

Military Resistance 1117



“We As Soldiers Really Do Not Matter”

“We Were Used As Cannon Fodder To Make Rich People Richer”

“They Know That They Can Kick Us Out, Take Away Our Benefits, Etc., Yet We Still Serve”

“Congress Continues To Slash The Military Budget, But How About Cutting Some Of Their Perks Or Pay?”

September 2, 2013 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

After 12 years of war, tightening budgets and an uncertain future, almost half of soldiers don't believe the Army is committed to them, according to an annual leadership survey.

The survey showed 47 percent of active-duty soldiers and 42 percent of reserve-component soldiers agreed or strongly agreed that “the Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed.”

Every relationship is based on trust.

When that trust is violated, so, too, is the relationship.

When we see we were used as cannon fodder to make rich people richer, while our vets suffer PTSD and various other injuries absent the resources needed by the VA to properly respond, and when we see the DoD maintaining the status quo in response to the systemic propensity of sexual assaults in our military, then too a sense of betrayal is well-earned.

— Joe Orawczyk, former Marine

I lost trust in our leadership years ago; beyond company and battalion level, it's just politics and numbers.

We as soldiers really do not matter. They know that they can kick us out, take away our benefits, etc., yet we still serve.

We know and honor our commitment. Wish our leaders did the same.

— James Cayton, soldier who has been deployed at least three times

Only surprise is that it's only 50 percent.

So many promises broken, “extras” taken away.

Meals canceled, commissaries closed.

Most of our troops are surviving on a razor-thin budget as is. Some are single parents relying on the meal tickets they purchase.

So now our soldiers go without meals?

Meanwhile, Congress continues to slash the military budget, but how about cutting some of their perks or pay?

Shameful.

— Karen Pickles, military wife and mother

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



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

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.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Afghan Officials Have Accused Foreign Forces Of Killing Civilians In An Airstrike That Left At Least 15 People Dead”

September 08, 2013 VOA News

Afghan officials have accused foreign forces of killing civilians in an airstrike that left at least 15 people dead in the country's remote eastern region.

The police chief of eastern Kunar province, Abdul Habib Sayed Khaili, on Sunday said women and children were among the victims in the strike that occurred late Saturday.

Taliban Militants Attack An Intelligence Bureau In Central Afghanistan



The scene of the attack in Maidan Shar, the capital of Wardak province, September 8, 2013. REUTERS/Omar Sobhani

September 9, 2013 AFP

MAIDAN SHAR, Afghanistan – At least four Afghan intelligence agents were killed and dozens of civilians were wounded Sunday when a group of Taliban militants attacked an intelligence bureau in central Afghanistan, officials said.

Six attackers armed with guns and suicide vests attacked a National Directorate of Security (NDS) building in Maidan Shar, the capital city of Wardak province south of the capital Kabul, provincial spokesman Attaullah Khogyani told AFP.

"Thirty civilians were wounded," he said. The first attacker was killed when he smashed his explosives-laden vehicle into the gate of the bureau, opening the way for the other five to enter the building, he said.

The fighting lasted an hour, ending only when all the militants were dead.

Doctor Ghulam Farooq Wardak, an official at Wardak central hospital, said more than 150 people -- mostly civilians -- were wounded. "One hundred and fifty-three people including 23 women and two children have been brought to the hospital," he told AFP, adding that twelve civilians were in a critical condition.

The Taliban on their website claimed responsibility for the attack, saying their fighters have incurred heavy casualties to Afghan security forces.

MILITARY NEWS

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



An Army carry team moves a transfer case containing the remains of Sgt. Stefan M. Smith July 25 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Smith was killed when his unit was attacked with an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. Steve Ruark / AP



**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

“A Growing Group Of Tricare Beneficiaries Frustrated By What They See As Arbitrary Decisions In A Dysfunctional Appeals Process”

September 2, 2013 By Patricia Kime, Army Times [Excerpts]

Tricare beneficiary Jean Saunders, 63, who has lived with irritable bowel syndrome nearly her whole life, found relief from the pain and gastrointestinal symptoms 10 years ago when a physician prescribed her Xifaxan.

But earlier this year, a Tricare pharmacy advisory panel decided that the pricey drug, which costs nearly \$1,600 a month, should be used only as labeled— for hepatic encephalopathy, or, in some cases, traveler’s diarrhea.

IBS is not on the list of label uses.

In June, Saunders received a letter notifying her that the medicine no longer would be covered. Payment stopped the same week. She and husband Lloyd appealed to Tricare; they were denied.

Now, nearly all of Lloyd’s Navy retirement pay goes to cover Jean’s Xifaxan. And Lloyd is steamed not over the drug’s exorbitant price, but by a process that cut off reimbursement without warning based on a conversation between Tricare and a clerk at Saunders’ doctor’s office instead of the physician and by the letter he received from Tricare pharmacy manager Express Scripts containing four pages of legal jargon defending the denial.

“This has nothing to do with hepatic encephalopathy. This has everything to do (with) this (being) an expensive medication,” he said.

The Saunders are among a growing group of Tricare beneficiaries frustrated by what they see as arbitrary decisions in a dysfunctional appeals process.

Earlier this year, the family of a severely disabled Texas teenager, Kaitlyn Samuels, lobbied for legislation to provide horse-based physical therapy for patients after a Tricare hearing officer agreed that the military insurer should cover Kaitlyn’s therapy but his boss, Tricare Appeals Director Mark Donahue, thought otherwise.

The issues have become so widespread that the Senate earlier this year included a provision in its version of the 2014 defense bill requiring Tricare to submit a report on the appeals process.

“Advocacy groups have informed the committee that beneficiaries who have pursued the full range of options in the appeals process and received a favorable recommendation from the independent hearing officer perceive the process as unfair when the TMA summarily overturns the hearing officer’s recommended decision,” the Senate Armed Services Committee said.

An understanding of the process would mean much to Ashley Fry, the wife of an Army National Guard soldier who had two hip surgeries and faces a fourth after an initial operation was delayed by the appeals process.

According to Fry, even though nearly every doctor she saw and Tricare representative she spoke with agreed that the first surgery should have been covered, “someone in the Defense Department” decided it wasn’t.

“I need one more surgery, and I’m worried. (The appeals process) is so stressful,” she said.

Tricare did not respond to a request for information on the appeals process and its success rate.

The House did not include a request for a report in its version of the defense bill, so negotiators will decide whether it is included in the final compromise bill.

In the meantime, Fry, who has endured three claims processes and crowd-sourced to finance one of her surgeries, has this advice for dealing with Tricare: take down names, dates and times and ask for a manager, supervisor or case nurse when you don't get answers.

"The only reason I've had half a chance of sorting this out is because I was in customer service for 10 years. If they would at least assign a case worker to deal with these complex situations early on, it would help," Fry said.

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

<p>It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it. -- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers</p>

“The Antiwar Movement Cannot Oppose American Bombs While Cheering Assad’s Bloody Crackdown”

“Holding Up Pictures Of Bashar Al-Assad And Chanting For His Murderous Military Is No Way To Build A Principled Antiwar Movement”

“Dictatorships And Imperialism Use One Another As Alibis To Justify The Violence They Inflict”

“The Choice Between The Two Has Historically Guaranteed That We Will Suffer From Both”

September 4, 2013 by Yusef Khalil, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

The healthy skepticism about the goals of Western rulers and their imperial interests has sparked global protests against this new chapter of U.S.-led bombing. The protests have attracted many people genuinely against war.

But shamefully, some of these protests have been used--and in some cases called--by Assad supporters and apologists.

Holding up pictures of Bashar al-Assad and chanting for his murderous military is no way to build a principled antiwar movement.

The Assad regime is neither progressive nor deserving of our political support.

Anti-imperialism is not an excuse to give political cover to a regime that has for decades repressed independent political parties, unions, workers' organizations, and even discussion groups and public gatherings.

Nor should we deny the Syrian people's agency to liberate themselves by ignoring their grassroots attempts to organize coordinating committees, popular councils, armed resistance and revolutionary organizations, literally while under fire.

Those of us in the antiwar movement need to be clear that international solidarity with the Syrian people means supporting their right to struggle by any means necessary against a dictatorship that spouts an empty "anti-West," "anti-imperialist" rhetoric.

Dictatorships and imperialism use one another as alibis to justify the violence they inflict.

In fact, the choice between the two has historically guaranteed that we will suffer from both.

The antiwar movement cannot oppose American bombs while cheering Assad's bloody crackdown.

Egypt:
**“The Army Reached The Conclusion
That The Brotherhood Had Failed In
Carrying Out Its Assignment--In
Carrying Out The Role Or Task They
Were Granted”**
**“The Muslim Brotherhood Could Not
Contain Public Anger”**

September 3, 2013 Mostafa Ali, an activist with the Revolutionary Socialists, Egypt, interviewed by Lee Sustar; Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

[Lee Sustar] Why did the military move against the Muslim Brotherhood so forcefully? After all, the constitution authored mainly by the Brotherhood actually consolidated the military's economic and political power. Wasn't some kind of arrangement possible?

[Mostafa Ali] There are two reasons.

First, the old state apparatus was never really dismantled after the January 25 revolution. By the state apparatus, I mean the upper echelons of the army, the police and the state bureaucracy. They couldn't accept that the people they repressed and stepped on for 30 years or so--that is, the Muslim Brotherhood--could become full partners in power.

The state bureaucracy did everything it could to prevent Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood from playing any sort of an effective role in governing.

I can give you one example. Egypt was marred by an unbelievable crisis, a shortage of gasoline. You had lines stretching for kilometers of people searching for gas. This went on for months before the ouster of Morsi. They disappeared immediately the day that Morsi fell. The state bureaucracy was actually sabotaging the attempt of the Brotherhood to run the government or the state machinery.

The second reason, which is more important, is that the army was counting the Brotherhood to be a political front to manage mass popular anger.

But the Brotherhood committed mistake after mistake, increasing the level of public anger on the ground with its continuation of neoliberal policies--or you can call them impoverishment policies--for the mass of the population.

In the end, the army reached the conclusion that the Brotherhood had failed in carrying out its assignment--in carrying out the role or task they were granted.

The Muslim Brotherhood could not contain public anger.

They were actually increasing it by refusing to even make very simple concessions to the working class and to the poor. For example, they rationed bread--the main staple in the country, something unheard of under Mubarak.

So while the state machinery sabotaged any attempt by the Brotherhood to become full partners in ruling Egypt, the Brotherhood insisted on continuing Mubarak's social policies, thus increasing popular anger.

The army decided that the Brotherhood could no longer be at the front of the political scene.

People in the West should understand that the Egyptian revolution and the Arab Spring face a very difficult challenge. The counterrevolution is in full force.

People should realize that the Muslim Brotherhood betrayed the revolution.

But that betrayal of the revolution was not the same as the old ruling class attempting to defeat the entire revolution. This is really the difficult question facing us here in Egypt. We cannot equate the crimes of the Brotherhood and the crimes of the ruling class.

So while we publicize the crimes by the police and the army and their massacres of the Brotherhood's supporters, we've always been against the Brotherhood because they fronted for the old ruling class.

The main enemy is the state, and it's always the state.

MORE:

“What The Brotherhood Was Unable To Achieve Was The Co-Optation And Abortion Of The Egyptian Revolution”

“At Their Peak In The Five Months Leading Up To June 30, The Demonstrations Reached The Highest Rate Of Strikes And Protests In The World”

“Outbreak Of The Largest Wave Of Labor Strikes And Social Protests Since The Breakout Of The Revolution”

September 4, 2013 by Sameh Naguib, a leading member of the Revolutionary Socialists in Egypt; Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

And so we arrive at the deal between the military and the Brotherhood with the blessings of America.

The military accepted the coming to power of the Brotherhood in 2012 in return for the commitment of the Brotherhood to the same policies and alliances of the Mubarak regime, and the avoidance of any encroachment on the fundamental

interests of that regime, as well as working toward co-opting the anger of the populace and aborting the revolution.

In truth, the Brotherhood demonstrated that they were prepared to play this sordid role.

They instantly confirmed their loyalty to Washington, to Camp David, to the King of Saudi Arabia, whom they were quick to visit and to shake hands with. They stonewalled the demands of the revolution, especially retribution for the martyrs, and allowed a safe exit for the leaders of the military and police.

They implemented the same economic policies as the Mubarak regime with its generals and businessmen.

What the Brotherhood was unable to achieve was the co-optation and abortion of the Egyptian revolution, for on the contrary those same policies led to a deepening of the revolutionary crisis and the igniting of successive waves of millions-strong revolutionary demonstrations, and the outbreak of the largest wave of labor strikes and social protests since the breakout of the revolution.

At their peak in the five months leading up to June 30, the demonstrations reached the highest rate of strikes and protests in the world, surpassing during those months the total number of strikes and demonstrations in the year 2012.

And we know that the number of strikes in 2012 alone exceeded the number of all those that had happened in the 10 years before (Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights and the Democracy Index Report--Center for International Development, May 2013)

It became clear that the continuation of Morsi's government and the escalating revolutionary anger threatened not only Morsi and the Brotherhood, but Mubarak's state, the generals and his big businessmen.

Panic began to spread in the heart of the American administration regarding the escalation in the wave of popular demonstration leading up to June 30.

The military and feloul planned to derail this wave with the coup of July 3 and what immediately followed--the smashing of the Brotherhood, the massacres, the rapid return of the feloul and the old security apparatus--paving the way for the counterrevolution. And we are still now in its first days.

Book Review: "The People Want: A Radical Exploration Of The Arab Uprising"

**“He Takes Up The Cudgels With
Leftist ‘Anti-Imperialism’ That
Prioritises Anti-American
Dictatorships (Syria, Libya, Iran) Over
The Democratic Aspirations Of The
Working Classes”**

**“Achcar Contemptuously Dismisses Is
The Tendency To Understand The Arab
Spring Via Conspiracy Theories Whereby
Every Twist And Turn In The Arab World
Is Ascribed To Either Washington Or Tel
Aviv”**

**“This Idea Reflects A Naïve Belief In The
Omnipotence Of The United States And Deep
Contempt For The Insurgent Populations”**

29 August 2013 The News

Brushing aside a host of fashionable narratives to explain the Arab spring,

Gilbert Achcar’s recent book, ‘The People Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising’ (London: Saqi) offers a radically different perspective.

Instead of over-optimistically glorifying the uprising or pessimistically ridiculing the temporary lull as ‘Arab winter’, he views the Arab spring as a protracted or long-term revolutionary process which may continue to unfold for another couple of decades.

In fact, the recent coup in Egypt weeks was a timely endorsement of Achcar’s thesis on the Arab spring.

His prophetic analysis, informed by a Marxist outlook, springs from rigorous research and deep knowledge of Arab realities.

Instead of offering Facebook explanations, demographic analysis or ascribing the latest Arab upheaval to middle class democratic aspirations, he identifies “the

deep roots of the uprising” because “there can be no lasting solution to the crisis unless those roots are transformed”.

The breadth of the Arab spring shows that its causes are neither confined to the political realm nor limited to linguistic factors.

In his view, revolution-by-contagion occurs when “there is favourable ground...a predisposition to revolution”.

Even importantly: “Despotism by itself...can hardly be sufficient cause for the outbreak and subsequent success of a democratic revolution.”

One should look for the underlying socioeconomic factors to explain why the Arab spring “triumphed when it did: why 2011, after decades of despotism in the Arab region?

Why 1789 in France, after a long history of Absolutism and peasant revolts?

Why 1989 in Eastern Europe, rather than, say, 1953-56?”

To solve the puzzle, he delves into history.

A series of European revolutions also caused ripple effects. These socio-political earthquakes were, in the words of Achcar, “triggered by the collision of the two tectonic plates” ie “developing productive forces and existing relations of production”.

The latter, Marx thought, constitute “legal and political superstructures” with the state at its core.

While this contradiction between the rising bourgeoisie and feudal ‘superstructures’ – translating into revolutions – paved the way for Europe’s capitalist industrialisation, a precisely “comparable instance of the existing relations of production blocking the development of the forces of production was at the origin of the shock wave” that, according to Achcar, culminated in collapse of the USSR.

However, unlike juvenile Marxists, Achcar does not issue any sweeping judgements based on “Marx’s paradigmatic thesis on revolution” he himself invokes to explain European revolutions.

This is because every crisis does not constitute a revolutionary situation.

Similarly, every revolutionary situation does not lead to a revolution.

Therefore, Achcar suggests to cautiously “derive variants” from Marxist thesis that are “less sweeping in historical scope” to describe the Arab spring.

Chalking out both revolutionary possibilities and limitation impregnating a system, he points out: “the development of productive forces can be stalled, not by the relations of production constitutive of a generic mode of production (such as the relation between capital and wage-labour in the capitalist mode of production), but, rather, by a specific modality of that generic mode of production.

“In such cases, it is not always necessary to replace the basic mode of production in order to overcome the blockage. A change in modality or ‘mode of regulation’ does, however, have to occur”.

To understand the Arab spring, Achcar considers it fundamental to determine if “such a blockage exists”.

Consequently, he laboriously builds mountains of socioeconomic data showing the slow pace of economic growth, levels of poverty, dwindling welfare role in the Arab states since the 1970s onwards, effects of neo-liberal policies and foreign debt.

Citing painstakingly-gathered data on socioeconomic indicators, he shows how of all the developing regions, the “Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region is the one facing the most severe development crisis”.

Besides the failure of Arab nationalist forces paving the way for Infitah (opening) – a term president Sadaat introduced for a neo-liberal turn post-Nasser – Achcar ascribes the developmental crisis, or the ‘blockage’, to the character of Arab states.

He characterises the Mena countries either as rentier states (in the case of the oil-rich sheikhdoms), or patrimonial and neo-patrimonial states (Syria, Egypt, Tunis).

However, an element of rentiership marks most Mena countries.

The character of these states determines the form capitalism has taken there. From this rentier or neo-patrimonial character of these states flows, on the one hand, nepotistic and crony capitalism.

On the other hand, the rentierist and neo-patrimonialist character of these states breeds phenomenal corruption.

Achcar describes the dominant section of private capitalism in the Arab countries as given to cronyism because state resources are exploited to benefit private ventures often run by the autocrat’s familial entourage or henchmen.

This nature of Mena capitalism, springing from the rentier/neo-patrimonial character of the states, discourages growth even in the capitalist framework because the profits are not invested in the region.

For instance, in rentier states, the rent money accumulated by the kith and kin of the autocrats is staked in western stocks for quick profits.

In neo-patrimonial states, the crony-corrupt character of capitalism impedes growth by eliminating ‘free-market’.

In 2008 alone, the capital flight – “bribes, kickbacks, embezzlements, tax evasion, and trade mispricing” – from Mena was estimated at \$247 billion.

The nature of capitalism also determines the class composition of Mena countries. For instance, in oil-rich countries, labour has been imported and deported at convenience – leading to weak civil societies.

But Achcar does not reduce his analysis to economically-determined factors.

He pays sufficient attention to historically-determined variables, creative possibilities offered by new information technologies to organise resistance, imperialist manipulations, colonial legacy, gender dimensions and the role of religion.

Otherwise, it would not have been possible to understand the rather peaceful victories scored in Egypt and Tunisia and violence in the case of Libya and Syria.

Since the elements of civil society (unions, social movements, political forces, or historical traditions) in Tunisia and Egypt were able to put a brave resistance for the last ten-or-so years, the ‘final’ uprisings, thus, constituted an accumulative consequence. In Libya, the military-tribal domination meant a violent turn.

In an equally nuanced way, he explores the cases of Bahrain, Syria and Yemen.

What Achcar contemptuously, but in a highly informed manner, dismisses is the tendency to understand the Arab spring via conspiracy theories whereby every twist and turn in the Arab world is ascribed to either Washington or Tel Aviv.

“This idea reflects...a naïve belief in the omnipotence of the United States, a skewed vision of the Arab uprising’s impact on US interests and the Zionist state’s, and...deep contempt for the insurgent populations”.

Likewise, he takes up the cudgels with leftist ‘anti-imperialism’ that prioritises anti-American dictatorships (Syria, Libya, Iran) over the democratic aspirations of the working classes. On this question, he finds fault with Trotsky’s position in 1922 on Georgia to Hugo and Castro’s support for Qaddafi.

Described by the French daily Le Monde as “one of the best analysts of the contemporary Arab world”, Achcar teaches at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.

He has authored several books including the critically acclaimed The Arabs and the Holocaust and Perilous Power. The latter is co-authored with Noam Chomsky.

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.

Saudi Arabia Announces Historic Decision To Ban Everything



24 Mar 2013 karlremarks.com

In an unprecedented move in modern governance, Saudi Arabia announced today that it will introduce a ban on everything.

The announcement has sent shockwaves throughout the kingdom and the Middle East, leaving many governments wondering 'why didn't we think of that first?' The new rule is expected to revolutionise governance in this part of the world, and may indeed have wider repercussions.

The announcement was made early on Sunday morning by a Saudi official in a press conference, expected to be the last of its kind because press briefings will automatically be banned when the ban takes effect.

Sheikh Jassem Ahmad Al-Manea, a high-ranking official in the Saudi Ministry of General Regulation and the Promotion of Abstinence, presented the historic ban to members of the local and foreign press.

"This ban is a breakthrough for us after we realised that our piecemeal approach was misleading. Members of the public assumed that if something wasn't explicitly banned, then it was permissible. We had to stop this confusion and make life easier for everyone, removing the shadow of uncertainty from our citizens' minds"

He added that his department expected psychological disorders and suicide rates to drop significantly after the 'mega-ban' was put into effect, "because stress and anxiety levels will drop significantly once uncertainty was abolished." A national programme for monitoring well-being and happiness will be introduced in parallel, although it wasn't clear how it would operate because surveys and questionnaires will also be banned.

Al-Manea explained that the ban isn't a law in the conventional sense of the term, 'because that will be against the spirit of freedom', but a 'general principle'.

He explained that there will naturally be exceptions, but he didn't expect more than a handful of them, 'the absolute minimum to guarantee the orderly functioning of society'.

"For decades we spent thousands of hours every year coming up with new things to ban. This has proved tiresome, futile and counterproductive. We will now establish a department for licensing permissible activities, enabling us to address these issues more efficiently.

It is also a giant step forward in social liberties, because from now Saudi Arabia won't have to ban anything, ever again."

There was an awkward silence after Al-Manea concluded his presentation because the journalists present weren't sure if questions were still allowed, including questions about whether questions are still allowed. Thankfully after 15 minutes of agonising silence, the official press team understood what was happening and Al-Manea announced that there would be a one-time exception.

Responding to several similar questions about things like eating ice cream, using social media and wearing off-white robes, Al-Manea repeated the catchphrase: "if you're not sure, don't do it." According to him the new slogan will be displayed on large billboards to remind the public of this crucial principle.

It later emerged that the European Union had held an emergency meeting to discuss the Saudi 'mega-ban' and its implications. The meeting was stormy, and several European leaders were furious.

"We employ thousands of bureaucrats, why hasn't one of them come up with an idea of such elegance and minimalism?" "We have been beaten at our own game by the Saudis, and they are far behind us in terms of social policy." Those and other similar sentiments were being shouted across the meeting hall, as the meeting descended into chaos. The EU later issued a statement conceding a 'moral loss' but promising to learn from Saudi Arabia's innovative approach.

Just before publication, it was announced that the Mayor of New York Mike Bloomberg has converted to Islam and is interested in moving to Saudi Arabia.

He didn't reveal why, but take a wild guess.

ANNIVERSARIES

September 9, 1971: Heroic Anniversary; The Attica State Penitentiary Revolt



Carl Bunin Peace History September 3-9

The interracial revolt was led by blacks but featured cooperation between prisoners of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

It was finally brutally suppressed by the state five days later, upon orders from Gov. Nelson Rockefeller who refused to become directly involved.

29 prisoners and 10 guards were shot and killed by attacking state troopers in the bloodiest prison confrontation in U.S. history.

The prisoners had been demanding improvements in their living and working conditions at the increasingly overcrowded facility.

PBS.org/ [Excerpts]

On the morning of Monday, September 13, 1971, Governor Nelson Rockefeller arrived at his Fifth Avenue apartment for a meeting with some of his advisors. It had been a tough weekend, but he had finally reached a decision. It was, he told them, “a matter of principle.”

The Attica State Penitentiary — the scene of an inmate uprising just five days earlier — was to be retaken by force.

Trouble was in the air in the summer of 1971. The Vietnam war, court-ordered busing of students to integrate schools racially, and student protests had shaken the country.

Prisons were seeing a surge in the pressure — both from within and from without prison walls -- to recognize the rights of inmates, fueled in part by racial unrest. In the imposing Attica State Penitentiary, a maximum-security facility 30 miles south of Buffalo, New York, the tension had been particularly palpable for months.

Inmates, who were predominantly African American and Puerto Rican, were incensed at the deteriorating living conditions — among them the fact that they were only entitled to one shower a week and one roll of toilet paper a month.

Overcrowding had also become a source of resentment in a facility where the capacity limit had been exceeded by almost forty percent.

It was this pent-up unrest that prompted one of the guards to forcefully suppress a scuffle between two prisoners on September 9, 1971. The two inmates were taken to isolation cells. Rumors circulated that they would be tortured.

Confrontations escalated between the prisoners and the guards.



More than one thousand strong, the inmates quickly took control of the prison and set fire to several of its buildings. By the time the state police was summoned and managed to recapture part of the facility that afternoon, the inmates had regrouped in one of the yards and were holding 40 hostages in a ring of wooden benches.

Their demands were soon made public: federal takeover of the prison, better conditions, amnesty and the removal of the prison's superintendent.

In their statement, they criticized the “unmitigated oppression wrought by the racist administrative network of this prison throughout the year,” and the “ruthless brutalization and disregard for the lives of the prisoners here and throughout the United States.”

Those words had a troubling ring for Nelson Rockefeller, who in his last years as governor had toughened his stand on crime and political dissent.

He believed that the rebellion was led by revolutionaries, and that any sign of compromise would have a domino effect throughout the nation. Having sent one of his closest aides to the scene, he retreated to the Rockefeller estate in Pocantico Hills, just a few miles outside of New York City.

Four hundred miles upstate, things were quickly heating up. A group of observers had been trying in vain to come up with a compromise package.

On Sunday, three days after the outbreak, they issued a statement, calling on Rockefeller to come to the prison to avert a “massacre... so we can spend time and not lives in an attempt to resolve the issues before us.”

The pressure on the governor to come to Attica was mounting, as the inmates and even the Commissioner of Correctional Services, Russell Oswald, urged him to address the situation in person.

“We must have Rockefeller,” said one of the inmates’ leaders. “We got to have Rockefeller here to save our lives and those of his hostages. ... I say his hostages because he created this situation.”

But Rockefeller wouldn’t budge.

Saying that his physical presence on the site would not “contribute to a peaceful settlement,” he vowed to stand fast and rely on his aides on the scene, among them Robert Douglass.

“In life it’s not easy to face a hard decision, particularly when human lives are involved,” he told Commissioner Oswald, “But I think we have to look at these things not only in terms of the immediate but in terms of the larger implication of what we are doing in our society.”

By Sunday night, hopes for a non-violent compromise solution were wearing thin, and on Monday morning Rockefeller, determined to appear firm, authorized the operation to reclaim the facility.

It was 9:46am when a state police helicopter started dropping tear gas over the yard and walkways where the inmates were holding the hostages at knife-point.

Gunfire broke out, and within 6 minutes, 2,200 lethal missiles were discharged.

The use of shotguns, with their imprecise range, increased the bloodshed.

Ten hostages and twenty-nine inmates died — a horrific toll that was especially appalling after it was revealed that all the hostages had died from gunshot wounds inflicted by state troopers and guards.

Rockefeller was also spared the sight of the capture’s grim aftermath.

Once the prison was reclaimed, guards, enraged by the events, ordered the inmates to crawl naked into the yard, beating them with clubs as they passed through.

One of the leaders, Frank Smith, was stripped naked and forced to lie on a table balancing a football under his chin for hours, threatened with being shot if he let it fall to the ground.

The extent of the chaos was not acknowledged by Governor Rockefeller, who said that the state troopers had done “a superb job.”

One year later, an investigative commission would reach a very different conclusion.

Its report stated that the operation had been ill-conceived, poorly executed and probably unnecessary, and stressed the fact that Rockefeller should have gone to Attica, “because his responsibilities as the State’s chief executive made it appropriate that he be present at the scene of the critical decision involving great risk of loss of life.”

In spite of the public outrage, Nelson Rockefeller’s hard-line stance in the Attica crisis made him more palatable to the conservatives who were now in control of the Republican Party.

He never publicly regretted the way he handled the situation, saying only that he wished he had been more aware of the “tremendous need that existed” at the Attica facility.

Yet the impact of the Attica crisis would be long lasting.

In August 2000, almost thirty years after the prisoners’ revolt, the state of New York paid up to \$8 million to the 1,280 men harassed during the attack, after their lawyers filed a class-action lawsuit against prison and state officials in 1974.

The verdict, however, had little echo within the walls of the Attica Correctional Facility, where overcrowding is still a problem.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Settler Mob Attacks Palestinian Olive Trees, As Usual

28/08/2013 Ma'an

NABLUS (Ma'an) -- A group of settlers raided private Palestinian olive groves south of Nablus on Wednesday and destroyed dozens of trees, a Palestinian Authority official said.

Ghassan Daghlas, who monitors settlement activity in the northern West Bank, told Ma'an that the attack took place in an area between Huwwara and Burin.

Settlers destroyed over 25 trees. The fields belong to Hasan Bani Salem

Settlers routinely attack Palestinians and their property in the occupied West Bank with impunity.

Annual figures compiled by Israeli rights group Yesh Din have repeatedly shown that nine out of 10 police investigations about settler crimes fail to lead to a prosecution.

Comment Unnecessary



A Palestinian protester gestures in front of riot police during a demonstration against renewed peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians, in the West Bank city of Ramallah September 7, 2013. REUTERS/Mohamad Torokman

**Stupid Zionist Occupiers Arrest
Palestinian Leader Invited To U.S.
State Dep't Training Session:**

“Ala’a Was Arrested And Transferred To Majdal Prison”

August 26, 2013 by Philip Weiss, Mondoweiss [Excerpts]

The leader of a Palestinian youth group who was invited to a social media training session organized by the State Department “to create a sustainable community that fosters innovation and social progress” was arrested by Israeli authorities today as he attempted to travel from Gaza to the West Bank.

Ala’a Miqbel, 30, director of a Palestinian NGO in Gaza called the Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership And Rights Activation (Pyalara), which has broad international support, had been invited to a three-day social media “TechCamp,” organized by US State Department and PalTel, the Palestinian telephone company.

Miqbel was told to go Erez checkpoint early this morning to get authorization from the Israelis to travel to the session at a Ramallah hotel.

Instead he was arrested there and taken to Majdal prison in Israel, according to the Institute for Middle East Understanding.

The TechCamp is surely part of Kerry’s initiative for “economic peace.”

Here is part of the invitation to Miqbel that bore State Department letterhead:

“By participating in TechCamp Ramallah 2, we will connect your organization with technology leaders to increase your capacity and outreach potential in the 21st century.

“We offer you the opportunity to interact with top international and local technologists to learn how digital tools can boost your business and help your organization make an advantageous leap.... It will also help build lasting relationships with other civil society organizations and technologists to create a sustainable community that fosters innovation and social progress.

“We invite you to be a part of this exceptional experience!”

But the arrest shows the structural flaw in the economic approach— for all Palestinians lack freedom of movement under occupation.

These TechCamps brought together three areas of focus for Secretary Clinton: strengthening civil society, innovation, and empowering women and girls. – See more at: <http://blogs.state.gov/stories/2012/05/09/techcamp-goes-tel-aviv-and-ramallah-empowering-women-and-girls-middle-east#sthash.jQLxP371.dpuf>

The Institute for Middle East Understanding provided me the following report from a Pyalara official:

Yesterday, Ala'a was informed by the organizers of the workshop that he should go for an interview with the Israeli side at Eretz checkpoint for the purpose of receiving a permit to travel to the West Bank.

At 7:30 am, today, the 26th of August, Ala'a called me and informed me that he was on his way to Eretz checkpoint for the interview.

He told me that he will have to turn off his mobile and that as soon as he is out he will call me to update me on the interview.

Ala'a was so happy and hopeful that after more than 7 years since he last got a permit and visited the West Bank, he would at last manage to leave Gaza Strip.

At around 6:30 pm and after hours of trying to contact Ala'a, his father, Subhi Miqbil called me to inform me that he received a phone call from a private number and that the person on the other line informed him that his son Ala'a was arrested and transferred to Majdal prison.

Since we received the information, PYALARA contacted the Red Crescent and different Human Rights organization to pursue the issue.

Ala'a has been working as the director of the Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation (PYALARA) office in Gaza for the last 4 years.

Ala'a is a very well-known youth and social activist who is known for his professionalism, dedication and activism on the level of youth rights, leadership and youth mobilization.

Ala'a is 30 years old, married and a father of three children the latest of whom is only one month and a half old.

[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."]

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL

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CLASS WAR REPORTS

“Iraqi Prime Minister And Chief Thug Nouri Tried To Stop The Saturday Protests In Iraq”

“He Did Not Succeed. Oil Is For The People!”

“Widespread Anger At The Monthly Payments Of Thousands Of Dollars And Other Benefits To Government And Parliamentary Officials”

“Widows, Orphans, People With Special Needs And Cancer Patients Are Suffering While The Iraqi Officials Live Lives Of Ease”

September 01, 2013 The Common Ills [Excerpts]

Iraqi Prime Minister and chief thug Nouri tried to stop the Saturday protests in Iraq.

He did not succeed.

He insisted that they needed to be halted to protect the protesters. This despite the fact that only his own forces have killed any of the protesters in the time since these protests started on December 21st. Today that happened again, the only one harming the protesters was Nouri's forces.

World Bulletin explains:

“Hundreds of protesters took to the streets in Baghdad and central and southern Iraq on Saturday against generous pension payments to lawmakers in a county where many are still struggling to get jobs and basic services.

“Police surrounded the rare demonstration in the capital and security forces armed with batons, teargas and water canon broke up one gathering in the southern city of Nassiriya, witnesses and security forces said.

The protests marked widespread anger at the monthly payments of thousands of dollars and other benefits to government and parliamentary officials."



Iraqi Spring MC reports protesters in Baghdad (above) chanted "Oil is for the people!" Euronews adds, "Thousands have marched in the Iraqi city of Kerbala in a protest over benefits for politicians. Lawmakers in the country can claim pensions of up to 80 per cent of salary, after just four years in parliament."

Alsumaria reports hundreds turned out in Basra and quotes protester Saad Khazal Salman stating that widows, orphans, people with special needs and cancer patients are suffering while the Iraqi officials live lives of ease.

Ahmed Hussein and Sam Mahmoud (Alsumaria) report that hundreds turned out in Kerbala.

Sam Mahmoud and Ghassan Hamid (Alsumaria) report that protesters turned out in Babylon and protest coordinator Ayed al-Awadi states they are giving the central government 30 days to make changes based on their demands.

On Friday Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International both called for the protesters to be allowed to utilize their Constitutional rights.

But Nouri still attempted to stop the protests.

Sameer N. Yacoub (AP) reports, "Authorities in Baghdad refused to permit demonstrations there. They put in place extraordinary security measures, such as blocking bridges and deploying large numbers of rifle-toting soldiers and police in major squares."

Iraqi Spring MC notes Nouri's SWAT forces attempted to prevent the protests in Dhi Qar. Similar incidents took place in Baghdad and Baiji.

Al Jazeera reports, "Riot police armed with batons, tear gas and water canon broke up one gathering in the city of Nasiriyah. Witnesses and security forces said 11 people were wounded and 10 detained. [. . .]"

"Security forces blocked bridges and deployed large numbers of soldiers and police in major squares - an extraordinary show of force that protesters said was mainly taken to prevent demonstrators from congregating in larger numbers."

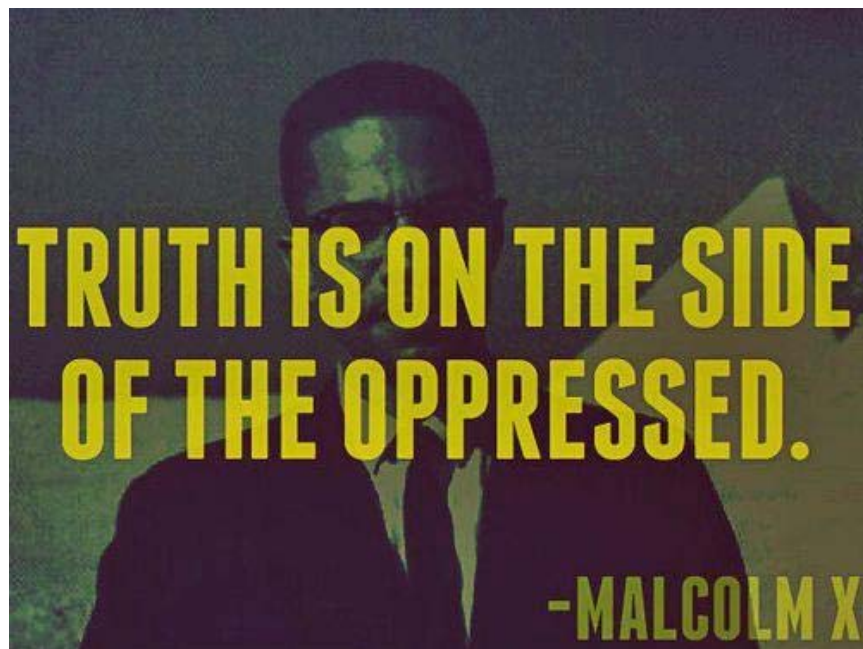
All Iraq News notes an investigative committee has been formed in Dhi Qar Province to investigate the attack. NINA adds:

Ahrar bloc's Secretariat strongly condemned what it describes 'attacks on peaceful and unarmed demonstrators' calling on security authorities to immediately release the detainees.

It added that Ahrar bloc urges all political blocs and nongovernmental, human rights and civil society organizations to demand the rights of the deprived Iraqis through pressuring the government to grant them the legitimate rights.

All Iraq News also reports that Ayad Allawi called out Nouri for his attempts to ban the protests.

After that, Nouri suddenly came out in favor of the protests -- after they had taken place. Kurdish MP Mahmoud Othman calls out Nouri for saying now that he agrees with the protesters demand.



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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