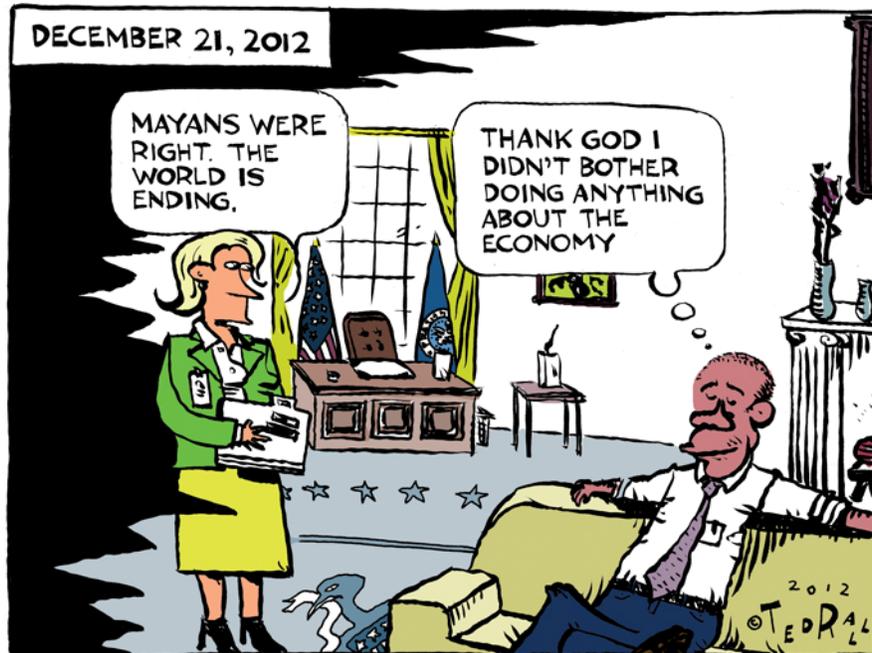


Military Resistance 10L13



“The Number Of FSA And Defected Soldiers Is Increasing”
“All Roads Leading Into Aleppo Are Under Free Syrian Army Control”
“Syrian Government Forces In The Area Are Forced To Bring In Their Supplies By Plane And Use Helicopters To Deliver It To Many Of Their Bases Within The City”

December 17, 2012 By Tom A. Peter, Special for USA TODAY & 18 December 2012 by John Hall, Independent UK. [Excerpts]

ALEPPO, Syria — After months of fighting in the major city of Aleppo and surrounding countryside, opposition fighters there say they are close to forcing out the Syrian army from much of northern Syria.

Opposition fighters on Sunday captured the last military base in the northern Aleppo province loyal to President Bashar Assad. The infantry base was the second such base to be captured in the province in a week.

The capture provides a significant boost of captured equipment, mainly small arms and at least two tanks, members of the Syrian Free Army said.

“The key to our advance has been captured ammunition. The more we can capture, the more we can advance,” said Abu Saleh, deputy commander of the opposition's Dar al Shaba Brigade.

Rebels said the capture will also make it harder for Syrian army to re-supply its forces in Aleppo. The Free Syrian Army, the rebel force of deserters and others, estimated that Assad's forces control up to 40% of the city.

Opposition forces have struggled to get weaponry for the entire 21-month conflict, relying predominately on what they can take from the Assad army.

The rebels are continuing efforts to cut off supply lines to government forces in the north and emboldened civilians are taking the most ambitious steps yet to create a transitional government inside Syria.

“The rebels are showing recently in the past few weeks that they're capable of taking defended regime positions. This is something they had a great deal of difficulty doing in the past. That to me, is a substantial change in the situation,” said Jeffrey White, a defense fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

All roads leading into Aleppo are under Free Syrian Army control.

Syrian government forces in the area are forced to bring in their supplies by plane and use helicopters to deliver it to many of their bases within the city.

Opposition forces are also besieging the airport and said they will begin using heavy machine guns to try to shoot down supply planes. They worry, however, that if they take control of the airport it could be difficult to hold because it is surrounded by open ground susceptible to airstrikes.

“The airport is the most important part of the city now. If we can control the airport we can cut their supplies and win the war here,” said Abu Tawfik, a senior commander of Liwa Tawheed, one of the largest FSA units fighting in Aleppo.

During a break in the fighting, several members from the FSA's Bab Al Salaam Battalion said that they are noticeably better equipped following recent gains against government forces that resulted in the capture of more supplies. Other brigades said that is true, but the regime forces still have them outgunned.

“In the summer, we would go on missions with only one or even just a half a magazine of ammunition for our rifles. Now we have four or five magazines,” said Abu Morad, an FSA fighter in Aleppo.

White and Hakeem said that fighting continues in 12 of Syria's 14 provinces and in no other province have opposition forces managed to take control as in Aleppo. They remain optimistic that more provinces will fall to them.

“The longer we fight, the more experience we get and the number of FSA and defected soldiers is increasing,” said Haj Omar, an FSA commander in Aleppo.

Fighting raged across Syria today, with fighter jets and ground rockets bombarding rebel-dominated eastern suburbs of the capital and army forces shelling a town in Hama province after clashes reignited there over the weekend.

Rebels overran at least five army sites in a new offensive in Hama yesterday, opposition activists said.

Qassem Saadeddine, a member of the newly established rebel military command, said on Sunday fighters had been ordered to surround and attack army positions across Hama province.

He said Assad's forces were given 48 hours to surrender or be killed.

MORE:

**Damascus:
“A Frontline Creeping Ever
Closer”
“Rebel Forces Seep Deeper Into The
Capital”
“Rebels Tighten Their Grip On The
Eastern Outskirts Of The City And Its
Southern Districts”**

December 17, 2012 Reuters

DAMASCUS (Reuters) - From the center of Damascus, Syrians can see the shrouds of smoke rising overhead and feel the shake of explosions that warn of a frontline creeping ever closer.

The same squares where President Bashar al-Assad once drew tens of thousands to cheer in support lie empty and walled off by concrete barriers up to two meters (six feet) high.

Damascus is bracing itself after nearly two years of civil conflict as rebel forces seep deeper into the capital, and anxiety is etched across the faces of people in the city center.

“There is fear and pain in people's hearts, a feeling of despair and paralysis because of the enormity of the crisis,” said Suad, an architect in the Salihya neighborhood.

“The sounds of all the different explosions - mortar, artillery and warplanes - suggest the frontline is getting closer,” she said.

A new wave, thousands-strong is now seeking refuge. They are the latest victims of violence that has already forced people to flee many suburbs around Damascus, as rebels tighten their grip on the eastern outskirts of the city and its southern districts.

Whatever their political views, civilians are putting safety first. Families and friends with homes in more central parts of Damascus have been taking in beleaguered refugees. But there are signs that generosity may be reaching its limits.

“I have moved into my parents' house along with all my siblings' families. My wife's house is full of her aunts and uncles. Who has room now?,” said Issam, a resident of central Damascus. “Most families I know are like this, and I want to know what will happen to the refugees who come now.”

Walking to his parents' house from work this week, he thinks some of the new homeless have found an answer: “In some shopping districts, the shutters that cover storefronts aren't locked. “If you look inside, you can see whole families have moved inside. They can't go home.”

Despite the flow into the city center, still relatively safe, rents have dropped and some apartments are empty. “I rent my place for 70 percent of what I used to, and that's when I can find a tenant,” one resident said. “You'd think the demand should be up ... but there's a sense that no place is really safe.”

Informal charity networks are springing up, though many residents who fear the ire of Assad's security forces still keep their work secret.

Wael, who has organized a weekly charity drive with a group of college students, chooses a focus for help each week: “Sometimes we do children's packages. Sometimes women's packages, sometimes men's,” he said.

Syrians in the capital are quietly preparing for the worst. Everyone wants an electricity generator as supply gets more erratic.

One shop in the walled Old City said it was selling 25 machines a day. Fuel is nearly impossible to find and a cylinder of gas goes for four times the normal price at about \$20.

In rebel-held eastern suburbs on the outskirts, cars ignore traffic lights. All the signals have been damaged by fighting or disabled by power cuts.

Damascus has new internal borders: Tadamun and Qadam, southern neighborhoods of the capital, are clearly in rebel control.

The fighters man checkpoints, oversee bread distribution at bakeries and bring in food from rural areas nearby that are also under rebel control.

Those same rural areas are now off-limits to many displaced families who fled their homes and are not allowed back past Syrian army checkpoints.

“I don't know what happened to my home; it's in an area to the east,” said Issam. “My neighbors moved to central Damascus too, and they don't know what has happened to their shops. Everyone is waiting to see what is left of their lives there.”

Last week, a civilian plane flew over - a rare sight since fighting engulfed the roads leading to the airports - and gave a rare spark of hope for some, like Khaled, an office worker.

He prays next time it will be a plane taking Assad off into exile: “People hope they will wake up one day and see he has fled the country peacefully.”

Troops Invited:

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE COVER THEIR ASS:

That is not a good enough reason.



A U.S. soldier at the site of an insurgent explosion in Kabul December 17, 2012.
Credit: REUTERS/Omar Sobhani

MILITARY NEWS

**Soldiers' Kids Abused At Fort Meyer Day Care Center:
"Two People Arrested In September
On Multiple Charges Of Assault
Against Children"
Although "The Army Found 'Derogatory
Information' In The Background Of An
Unspecified Number Of Other Employees
There," Center Not Closed Until Last
Week**

Dec 19, 2012 By Lolita C. Baldor - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama called the Army secretary to express concerns over arrests and the discovery of problems with background checks at an Army day care center and to urge a speedy investigation, U.S. officials said Wednesday.

The call at 10 p.m. Tuesday to Army Secretary John McHugh came against the backdrop of last week's massacre of young children in a shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn.

A White House official said the president relayed his concern about reports of abuse at the Fort Myer, Va., day care center and made clear that there must be a zero tolerance policy when it comes to protecting the children of service members.

The official said Obama urged McHugh to conduct the investigation into its hiring practices quickly and thoroughly.

The Army had no immediate comment on the president's call.

The Pentagon is reviewing hiring procedures at military day care centers, schools, youth centers and other facilities where children are present, after revelations that some employees at the day care center had criminal records.

Pentagon leaders were angry that it took months for the Army to disclose the problems to top officials and the public.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta ordered the military-wide review Tuesday shortly after the Army disclosed problems with security background checks of workers at Fort Myer. Pentagon press secretary George Little said department leaders were surprised to hear of the problems and that "clearly this information did not get reported up the chain of command as quickly as we think it should have."

Little said Wednesday that officials also are questioning why it took three months for the Army to inform Panetta about arrests and problems with background checks at the day care center.

Two people were arrested in September on multiple charges of assault against children at the center.

Little also said reports that parents of children at the center weren't told about the problems indicate there may have been a serious breakdown in communications.

The actions stem from the Sept. 26 arrests of two Army employees.

One was charged with five counts of assault and the second was charged with four counts of assault.

But the problems at Fort Myer apparently went much deeper.

Indications are that at least 30 workers at the facility have histories that call into question their suitability to care for children, according to two officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigation into worker backgrounds at Fort Myer has not been completed.

After the Fort Myer arrests, the Army replaced the day care center's management team and found what the Army called “derogatory information” in the background of an unspecified number of other employees there.

Army officials did not reveal the information, and officials said it's not clear if the background checks were not done, were not sufficient or simply were not used appropriately in screening personnel.

Col. Fern Sumpter, the Fort Myer commander, said the day care center was closed “out of an abundance of caution” and the children moved to a separate day care center at Fort Myer.

A Fort Myer spokeswoman, Mary Ann Hodges, said the center was closed on Dec. 13.

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

People do not make revolutions eagerly any more than they do war. There is this difference, however, that in war compulsion plays the decisive role, in revolution there is no compulsion except that of circumstances.

A revolution takes place only when there is no other way out. And the insurrection, which rises above a revolution like a peak in the mountain chain of its events, can be no more evoked at will than the revolution as a whole. The masses advance and retreat several times before they make up their minds to the final assault.

-- Leon Trotsky; The History of the Russian Revolution

**“President Obama, Not Unlike His Immediate Predecessor In Office, George W. Bush, Has Been Waging Horrendous Wars In Which Hundreds Of Thousands Have Been Killed”
“Alas, Many Of These Children Were The Same Age As Those Killed In Newtown”**

December 19, 2012 by SANFORD KELSON, CounterPunch. Sanford Kelson is a lawyer in Pennsylvania.

One woman said after the shooting of 20 young children in Newtown, Connecticut: “I am Adam Lanza’s mother.” She is the mother of a boy who she believes is not so different from the shooter and she lives in fear.

I ponder whether America, in a metaphorical sense is, to a large degree, Adam Lanza?

Lanza, dressed in military clothing, killed 20 elementary school children. When Clinton was president, his secretary of state, Madeline Albright, a representative of the American people, was questioned by Lesley Stahl on 60 minutes about the effect of US inspired sanctions on Iraq: “We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that’s more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?” Secretary of

State Albright calmly responded: "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it."

As the representative of the American people President Obama, not unlike his immediate predecessor in office, George W. Bush, has been waging horrendous wars in which hundreds of thousands have been killed, mostly civilians, including, of course, children.

Alas, many of these children were the same age as those killed in Newtown. And President Obama claims he has the right to assassinate anybody he decides anywhere in the world and he has been very busy doing just that with drones and other sophisticated methods. The killing is routine.

Our culture is one that glorifies violence. Examples making up this culture are so prominent that I need not even provide any to make the point.

I had hope when I heard Obama over the radio, in his speech at Newtown, say in part:

"I'll use whatever power this office holds to engage my fellow citizens, from law enforcement, to mental health professionals, to parents and educators, in an effort aimed at preventing more tragedies like this, because what choice do we have? We can't accept events like this as routine."

So, today, I read the whole speech carefully but, alas, he was only speaking about American children. So, I guess he will not use the power of his office in efforts to prevent more tragedies like the killing of 500,000 Iraqi children. I am sure the parents of those dead children continue to grieve just like we all do for the 20 killed in Connecticut. Are non-American children any less valuable than American children? Is it moral, or even possible, to have a heart so cold that we can kill children with reckless abandon overseas but at the same time protect children here?

There is a lesson, I believe, in what Martin Luther King said on April 4, 1967 when he publicly spoke out for the first time against the Vietnam War:

"... we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing oriented" society to a "person oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

And I will add to King's triplets that are incapable of being prevented without a revolution in values: alienation and dysfunction on a national scale.

The woman who said she was Adam Lanza's mother is in fear. So should we all.

But, if we choose to come together as a people and work for a revolution of values we can defeat the violence and dissipate our fears. Many Americans have been engaged in working for this revolution. Many more are required. Let not the deaths of the 500,000 Iraqi or the 20 in Connecticut be in vain. Let's honor those teachers and first responders who instinctively stepped into harm's way to protect the children in their schools by acting now and not when faced with a shooter when it may be too late.

Let's engage in our schools, churches, prisons, work places and unions. If we the people lead, our elected representatives will surely follow. They always have when enough people united and demanded that they do so.

The Antipsychotic Prescribed To Adam Lanza May Have The Following Side Effects: “Restlessness, Aggression, Delusion, Hostility, Paranoia, Mania & Mood Swings”

Dec. 18, 2012 By Geoffrey Ingersoll, Business Insider, Inc.

By now the whole country is fully embroiled in the Gun Control debate, spurred by the grisly murder of 27 people, mostly kids, at the Sandy Hook Elementary school last Friday.

Guns might not be the only problem though.

New York Magazine wrote a piece about shooter Adam Lanza's supposed “aspergers” syndrome as a “red herring” meant to distract from the real problem (guns, of course, the subject goes without mentioning).

Inside the piece though they report Adam Lanza's uncle said the boy was prescribed Fanapt, a controversial anti-psychotic medicine.

Fanapt was the subject of a Bloomberg report when it passed regulators, after previously getting the “nonapproval” stamp.

Why wasn't it approved, you might ask?

There are many reasons, some of which have to do with competing entities in a competitive market.

The main cited reason for the rejection was that it caused severe heart problems in enough patients to cause a stir.

Maybe more importantly, though, Fanapt is one of a many drugs the FDA pumped out with an ability to exact the opposite desired effect on people: that is, you know, inducing rather than inhibiting psychosis and aggressive behavior.

From Drugs.com, side effects of the drug Fanapt:

“Psychiatric

“Psychiatric side effects including restlessness, aggression, and delusion have been reported frequently.

“Hostility, decreased libido, paranoia, anorgasmia, confusional state, mania, catatonia, mood swings, panic attack, obsessive-compulsive disorder, bulimia nervosa, delirium, polydipsia psychogenic, impulse-control disorder, and major depression have been reported infrequently.”

In fact, Fanapt was dropped by its first producer, picked up by another, initially rejected by the FDA, then later picked up and mass produced. The adverse side-effect is said to be “infrequent,” but still it exists, and can’t be ignored.

The reaction invoked by the drug in some people is reminiscent of the Jeffrey R. MacDonald case, where a Green Beret slaughtered his entire family and then fabricated a story about a marauding troop of “hopped up hippies”.

MacDonald though, had Eskatrol in his system, a weight-loss amphetamine that’s since been banned in part for its side effects of psychotic behavior and aggression.

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

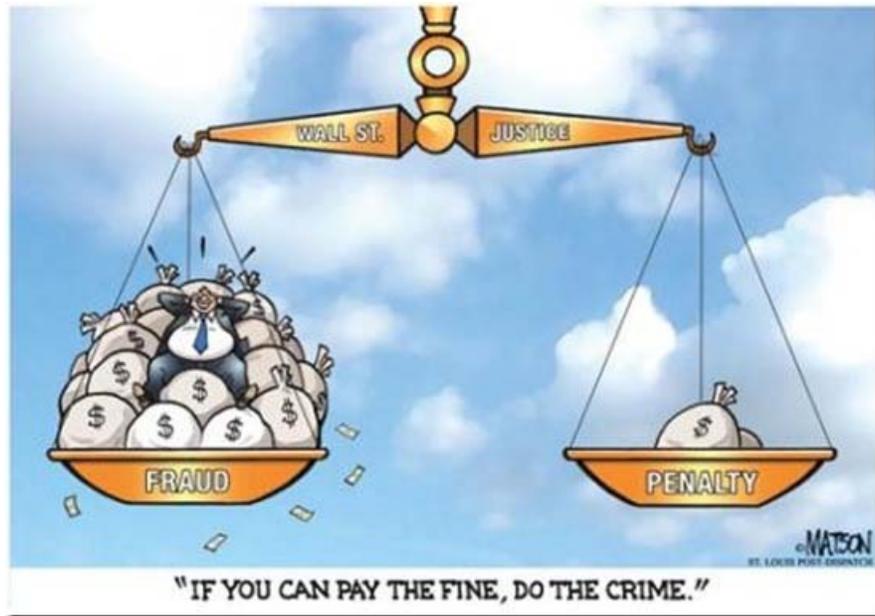
If you prefer PDF to Word format, email: contact@militaryproject.org

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

WALKER HISTORIC BUSINESS DAILY



CLASS WAR REPORTS



**Foreign Managers Trapped
After Fighting Breaks Out In
Sierra Leone Koidu Mine Strike:
“Residents Accused Police Of
Shooting Dead Two People”
“Protesters Stormed The Hospital In
Koidu, Taking The Dead Bodies And
Marching With Them Through The
Streets Of The Town, Vowing To
Avenge The Killings”**

“A Police Post In The Town Was Also Burnt”

19 December 2012 BBC

Foreign staff are holed up at the biggest diamond mine in Sierra Leone, which has been hit by a violent strike, the company's spokesman has said.

Hundreds of local workers at the mine in the eastern town of Koidu have blocked its entrance since Saturday.

The army has been deployed to Koidu where two people were killed in clashes on Tuesday, the police said.

It is said to be the worst conflict to hit Sierra Leone's lucrative diamond industry in recent years.

The BBC's Umaru Fofana reports from the capital, Freetown, that between 100 and 150 foreign staff are trapped at their residences in the mine compound, owned by a South African-based company, Ocea Diamond Group.

Most of them are South Africans, but they also include Ghanaian, Zimbabwean, Namibian, UK and Indian nationals, he says.

Ocea spokesman Ibrahim Sorie Kamara said the expatriates could not leave the compound because of alleged threats against them.

The company is concerned about their safety, and considering whether to evacuate them, he said.

Sierra Leone's Vice-President Samuel Sam-Sumana rushed to Koidu - the main mining town in eastern Sierra Leone - after violence broke out on Tuesday.

He continued with his mediation efforts on Wednesday, holding talks with workers and management.

His intervention came after police fired on protesters who allegedly threw stones at the convoy of Mineral Resources Minister Minkailu Mansaray, when he was in Koidu to deal with the crisis.

Residents accused police of shooting dead two people, our correspondent says.

Protesters then stormed the hospital in Koidu, taking the dead bodies and marching with them through the streets of the town, vowing to avenge the killings, he adds.

A police post in the town was also burnt, our reporter says.

Koidu police commander Chief Supt Saidu Jalloh said the army had been deployed to Koidu to help restore order, and a night-time curfew has been imposed.

Police opened fire after being “over-powered” by a huge number of protesters, Mr Jalloh said. He confirmed there were two fatalities, but did not say how they were shot.

Our correspondent say the authorities have retrieved the two bodies taken from the hospital, which is now under the control of police.

Bike-riders, who provide a taxi service in Koidu, say one of their colleagues was killed in the shooting.

They have now joined the strike, refusing to transport passengers and demanding that the authorities hand over the body of their colleague, our reporter says.

Mr Jalloh said several people have been arrested in connection with the unrest.

Miners embarked on the strike to demand better pay and working conditions, accusing Ocea of renegeing on a promise to pay them a Christmas bonus, equivalent to three months' salary.

The workers are also demanding an improvement in what they describe as appalling working conditions and end to alleged racism, he adds.

Five years ago, the mine was also hit by conflict which left two people dead, our correspondent says.

Ocea is the biggest investor in the diamond industry in Sierra Leone where the government is heavily dependent on the industry for its revenue, our reporter says.

The country's mining sector is often hit by strikes, but the police do not usually respond with such force or call in the army, he says.

Marchers Challenge Bahrain Royal Dictatorship

December 17, 2012 By REEM KHALIFA, TheHuffingtonPost.com

MANAMA, Bahrain — Security forces in Bahrain fired tear gas and arrested protesters Monday during marches in the traditional market area of the Gulf nation's capital, forcing many businesses to close.

The clashes underlined the volatility of the tiny, strategic island nation, home to the U.S. Fifth Fleet, where the Shiite Muslim majority is demanding more say from the Sunni monarchy.

The Interior Ministry said it made a “number” of arrests. Among them was rights activist Yousef al-Muhafedha, the acting head of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, said his wife Zainab al-Sairafi.

Al-Muhafedha's arrest could stir more backlash, less than a week after a Bahrain court rejected an appeal to overturn the jail sentence of the rights center's director, Nabeel Rajab.

The court cut one year from his three-year sentence on charges of encouraging “illegal gatherings” linked to the 22-month uprising against the kingdom's ruling system.

On Monday, authorities set up checkpoints and expanded patrols across Manama before rallies Monday to mark an annual commemoration for two protesters killed in 1994.

Separate groups of hundreds of protesters chanted slogans in the narrow streets of the city's market district. Some of the crowds were dispersed with tear gas and volleys of stun grenades.

It's the latest attempt by Shiite-led protesters to stage marches in the heart of the capital.

More than 55 people have been killed in unrest since February 2011, when Bahrain's majority Shiites escalated their fight for a greater political voice in the Sunni-ruled kingdom.

**For Spaniards, Having A Paying
Job No Longer Guarantees
Getting Paid:
“Even Workers Like Bus Drivers
And Health Care Attendants,
Dependent On Government
Financing For Their Salaries, Are
Not Always Paid”
“There Are Nights When We Cannot
Sleep”**

“Moments When You Talk Out Loud To Yourself In The Street. It Has Been Terrible, Terrible”

16 Dec 2012 By: Suzanne Daley, New York Times

Over the past two years, Ana María Molina Cuevas, 36, has worked five shifts a week in a ceramics factory on the outskirts of this city, hand-rolling paint onto tiles.

But at the end of the month, she often went unpaid.

Still, she kept showing up, trying to keep her frustration under control.

If she quit, she reasoned, she might never get her money. And besides, where was she going to find another job?

Last month, she was down to about \$130 in her bank account with a mortgage payment due.

“On the days you get paid,” she said at home with her disabled husband and young daughter, “it is like the sun has risen three times. It is a day of joy.”

Mrs. Molina, who is owed about \$13,000 by the factory, is hardly alone.

Being paid for the work you do is no longer something that can be counted on in Spain, as this country struggles through its fourth year of an economic crisis.

With the regional and municipal governments deeply in debt, even workers like bus drivers and health care attendants, dependent on government financing for their salaries, are not always paid.

But few workers in this situation believe they have any choice but to stick it out, and none wanted to name their employers, to protect both the companies and their jobs.

They try to manage their lives with occasional checks and partial payments on random dates — never sure whether they will get what they are owed in the end.

Spain’s unemployment rate is the highest in the euro zone at more than 25 percent, and despite the government’s labor reforms, the rate has continued to rise month after month.

“Before the crisis, a worker might let one month go by, and then move on to another job,” said José Francisco Perez, a lawyer who represents unpaid workers in the Valencia area.

“Now that just isn’t an option. People now have nowhere to go, and they are scared. They are afraid even to complain.”

No one is keeping track of workers like Mrs. Molina.

But one indication of their number can be seen in the courts, which have become jammed with people trying to get back pay from a government insurance fund, aimed at giving workers something when a company does not pay them.

In Valencia, Spain's third-largest city, the unemployment rate is 28.1 percent and the courts are so overwhelmed that processing claims, which used to take three to six months, now takes three to four years.

Since the start of the crisis in 2008, the insurance fund has paid nearly a million workers nationally back pay or severance.

In 2007, it paid 70,000 workers. It is on track to pay more than 250,000 this year, and experts say the figures would be much higher if not for the logjam in the courts.

Often the unpaid workers, like Mrs. Molina, whose company is now in bankruptcy proceedings, hope their labor will keep a struggling operation afloat over the long run.

Unemployment benefits last only two years, they point out, and they wonder what they would do after that. But in the meantime, they cannot even claim unemployment benefits.

And no amount of budgeting can cover no payment at all.

Beatriz Morales García, 31, said she could not remember the last time she went shopping for herself.

A few years ago, she and her husband, Daniel Chiva, 34, thought that they had settled into a comfortable life, he as a bus driver and she as a therapist in a rehabilitation center for people with mental disabilities. His job is financed by the City of Valencia, and hers by the regional government of Valencia.

They never expected any big money.

But it seemed reasonable to expect a reliable salary, to take on a mortgage and think about children. In the past year, however, both of them have had trouble being paid.

She is owed 6,000 euros, nearly \$8,000.

They have cut back on everything they can think of. They have given up their landline and their Internet connection. They no longer park their car in a garage or pay for extra health insurance coverage. Mr. Chiva even forgoes the coffee he used to drink in a cafe before his night shifts. Still, the anxiety is constant.

"There are nights when we cannot sleep," he said. "Moments when you talk out loud to yourself in the street. It has been terrible, terrible."

Mrs. Morales said it was particularly hard to watch other mothers in the park with their children while she must leave her own toddler to go to work, unsure she will ever get paid.

“We are working eight hours, and we’re suffering more than people who are not working,” she said.

The couple’s pay has been so irregular that they are having a hard time even keeping track of how much they are owed, because small payments show up sporadically in their account.

The regional government would not address the dimensions of the problem, when questions were submitted in writing. Instead, it offered a statement saying it was doing its best to pay its debts.

“We are aware of the difficulties faced by many associations and suppliers caused by the delay in payments from the public administration,” the statement said. The Region of Valencia, it said, was working to “overcome this crisis at the earliest opportunity,” understanding that “paying contributes towards activating the economy.”

Often enough the workers’ patience has not paid off — more than 300,000 companies have gone bankrupt in Spain over the last few years.

On a recent morning, workers began lining up outside the Valencia offices of the government insurance fund even before it opened.

The mood was grim. Most would get only a fraction of what they were owed. Recently, the government reduced the maximum reimbursement of \$1,700 a month to four months, rather than five.

Many in line were second-guessing their decision to keep working, feeling that their employers had taken advantage of them.

Some could barely contain their fury.

Several construction workers described how they had lived at a job site, working 12- to 16-hour days because the construction company assured them that getting a job done early would guarantee payment. It did not.

“I know I will never get what I am owed,” said Tudos Vrendicu, 38, who moved to Spain from Romania nearly a decade ago and worked on the construction site free for months, occasionally getting \$65 from his boss. “We came here for a better life, but this is a nightmare.”

It is unclear how many workers are being taken advantage of by unscrupulous employers.

Officials of the insurance fund, which seeks to retrieve the money it has paid out from companies that are behind in paying salaries, said they simply did not consider this question. However, it is one that gnaws at many unpaid workers.

Cristóbal Hernández, a chef at a 750-room hotel in the resort town of Benidorm south of Valencia, said the hotel had been totally booked and still the workers were owed money. It is the same, he said, for most of the other big hotels in town.

“We keep trying to figure it out,” he said. “Where is the money going? We think it may be going to hold up the owner’s other businesses.”

Mr. Hernández said the hotel workers had recently threatened to go to the press, a threat that got them some of their back pay.

But, he said, none of the workers were eager to take that route, for fear it would kill the hotel’s business and with it their jobs. He asked that the hotel not be named for that reason.

“This is our living,” he said.

Some employers say that they are doing their best, but that their customers frequently pay late, or not at all. Others say they have gone to great lengths to pay their employees. One, who refused to be identified because he did not want to advertise his real estate company’s financial problems, said his family had sold a beach house and a space in a parking garage to pay employees their commissions earlier this year.

“We know that all our employees have their own obligations: mortgages, families,” he said. “Paying wages on time is sacred. It is an act of faith.”

Some worker advocates worry that the backup in the courts is giving abusive employers extra leverage.

Workers hang on longer because they know that giving up and going to the courts will not get them any cash soon.

“The companies understand all this,” said Mr. Perez, the lawyer, who said some workers were simply pressured into accepting less than they were owed. “It’s shameful.”

At home recently, Mrs. Molina said she had sometimes used her credit card to pay her mortgage. But she considered herself luckier than most. At least her family has been able to lend her money when she needed it, at least for now.

Still, she has to fight off anger as she puts in the hours and has nothing to show for it. “I try not to let it get to me and, over all, not to pass the bitterness on to my family,” she said. “That’s not going to feed us.”

**Aleppo:
“We Left High Salaries, We Left
Our Jobs, We Left Our Rank In
Society”**

“We Left Everything To Get Our Dignity”

“This Is The Price We Have To Pay, And It Is A Cheap Price To Get Our Freedom From The Tyrant”

December 18, 2012 By C. J. CHIVERS, New York Times [Excerpts]

Winter is descending on Aleppo, Syria's largest city and the bloodied stage for an urban battle, now running into its sixth month, between rebels and the military of President Bashar al-Assad.

“We left high salaries, we left our jobs, we left our rank in society,” said Dr. Ammar Diar Bakerly, who directs medical care in the city's rebel-held east.

“We left everything to get our dignity. This is the price we have to pay, and it is a cheap price to get our freedom from the tyrant.”

For most of Syria's 21-month uprising, Aleppo, a commercial and government center built around its historic Old City, was spared the battles engulfing the country.

That changed in July when the Free Syrian Army, or F.S.A., as many rebels call themselves, entered Aleppo and opened urban fronts.

The government rushed in much-needed army units from elsewhere, turning to heavier weapons in a bid to retain control of a city that, if lost, would change Mr. Assad's self-assured narrative. The war's largest battle yet was joined.

Five months on, the government's gambit has failed.

Even with air support and artillery batteries firing relentlessly, Mr. Assad's military has yielded ground.

In roughly half the city, rebels move about openly.

In all the rebel-held territory, medical service is scarce, a shortage that deepened in November when the air force destroyed Dar al-Shifa Hospital, the largest in rebel-held ground.

With the hospital closed, Dr. Bakerly said, “there are 20 hospital beds for all of east Aleppo,” an area with as many as a million residents.

Doctors now work from a partly hidden network of clinics and small hospitals, from which they treat about 40 people each day for wounds from the shelling.

(The number of patients has declined since the hospital was destroyed, doctors said; many people arrange to move the wounded north, to makeshift trauma centers in the countryside and then across the border to Turkey.)

But there are other conditions to treat, including a growing menace: disease.

Dr. Bakerly noted that people had crowded into neighborhoods away from the fronts. Dense living conditions, combined with the shortage of potable water and a long absence of trash collection, have created conditions ideal for the spread of infectious diseases.

He and other doctors noted a surge in leishmaniasis, a potentially fatal infection passed to humans by sandfly bites.

Before the fighting came to Aleppo, several doctors said, the government misted the streets and the areas where sandflies bred with insecticide. That has not happened for months. Leishmaniasis cases have spiked.

“We are seeing very high numbers of this; it is spreading in the streets,” said another doctor, Mohammad al-Haj, who splits times between clinics.

Dr. Haj ticked off the season’s dreary list: more leishmaniasis, more respiratory and stomach infections, dysentery spreading like he had never seen.

He added: “We could treat these cases, but there is no laboratory, no medical equipment and almost no medicine. We divide the medicine. The medicine we would normally give to one person we now give to many.”

Outside the clinic, shells landed nearby, close enough to make the distinctive thump and crunch of high-explosive ordnance creeping close.

A crowd of women with children all but pushed at his door.

Dr. Haj was gentle and polite, but spoke with bitterness at how he hears the West assess Syria’s war.

“They say that chemical weapons are the red line,” he said, referring to President Obama’s public warning to Syria’s government that a chemical strike might prompt an American military response.

“But we are dying from other ways. It is not good enough to die from shelling or disease? The international community laughs at our suffering.”

Many of the problems plaguing Aleppo can be seen in the experience of Ahmed and Hayat Saleh, a couple with seven children.

The Salehs live for now in an unfinished apartment in a sprawling building that had yet to open when the war broke out.

A group of fighters from Al Tawhid brigade, the main F.S.A. contingent in the city, had moved in first, after overrunning a nearby army checkpoint. They offered the family shelter.

The building has no electricity or heat; the rooms turn pitch-black during December's nearly 14-hour nights. And the apartment needed basic upgrades. "There was no door when we came here," Mr. Saleh said. "We brought the door."

There are no windows, either. Mr. Saleh covered the open holes with blankets and sheets.

In spite of this, as he paced the small space on a recent night, he offered a strange form of real-estate pride. The building is three rooms' thick, he said, and his apartment is not on the top floor.

That matters. At night, the family huddles together on thin mattresses on the center room's floor, knowing that their location in the building's interior improves prospects for survival if an artillery shell hits either side of the building or the roof.

But many of the Salehs' troubles cannot be solved by shelter. One of their sons has a heart condition and needs the attention of a cardiologist.

The specialist lives on the other side of the front lines, in a neighborhood occupied by the army.

When Mr. Saleh tried to take his son there, the soldiers stopped him. "At the checkpoint they said, 'You gave food to the F.S.A.," he said. "I said, 'How can I give food to the F.S.A. when I don't have food myself?"

The soldiers blocked the way, even though, he said, the truth was the other way around.

"Now when the F.S.A. downstairs gets food, they give us some," he said.

In the chilly room, two small candles burned, casting the concrete walls in a faint orange glow.

Outside, a cold rain fell. In the distance, artillery boomed.

Mr. Saleh rattled off what he and his family faced: No heat, no electricity, no money, no medicine, no doctor and no home, except this unlit, borrowed room.

The children sat silently, under shared blankets, bundled in thick clothes. Their father's soft voice filled the space.

"We don't know how we will survive the winter," Mr. Saleh said. "We wait for the mercy of God"

**DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE
MILITARY?**



U.S. soldier in Bejjia village Iraq, Feb. 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

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**Greek Workers “Walked Off The
Job In Protest At New Austerity
Measures And Lay-Offs Demanded
By Foreign Lenders”**

**“We Want To Tell The Government
Enough Is Enough!”**

**“Enough With Layoffs, Wage And
Pension Cuts, The Collapse Of The**

Public Sector, Enough With These Tax Hikes”

19 Dec 2012 Al Jazeera

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

Greek transport systems have been disrupted and schools and tax offices shut after public sector workers walked off the job in protest at new austerity measures and lay-offs demanded by foreign lenders.

The 24-hour strike is the latest in a series of protests since September against a package of wage cuts and tax hikes demanded by Greece's European Union and International Monetary Fund lenders as the price for bailout loans to keep the country afloat.

The measures, which include earmarking 27,000 civil servants for eventual dismissal, remain unpopular among Greeks who say society is crumbling under the weight of spending cuts and tax hikes that hurt mostly the middle class.

On Wednesday, striking teachers, doctors and municipal workers started gathering in central Athens as part of the walkout called by the ADEDY union, which represents about half a million public sector workers or roughly a quarter of the country's workforce.

“We want to tell the government enough is enough! Enough with layoffs, wage and pension cuts, the collapse of the public sector, enough with these tax hikes,” said Adedy unionist Despina Spanou.

Greece's other major union, the private sector union GSEE, said it would hold a three-hour stoppage in solidarity and join the march through the streets of central Athens.

The Communist-affiliated PAME group was expected to hold a separate rally.

Some domestic flights were grounded and about 100 workers occupied the headquarters of Athens' city train company on Wednesday in protest at planned wage cuts.

Train workers also started a 48-hour strike against the conservative-led coalition's plans to privatise Greece's national railways.

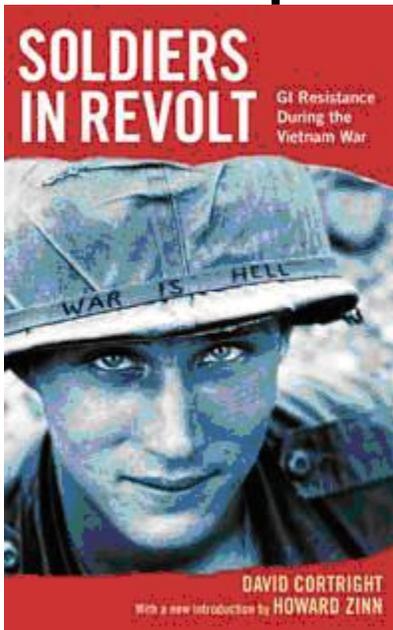
Metro and tram workers walked off the job for a few hours on Wednesday and plan a 24-hour strike on Thursday.

Thousands were expected to march to the administrative reform ministry which oversees public sector reform, however unionists expected a smaller turnout than previous strikes.

Unions said that some Greeks, although fed up with austerity, could no longer afford to lose a day's wages.

Police deployed about 2,000 officers in central Athens.

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



SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT

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