

Military Resistance 11D14



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

#1:
Obama Regime Scum
Announce Cut In Troops'
Income And Benefits:
Planned 1% Pay Increase Less
Than 1.6% Increase In Consumer
Price Index:

Also, “Defense Department Is Seeking To Raise Or Establish Certain Fees In Health Coverage For Retirees And Military Dependents” “A 1% Increase Would Be The Lowest Since 1963, When There Was No Raise”



[“Consumer Price Index up 1.6 percent from January 2012 to January 2013” -- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. T]

April 25, 2013 Gregg Zoroya, USA TODAY

Military families and their advocates are battling an Obama administration proposal to limit troops' pay raises to 1% in 2014, the lowest increase in half a century.

The raise comes at a time when forces will still be fighting in Afghanistan.

“We're sending the wrong message to the ones who have worked the hardest in our country by the multiple deployments and family separations,” says Michael Hayden, deputy director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America.

White House spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden, no relation to Michael Hayden, said Obama is committed to “a sacred trust” with military members, but needed to reduce the pay raise, partly to offset congressional refusal to cut spending on “outdated weapons system.”

Elizabeth Robbins, a Pentagon spokeswoman, called the limit on pay increases a “tough decision.” She said the Defense Department must pay for proper training and support,

and “fair compensation that recognizes the sacrifices they (troops) make for our country ... while adhering to the budget constraints it is facing.”

Pentagon officials briefing military family representatives framed the 1% increase as a trade-off — “They believe servicemembers and families would be willing to give something on the size of pay raises to ensure funding for the mission,” the National Military Family Association explained to members on its website.

This triggered angry questions from spouses, who asked whether this wasn't a false choice.

“We understand that funding training and readiness are vital to the servicemember and the Department of Defense, but why should something this important be an either/or?” says Joyce Raezer, executive director of the association.

Pentagon records show that a 1% increase would be the lowest since 1963, when there was no raise followed by a double-digit increase later that year. The second-lowest raise since then was in 2011 at 1.4%.

Military pay increases by law are now linked with private sector growth as reflected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index, an assessment that would call for a 1.8% increase in 2014, which advocates are seeking.

But the Pentagon is asking Congress to limit it to 1% and save \$540 million.

The Defense Department is also seeking to raise or establish certain fees in health coverage for retirees and military dependents, a savings of \$1 billion.

#2:

“By Historical Standards, The Current Recovery Has Been Dismal”

“Beyond The Immediate Sluggishness, However, There Are Signs Of A Longer-Term Trend Of Slowing Growth”

“From The 1970s Through 1990s, The Economy Averaged Better Than 3% Annual Growth”

“Since Then, Growth Has Averaged Less Than 2%. There's Little Sign That Trend Will Reverse Any Time Soon”

April 26, 2013 By BEN CASSELMAN, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Forget for a moment the talk of spring swoons, double-dips, “stall speed” and “escape velocity.”

The real story of the recovery hasn't been its volatility, but its persistent slowness.

The economy's 2.5% growth rate in the first quarter looks like a sharp acceleration from the 0.4% rate at the end of 2012, which was itself a dramatic slowdown from the 3.1% rate posted in the fall.

But such big swings are more about the intricacies of economic accounting than true shifts in momentum.

Look over the past year, and output has grown at an average rate of a bit under 2%. Give or take a half percentage point, that's pretty much where growth has averaged throughout the recovery.

At a time when the United Kingdom narrowly avoided a triple-dip recession and the euro zone is in a constant state of near-collapse, the U.S.'s slow-and-steady growth may not look so bad.

But by historical standards, the current recovery has been dismal.

On a per capita basis, neither economic output nor personal income has returned to its pre-recession level. Nearly 12 million people remain out of work.

To put that in perspective, growth has averaged 2.1% over the 15 quarters of the current recovery.

Following the double-dip recession of the early 1980s — the recent downturn's only postwar rival in terms of severity — growth averaged 5.3% over the same 15-quarter period.

After the much milder slowdowns of the early 1990s and 2000s, growth averaged 3.4% and 2.9%, respectively.

Beyond the immediate sluggishness, however, there are signs of a longer-term trend of slowing growth.

From the 1970s through 1990s, the economy averaged better than 3% annual growth.

Since then, growth has averaged less than 2%.

Remarkably, even without the recent recession, the annualized quarterly growth rate since 2000 would have averaged less than 2.4%.

There's little sign that trend will reverse any time soon.

The pace of growth has slowed slightly since the recovery began, and most economists expect the second quarter of the year to be worse than the first.

April 26, 2013 By SUDEEP REDDY, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Retailers and restaurants are starting to feel the pinch. Cheesecake Factory Inc. CEO David Overton told investors this week: "The economy has changed, especially for those people that are just hanging in there.

"Credit has dried up. People are using cash. They're not living on credit that they think they're going to get out of their house. It may always be a little bit different."

The cloudy outlook appears to be weighing on business investment.

Capital expenditures by businesses rose at a modest pace of about 2%. Spending on equipment and software increased 3%, down from the nearly 12% pace in the fourth quarter.

Spending on structures such as new stores fell after a stronger fourth quarter.

While businesses shipped more products abroad during the quarter, higher imports offset gains in exports and made trade a drag on the overall economy.

The weakening outlook in the key economies of the euro zone and China indicates little prospect of a boost to the U.S. anytime soon due to overseas demand.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Friends Remember Jarett Yoder Killed In Afghanistan

Apr 11 2013 by Pam Cunningham, Reporter; WFMZ

BRECKNOCK TWP., Pa. –

A soldier from Berks County has been identified as one of two members of the Pennsylvania National Guard who were killed in a helicopter crash in Nangarhar, Afghanistan on Tuesday, officials said.

Those who knew Chief Warrant Officer Jarett Yoder, of Brecknock Township, remember him as a soldier who served his country, but also as a family man, track star, soccer player and a hero.

Yoder, 26, married Heather Garay last July at the Reading Liederkrantz club in Lower Alsace Township.

“They were actually supposed to get married later in the year more towards the fall, but he got deployed so the club rearranged its schedule so that we could fit them in,” said Robin Pritz, sous chef for the club.

Yoder wore his National Guard dress uniform even in the heat.

“It was 105 degrees out and right when they were giving the speeches and everything, it poured rain,” said Pritz. “And after just about 10 minutes and cooled it off by 20 degrees and they had a great time.”

Those are memories Pritz will hold onto.

“Because it's like one big extended family up here if you will and they wanted to be a part of it,” said Pritz, “So, we were all very shocked and sad.”

Jarett and Heather not only got married at the Reading Liederkrantz club, they also became members. A close friend who has been in contact with Heather said she was on her way to Dover, Del., where his body will arrive.

Anyone who knows the young couple said it's been an emotional day.

“He was very passionate about serving his country and that's why we're all so proud of him,” said Dr. Darrell Markley, principal at Oley Valley High School.

At Oley Valley, Yoder was a pole vaulter on the track team and number 11 on the soccer team.

“He played as he kind of lived his life,” said Shawn Meals, the soccer coach. “He worked hard. He had a great work ethic. He was very team-oriented.”

Yoder graduated in 2005, but he stood out.

At the Liederkrantz club, where they plan so many weddings, Heather and Jarrett also stood out.

"In the front, when you walk in ,we're going to have a picture and a book for all the members to sign," said Pritz. "So, they're going to have a month's time to come to sign."

Pritz said he is still thinking about what he'll write to the soldier's wife.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

**“Some Residents Speak With
Hatred About The Elite U.S.
Forces And Believe Allegations
That They Committed
Atrocities”**

**“Every Day They Kill Our Innocent
People”**

**“Provincial Officials Are Not Taking
Any Chances”**

**“Many Of Them Refuse To Spend The
Night In Wardak For Fear Of Attacks By
Militants”**

Mar 13, 2013 By Mirwais Harooni and Michael Georgy, Reuters

The Afghan policeman manning a checkpoint glances at the snow-covered mountains that are home to Taliban fighters and predicts what would happen if elite U.S. forces leave Wardak province, seen as the gateway to the capital of Kabul.

“The Taliban will take over in one day,” Mohammad Jamil says. “They are nearby.”

Wardak, just a 40-minute drive from Kabul, is a prime example of what could happen in other parts of Afghanistan as the United States winds down an increasingly unpopular war, now in its 12th year.

“It’s special forces who go usually on the front lines and fight with Taliban,” said a second Afghan policeman, Mir Hussain.

“If we make them leave this province than there won’t be anybody to fight them. It’s obvious that as soon as they leave our province the Taliban will return to power here.”

Strategically located astride the Western approach to Kabul, Wardak is ideally placed for the insurgents who control nearby mountain villages to use as a staging ground for operations into the city, home to nearly 5 million people and dozens of diplomatic missions.

Militants already carry out ambushes, shooting attacks and bombings on American and Afghan forces there.

Karzai ordered U.S. special forces to leave after residents complained that they, and Afghans working with them, were torturing and killing civilians, an allegation strongly denied by the Americans.

Even after the deadline for U.S. special forces to withdraw passed on Sunday, General Abdul Razaq, a senior police detective, told Reuters they were still in Wardak, a collection of mostly apple and apricot farms surrounded by mountains.

U.S. forces have refused to comment on their deployment.

Razaq said local officials had urged the Interior Ministry to provide strong support if the American forces leave, including artillery and reinforcements.

Some residents speak with hatred about the elite U.S. forces and believe allegations that they committed atrocities.

“Every day they kill our innocent people,” said Abdul Ghafoor, 54, without offering any evidence to back the accusations, as his companions nodded in agreement.

Some fear the dangers could reach far beyond the provincial capital of Maidan Shahr, where Afghan policemen speed past a children’s playground called Peace Park in jeeps mounted with machine guns.

Afghan Army Chief of Staff Sher Mohammad Karimi recently told Reuters most of the attacks in Kabul were planned just 25 km (15 miles) away in Wardak.

“It is one of our biggest concerns,” he said.

Jittery Afghan forces have set up a multitude of checkpoints along Maidan Shahr’s two paved roads. Intelligence agents, police and soldiers stop and question motorists travelling on potholed, dusty streets.

The Taliban haven't lost their edge despite the presence of U.S. special forces and their intimidating Afghan partners, who ride off-road motorbikes and cover their faces with balaclavas and dark sunglasses.

“We have five PK light machine guns in our whole district, but the Taliban has more than five in a small checkpoint. So how can we fight with them or protect our people from their atrocities?” asked the policeman Jamil.

He recalls the consequences of a U.S. withdrawal from a nearby district, Sayedabad. “The Taliban captured that valley. Now it's a training camp for them where they learn how to attack Afghan and foreign forces.”

Provincial officials are not taking any chances. Many of them refuse to spend the night in Wardak for fear of attacks by militants.

“It is a 15-minute drive from my office to my house but I cannot go there,” said Esmatullah Asem, head of Maidan Shahr Hospital.

“The last time I went home was two years ago. I live in Kabul.”

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.

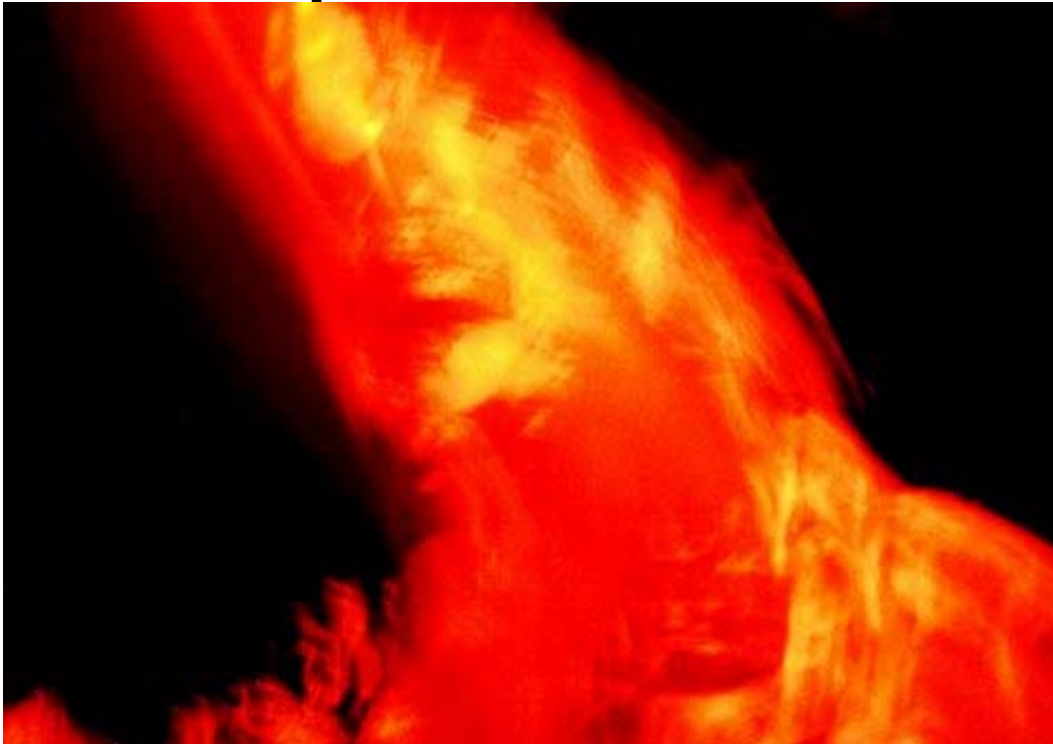
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“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**

Napalm In America



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: April 27, 2013
Subject: Napalm In America

Napalm In America

When I came back from Vietnam,
I asked my mother if she still had
my toy soldiers.
She said yes.
I asked her where they were.
She asked me why I wanted them.
I said I wanted to take them out in
the backyard and set them on fire
with lighter fluid.
She asked me why in the world would
I want to do that.
I said because I wanted to see what
napalm looked like in America.

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
April 27, 2013

The only thing worse than death is betrayal.
Malcolm X

Photograph by Mike Hastie

This image was taken in An Khe, Vietnam a couple of months before I went back to the United States. It is an American soldier who was celebrating the fact that he was going back to the States in a couple of days. He was drunk, and his fellow soldiers had put shaving cream all over his head and face. If you look closely, you can see his head with his mouth open. It was taken at night inside a tent, and the only light source was a light bulb over his head. The reason this image turned out this way, was because the camera was set at a slow shutter speed, resulting in the blurred movement.

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

‘Take Your Fobbit To Work Day’ Ends In Newfound Respect; 27 Wounded In Action



There's something out there

27 April 2013 by Merrick, The Duffel Blog

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN —

Pentagon sources were proud to announce the success of a new, yearly event which allowed Fobbits — service-members who spend their entire tour on Forward Operating Base — the opportunity to venture out into Afghanistan alongside combat units.

“I was super excited when I first found out,” said Specialist Jimmy McNulty, a finance soldier.

“I’d spent months in my guard tower wondering what was out there. I couldn’t wait to finally ‘get some’. You know, when I got home and told a girl in a bar about the one time I left the wire.”

The 'wire', as service-members call the protective barricade surrounding coalition bases, represents the departure of relative safety into the unknown.

While the thirty Fobbits who volunteered for the event were enthusiastic, their counterparts were less than thrilled. An embedded Duffel Blog reporter with the 101st Airborne spoke with a few infantryman who participated in Operation Zero to Hero.

"I couldn't believe the 'mission essential' crap they had," said Staff Sergeant Omar Little, a 24 year-old squad leader. "One guy brought a pillow because it was going to be a long convoy and he was kind of sleepy."

"Some Sergeant had a blank firing adapter," chimed in a young Private. "I found it in his grenade pouch which had been in there since his MOB [mobilization] training. I was like, what the fuck dude, we don't fire blanks here."

Despite the initial gung-ho spirit, the Fobbits quickly discovered life outside the wire was less glamorous than it seemed.

"I was attached to an infantry scout/sniper platoon," said 1st Lieutenant Rhonda Pearlman, pausing between tears.

"We set up something called a hide site on a mountain and watched an empty town for three days. Three days of watching and nothing else, except peeing in water bottles and pooping in used MRE bags that we carried back with us. These people are animals."

A newfound respect was shown the following day as hungry, blood-shot eyed combat troops returned from patrols and were turned away from DFAC's (dining facilities) across Afghanistan. Instead of being threatened with reprimand, they were politely asked to return with cleaner uniforms.

The historic day did have its drawbacks.

27 Fobbits were wounded in action but tragedy was averted thanks to a cadre of well-trained medics. Major Ervin Burrell, an Army quartermaster, was one such unfortunate Fobbit when he encountered a cell phone detonated IED.

"How could something like that happen?" said shocked and wounded Fobbit PFC Clay Davis.

"One minute, the Major is walking along dialing on his iPhone. The next, people are screaming for a medic. For Christ's sake, he had AT&T. I can't even get reception in the states."

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email:

contact@militaryproject.org

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Imitation Is The Sincerest Form Of Flattery: Following Nazi Warsaw Ghetto Model, Zionists Organizing Ghetto For Palestinians In Occupied Jerusalem: Plan “To Limit Palestinians To An Area Of Only 7.8 Per Cent Of Jerusalem”

“Palestinian residents form 39 per cent of the total residents in Jerusalem and they are permitted to build houses on 14 per cent of the East Jerusalem area, which is 7.8 per cent of the whole area of Jerusalem”

23 April 2013 Middle East Monitor

On Monday Palestinian newspaper Al-Quds reported that two Israeli human rights organisations filed a petition to the Central Israeli Court in Jerusalem against the Israeli structural map Jerusalem 2000.

Citizen's Rights and Bemakom organisations have said that they are repealing against the map, as it is illegal on the grounds it planned to limit Palestinians to an area of only 7.8 per cent of Jerusalem.

The two organisations claimed that the Israeli Authorities deal with Jerusalem 2000 as an abiding “political document.” They refuse any other building plans if they clash with the document despite the fact that it is unapproved and has no legal force.

Residents did not even have the chance to repeal against it when it was drafted.

The structural situation in Jerusalem, the two organisations said, has been negatively affected as the document is not approved. This situation caused much damage to Jerusalem residents, particularly Palestinians in East Jerusalem, who are encircled within an area of only 7.8 per cent.

The reduced area specified for Palestinians in Jerusalem led to a reduced number of houses. That made the Palestinian neighbourhoods densely populated.

However, Palestinian residents form 39 per cent of the total residents in Jerusalem and they are permitted to build houses on 14 per cent of the East Jerusalem area, which is 7.8 per cent of the whole area of Jerusalem.

It means that Jerusalem 2000 challenges civilised growth for Jerusalemites.

The researchers of the two organisations said that the structural maps of Jerusalem are not detailed enough to get construction permits based on them.

It is clearly aimed at limiting the residential expansion in East Jerusalem.

Engineer Efrat Kohen-Bar from Bemakom said: “As a result of the restrictions imposed on construction in East Jerusalem, Palestinian residents are obliged to find solutions to their problems. They pay the costs for producing new maps based on Jerusalem 2000, which is not approved.”

In response, the Regional Planning Committee froze a large number of the maps issued by Palestinians. Kohen-Bar said that had resulted in planning chaos in the Palestinian neighbourhood.

**Heroic Zionist Forces Destroy
Homes And A Popular Restaurant
In Occupied Palestine:
“The Motivation For Demolishing
Homes Is Purely Political And
Racially Informed”
“To Either Drive The Palestinians Out Of
The Country Altogether (The ‘Quiet
Transfer’) Or To Confine The Four Million
Residents Of The West Bank, East
Jerusalem And Gaza To Small, Crowded,
Impoverished And Disconnected
Enclaves”**



Rubble remains where al-Makhrour restaurant once stood in the occupied West Bank, demolished by the Israeli army for lacking a building permit. Picture taken April 23, 2013. (photo by Jihan Abdalla)

April 24 By: Jihan Abdalla for Al-Monitor Palestine Pulse. Jihan Abdalla is a Palestinian freelance journalist and television producer based in Jerusalem.

AL-MAKHROUR, West Bank —

A large pile of twisted zinc and concrete rubble in a parking lot is all that is left of the popular al-Makhrour restaurant in the occupied West Bank.

Dirty pots and pans lie on the ground and broken glass crackles under the feet of owner Ramzy Qissiyeh as he tries to salvage more buried items.

Last week, Israeli soldiers arrived with bulldozers and demolished his family-owned restaurant, located in the picturesque valley near the West Bank city of Bethlehem. Qissiyeh said this is the second time the Israeli army has demolished his business, citing the lack of a building permit.

“All I could do was watch and mourn,” Qissiyeh told Al-Monitor. His family house next door also has a pending demolition order, but has so far been spared.

Interim peace agreements signed in the 1990s allotted around two-thirds of the West Bank, Area C, to full Israeli military and administrative control.

The Israeli army said all construction in the West Bank is subject to building codes and planning laws, and unauthorized construction is grounds for demolition.

Residents say building permits are nearly impossible to obtain and they are forced to build without them. They also accuse Israel of using demolitions to tighten its hold on the territory and evict them from their land to expand Jewish settlements.

A spokesman for the Israeli civil administration, Guy Inbar, said the restaurant was destroyed per a demolition order issued back in 2005.

“This restaurant is well known as an illegal structure, built without any building permit or plan,” Inbar told Al-Monitor. “There are many other illegal structures in the area.”

The steep, rocky valley of Wadi al-Makhrour is dotted with ancient apricot and olive-tree terraces. Residents of the neighboring village of Beit Jala have for decades owned the fertile agricultural area that since 1967, the year Israel occupied the West Bank, has been subject to severe Israeli building and farming restrictions. Only a few small brick houses are scattered over the hills.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), between 2000 and 2007, over 94% of applications for building permits in Area C were denied.

The body said for the 2.5 million Palestinians living in the West Bank, construction is prohibited in up to 70% of Area C, and a range of restrictions in the rest of the area make it virtually impossible to get a building permit.

According to the Applied Research Center in Jerusalem (ARIJ), since 2011, the Israeli army has demolished the restaurant, four houses, an agriculture well and 53 electric poles in al-Makhrour. Several other houses and structures have pending demolition orders.

“There has been a deliberate Israeli campaign to prevent development in that area, where even repairing old agricultural structures is prohibited,” Suhail Khalilieh, head of the settlement-monitoring department at ARIJ, told Al-Monitor.

Between 2000 and 2009, according to OCHA, 5,600 demolition orders were issued in Area C, and more than 1,600 buildings were demolished.

In a March 2013 report, the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions said that in 2012, Israel demolished a total of 600 Palestinian structures, including at least 189 homes. Some 880 Palestinians, more than half of them children, were displaced.

“The motivation for demolishing these homes is purely political and racially informed: to either drive the Palestinians out of the country altogether (the “quiet transfer”) or to confine the four million residents of the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza to small, crowded, impoverished and disconnected enclaves,” the report said.

Overlooking al-Makhrour is the Jewish settlement of Har Gilo, home to some 500 Jewish settlers. The faint rumble of construction can be heard over the hill as more identical

stone apartments are built. Rights groups say Israel plans to build another settlement called Givat Yael nearby.

Israeli group Ir Amim said the plan for the Givat Yael settlement, which dates back to 2003, involves 3000 dunums (741 acres) of land to provide 14,000 housing units for over 40,000 settlers, along with a commercial area and a sports club.

Some 500,000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank and east Jerusalem in over 100 settlements, most of which are located in Area C.

The World Court has ruled that all settlements are illegal.

Israel rejects this, and has said it will keep many of the settlements under any future peace deal with the Palestinians. The ARIJ said land belonging to the Palestinian villages of Beit Jala, Battir and al-Walajeh would be annexed as part of the Givat Yael settlement.

If constructed, Givat Yael will create a contiguous built-up area linking Jerusalem with the Har Gilo settlement and create a strategic link with the Gush Etzion settlement block, located southeast of Jerusalem.

Khalilieh said al-Makhrour falls in a strategic location for Israel, as it constitutes a geographical linking point between the Gush Etzion settlement block and the Har Gilo settlement.

“Al-Makhrour would fill some of the territorial gap between the two settlements,” Khalilieh said.

According to a European Union report issued last year, in 1967, between 200,000 and 320,000 Palestinians lived in Area C of the West Bank.

But demolition of Palestinian homes and structures and the prevention of new construction has seen the population drop to 150,000.

Meanwhile, the settler population in Area C has grown from 1,200 to 310,000, the report said.

In al-Makhrour, Qissiyeh said his restaurant had only been operating for two weeks when the trucks came for the second time to demolish a restaurant that cost him all his savings and several loans he can no longer repay.

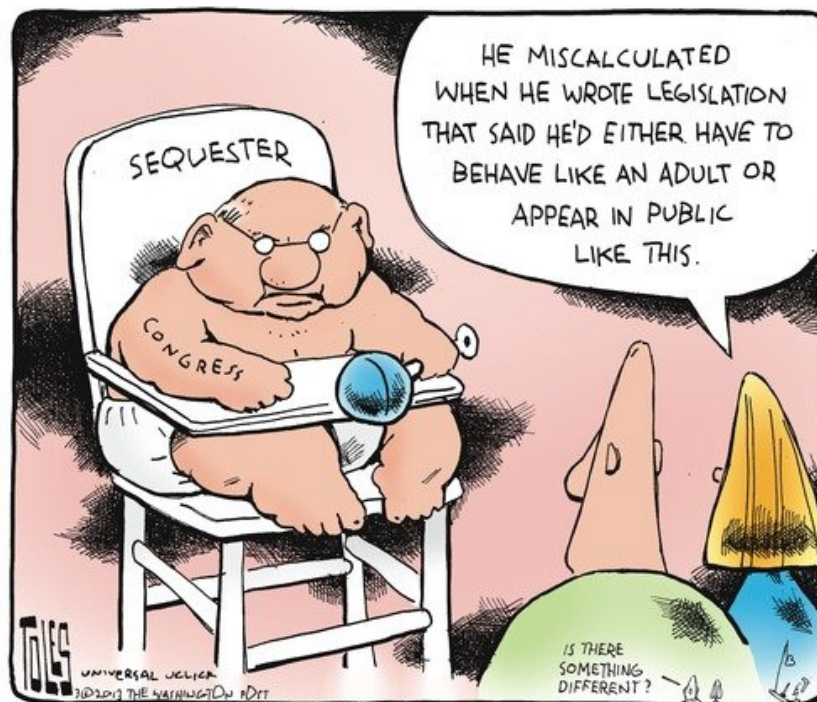
He said he cannot risk a third demolition and is considering leaving the area altogether. “Everyone has a certain amount of pain and pressure they can handle, I think I’ve surpassed mine,” Qissiyeh said with a shake of his calloused hands. “I’m tired, I can’t play this cat-and-mouse chase anymore.”

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

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



**Hospital Chooses Death For Man
Who Used Prescribed Medical
Marijuana:
“Mr. Smith Was Taken Off The
Transplant List And Denied A Life
Saving Procedure”**

“Mr. Smith Died Because Of This”

After testing positive for THC (one of the active chemicals in marijuana), Mr. Smith was taken off the transplant list and denied a life saving procedure.

Mr. Smith died because of this.

It did not matter to the hospital that Mr. Smith's marijuana use was non-recreational, and was approved by his oncologist as a way to treat his chemotherapy side effects.

April 24, 2013 By Matthew Donigian, AlterNet [Excerpts]

Matthew Donigian is a third year law student at the University of Illinois College of Law (graduating this May).

After being diagnosed with liver cancer in 2009, Norman B. Smith applied to the liver transplant list at Cedar-Sinai hospital.

While waiting for a transplant, Mr. Smith underwent chemotherapy in an attempt to destroy the cancer eating away at his liver.

This caused severe side-effects, common to many cancer patients. In an attempt to curb the pain, and on the recommendation of his oncologist, Mr. Smith began using medical marijuana.

Cannabis has become increasingly common as a medicine of choice for patients undergoing chemotherapy, since it increases appetite and reduces pain—minimizing the chance of a patient developing cancer related wasting syndrome.

Finally, in September of 2010, Mr. Smith was notified that he was eligible for a liver transplant and was placed on the liver transplant list.

Mr. Smith continued his treatment and submitted to drug testing per the hospital's transplant list policy.

After testing positive for THC (one of the active chemicals in marijuana), Mr. Smith was taken off the transplant list and denied a life saving procedure.

Mr. Smith died because of this.

It did not matter to the hospital that Mr. Smith's marijuana use was non-recreational, and was approved by his oncologist as a way to treat his chemotherapy side effects.

This story is a more common than one might think.

While working at NORML I received a call from a 19 year-old medical marijuana patient who had a rare liver cancer.

This patient tried everything to control the pain and nausea that plagued her everyday. Pills, healthy foods, acupuncture. . . nothing worked.

In fact, many of the prescription drugs given to her by her doctor either worsened her nausea or caused other severe side-effects.

Finally, she tried medical marijuana, which her oncologist said might be a good option if she could find a reliable source. She tried it, and it worked.

After hearing about Mr. Smith, she became terrified that her marijuana use might jeopardize her chances of getting a new liver. How could this be possible?

“I want my liver transplant, but I can't imagine living without my medicine, it would be too painful”. Unfortunately, due to patient confidentiality laws, it is impossible to know how many people like Mr. Smith there are.

But the number will continue to grow as marijuana continues to become an accepted treatment for cancer related pain and nausea. These are the human costs of the war on drugs.

Why do hospitals remove medical marijuana patients from their transplant list?

One possibility is fear and ignorance.

Cedar-Sinai claims that they remove marijuana users from transplant lists for two main reasons, that marijuana use may indicate a substance abuse problem (but taking high-powered and addictive pharmaceuticals does not?) and that marijuana may increase a user's chance of becoming infected with the aspergillus fungus, which may threaten the well-being of the transplanted organ.

This theory is bunk and based on speculation, and a recent study featured in the American Journal of Transplantation found that marijuana users are just as successful after a transplant as non-marijuana users.

Another possibility is that hospitals are beholden to pharmaceutical companies who peddle dangerous drugs when there is a safe and affordable alternative; and marijuana remains illegal under federal law.

According to Dr. Lester Grinspoon, Professor Emeritus of Harvard Medical School, pharmaceutical companies oppose medical marijuana because “(they) cannot patent marijuana. . . (and) it will compete with their own products.”

And although marijuana has a long history of medical use and thousands of years of validation, it is unable to win FDA approval because of the federal government's refusal to change the Controlled Substances Act, and reschedule marijuana out of its current Schedule I status. Schedule I drugs are defined as follows:

A) The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse.

B) The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.

C) There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.

Any rational human being who has not been sleeping under a rock for the past 40 years recognizes the absurdity of classifying marijuana as a Schedule I substance, but efforts to reschedule it have been met with ignorance and special interest fueled political hacks who oppose anything that would re-think the fallacious state of drug policy in this country.

Even though several states have legalized the use of medical marijuana, the plant still remains illegal to possess for any reason under federal law.

Doctors who recommend the substance may also risk reprimand from the DEA, and although it has not happened, the revocation of a doctor's DEA license is a real possibility for those physicians that recommend cannabis to patients. The federal government's continued prohibition against cannabis is a hallmark example of capture by special interests.

Prohibition undermines the civil liberties of Americans, and creates an irrational and irresponsible environment.

This environment causes hospitals to remove patients from transplant lists, causes employers to fire otherwise good employees, and has put tens of millions of Americans into the criminal justice system.

This debate ended long ago.

The real winner has already been declared.

There is no rational reason for Marijuana to be listed as a Schedule I substance or to criminalize its possession, sale, or distribution. By upholding the status quo, politicians show where their true allegiance lies, with special interests and uninformed culture-warriors.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Bangladeshi Garment Workers Burn Factories To Protest Deadly Working Conditions:

“Thousands Rampaged Through Industrial Areas Of The Capital Of Bangladesh On Friday, Smashing Vehicles With Bamboo Poles”

April 26, 2013 By JULFIKAR ALI MANIK, JIM YARDLEY and STEVEN GREENHOUSE;
New York Times Company [Excerpts]

DHAKA, Bangladesh —

Thousands of garment workers rampaged through industrial areas of the capital of Bangladesh on Friday, smashing vehicles with bamboo poles and setting fire to at least two factories in violent protests ignited by a deadly building collapse this week that killed at least 340 workers.

The protests, which continued into Saturday, came as rescue teams spent a third day searching for survivors in the rubble of the building, the Rana Plaza, in a suburb of the capital, Dhaka.

Officials reported that 72 people were pulled out alive, a rare bit of good news in what is already considered the deadliest accident in the history of the garment industry — with a death toll expected to keep rising.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina ordered the arrests of the owner of Rana Plaza, as well as the owners of four garment factories that were operating on the upper floors of the eight-story building.

Pressure also mounted on Western clothing brands that rely heavily on Bangladesh to manufacture their products; labor activists have found labels inside the wreckage for clothes being made for J. C. Penney, Cato Fashions, the British retailer Primark and other clothing brands.

Friday’s violent protests ricocheted among industrial sections of Dhaka as garment workers took to the streets to vent their fury.

Many of the protesters demanded the death penalty for Sohel Rana, the owner of the building, as well as the owners of the garment factories on the upper floors.

More than 150 vehicles were reported damaged, and some protesters burned two factories.

In Narayanganj, an industrial district near the capital, protesters damaged at least five garment factories and clashed with the police, who responded with rubber bullets and tear gas.

Ten people were injured and nearly two dozen workers were arrested on vandalism charges after demonstrations halted traffic on a major road.

Labor groups in the United States on Friday distributed photos showing that they had discovered garments with labels from J. C. Penney and El Corte Inglés, the Spanish retailer, at the site of the collapse.

Seeking to press American retailers to do more to assure factory safety in Bangladesh, dozens of worker advocates held protests on Thursday at the Gap's headquarters in San Francisco and at a Walmart store in Renton, Wash.

A leading factory monitoring group, the Business Social Compliance Initiative, which is based in Brussels, said that two of the factories in the building — New Waves Style and Phantom Apparel — were inspected and had complied with the group's code of conduct.

Another factory in the building, Ether Tex, said on its Web site that it had passed an inspection by a monitoring group in Düsseldorf, Germany, the Service Organization for Compliance Audit Management. The Web site said Ether Tex was being evaluated by the Business Social Compliance Initiative.

Officials from such monitoring groups say they generally focus on internal matters, like smoke detectors and whether exit doors are locked, and not on matters like fire escapes or the soundness of a building's structure, which are normally the responsibility of government inspectors.

The Bangladeshi military has established a command center near Rana Plaza to coordinate rescue efforts. Teams of soldiers, paramilitary police officers and ordinary citizens were carefully digging through the rubble, sometimes with their bare hands.

Hundreds Of Chicago Workers Strike Dozens Of Major National Fast Food And Retail Stores: “It Would Take Me About 777 Years To Earn As Much As The McDonalds CEO Made Last Year,’ Said Tyree Johnson, A McDonalds’ Worker”

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, who sent this in.]

April 24, 2013 Workers Organizing Committee of Chicago [Excerpts]

Hundreds of workers at Chicago's largest fast food and retail chains walked off their jobs today, calling for \$15 an hour and the right to form a union free from retaliation.

The unprecedented combined fast-food and retail walkout – hitting major national stores like McDonald’s, Subway, Dunkin Donuts, Macy’s, Victoria’s Secret and Sears – marks the latest in a string of strikes in low-wage industries that began last fall at Walmarts across the country and continued at fast-food restaurants in New York City.

“Workers across the country are tired. We’re tired of working hard, but not earning enough to support our families,” said Krystal Collins, a Macy’s worker.

“After seeing the workers in New York say they weren’t going to take it anymore, we were inspired to go on strike right here in Chicago.”

Low-wage jobs have accounted for the bulk of new jobs added in the recovery, and retail and fast food are among the fastest-growing sectors.

The Workers Organizing Committee of Chicago campaign, Fight for 15, seeks to put money back in the pockets of the 275,000 men and women who work hard in the Chicago-area’s fast food and retail outlets but still can’t afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and rent

It would take me about 777 years to earn as much as the McDonald’s CEO made last year,” said Tyree Johnson, a McDonald’s worker. “I’m not asking for all that, just for enough to pay my train fare without having to worry about taking food off the table.”

Fast food and retail workers bring more than \$4 billion a year into the cash registers of the Magnificent Mile and the Loop alone, yet most of these workers earn Illinois’ minimum wage of \$8.25, or just above it, and are forced to rely on public assistance programs to provide for their families and get healthcare for their children.

In Chicago, jobs that are considered low-wage now make up about a third of all jobs, and this proportion has increased significantly over the last decade.

While the fast-food industry promotes the stereotype that fast-food workers are teenagers earning pocket money, nationally, the median age of fast-food workers is over 28 years old, and women in those jobs have a median age of over 32 years.

More than half of Chicago’s low-wage workers are older than 30.

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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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