the western provincial capital of Herat is many things: a temple to the mujahedeen heroes who battled the Soviets in the 1970s and '80s, and a memorial for the hundreds of thousands of Afghans who were slaughtered or fled the fighting.

The museum is a blue, green and white rotunda covered on the outside with the names of hundreds of victims from the war, all set in a watered garden of flower beds and fountains.

It boasts captured Soviet weaponry like tanks, a MIG fighter jet and helicopters.

It has a portrait hall of fame of mujahedeen commanders.

The star attraction is a graphic diorama showing models of Afghan villagers rising up in a hellish wartime landscape to cudgel the heads of Soviet oppressors, in a triumphant if rather rosy narrative art: Soviets commit heinous acts against poor villagers, farmers besiege Soviet tanks with sticks, Soviet soldiers are throttled, Soviet soldiers are shot.

At the end, the army of the mujahedeen marches home victorious.

Still, if its view is more triumphal than strictly historical, it is one of the few accounts of the era that is easily accessible here.

“Since most Afghans are uneducated and we don’t have good historians to write our histories, our children don’t know who the Russians were, why the Afghans fought against them and what was the result of their resistance,” said Sayed Wahid Qattali, a prosperous 28-year-old politician and businessman who is the son of a former jihadi commander.

Mr. Qattali’s father established the museum with the help of Ismail Khan, a mujahedeen warlord and former governor of Herat.

Mr. Qattali says one of the motivations for building the museum is the reluctance of the country’s official history books to address the painful events of the past four decades. In an attempt to depoliticize the history of a country pulled in so many different ways by ethnic tensions, school textbooks tell Afghanistan’s history in depth only up until about the 1970s, skipping over major events since then like the Soviet invasion, civil war, the Taliban’s reign and the American-led invasion and military presence.

Mr. Qattali wants the museum to fill that void, in particular telling his version of the mujahedeen’s exploits — before time moves on and the next chapter of history is inevitably written.

His family has profited during the relative calm of the past 10 years, with interests from chicken farms to a security firm that guards foreign military fuel convoys, and he runs his own television station.

Recently, he toured the garden of the museum, showing off the mujahedeen’s trophies, like the MIG jet.

“Afghans have very bad memories of this,” he said, shaking his head, before strolling past an 82-millimeter light-rocket launcher perched in the grass. Near a Soviet helicopter, behind some bushes, Mr. Qattali hunched his shoulders and grew even more morose.

“A lot of people were killed by this kind of helicopter,” he said. “We lost a lot of relatives and loved ones. Of course, we fought to the end.”

Inside the hushed museum, shoeless feet — visitors are required to remove their shoes — shuffled past glass cabinets of centuries-old rifles seized from British soldiers in earlier conflicts.

The British were repelled, too, and the guns were used against the Soviets, showing an Afghan knack for taking whatever weapons invaders bring and turning them to their advantage.

A museum visitor might reflect that the arsenal of weaponry currently being supplied to Afghanistan by the American-led coalition could one day be piled here, too.

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

**A revolution is always distinguished by impoliteness, probably because the ruling classes did not take the trouble in good season to teach the people fine manners.
-- Leon Trotsky, History Of The Russian Revolution**

Michigan’s Anti-Union Law Breaks Hearts And Backs:

**“When Paid Union Membership
Becomes An Individual Decision,
Workers Who Join Unions Will
Undoubtedly Face Reprisal From
Management”**

**“Intimidating The Most Vulnerable
Members Of The Labor Force --
Immigrants, Young People, Minorities
Or The Poor -- Is What Right-To-Work
Legislation Is Really About”**

**“It’s The End Of My Family’s Version Of
The American Dream, An End That’s
Nothing Short Of Heartbreaking”**

Dec 12, 2012 By Dean Bakopoulos, Bloomberg.com

Michigan’s new right-to-work law, this nation’s 24th, is ostensibly all about freedom.

Proponents such as Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, say it simply gives workers the right to decide, solo, whether to pay union dues -- freedom of choice. That’s a pretty American idea, isn’t it?

Never mind one obvious retort: Paying for union services only when you need them is like paying taxes for police and fire services only if you use them.

We pay taxes to ensure that if we call 911, someone well trained shows up; yet nobody calls 911 on a daily basis.

Union dues work the same way: They protect, often in unseen ways, a collective against the interests of management in a sustained and organized way. That’s also a very American idea -- checks and balances.

There is a bigger, less discussed problem with right-to-work laws. Plain and simple, they take our most vulnerable laborers -- often those who have just clawed their way into the middle class -- and make them vulnerable again.

My grandparents came to Detroit as war refugees in the early 1950s. My grandfather, after working odd jobs for a few years and borrowing money from friends, eventually got a United Auto Workers job at Ford Rouge, working the line.

The union did a lot for him. Not only did it secure good wages and benefits, as it did for all its members, but also, when he briefly went on medical leave at age 40, it made sure he had a job to return to when he was well.

A union steward brought him his prescriptions.

My grandfather had fled a Stalinist purge and did hard labor in a Nazi prison camp. He was terrified of powerful forces -- his brothers had been killed for joining a resistance movement -- and he lived in such fear of management and big government that I know he would have never declared himself a union member voluntarily. He was too afraid of the repercussions; he would worry that his family would be in danger.

He had evidence to back up his fears, too.

Across town at Dearborn Gear & Tool Co., a nonunion shop, my grandmother refused to be part of a union organization effort, though she desperately wanted to be a union member.

She'd just seen her best friend, a fellow immigrant who worked at the same plant, get fired for signing a petition to organize. So my grandmother stayed silent, and worked an exhausting manual-labor job without high wages or good benefits.

Intimidating the most vulnerable members of the labor force -- immigrants, young people, minorities or the poor -- is what right-to-work legislation is really about in the long run.

Management can tell new workers all kinds of strange things when union membership drives are under way, creating a culture of fear-based obedience, easy to do when unemployment is high.

When I was working in Detroit as a young radio writer, a manager privately advised me to boycott organization activities at that station if I ever wanted to get a promotion. I was 19 and eager for a job; I refused to sign the union organizing petition, for fear I would lose my eight bucks an hour.

With right-to-work laws on the books in Michigan, management will no longer need to be so secretive in its intimidation. Want a promotion, kid? Stay off the union rolls. Want to avoid a layoff, amigo? Don't pay your union dues. We'll take care of you.

When paid union membership becomes an individual decision, workers who join unions will undoubtedly face reprisal from management.

The most vulnerable workers won't publicly admit their desire to organize by signing up at hiring time. With decreased revenue, unions will weaken, as will their political influence.

Wages will go down across Michigan, and not just in union shops.

Unions set the bar for how employers define a “good job.” When that bar is lowered, all workers suffer. And Michigan’s battered economy -- which is sustained, largely, by the spending power of union laborers -- could collapse.

In light of all this, one might call Michigan’s right-to- work law troubling. When I look back at my life, it’s clear that my grandfather’s tenaciously saved and back-breakingly earned UAW wages helped my mother make ends meet after my parents’ divorce. Those wages helped me pay for my first car which I drove to my first job, helped me pay for college, and helped my wife and me with a down payment for our first home.

When I consider all this, well, Michigan’s new law is more than troubling. For me, it’s the end of my family’s version of the American dream, an end that’s nothing short of heartbreaking.

Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika **[In Case You Missed It The First Time]**

Comment: T

The anthem of the South African liberation movement has been trashed over the past few years, transformed from a militant marching song into a slow dirge that barely moves, or, in other versions, into limping gushy sentimental garbage complete with violins and a church-style choir; carefully entombed with all traces of its revolutionary origins castrated.

This link is to the anthem as it was recorded in the 1930’s, when it was still a truly beautiful and revolutionary call to action, marching proudly into the future.

Turn up your volume to the max. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBIRbrB_Gnc

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ll1hNMhdmpk>

Troops Invited:

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

A Huge Win For Our Side:

Rape Victim Sara Reedy, Accused Of Lying And Jailed By Police, Wins \$1.5 Million Payout:

“It Comes Against A Backdrop Of Problems Across The U.S., With Accounts Of Police Ignoring Or Neglecting Rape Reports, While Bullying Victims And Scrutinising Their Behaviour Rather Than The Suspect’s”



Sara Reedy, wrongfully arrested and charged with theft, false reporting, has won a \$1.5m police settlement. Photograph: Cory Morton For The Observer

In a precedent-setting decision against the police, the appeal judges ruled in 2010 that Evanson wasn't reasonable and lacked probable cause when he arrested Sara, and that the case could go to trial.

Reedy's victory has gone down in legal history.

15 December 2012 by Joanna Walters in Pittsburgh, The Observer

Sara Reedy remembers clearly the start of her ordeal, and how surprisingly painful it was to have a gun jammed to her temple. Then her attacker demanded oral sex, saying he would shoot her if she refused.

She was shaking, gagging.

"I had images of my family finding me dead," she told the Observer. "I closed my eyes and just tried to get it over with."

Reedy was 19 when the man entered the petrol station near Pittsburgh where she was working to pay her way through college and pulled a gun. He emptied the till of its \$606.73 takings, assaulted her and fled into the night.

But the detective who interviewed Reedy in hospital didn't believe her, and accused her of stealing the money herself and inventing the story as a cover-up.

Although another local woman was attacked not long after in similar fashion, the police didn't join the dots.

Following further inquiries, Reedy was arrested for theft and false reporting and, pregnant with her first child (by her now ex-husband), thrown in jail.

She was subsequently released on bail, but lost her job. More than a year after attacking Reedy, the man struck again, but this time he was caught and confessed to the earlier crime.

When the charges against her were dropped, Reedy sued the police and has now won a marathon legal battle and a \$1.5m settlement against the detective who turned her from victim into accused.

The payment was agreed earlier this year, but can be revealed only now because of a non-disclosure clause that was part of the settlement.

Now 27, Reedy talked exclusively to the Observer to announce the settlement and speak out about how she hopes her vindication will change the way the police investigate rape. "I'm relieved that people will be able to see now that I was telling the truth," she said.

"Although mine is an extreme case, I'm not the first – and I won't be the last."

Reedy's story is dramatic, but it comes against a backdrop of problems across the US, with accounts of police ignoring or neglecting rape reports, while bullying victims and scrutinising their behaviour rather than the suspect's.

"There is a national crisis," said Carol Tracy, of the Women's Law Project, an advocacy group in Philadelphia. "We're witnessing the chronic and systemic failure of law enforcement to properly investigate crimes of sexual violence."

Reedy said the police officer who took her to hospital from the petrol station in Cranberry Township, about 20 miles from Pittsburgh, in July 2004 was nice.

But once there she was interviewed by Detective Frank Evanson.

"I told him what happened. His next question was how often did I use dope. I thought he meant heroin – there is a problem with it in the area – but I told him I didn't use it. I told him I smoked marijuana occasionally, though not for a week. Then he asked me where the money was."

Talking to me in the living room of her home in the small town of Butler, near Cranberry, Reedy shook her head incredulously. In the hospital, she had become angry with Evanson, and then a nurse and a doctor also questioned her account.

Joanne Archambault, a retired police sergeant who now trains officers in handling what she calls "one of the most difficult crimes to investigate", said this can be a common reaction.

"When women don't act like the classic 'perfect, innocent victim' they can be seen as less credible. But trauma can have unexpected effects on how victims come across."

Reedy aroused further suspicion when she declined the offer of a victim's advocate.

"The assault made me feel worthless, then I was degraded at the hospital for hours," she said.

"I had to give intimate details again and again. I was afraid of being belittled even further."

Reedy was swabbed for forensic evidence, but the material was never tested. This was despite the fact that it contained a fingernail that could have yielded DNA from her attacker.

After that night, Evanson continued to accuse Reedy, despite the other similar attack in the area, which he also investigated.

Eventually she was arrested and the court refused bail.

She remembers her sister screaming as Reedy was taken away in a police car:

"I was terrified. I realised if I got the max I'd be in prison for seven years and not see my baby. I was so tense I couldn't eat."

Upon being bailed, she was turned away from a local victim help centre, and old school friends spread rumours about her.

Even her parents expressed doubts about their daughter's veracity after talking to Evanson.

But a month before Reedy's trial, Wilbur Brown, 44, was arrested after raping a woman in a convenience store several miles away. He admitted attacking Reedy too, and in 2006 she was in court to see him plead guilty to assaulting 10 women. He is now serving life in prison.

Reedy was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. "Major trust issues" left her unable to return to college or take a job.

Her case against the Pennsylvania police department was initially dismissed in district court in 2009. With help from Archambault, the Women's Law Project and similar groups, and lawyer David Weicht of Pittsburgh firm Leech Tishman, she appealed.

In a precedent-setting decision against the police, the appeal judges ruled in 2010 that Evanson wasn't reasonable and lacked probable cause when he arrested Sara, and that the case could go to trial.

The police finally settled before trial on behalf of Evanson, who is still in his job.

Reedy's victory has gone down in legal history.

During her battle she testified in Congress, and this helped persuade the federal government this year to change the definition of rape to include forced oral sex and the rape of men.

"I had a sense of pride at that," said Reedy.

Recently engaged to a local man whom she described as honest and hardworking, and considering starting work for her parents' trucking firm, she said she was relieved at her vindication:

"If my story can bring about change, I owe it to people to tell it."

According to FBI statistics, police in many cities drop a high proportion of rape cases on the grounds that they are "unfounded". Pittsburgh shelves 34% of cases in this way; San Bernardino, 34%; Atlanta, 24%; Jersey City, 18%; and Dallas, 13%. The national average is 6%.

New Orleans police are under federal review for shelving 50% of sex attack cases as "non-criminal complaints".

Some cities are ploughing through backlogs of untested forensic medical evidence (rape kits) found in 2009. Houston had 6,600; Detroit, Los Angeles and San Antonio more than 11,000 each.

In Cleveland, Ohio, police were shamed last year by serial rapist and murderer Anthony Sowell, who killed 11 women, six of them after a rape kit had been disregarded.

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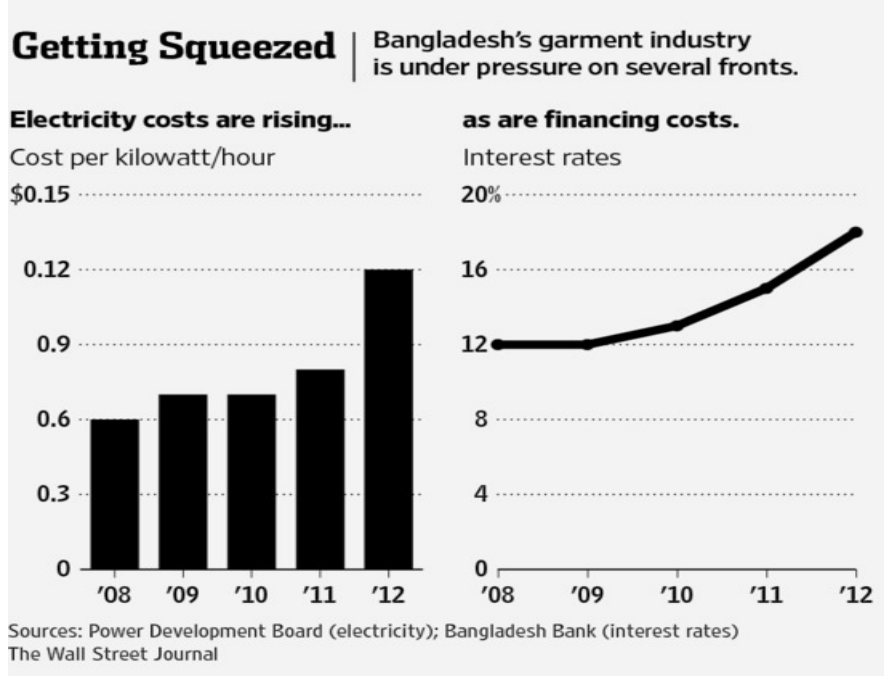
CLASS WAR REPORTS

Class War Bangladesh:

“Garment Workers Have Clashed With Police Weekly In Ashulia”

“Pressure From Workers To Overhaul Workplace Safety In The Aftermath Of Last Month’s Deadly Factory Fire”

“Factory Owners This Year Resisted An Order From The Fire Department To Dismantle Unauthorized Rooftop Tin Structures”



December 13, 2012 By SYED ZAIN AL-MAHMOOD in Dhaka, Bangladesh, KATHY CHU in Hong Kong and TRIPTI LAHIRI in New Delhi, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

The Bangladesh government, factory owners and foreign retailers are facing pressure from workers to overhaul workplace safety in the aftermath of last month's deadly factory fire.

More than 500 people have died in Bangladesh factory fires since 2006, according to estimates by labor groups. The late-November fire in the Tazreen Fashions Ltd. factory that killed 112 people, the country's worst industrial accident, was a tipping point.

Garment workers have clashed with police weekly in Ashulia, the northern industrial suburb of Dhaka where Tazreen is located, demanding compensation for victims' families and safer working conditions. Pressure is mounting on big buyers such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Hennes & Mauritz to tighten systems for monitoring factory safety in Bangladesh.

Fearing social unrest and lost orders, Bangladesh's government is promising action.

The stakes are large. The country exported \$19 billion in garments last year, second only to China, according to government reports. A recent report by consulting firm McKinsey & Co. estimated that the figure could double in less than a decade.

"The prime minister has ordered us to make sure this never happens again," said Mikail Shiper, an official in Bangladesh's labor ministry. Authorities have begun to review the nation's 5,000 registered garment factories and will rescind permits from those that fail safety evaluations, Mr. Shiper said. The government also is looking to install more fire hydrants in industrial areas, he said.

Skeptics have said Bangladesh's niche as among the world's least-expensive place to make clothing — the minimum wage for garment workers is less than \$37 a month — is an obstacle to progress.

The country's economy in recent years has been propelled by churning out low-cost garments for the West, which labor groups said has come at the cost of worker safety.

As foreign retailers slash prices to attract shoppers, Bangladeshi factories have to produce for less. A Bangladeshi supplier said prices retailers pay for clothes had fallen 3% in the past five years, while production costs had increased 10%.

"It's hard to continue to improve factory compliance and safety when there's ever-increasing downward pressure on the prices that global retailers are willing to pay," said Ifty Islam, managing partner at Asian Tiger Capital Partners, a Dhaka-based asset-management company.

Pierre Börjesson, the sustainability manager for social issues at fashion retailer H&M, said his company does its own safety inspections in Bangladesh, rather than rely on third parties, as many retailers do.

"The absolute root cause of fires in Bangladesh factories is the electrical situation," Mr. Börjesson said.

Fire-safety authorities need to increase safety standards for electrical wiring, for new as well as old structures, he said.

Labor groups said factory owners, a number of whom sit in Parliament, have blocked efforts to improve working conditions and have sought to ensure that a ban on unionization in garment factories remains in place.

“When we spoke up, we had our (nongovernmental organization) license revoked,” said Kalpona Akter, executive director of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity. She said the organization has applied to have its license renewed.

Factory owners this year resisted an order from the fire department to dismantle unauthorized rooftop tin structures, according to Ashulia fire inspector Mahbub Hossain.

He said fire officials changed the order to allow such structures on three-quarters of a roof, after owners complained they needed the structures for workers' dining areas.

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Profile Of A Backward Rotten Royal Dictatorship: “The Walls Declare ‘Death To Hamad’, Bahrain’s Self-Proclaimed King”

“On December 14th, A Coalition Of Opposition Groups Mounted A Daytime Protest March Joined By Tens Of Thousands, Defying A Ban On Public Gatherings”

“Activists Taunt The Security Forces Relentlessly, Some Nights With Slogans, Others With Crude Petrol Bombs”

Despairing of Wefaq’s trust in a constitutional process, activists from a growing grass-roots youth group, the February 14 Movement, mask their faces and mount makeshift stages to rouse the crowds with calls to topple the Al Khalifas.

Dec 15th 2012, 17:36 by N.P. and M.R.; The Economist [Excerpts]

MANAMA, Bahrain

The annual mourning for Zein al-Abdin al-Sajjad, an eighth century martyred Shia Imam, is a relatively minor event, even in Iran where Shias hold power.

But in the little island kingdom of Bahrain, where the Shia majority chafes at their subjugation under a Sunni ruling family, the Al Khalifas, it has become another excuse to reclaim the streets.

The political process has been frozen for the 22 months since the government launched a ferocious clamp-down, backed by troops borrowed from across the causeway to Saudi Arabia, that has left some 90 people dead — a grim total given that native Bahrainis number just 600,000, out of an overall population of 1.3m.

Mass arrests, show trials, harsh sentences and incitement to sectarian hatred have blunted the opposition’s momentum.

But Shia religious activism is more visible than ever.

On a balmy night in the old souks of Manama, Bahrain’s capital, muscular, black-clad youths chant dirges and chest-thump past shrines adorned with dramatic tableaux of Shia saints. Yet the spirit is festive. Men feast on sweetmeats and hot, saffron-infused sheep’s milk freely distributed in stalls. Not a policeman is in sight.

“What’s there to mourn about,” asks a civil servant, who covertly supports Amal, an anti-monarchy group, “when time is on our side.”

Such bravado is still widely shared among working-class Shias.

On December 14th, a coalition of opposition groups mounted a daytime protest march joined by tens of thousands, defying a ban on public gatherings of more than five people imposed in October.

In the mostly Shia villages west of Manama, activists taunt the security forces relentlessly, some nights with slogans, others with crude petrol bombs.

Despairing of Wefaq's trust in a constitutional process, activists from a growing grass-roots youth group, the February 14 Movement, mask their faces and mount makeshift stages to rouse the crowds with calls to topple the Al Khalifas.

Images of detainees hang by the dozen in a mock cage erected in the central square of Diraz, a Shia coastal town. Nearby stands a billboard with gruesome photos of babies allegedly asphyxiated by tear gas.

Here, unlike in Manama, the authorities have tired of blacking out graffiti. The walls declare "Death to Hamad", Bahrain's self-proclaimed king.

Repression continues, albeit less violently than when the uprising started.

[A]n appeals court on December 11th reduced the sentence on a prominent human rights activist, Nabeel Rajab, from three to two years, still a remarkably harsh retribution for organising and joining "illegal gatherings".

Security forces have ostensibly been retrained to curb their excesses, but still regularly conduct house-to-house raids in Shia villages.

Authorities have rebuilt only five of the two dozen Shia shrines they destroyed during the worst days.

In a disturbing new tactic, the government in November summarily stripped 31 Bahrainis of their citizenship. Half those affected already live in exile, but the fate of the others, some of whom appear to have been singled out because of Iranian ancestry, remains unclear.

Last year, Bahrain's rulers appeared to open a door to compromise by accepting, with reservations, the rulings of an impartial international inquiry that they had invited. POMED, a Washington-based advocate of democracy in the Middle East, reckons that Bahrain has implemented only three out of its 26 recommendations.

But Saudi tanks have disappeared from the main roads, and some unionists who joined the protests have recovered their jobs. In contrast to the region's harsher security regimes, opposition leaders brief journalists in hotel lobbies.

More tellingly, Sunnis are no longer mere cheerleaders for the Al Khalifas.

Inter-sect marriage rates are still sharply down, but the boycott Sunnis waged on Shia merchants is petering out.

Sunni thugs who went on pogroms armed with swords have retreated back to Muharraq, an island suburb of Manama.

And many Sunnis are increasingly voicing the same socio-economic grievances as Shias. They gripe about the lack of affordable housing, the low pensions, utility hikes and the ruling family's penchant for grabbing land and power.

"We feel the Al Khalifas are defending their own interests, not Sunnis," says a member of the National Unity Gathering, a Sunni caucus. Ten of the 22 cabinet posts are filled by royals.

The country's prime minister, an uncle of the king, has spent 41 years on the job, longer than even Libya's late Colonel Qaddafi.

So nervous do the Al Khalifas seem of their people — Sunnis and Shias alike — that they disinvited both from a security studies conference held earlier this month in the capital.

The organisers opted for pliable migrant worker drivers to ferry delegates, not local ones who might speak their minds.

And while giving the podium to Syria's Sunni opposition, they kept Bahrain's Shia ones safely away with road-blocks defended by armoured cars.

Fittingly for a conference called the Manama Dialogue, Bahrain's supposedly reformist Crown Prince launched the event with an appeal for an internal dialogue as "the only way forward".

But given that few of his subjects were present, it seemed primarily aimed for international consumption.

Even that seemed too much for some hardline royals. "No to dialogue with treacherous terrorists," tweeted a rival prince.

Fearing he might be considered a rogue, the king's advisors quickly backpedalled. He meant dialogue between Sunnis and Shia, they said, not government and opposition. Fearful of backstabbers, the Crown Prince — who was sidelined after the arrival of Saudi tanks torpedoed an earlier, aborted attempt at US-brokered negotiations — profusely thanked the British government for its support, but pointedly not the more openly pro-reform Americans.

While William Hague, Britain's foreign secretary, declined to meet Bahrain's Shia dissidents, American officials who attended the conference rushed after them.

America's assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labour, Michael Posner, appealed to the Al Khalifas to drop charges against non-violent protesters.

Three days later he received an answer, with the sentencing of Mr Rajab.

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