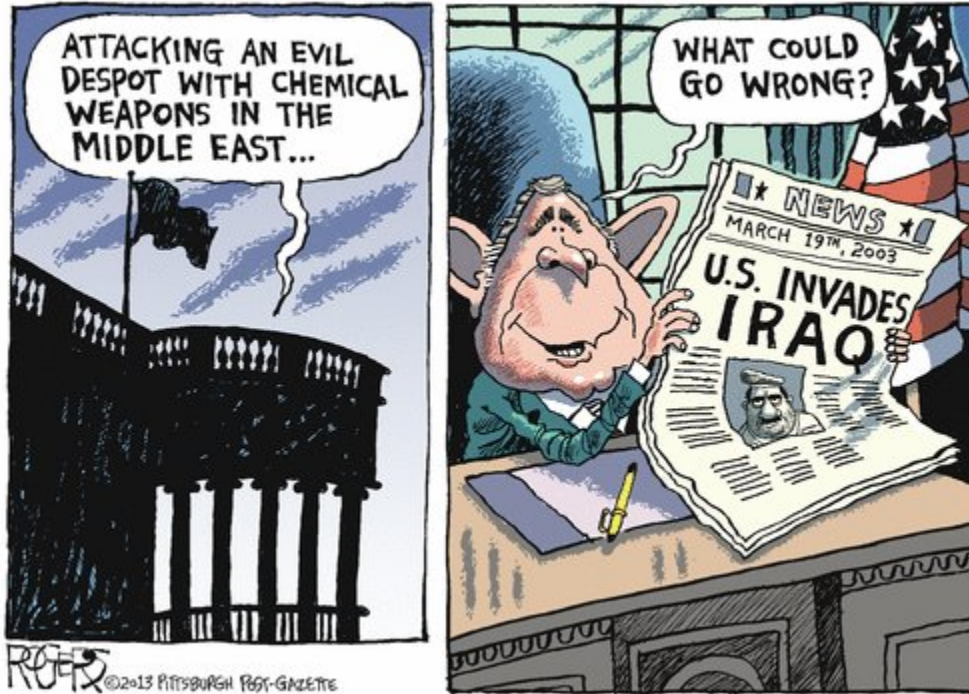


Military Resistance 1112



The Second Time Around

From: Dennis Serdel
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: August 31, 2013
Subject: The Second Time Around

Written by Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div.
11th Brigade; United Auto Workers GM Retiree

The Second Time Around

Where have all the protesters gone
Long time standing
long time ago
against Vietnam everyone
fighting pigs
throwing teargas & getting hit

by nightsticks
everyone
Where have all the protesters gone
thousands around the white house lawn
payed their mortgage & raised their kids
thousands on the DC mall
marching to end the Vietnam War
& then when the War ends
most everyone graduates & find jobs
marry & raise some kids
dragged by their long hair by the pigs
retiring from protesting
flowers on Iraq Soldier's graves
long time now
on Afghan Soldier's grave
watching them on TV
Campuses erupting every week
hated by LBJ
& Nixon everyone
but now there is no draft
so there is no reason
Chicago pigs with teargas
splitting heads
a North Vietnam CIA flag
floating in the middle
long time ago
Living off pension checks
at the top of every month
waiting for the Social Security check
in the middle of the month
Medicare & ARP
Black Panthers getting
killed in Chicago town
Weather Underground
out of SDS U of M
bombs government buildings
Where have all the Radicals gone
Guns in Michigan Black & White
fighting together to overthrow
the government
Mao's Little Red Book
carried by the Revolutionaries
where are they now
Patty Hearst & the Symbionese
Liberation Party robbing banks
where is she now
Where have the Revolutions gone
lost a long time ago
working for Capitalist
They stopped their War
now You stop Yours

Living in our Golden Years
Gated Communities & Condos
No mowing lawns or feeling fear
Vietnam Veterans still
committing suicide
but many are still alive
drafted along time ago
They are hard to kill
They still remember War
Protest War
see them on alternate TV
Wearing their VFP
VVAW's now
burying their Brothers
they still take care of each other
to the end
They don't need anybody else
Never have
Don't strike Syria
their new battle cry
If Syrians want a Revolution
let it be their own
Bloody Revolution
as General Smedley Butler said
As History repeats itself
the Government makes it bigger
the second time around.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

August 31, 2013 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following a direct fire attack by enemy forces in eastern Afghanistan today.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

MILITARY NEWS

**The Tyrant Assad's Chemical
Warfare Up Close And Personal:
Nothing New Here;
Regime Poison Attacks Have Come Over
And Over And Over Since Spring 2013**

05.27.2013 Jobar, Syria, by our special correspondent, Jean-Philippe Rémy, Le Monde [Excerpts]

A chemical attack on the Jobar front, on the outskirts of the Syrian capital, doesn't look like anything much at first.

It's not spectacular.

Above all, it's not detectable.

And that's the aim: by the time the rebel fighters of the Free Syrian Army who have penetrated furthest into Damascus understand that they've been exposed to chemical products by government forces, it's too late.

No matter which type of gas is used, it has already produced its effects, only a few hundred meters from residential areas of the Syrian capital.

At first, there is only a little sound, a metallic ping, almost a click. And in the confusion of daily combat in Jobar's Bahra 1 sector, this sound didn't catch the attention of the fighters of the Tahrir al-Sham ('Liberation of Syria') Brigade.

'We thought it was a mortar that didn't explode, and no one really paid attention to it,' said Omar Haidar, chief of operations of the brigade, which holds this forward position less than 500 meters from Abbasid Square.

Searching for words to describe the incongruous sound, he said it was like 'a Pepsi can that falls to the ground.'

No odor, no smoke, not even a whistle to indicate the release of a toxic gas.

And then the symptoms appear. The men cough violently. Their eyes burn, their pupils shrink, their vision blurs. Soon they experience difficulty breathing, sometimes in the extreme; they begin to vomit or lose consciousness.

The fighters worst affected need to be evacuated before they suffocate.

“The Gas Was Not Diffused Over A Broad Swath Of Territory But Used Occasionally In Specific Locations By Government Forces To Attack The Areas Of Toughest Fighting With The Encroaching Opposition Rebels”

Reporters from Le Monde witnessed this on several days in a row in this district, on the outskirts of Damascus, which the rebels entered in January.

Since then, Jobar has become a key battleground for both the Free Syrian Army and the government.

In two months spent reporting on the outskirts of the Syrian capital, we encountered similar cases across a much larger region. Their gravity, their increasing frequency and the tactic of using such arms shows that what is being released is not just tear gas, which is used on all fronts, but products of a different class that are far more toxic.

In the tangled web of the Jobar front, where enemy lines are so close that the fighters exchange insults as often as they kill each other, gas attacks occurred on a regular basis in April.

The gas was not diffused over a broad swath of territory but used occasionally in specific locations by government forces to attack the areas of toughest fighting with the encroaching opposition rebels.

This sector is the place where Free Syrian Army groups have penetrated most deeply into Damascus. A merciless war is being waged here.

The sector known as Bahra 1 is one of the most forward positions en route to the sprawling and strategic Abbasid Square, one of the key gateways to Damascus. It was here that fighters commanded by Abu Jihad, known as 'the Argileh,' experienced their first such attack on Thursday, April 11.

They were taken by surprise.

They had heard of gas being used on other fronts, in other regions of Syria (notably Homs and the Aleppo region), over the last few months, but what to do when faced with such an attack?

How to protect themselves without abandoning their positions and handing an easy victory to the enemy? 'Some of the men were evacuated, while others were paralysed with fear,' one of the fighters said. 'But we didn't abandon the position. We ordered the soldiers heading to the front to take wet scarves with them to protect their faces.'

A few gas masks were distributed in the confusion, with priority going to the men in fixed positions where a simple wall sometimes marks the limit of rebel-held territory. Others had to make do with the insignificant protection of surgical masks.

“The Men Under The Command Of 'The Argileh' Are Not The Only Ones In The Area To Have Experienced A Gas Attack”

The men under the command of 'the Argileh' are not the only ones in the area to have experienced a gas attack.

Closer to the nearby meat market, where government tanks are stationed, the 'special forces' of Liwa Marawi Al-Ghouta were exposed to concentrations of chemicals that were undoubtedly stronger, judging by their effects on the fighters.

We found them in hospitals, struggling for survival, in the hours following the attacks.

In Jobar, the fighters did not desert their positions, but those who stayed on the front lines – with constricted pupils and wheezing breath – were 'terrorised and trying to calm themselves through prayer,' admitted Abu Atal, one of the fighters of Tahrir Al-Sham. A man from another brigade, Ibrahim Darwish, died in a nearby sector on April 18.

In the northern part of Jobar, which was struck by a similar attack, General Abu Mohammad Al-Kurdi, commander of the Free Syrian Army's first division (which groups five brigades), said that his men saw government soldiers leave their positions just before other men 'wearing chemical protection suits' surged forward and set 'little bombs, like mines' on the ground that began giving off a chemical product.

The general asserted that his men had killed three of these technicians. Where are the protection suits seized from the dead? Nobody knows... The soldiers who came under attack that night said there had been a terrible panic, with men fleeing to the rear. There are no civilians or independent sources to confirm or deny this account: no one is left in Jobar apart from the men fighting on the neighborhood's various fronts.

April 13:

“The Devastating Effects Of The Gases Being Used By The Syrian Government At The Gates Of Its Own Capital”

But this does not prevent observation of the devastating effects of the gases being used by the Syrian government at the gates of its own capital.

On April 13, the day of a chemical attack on a zone of the Jobar front, Le Monde's photographer was with rebels who have been waging war out of ruined buildings.

He saw them start to cough before donning their gas masks, apparently without haste although in fact they were already exposed. Men crouched down, gasping for breath and vomiting. They had to flee the area at once.

Le Monde's photographer suffered blurred vision and respiratory difficulties for four days. And yet, on that particular day, the heaviest concentrations of gas were used not there but in a nearby area.

To try to determine whether such arms were actually used by the Syrian army on certain fronts, we went to see doctors in the area who are trying to treat or save the lives of fighters exposed to gas.

On April 8, at the Al-Fateh de Kafer Battna hospital – the main medical center of the Ghouta region east of Damascus, where a large number of rebels are based – doctors showed us scenes of people suffocating that had been videoed on cell phones.

A terrible rattling sound came from a man's throat.

According to medical personnel, the video was shot on March 14 and the man had just been gassed in Otaiba, a town east of Ghouta, where since mid-March the Syrian government has been waging a vast operation to surround rebel forces and cut off their main supply route.

One of the doctors, Dr. Hassan O., described these patients' symptoms in detail.

'The people who arrive have trouble breathing,' he said. 'Their pupils are constricted. Some are vomiting. They've lost their hearing, they cannot speak, their respiratory muscles have been inert.

“If we don't give them immediate emergency treatment, death ensues.’ This description is identical to those provided by other doctors we met over several weeks in the outskirts of Damascus. With some slight variations: Depending on the area where they came under attack, the fighters say that the chemicals were released by shells, by rockets or by a type of grenade.

On the Jobar front, Free Syrian Army fighters under the command of Omar Haidar say they saw a large cylinder equipped with an opening mechanism hit the ground at their feet when the fifth attack took place, on April 18.

The cylinder measured about 20 centimeters, or 5 inches, in length.

Was this a chemical weapons device and if so what substance was it giving off?

A precise answer would require the kind of investigative protocol that combat conditions have made difficult. Samples must be taken from fighters whose exposure to gas has left them dead or in hospital, and these samples then need to be sent to specialised laboratories abroad. A certain number of such samples have been taken and are being studied.

Since then, gas masks have been distributed in Jobar, along with syringes and doses of atropine, an injectable product that counteracts the neurotoxic effects of sarin.

Use of this odorless, colorless neurotoxic gas is suspected by doctors in Ghouta its effects and those observed on the scene are one and the same.

“In The Second Half Of April, Gas Attacks Became Almost A Strange Kind Of Routine In Jobar”

According to a well-informed Western source, the Syrian authorities have gone so far as to use mixtures of chemicals, notably with the addition of tear gas, to make it harder to identify the source of the symptoms.

The stakes are high if the use of chemical weapons by the troops of Bashar al-Assad can be proved.

Dissimulation is therefore the name of the game.

Gas is used on the battlefronts only from time to time, avoiding the kind of massive spread of toxic chemicals that would easily constitute irrefutable proof.

Nonetheless, the phenomenon keeps recurring: on Thursday, May 23, according to the rebels, a new chemical attack took place in Adra, a zone of very heavy fighting between government forces and the rebels northeast of Damascus.

In the second half of April, gas attacks became almost a strange kind of routine in Jobar.

On the front lines, the rebels of the Free Syrian Army got used to keeping their gas masks beside them.

They held regular eye-washing sessions and had syringes ready with a special serum. The aim of the attacks seemed to be essentially tactical at this stage – an attempt to destabilise rebel units in areas where government soldiers have been unable to dislodge them, and at the same time a test.

So far, cases of the use of gas have not been isolated.

The only ophthalmologist in the region, who was trained abroad, sees patients in a small hospital in Sabha which he prefers not to identify.

He said he had seen 150 people affected by gas in the space of two weeks. Near the zones most exposed to gas, he has organized a system of showers so that rebel fighters exposed to chemical products can wash and change clothes to avoid contaminating health workers at clinics.

Saving the lives of soldiers with the most serious respiratory problems requires carrying them through a long maze of buildings with pierced walls, across trenches and through tunnels dug to avoid enemy snipers, to reach an improvised ambulance parked in a small, inconspicuous space.

They must then be driven on a high-speed chase through streets under bullet and shell fire in order to reach a hospital at the front before the fighters die of suffocation.

At the Islamic hospital in Hammuriya, set up in a discreet hangar, the doctor on duty said on April 14 that two hours earlier he had treated a fighter from the Jobar front with major respiratory problems and a heart beat that had 'gone crazy.'

To save the man, the doctor said, he gave him 15 successive injections of atropine as well as hydrocortisone. Enough to save a horse in a desperate situation.

The night before, one of the ambulances seeking to evacuate men who had been gassed was hit by sniper fire and the driver was wounded. In the morning, ambulances managed to get through by driving at maximum speed under tank fire and reached the front, where a new chemical weapons attack had just taken place.

'When we arrived, we found everyone lying on the ground,' said an orderly from another hospital, in Kaffer Batna. He declined to give his name for fear of reprisals against his family, who live in a zone controlled by the government.

That morning, chaos predominated in the courtyard of the hospital, which had been set up in an underground parking lot to avoid being hit by MiG air strikes or government artillery fire.

Injured fighters were lying beside five medical workers who had been contaminated by contact with the affected men. More fighters were arriving in successive transfers from the front – there were already 15 of them. Medical workers rushed among the improvised rooms to administer oxygen and injections to the injured.

Dr. Hassan, the hospital's director, was lying in his tiny office wearing an oxygen mask while aid workers gave him atropine.

He had been taking care of emergency cases for an hour when he lost consciousness and began to suffocate. The doctor had been struggling for months to keep things going at his clinic, aided by volunteers, some of them high school students, at a time when a blockade of the region by government forces had made it increasingly difficult for medical supplies to get through.

With anesthesia lacking, field surgeons were reduced to using veterinary products like ketamine. There was no more morphine. The doctor took samples that he managed to send out of the region clandestinely despite myriad difficulties. Their analysis will take a few more weeks before the results are known.

“Reporters Visited Eight Medical Centers In The Eastern Part Of The Ghouta Region And Found Only Two Where Medical Directors Said They Had Not Seen Fighters Or Civilians Affected By Gas Attacks”

Le Monde's reporters visited eight medical centers in the eastern part of the Ghouta region and found only two where medical directors said they had not seen fighters or civilians affected by gas attacks.

In Nashibiyya, doctors said they had admitted up to 60 cases from the Otaiba front in a single day, March 18.

Their modest installation did not have the means to handle this influx, with a lack of oxygen in particular.

Five patients died of suffocation.

A few days later, recognising the gravity of the situation, the doctors disinterred the bodies of these victims in the presence of local officials and religious leaders and took tissue samples that they tried to send out to a neighboring country.

Some of these samples were handed to a small group of fighters who were trying to break through the encirclement of the region by government forces. To this day, the doctors of Nashibiyya don't know whether the samples ever reached their destination.

A dozen kilometers away, at the hospital in Douma, an area controlled by the Al-Islam brigade, doctors said they had admitted 39 patients after a chemical attack on the town of Adra on March 24.

Two men died there.

One of the doctors said that within two days of coming under attack, 'the patients go crazy.' Marwane, a fighter who was present during the attack on Adra, said that he had seen 'rockets hit the front and give off an orange light,' and that while he was being transferred to the hospital he had seen 'three men die in vehicles on the road.' In the chaos of the Ghouta region, civilians and fighters often die without reaching a medical center.

Adra, Otaiba and Jobar are three places in the Damascus region where local sources have been describing the use of gas since March.

But a difference has emerged:

In Jobar, the products have been used more cautiously, with specific localities targeted. Along fronts further from the capital, however, like Adra and Otaiba, the quantities used are estimated to be greater, judging by the number of cases arriving at hospitals simultaneously.

But hospitals in the region are not dealing just with chemical attacks.

Two hours before Le Monde's reporters arrived in Douma, four children who had suffered terrible wounds in a MiG bomb attack were being treated at the hospital's emergency ward. As soon as their conditions stabilised that had to leave the hospital, with no hope of being evacuated out of Syria. No doubt, like many, they died while en route. Medical workers filmed the children's wounded bodies, their screams of pain.

'This, you see, is what happens every day, and for us it's even worse than the chemical attacks – that's how bad things have become,' said a doctor, his eyes haggard. He, too, could not give his name.

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**

The United States Helped Protect The Last Middle Eastern Tyrant Who Used Chemical Weapons: “Because He Was Fighting Iran In The 1980s, The Reagan Administration Fed Him Secret Intelligence” “And Because His Country Bought U.S. Crops, Farm-State Politicians Fought Off Sanctions”

Citing CIA documents and interviews, Foreign Policy magazine reported this week that “the Iraqis used mustard gas and sarin prior to four major offensives in early 1988 that relied on U.S. satellite imagery, maps, and other intelligence.”

August 27, 2013 By Michael Doyle, | McClatchy Washington Bureau [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — The United States helped protect the last Middle Eastern tyrant thought to use chemical weapons.

That dictator was Iraq’s Saddam Hussein. Because he was fighting Iran in the 1980s, the Reagan administration fed him secret intelligence. And because his country bought U.S. crops, farm-state politicians fought off sanctions.

Now, amid allegations of chemical weapons use by Syria, the Obama administration is preparing a case for military action.

Moral assertions will be paramount, as in Secretary of State John Kerry’s declaration Monday that “our sense of basic humanity is offended.”

History, though, offers a harsher perspective. From Iraq and Syria, to Rwanda and Armenia, morality as a motive in U.S. foreign policy is more contingent than absolute.

“It’s quite selective. The government knew of the fact that Iraq was using chemical weapons, and did not deter them,” Joyce Battle, an analyst at the National Security Archive, a nonpartisan research center, said in an interview Tuesday.

“But when it’s thought to be in U.S. interests, the government will adopt a moralistic stand when it wants to justify its policies.”

Put another way, foreign policy calculations are invariably cold-blooded, notwithstanding moral declarations. Stirring words can be worn like a new cloak during a campaign, then set aside for action.

The inconstant U.S. response to allegations of Middle Eastern chemical weapons use further underscores how morality comes and goes.

Kerry, in his remarks Monday, asserted it was “undeniable” that the Syrian military had used chemical weapons on a Damascus suburb. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and Doctors Without Borders put the death toll at at least 300 people.

While not publicly endorsing a casualty total other than to say that it was on a “staggering scale,” Kerry declared with black-and-white certainty, “There must be accountability for those who would use the world’s most heinous weapons.”

The United States took a different approach in the 1980s, when the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations publicly denounced Iraq’s chemical weapon use, but stopped short of firmer action.

“They still thought Saddam Hussein was somebody they could work with,” former California Rep. Howard Berman, a strong advocate of sanctions against Iraq, recalled in an interview Tuesday. “They still had not stopped their tilt toward Iraq.”

A Nov. 1, 1983, State Department memo unearthed by Battle of the National Security Archive noted that “we have recently received additional information confirming Iraqi use of chemical weapons.”

The 1983 memo also hinted at potential Iraqi motives for using the widely reviled weapons, observing that “Iraq is at a disadvantage in its war of attrition with Iran.”

Hoping to constrain Iran, the Reagan administration provided what Battle called “quite extensive” military intelligence to Iraq during parts of the 1980-1988 war between the Middle East neighbors.

Citing CIA documents and interviews, Foreign Policy magazine reported this week that “the Iraqis used mustard gas and sarin prior to four major offensives in early 1988 that relied on U.S. satellite imagery, maps, and other intelligence.”

Members of Congress, too, would publicly chide Iraq over chemical weapons, while fighting against more vigorous action that might impinge on U.S. businesses, as when farm-state lawmakers in 1990 challenged efforts to stop Iraq’s use of U.S. credit guarantees to buy U.S. farm products.

“I understand the blood pressure behind this,” Republican Pat Roberts, now a Kansas senator but then a member of the House of Representatives, said during one 1990 House debate. But he added, “We do sell to Iraq about a million tons of wheat and 450,000 tons of rice, (so) I wonder who we’re hurting here.”


Five days after that House debate, Iraq invaded Kuwait, and Congress and the White House changed their tune.

The African nation of Rwanda provides one of the most heart-wrenching examples of cold-blooded national calculations. More than half a million people were slaughtered in Rwanda during a three-and-a-half-month bloodbath that started in April 1994.

The Clinton administration remained aloof during the genocide that targeted the Tutsi. Politically, officials were wary about additional U.S. casualties in the year after the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers in Somalia. Bureaucratically, they were leery about making a commitment, as when Defense Department officials in a May 1, 1994, memo cautioned against use of the word “genocide.”

“Be careful,” stated the memo, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by the National Security Archive. “Legal at State was worried about this yesterday. Genocide finding could commit (U.S. government) to ‘do something.’”

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



CHANGE WE CAN BEREAVE IN

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to injustices, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

STUCK ON STUPID

Air Traveler Detained, Abused And Tormented By TSA, FBI, NYPD And JetBlue With Blindingly Stupid Questions: Oops; Traveler Was Hindu, Not Muslim

August 23, 2013 by Aditya Mukerjee, AlterNet

A couple of weeks ago, I was scheduled to take a trip from New York (JFK) to Los Angeles on JetBlue.

Every year, my family goes on a one-week pilgrimage, where we put our work on hold and spend time visiting temples, praying, and spending time with family and friends.

To my Jewish friends, I often explain this trip as vaguely similar to the Sabbath, except we take one week of rest per year, rather than one day per week.

Our family is not Muslim, but by coincidence, this year, our trip happened to be during the last week of Ramadan.

By further coincidence, this was also the same week that I was moving out of my employer-provided temporary housing (at NYU) and moving into my new apartment. The night before my trip, I enlisted the help of two friends and we took most of my belongings, in a couple of suitcases, to my new apartment.

The apartment was almost completely unfurnished - I planned on getting new furniture upon my return - so I dropped my few bags (one containing an air mattress) in the corner.

Even though I hadn't decorated the apartment yet, in accordance with Hindu custom, I taped a single photograph to the wall in my bedroom — a long-haired saint with his hands outstretched in pronam (a sign of reverence and respect).

The next morning, I packed the rest of my clothes into a suitcase and took a cab to the airport.

I didn't bother to eat breakfast, figuring I would grab some yogurt in the terminal while waiting to board. I got in line for security at the airport and handed the agent my ID.

Another agent came over and handed me a paper slip, which he said was being used to track the length of the security lines. He said, "just hand this to someone when your stuff goes through the x-ray machines, and we'll know how long you were in line." I looked at the timestamp on the paper: 10:40.

When going through the security line, I opted out (as I always used to) of the millimeter wave detectors. I fly often enough, and have opted out often enough, that I was prepared for what comes next: a firm pat-down by a TSA employee wearing non-latex gloves, who uses the back of his hand when patting down the inside of the thighs.

After the pat-down, the TSA agent swabbed his hands with some cotton-like material and put the swab in the machine that supposedly checks for explosive residue. The machine beeped. "We're going to need to pat you down again, this time in private," the agent said.

Having been selected before for so-called "random" checks, I assumed that this was another such check.

"What do you mean, 'in private'? Can't we just do this out here?"

"No, this is a different kind of pat-down, and we can't do that in public."

When I asked him why this pat-down was different, he wouldn't tell me.

When I asked him specifically why he couldn't do it in public, he said "Because it would be obscene."

Naturally, I balked at the thought of going somewhere behind closed doors where a person I just met was going to touch me in "obscene" ways.

I didn't know at the time (and the agent never bothered to tell me) that the TSA has a policy that requires two agents to be present during every private pat-down. I'm not sure if that would make me feel more or less comfortable.

Noticing my hesitation, the agent offered to have his supervisor explain the procedure in more detail.

He brought over his supervisor, a rather harried man who, instead of explaining the pat-down to me, rather rudely explained to me that I could either submit immediately to a pat-down behind closed-doors, or he could call the police.

At this point, I didn't mind having to leave the secure area and go back through security again (this time not opting out of the machines), but I didn't particularly want to get the cops involved. I told him, "Okay, fine, I'll leave".

"You can't leave here."

"Are you detaining me, then?" I've been through enough "know your rights" training to know how to handle police searches; however, TSA agents are not law

enforcement officials. Technically, they don't even have the right to detain you against your will.

"We're not detaining you. You just can't leave." My jaw dropped.

"Either you're detaining me, or I'm free to go. Which one is it?" I asked.

He glanced for a moment at my backpack, then snatched it out of the conveyor belt. "Okay," he said. "You can leave, but I'm keeping your bag."

I was speechless. My bag had both my work computer and my personal computer in it. The only way for me to get it back from him would be to snatch it back, at which point he could simply claim that I had assaulted him. I was trapped.

While we waited for the police to arrive, I took my phone and quickly tried to call my parents to let them know what was happening. Unfortunately, my mom's voicemail was full, and my dad had never even set his up. "Hey, what's he doing?" One of the TSA agents had noticed I was touching my phone. "It's probably fine; he's leaving anyway," another said.

The cops arrived a few minutes later, spoke with the TSA agents for a moment, and then came over and gave me one last chance to submit to the private examination.

"Otherwise, we have to escort you out of the building." I asked him if he could be present while the TSA agent was patting me down. "No," he explained, "because when we pat people down, it's to lock them up."

I only realized the significance of that explanation later. At this point, I didn't particularly want to miss my flight. Foolishly, I said, "Fine, I'll do it."

The TSA agents and police escorted me to a holding room, where they patted me down again - this time using the front of their hands as they passed down the front of my pants. While they patted me down, they asked me some basic questions.

"What's the purpose of your travel?"

"Personal," I responded, (as opposed to business).

"Are you traveling with anybody?"

"My parents are on their way to LA right now; I'm meeting them there."

"How long is your trip?"

"Ten days."

"What will you be doing?"

Mentally, I sighed. There wasn't any other way I could answer this next question.

"We'll be visiting some temples."

He raised his eyebrow, and I explained that the next week was a religious holiday, and that I was traveling to LA to observe it with my family.

After patting me down, they swabbed not only their hands, but also my backpack, shoes, wallet, and belongings, and then walked out of the room to put it through the machine again.

After more than five minutes, I started to wonder why they hadn't said anything, so I asked the police officer who was guarding the door. He called over the TSA agent, who told me, "You're still setting off the alarm. We need to call the explosives specialist".

I waited for about ten minutes before the specialist showed up. He walked in without a word, grabbed the bins with my possessions, and started to leave. Unlike the other agents I'd seen, he wasn't wearing a uniform, so I was a bit taken aback.

"What's happening?" I asked.

"I'm running it through the x-ray again," he snapped. "Because I can. And I'm going to do it again, and again, until I decide I'm done".

He then asked the TSA agents whether they had patted me down. They said they had, and he just said, "Well, try again", and left the room.

Again I was told to stand with my legs apart and my hands extended horizontally while they patted me down all over before stepping outside.

The explosives specialist walked back into the room and asked me why my clothes were testing positive for explosives. I told him, quite truthfully, "I don't know." He asked me what I had done earlier in the day.

"Well, I had to pack my suitcase, and also clean my apartment."

"And yesterday?"

"I moved my stuff from my old apartment to my new one".

"What did you eat this morning?"

"Nothing," I said. Only later did I realize that this made it sound like I was fasting, when in reality, I just hadn't had breakfast yet.

"Are you taking any medications?"

The other TSA agents stood and listened while the explosives specialist and asked every medication I had taken "recently", both prescription and over-the-counter, and asked me to explain any medical conditions for which any prescription medicine had been prescribed.

Even though I wasn't carrying any medication on me, he still asked for my complete "recent" medical history.

"What have you touched that would cause you to test positive for certain explosives?"

"I can't think of anything. What does it say is triggering the alarm?" I asked.

"I'm not going to tell you! It's right here on my sheet, but I don't have to tell you what it is!" he exclaimed, pointing at his clipboard.

I was at a loss for words. The first thing that came to my mind was, "Well, I haven't touched any explosives, but if I don't even know what chemical we're talking about, I don't know how to figure out why the tests are picking it up."

He didn't like this answer, so he told them to run my belongings through the x-ray machine and pat me down again, then left the room.

I glanced at my watch. Boarding would start in fifteen minutes, and I hadn't even had anything to eat. A TSA officer in the room noticed me craning my neck to look at my watch on the table, and he said, "Don't worry, they'll hold the flight."

As they patted me down for the fourth time, a female TSA agent asked me for my baggage claim ticket.

I handed it to her, and she told me that a woman from JetBlue corporate security needed to ask me some questions as well.

I was a bit surprised, but agreed. After the pat-down, the JetBlue representative walked in and coolly introduced herself by name.

She explained, "We have some questions for you to determine whether or not you're permitted to fly today. Have you flown on JetBlue before?"

"Yes"

"How often?"

"Maybe about ten times," I guessed.

"Ten what? Per month?"

"No, ten times total."

She paused, then asked, "Will you have any trouble following the instructions of the crew and flight attendants on board the flight?"

"No." I had no idea why this would even be in doubt.

"We have some female flight attendants. Would you be able to follow their instructions?"

I was almost insulted by the question, but I answered calmly, "Yes, I can do that."

"Okay," she continued, "and will you need any special treatment during your flight? Do you need a special place to pray on board the aircraft?"

Only here did it hit me.

"No," I said with a light-hearted chuckle, trying to conceal any sign of how offensive her questions were.

"Thank you for asking, but I don't need any special treatment."

She left the room, again, leaving me alone for another ten minutes or so.

When she finally returned, she told me that I had passed the TSA's inspection. "However, based on the responses you've given to questions, we're not going to permit you to fly today."

I was shocked. "What do you mean?" were the only words I could get out.

"If you'd like, we'll rebook you for the flight tomorrow, but you can't take the flight this afternoon, and we're not permitting you to rebook for any flight today."

I barely noticed the irony of the situation - that the TSA and NYPD were clearing me for takeoff, but JetBlue had decided to ground me.

At this point, I could think of nothing else but how to inform my family, who were expecting me to be on the other side of the country, that I wouldn't be meeting them for dinner after all.

In the meantime, an officer entered the room and told me to continue waiting there. "We just have one more person who needs to speak with you before you go." By then, I had already been "cleared" by the TSA and NYPD, so I couldn't figure out why I still needed to be questioned.

I asked them if I could use my phone and call my family. "No, this will just take a couple of minutes and you'll be on your way." The time was 12.35.

He stepped out of the room - for the first time since I had been brought into the cell, there was no NYPD officer guarding the door. Recognizing my short window of opportunity, I grabbed my phone from the table and quickly texted three of my local friends - two who live in Brooklyn, and one who lives in Nassau County - telling them that I had been detained by the TSA and that I couldn't board my flight. I wasn't sure what was going to happen next, but since nobody had any intention of reading me my Miranda rights, I wanted to make sure people knew where I was.

After fifteen minutes, one of the police officers marched into the room and scolded, "You didn't tell us you have a checked bag!" I explained that I had already handed my baggage claim ticket to a TSA agent, so I had in fact informed someone that I had a checked bag.

Looking frustrated, he turned and walked out of the room, without saying anything more.

After about twenty minutes, another man walked in and introduced himself as representing the FBI. He asked me many of the same questions I had already answered multiple times - my name, my address, what I had done so far that day. etc.

He then asked, "What is your religion?"

"I'm Hindu."

"How religious are you? Would you describe yourself as 'somewhat religious' or 'very religious'?"

I was speechless from the idea of being forced to talk about my religious beliefs to a complete stranger. "Somewhat religious", I responded.

"How many times a day do you pray?" he asked.

This time, my surprise must have registered on my face, because he quickly added,

"I'm not trying to offend you; I just don't know anything about Hinduism. For example, I know that people are fasting for Ramadan right now, but I don't have any idea what Hindus actually do on a daily basis."

I nearly laughed at the idea of being questioned by a man who was able to admit his own ignorance on the subject matter, but I knew enough to restrain myself. The questioning continued for another few minutes. At one point, he asked me what cleaning supplies I had used that morning.

"Well, some window cleaner, disinfectant -" I started, before he cut me off.

"This is important," he said, sternly. "Be specific." I listed the specific brands that I had used.

Suddenly I remembered something: the very last thing I had done before leaving was to take the bed sheets off of my bed, as I was moving out. Since this was a dorm room, to guard against bedbugs, my dad (a physician) had given me an over-the-counter spray to spray on the mattress when I moved in, over two months previously. Was it possible that that was still active and triggering their machines?

"I also have a bedbug spray," I said. "I don't know the name of it, but I knew it was over-the-counter, so I figured it probably contained permethrin."

Permethrin is an insecticide, sold over-the-counter to kill bed bugs and lice.

"Perm-what?" He asked me to spell it.

After he wrote it down, I asked him if I could have something to drink. "I've been here talking for three hours at this point," I explained. "My mouth is like sandpaper". He refused, saying, "We'll just be a few minutes, and then you'll be able to go."

"Do you have any identification?" I showed him my drivers license, which still listed my old address. "You have nothing that shows your new address?" he exclaimed.

"Well, no, I only moved there on Thursday."

"What about the address before that?"

"I was only there for two months - it was temporary housing for work". I pulled my NYU ID out of my wallet. He looked at it, then a police officer in the room took it from him and walked out.

"What about any business cards that show your work address?" I mentally replayed my steps from the morning, and remembered that I had left behind my business card holder, thinking I wouldn't need it on my trip.

"No, I left those at home."

"You have none?"

"Well, no, I'm going on vacation, so I didn't refill them last night."

He scoffed. "I always carry my cards on me, even when I'm on vacation." I had no response to that - what could I say?

"What about a direct line at work? Is there a phone number I can call where it'll patch me straight through to your voicemail?"

"No," I tried in vain to explain. "We're a tech company; everyone just uses their cell phones".

To this day, I don't think my company has a working landline phone in the entire office - our "main line" is a virtual assistant that just forwards calls to our cell phones. I offered to give him the name and phone number of one of our venture partners instead, which he reluctantly accepted.

Around this point, the officer who had taken my NYU ID stormed into the room.

"They put an expiration sticker on your ID, right?" I nodded. "Well then why did this ID expire in 2010?!" he accused.

I took a look at the ID and calmly pointed out that it said "August 2013" in big letters on the ID, and that the numbers "8/10" meant "August 10th, 2013", not "August, 2010".

I added, "See, even the expiration sticker says 2013 on it above the date". He studied the ID again for a moment, then walked out of the room again, looking a little embarrassed.

The FBI agent resumed speaking with me. "Do you have any credit cards with your name on them?" I was hesitant to hand them a credit card, but I didn't have much of a

choice. Reluctantly, I pulled out a credit card and handed it to him. "What's the limit on it?" he said, and then, noticing that I didn't laugh, quickly added, "That was a joke."

He left the room, and then a series of other NYPD and TSA agents came in and started questioning me, one after the other, with the same questions that I'd already answered previously.

In between, I was left alone, except for the officer guarding the door.

At one point, when I went to the door and asked the officer when I could finally get something to drink, he told me, "Just a couple more minutes. You'll be out of here soon."

"That's what they said an hour ago," I complained.

"You also said a lot of things, kid," he said with a wink. "Now sit back down".

I sat back down and waited some more. Another time, I looked up and noticed that a different officer was guarding the door.

By this time, I hadn't had any food or water in almost eighteen hours. I could feel the energy draining from me, both physically and mentally, and my head was starting to spin. I went to the door and explained the situation the officer. "At the very least, I really need something to drink."

"Is this a medical emergency? Are you going to pass out? Do we need to call an ambulance?" he asked, skeptically.

His tone was almost mocking, conveying more scorn than actual concern or interest.

"No," I responded. I'm not sure why I said that. I was lightheaded enough that I certainly felt like I was going to pass out.

"Are you diabetic?"

"No," I responded.

Again he repeated the familiar refrain. "We'll get you out of here in a few minutes."

I sat back down. I was starting to feel cold, even though I was sweating - the same way I often feel when a fever is coming on. But when I put my hand to my forehead, I felt fine.

One of the police officers who questioned me about my job was less-than-familiar with the technology field.

"What type of work do you do?"

"I work in venture capital."

"Venture Capital - is that the thing I see ads for on TV all the time?" For a moment, I was dumbfounded - what venture capital firm advertises on TV? Suddenly, it hit me.

"Oh! You're probably thinking of Capital One Venture credit cards." I said this politely and with a straight face, but unfortunately, the other cop standing in the room burst out laughing immediately.

Silently, I was shocked - somehow, this was the interrogation procedure for confirming that I actually had the job I claimed to have.

Another pair of NYPD officers walked in, and one asked me to identify some landmarks around my new apartment. One was, "When you're facing the apartment, is the parking on the left or on the right?"

I thought this was an odd question, but I answered it correctly. He whispered something in the ear of the other officer, and they both walked out.

The onslaught of NYPD agents was broken when a South Asian man with a Homeland Security badge walked in and said something that sounded unintelligible. After a second, I realized he was speaking Hindi.

"Sorry, I don't speak Hindi."

"Oh!" he said, noticeably surprised at how "Americanized" this suspect was.

We chatted for a few moments, during which time I learned that his family was Pakistani, and that he was Muslim, though he was not fasting for Ramadan.

He asked me the standard repertoire of questions that I had been answering for other agents all day.

Finally, the FBI agent returned.

"How are you feeling right now?" he asked. I wasn't sure if he was expressing genuine concern or interrogating me further, but by this point, I had very little energy left.

"A bit nauseous, and very thirsty."

"You'll have to understand, when a person of your... background walks into here, travelling alone, and sets off our alarms, people start to get a bit nervous. I'm sure you've been following what's been going on in the news recently. You've got people from five different branches of government all in here - we don't do this just for fun."

He asked me to repeat some answers to questions that he'd asked me previously, looking down at his notes the whole time, then he left.

Finally, two TSA agents entered the room and told me that my checked bag was outside, and that I would be escorted out to the ticketing desks, where I could see if JetBlue would refund my flight.

It was 2:20PM by the time I was finally released from custody.

My entire body was shaking uncontrollably, as if I were extremely cold, even though I wasn't. I couldn't identify the emotion I was feeling.

Surprisingly, as far as I could tell, I was shaking out of neither fear nor anger - I felt neither of those emotions at the time. The shaking motion was entirely involuntary, and I couldn't force my limbs to be still, no matter how hard I concentrated.

In the end, JetBlue did refund my flight, but they cancelled my entire round-trip ticket.

Because I had to rebook on another airline that same day, it ended up costing me about \$700 more for the entire trip. Ironically, when I went to the other terminal, I was able to get through security (by walking through the millimeter wave machines) with no problem.

I spent the week in LA, where I was able to tell my family and friends about the entire ordeal. They were appalled by the treatment I had received, but happy to see me safely with them, even if several hours later.

I wish I could say that the story ended there.

It almost did.

I had no trouble flying back to NYC on a red-eye the next week, in the wee hours of August 12th.

But when I returned home the next week, opened the door to my new apartment, and looked around the room, I couldn't help but notice that one of the suitcases sat several inches away from the wall. I could have sworn I pushed everything to the side of the room when I left, but I told myself that I may have just forgotten, since I was in a hurry when I dropped my bags off.

When I entered my bedroom, a chill went down my spine: the photograph on my wall had vanished. I looked around the room, but in vain. My apartment was almost completely empty; there was no wardrobe it could have slipped under, even on the off-chance it had fallen.

To this day, that photograph has not turned up. I can't think of any "rational" explanation for it. Maybe there is one. Maybe a burglar broke into my apartment by picking the front door lock and, finding nothing of monetary value, took only my picture. In order to preserve my peace-of-mind, I've tried to convince myself that that's what happened, so I can sleep comfortably at night.

But no matter how I've tried to rationalize this in the last week and a half, nothing can block out the memory of the chilling sensation I felt that first morning, lying on my air mattress, trying to forget the image of large, uniformed men invading the sanctuary of my home in my absence, wondering when they had done it, wondering why they had done it.

In all my life, I have only felt that same chilling terror once before - on one cold night in September twelve years ago, when I huddled in bed and tried to forget the terrible events in the news that day, wondering why they had happened, wondering whether everything would be okay ever again.

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CLASS WAR REPORTS



Food Workers Strike 60 Cities, Largest Food Strike In History



Workers and their supporters protest outside Burger King as part of a nationwide strike by fast-food workers to call for wages of \$15 an hour, in Los Angeles, California August 29, 2013. Fast-food workers staged strikes at McDonald's and Burger Kings and demonstrated at other stores in sixty U.S. cities on Thursday in their latest action in a nearly year-long campaign to raise wages in the service sector. REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson

August 29, 2013 By Laura Clawson, Daily Kos Labor [Excerpts]

The biggest fast food strike yet - a title that's been set and eclipsed repeatedly in the past year - is happening across the country today, with workers in 60 cities reported by organizers to have walked out of their fast food (and, in some cases, retail) jobs.

The workers are calling for a living wage of \$15 an hour and for the right to form a union without intimidation or retaliation, to counter the disrespect they meet daily.

In every strike, workers cite a simple fact: They cannot live on the \$7.25 or \$8 they are paid, especially with unpredictable part-time schedules that make their paychecks vary wildly from week to week, especially when they have children to care for or tuition to pay.

But they also have stories of gratuitous mistreatment, from being forced to work off the clock to insults to injuries on the job without proper care.

It's things as simple as the tip you think you're giving Dunkin Donuts workers in Madison, Wisconsin: Equally frustrating, (worker Meghan Ford) says, is that employees are not able to keep the money that customers put in what looks very much like a tip jar on the

counter. Instead, management collects the money and buys small prizes, such as gift cards, to distribute to well-performing employees.

Workers are striking in Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Denver, Peoria, St. Louis, and dozens of other cities. In Chicago.

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Fracking Protests Hit Europe:
“The Controversy Is Now Exploding
In Europe, Fueled By Horror Stories
From Across The Atlantic”**

“Threats To Use Molotov Cocktails In Poland”



Protesters block the road by the entrance of the Cuadrilla Resources site in Balcombe, West Sussex, in southern England on Monday. Facundo Arrizabalaga / EPA

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

August 24, 2013 By Ian Johnston, Staff Writer, NBC News [Excerpts]

LONDON -- Threats to use Molotov cocktails in Poland, a civil disobedience workshop in affluent rural England, and an Irish farmer with a sick child moved to become an eco-campaigner: these are just some of the ways in which Europeans have responded to the expansion of a much-debated oil industry practice.

Fracking has long been the source of heated debate in Pennsylvania and the controversy is now exploding in Europe, fueled by horror stories from across the Atlantic.

The U.K. has become the latest front line for fracking after the British government lifted a ban imposed when the procedure was linked to a series of earthquakes in northwest England.

For some, fracking – a process that involves forcing water and chemicals into the ground to shatter rocks like shale and release natural gas trapped inside – poses a risk to water supplies, causes air pollution and flies in the face of the fight against climate change, worse even than coal.

Chris Peters, of the No Dash for Gas campaign group, took part in a five-day protest last week against exploratory drilling that might eventually lead to fracking at a site near the village of Balcombe, Sussex, in rural England.

He said the camp held workshops in “methods of civil disobedience, direct action and various campaign strategies” and attracted about 1,000 people, including some from Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Poland.

Peters said his main problem with fracking was that it was an attempt to get “the last dregs of the barrel” of fossil fuels “when really we need to be looking at clean, renewable sources for energy.”

“The primary sources of oil and coal and gas are running out, so companies are looking to these more extreme, more risky methods,” he said, citing oil exploration in the Arctic, exploitation of Canada’s tar sands as well as fracking.

The Balcombe protest – a smaller camp of mainly local people remains – was undeniably controversial.

The right-leaning Daily Mail newspaper put the story on its front page with the headline “Police cave in to mob rule over fracking” after drilling was temporarily halted at the site following advice from police.

A total of 29 people were arrested at Balcombe on Monday, including the U.K.’s only Green Party lawmaker, Caroline Lucas.

Polish filmmaker Lech Kowalski was also at the camp to make a follow-up to his film “Drill Baby Drill,” which tells the story of the fracking experiences of farmers in Poland and Pennsylvania.

He said the protest at Balcombe, where oil firm trucks have been able to access the site, was tame by Polish standards.

Farmers at a Chevron site near Zurawlow have “totally blocked the entrances and they are hold fast there to the point they were prepared to throw Molotov cocktails,” he said.

Kowalski said the Polish farmers’ families had lived there for generations.

“These farmers had to survive the Soviet period, the Communist period and the Nazis,” he said. “They look at themselves as partisans fighting for the land.”

Kowalski said he thought the anti-fracking campaign was beginning to snowball, noting the presence at Balcombe of “middle-class people who work in London, the kind of people who probably never considered protesting about anything.”

Eddie Mitchell, a farmer and builder in Manorhamilton, northwest Ireland, said he feared fracking was about to be introduced into Ireland with hardly any public debate.

“We’re opposed [to fracking] because the main reason is that we know that it’s dangerous from America,” he said. “The personal testimony from people in America seems to be there’s a lot of concern.”

“I have a child who has a heart problem. We understand the value of health. We’re not going to allow our children to be put at risk,” he said.

“When you think about the risk for our children and the way the project is being driven, then you just have to stand your ground.”



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