

Military Resistance 12A16



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**A Traffic Policeman Famed As
Afghanistan's "Most Honest
Man"**

**His Reward: Low Pay And No
Promotion:**

**"Afghan Institutions Not Only
Tolerate Corruption But Implicitly
Encourage It"**

“Ask Him How Afghanistan Has Changed Since The Taliban, And He Won’t Speak About The Growth Of Democracy. ‘Now,’ He Says, ‘There Are A Lot More Cars’”

When the Taliban seized power, its leaders, too, heard about Saboor. Ministers came by his intersection with new clothes, new turbans and a new bicycle. Despite the long list of abuses perpetrated by the Taliban, Saboor said he felt the group respected his commitment to public service.

It’s more than he can say for the government that followed.

January 13 By Kevin Sieff, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

KABUL — The veteran traffic policeman walked to the stage, taking his place in front of a banner in Dari that said “CORRUPTION” with a red “X” through the word. After 24 years on the job, Abdul Saboor had been deemed the most honest man in Afghanistan.

He posed for photos with the interior minister. He gave interviews to local newspapers.

Then he went back to the five-room home he shares with 28 people.

Saboor, 52, might be a better symbol for the sacrifices that an honest man must make in Afghanistan to follow the law.

In two decades, he has received only one minor promotion.

His salary, unaided by bribes, is \$200 per month. His toes are black after being run over several times. His throat is perpetually sore from Kabul’s dust and pollution, but he struggles to afford medicine or hospital visits.

“Afghanistan Is The World’s Most Corrupt Nation”

Afghanistan is the world’s most corrupt nation (tied with North Korea and Somalia), according to Transparency International.

It’s a country where public officials have embezzled hundreds of millions of dollars, most of it foreign aid, and where petty corruption pervades daily life.

Although Western donors have funded anti-corruption programs and agencies, many Afghan institutions not only tolerate corruption but implicitly encourage it. Saboor has become a famous figure, but few Afghans are likely to follow his example.

"If they don't take bribes, they will suffer like Saboor," said Mohammad Shafiq Hamdam, chairman of the Anti-Corruption Network, an Afghan watchdog that joined with other civil-society groups to bestow the award last month.

To see Saboor in action in Kabul's Sherpur traffic circle is to understand why he came to the government's attention.

While his colleagues take frequent breaks and look for ways to extort drivers, Saboor leaps in front of cars that try to charge past his stop sign and blows his whistle at those threatening to accelerate before their turn.

In a city with poor roads and more than a million cars, where traffic lights were installed and promptly ignored, Saboor is famous for both his incorruptibility and his theatrics.

He's known to thousands of Afghans as "Uncle Traffic" or "Uncle Saboor."

He has received commendations from Taliban ministers and former presidents. International organizations have joined in, too: The United Nations, attempting to boost public confidence in the Afghan police, funded a short documentary about him last year.

His biggest fans, though, are Kabul drivers, several of whom nominated him as the country's most honest man. Often, they slow their vehicles to greet Saboor by name.

"He's the only honest traffic police in Afghanistan," said Abdul Hussen Sadeq, a taxi driver.

"All the rest are like dogs," said Hasibullah, another taxi driver, who uses only one name. "Every day they ask us for bribes. If we don't pay, they take our licenses."

As the government of President Hamid Karzai enters its final months, Saboor is happy to accept another superlative. But he doesn't expect it to change a system of institutionalized corruption.

Ask him how Afghanistan has changed since the Taliban, and he won't speak about the growth of democracy.

"Now," he says, "there are a lot more cars."

Saboor knows as well as anyone how you make money as a traffic police officer.

You accept bribes instead of giving tickets. For a price, you allow trucks to be driven in restricted areas of the city. You charge drivers to park on the street, even where parking is free and legal.

As for promotions at work, they are often purchased.

For his colleagues, these are common practices.

"We aren't as morally strong as Saboor," said Lt. Atta Mohammad, who works at the same roundabout. Like other police officers interviewed, Mohammad said he did not accept bribes.

Saboor sees each bribe as an ethical lapse and a reflection of the state's frailty.

But for many Afghans, as well as foreign academics and analysts, corruption is a complex problem, rooted in the country's social structure and aggravated by weak institutions and decades of war. The impoverished country has traditionally had strong patronage networks, which in the past paved the way for some corruption, but the practice expanded as foreign aid flooded in.

“Corruption Has Led To Discontent With The Central Government, Galvanizing Support For The Taliban”

“People have no confidence in the future. They fear the return of a dark era. In order to protect themselves and their families financially, they collect bribes,” said Hamdam of the Anti-Corruption Network.

He said fear — as well as the instinct for self-preservation, sharpened by so many hard years — has eroded a once-valued moral code.

Hamdam said the problem has worsened over the past decade as “weak and corrupt leaders” ascended to power.

In parts of the country, corruption has led to discontent with the central government, galvanizing support for the Taliban.

Many say that the Taliban government ousted by U.S.-backed Afghan forces in 2001 was more transparent than the current leadership, though often horribly brutal.

With Western funds, the government created the biggest police force in Afghan history, including hundreds of officers charged with directing traffic in the biggest cities.

But last fall, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, an independent watchdog, found that 59 percent of Afghan police officers were extorting money at tollbooths or checkpoints.

An anti-corruption unit within the police force, created in 2012, has issued only a handful of convictions, Afghan officials said. Some police officers don't even associate demanding bribes with corruption; rather, they consider it their right as underpaid government employees dealing with the soaring cost of living in a war economy.

The leaders and institutions that would crack down on graft often benefit from the practice themselves. In some high-profile corruption cases, such as that of national security adviser Mohammad Zia Salehi, suspects have been absolved by Karzai or other senior officials.

So, why hasn't Saboor accepted his place in the patronage system? He points to his childhood.

His father was killed in a traffic accident — an incident that he considers an example of the need for effective traffic police. His two uncles were traffic policemen, wearing crisp uniforms and reporting to a stable job every day, even as the country imploded.

Saboor saw the way pedestrians, especially children, responded when he ran frantically across Kabul intersections, blowing his whistle to stop rule-flouting drivers or kicking his legs up and patrolling like a guard at Buckingham Palace.

“They started coming just to watch me,” he said. “The kids would scream ‘Uncle Saboor’ or ‘Uncle Traffic.’ Drivers stopped to say thank you. Everyone knew about me.”

In the early 90s, when the government learned about the ‘incorruptible’ traffic police officer, President Burhanuddin Rabbani offered Saboor a plot of land for his family as a reward.

But Saboor said he ran into continuous bureaucratic delays and is still fighting to claim the land, 20 years later. He says it’s unclear whether a bribe — which he’s unwilling to offer — would have expedited the process.

When he asked superiors for a promotion, “nothing ever happened,” he said, sitting in the home he shares with his four children and about two dozen brothers, cousins, uncles and aunts. “But I still loved my job. I would never quit.”

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Resistance Action

Jan 18, 2014 By Mohammad Haroon, Pajhwok.com/ & (Xinhua)

TIRIN KOT, Afghanistan -- At least one person was killed while four others injured Saturday afternoon as a blast occurred in Tirin Kot, the provincial capital of southern Afghan province of Uruzgan, a security source said.

"An improvised explosive device (IED) attached to a motorbike parked near the provincial governor office in Tirin Kot was detonated while a vehicle of National Directorate for Security (NDS) was passing by the area," the deputy provincial police chief Mohammad Aslam told Xinhua.

The NDS is the country’s intelligence agency. The police source added that as a result of the attack one NDS personnel was killed and four other personnel were wounded.

KHOST CITY: Four border policemen were killed in an insurgent attack in southeastern Khost province on Saturday, the governor’s house said.

The policemen were returning to duty from their homes when they were ambushed by a group of armed insurgents in Ali Sher district in the afternoon, the governor’s house said in a statement.

A fifth policeman was wounded in the attack, the statement said.

MILITARY NEWS

Camp Pendleton Marines Off To Obama's Imperial Slaughterhouse



Marines with the Operations Coordination Center, which left Camp Pendleton, Calif., Monday morning for Afghanistan, marked their bags with Hello Kitty tape so they will be able to spot them. The unit is going to Afghanistan as part of I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) and the Marines will advise Afghan forces during their tour.

January 13, 2014 Jennifer Hlad, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Cpl. Michael Nelson wanted to join the Marine Corps from a young age, and he always assumed he would deploy to Afghanistan.

But on Monday morning, it was Nelson's wife, Lance Cpl. Samantha Gullatta, who got on the bus for a yearlong deployment in Helmand province, while Nelson waved goodbye.

"It's an eye-opener," Nelson said. "It's just different looking at it this way."

I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) will soon take command of Regional Command - Southwest, based at Camp Leatherneck. The unit will be the last major Marine

command to deploy to Afghanistan. It will focus on getting equipment and people out of Afghanistan safely, and help make sure the April presidential elections and political transition go smoothly.

Daniel Hunt, 15, said he arrived at the dark parking lot at 2 a.m. Monday to spend time with his father, I MEF (Fwd)'s chaplain. This is the fifth deployment Cmdr. Thomas Hunt of Daniel's life, but the teenager said it never gets any easier.

Many of the roughly 140 Marines who left Monday morning are part of I MEF (Fwd)'s command element.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

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

“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.” -- Thomas Paine

Holiday In Falluja: “I Was In Falluja During The Last Two Days Of The Final Assault” [A Soldier Reporting 2004]

GI SPECIAL 2#C27 11.21.04

From: [Soldier, Iraq]

To: GI Special

Sent: Friday, November 19, 2004 2:03 PM

Subject: Holiday in Falluja

These are ugly times for the US military in Iraq. It seems everywhere you turn, more and more troops are being killed and maimed in vicious encounters with determined rebel fighters.

The insurgency is mounting incredibly in such places as Baghdad, Mosul, and Baquba; using more advanced techniques and weaponry associated with a well-organized guerilla campaign. Even in the massively destroyed city of Falluja rebel forces are starting to reappear with a callous determination to win or die trying. Many critics and political pundits are starting to realize that this war is, in many aspects, un-winnable.

And why should anyone think that a complete victory is possible? Conventionally, our US forces win territory here or there, killing a plethora of civilians as well as insurgents with each new boundary conquered. However, such as the recent case in Falluja, the rebel fighters have returned like a swarm of angry hornets attacking with a vicious frenzy.

I was in Falluja during the last two days of the final assault.

My mission was much different from that of the brave and weary infantry and marines involved in the major fighting.

I was on an escort mission, accompanied by a squad whose task it was to protect a high brass figure in the combat zone.

This particularly arrogant officer went to the last battle in the same spirits of an impartial spectator checking out the fourth quarter of a high school football game.

Once we got to the marine occupied Camp Falluja and saw artillery being fired into town, the man suddenly became desperate to play an active role in the battle that would render Falluja to ashes. It was already rumored that all he really wanted was his trigger time, perhaps to prove that he is the toughest cowboy west of the Euphrates.

Guys like him are a dime a dozen in the army: a career soldier who spent the first twenty years of his service patrolling the Berlin Wall or guarding the DMZ between North and South Korea. This sort of brass may have been lucky to serve in the first Gulf War, but in all actuality spent very little time shooting rag heads.

For these trigger-happy tough guys, the last two decades of cold war hostilities built into a war frenzy of stark emptiness, fizzling out almost completely with the Clinton administration.

But this is the New War, a never ending, action packed “Red Scare” in which the communist threat of yesteryear was simply replaced with the white knuckled tension of today’s “War on Terrorism”.

The younger soldiers who grew up in relatively peaceful times interpret the mentality of the careerists as one of making up for lost opportunities. To the elder generation of trigger pullers, this is the real deal; the chance to use all the cool toys and high speed training that has been stored away since the ‘70s for something tangibly useful...and its about goddamn time.

However, upon reaching the front lines, a safety standard was in effect stating that the urban combat was extremely intense. The lightest armored vehicles allowed in sector were Bradley tanks.

Taking a glance at our armored humvees, this commander insisted that our section would be fine. Even though the armored humvees are very stout and nearly impenetrable against small arm fire, they usually don’t hold up well against rocket attacks and roadside bombs like a heavily armored tank will. The reports from within the war zone indicated heavy rocket attacks, with an armed insurgent waiting on every corner for a soft target such as trucks.

In the end, the overzealous officer was urged not to infiltrate into sector with only three trucks, for it would be a death wish during those dangerous twilight hours. It was suggested that in the morning, after the air strikes were complete, he could move in and “inspect the damage”.

Even as the sun was setting over the hazy orange horizon, artillery was pounding away at the remaining twelve percent of the already devastated Falluja.

Many units were pulled out for the evening in preparation of a full-scale air strike that was scheduled to last for up to twelve hours.

Our squad was sitting on top of our parked humvees, manning the crew served machine guns and scanning the urban landscape for enemy activity. This was supposed to be a secured forward operating area, right on the edge of the combat zone. However, with no barbed wire perimeter set up and only a few scattered tanks serving as protection, one was under the assumption that if someone missed a minor detail while on guard, some serious shit could go down.

One soldier informed me that only two nights prior an insurgent was caught sneaking around the bullet-ridden houses to our immediate west. He was armed with a rocket-propelled grenade, and was laying low on his advance towards the perimeter. One of the tanks spotted him through its night vision and hastily shot him into three pieces. Indeed, though it was safe enough to smoke a cigarette and relax, one had to remain diligently aware of his surroundings if he planned on making it through the night.

As the evening wore on and the artillery continued, a new gruesome roar filled the sky.

The fighter jets were right on time and made their grand appearance with a series of massive air strikes. Between the pernicious bombs and fierce artillery, the sky seemed as though it were on fire for several minutes at a time. First you would see a blaze of light in the horizon, like lightning hitting a dynamite warehouse, and then hear the massive explosion that would turn your stomach, rattle your eyeballs, and compress itself deep within your lungs. Although these massive bombs were being dropped no further than five kilometers away, it felt like it was happening right in front of your face.

At first, it was impossible not to flinch with each unexpected boom, but after scores of intense explosions, your senses became aware and complacent towards them.

At times the jets would scream menacingly low over the city and open fire with smaller missiles meant for extreme accuracy. This is what Top Gun, in all its glory and silver screen acclaim, seemed to be lacking in the movie's high budget sound effects.

These air-deployed missiles make a banshee-like squeal, sort of like a bottle rocket fueled with plutonium, and then suddenly would become inaudible. Seconds later, the colossal explosion would rip the sky open and hammer devastatingly into the ground, sending flames and debris pummeling into the air. And as always, the artillery—some rounds were high explosive, some were illumination rounds, some were reported as being white phosphorus (the modern day napalm).

Occasionally, on the outskirts of the isolated impact area, you could hear tanks firing machine guns and blazing their cannons. It was amazing that anything could survive this deadly onslaught. Suddenly a transmission came over the radio approving the request for “bunker-busters”. Apparently, there were a handful of insurgent compounds that were impenetrable by artillery. At the time, I was unaware when these bunker-busters were deployed, but I was told later that the incredibly massive explosions were a direct result of these “final solution” type missiles.

I continued to watch the final assault on Falluja throughout the night from atop my humvee.

It was interesting to scan the vast skies above with night vision goggles. Circling continuously overhead throughout the battle was an array of attack helicopters. The most devastating were the Cobras and Apaches with their chain gun missile launchers.

Through the night vision I could see them hovering around the carnage, scanning the ground with an infrared spotlight that seemed to reach for miles. Once a target was identified, a rapid series of hollow blasts would echo through the skies, and from the ground came a “rat-a-tatting” of explosions, like a daisy chain of supercharged black cats during a Fourth of July barbeque. More artillery, more tanks, more machine gun fire, ominous death-dealing fighter planes terminating whole city blocks at a time...this wasn't a war, it was a massacre!

As I look back on the air strikes that lasted well into the next morning, I cannot help but to be both amazed by our modern technology and disgusted by its means.

It occurred to me many times during the siege that while the Falluja resistance was boldly fighting us with archaic weapons from the Cold War, we were soaring far above their heads dropping Thor's fury with a destructive power and precision that may as well been nuclear. It was like the Iraqis were bringing a knife to a tank fight.

And yet, the resistance toiled on, many fighting until their deaths.

What determination!

Some soldiers call them stupid for even thinking they have a chance in hell to defeat the strongest military in the world, but I call them brave.

It's not about fighting to win an immediate victory. And what is a conventional victory in a non-conventional war?

It seems overwhelmingly obvious that this is no longer within the United States hands.

We reduced Falluja to rubble. We claimed victory and told the world we held Falluja under total and complete control. Our military claimed very little civilian casualties and listed thousands of insurgents dead.

CNN and Fox News harped and cheered on the television that the Battle of Falluja would go down in history as a complete success, and a testament to the United States' supremacy on the modern battlefield.

However, after the dust settled and generals sat in cozy offices smoking their victory cigars, the front lines in Falluja exploded again with indomitable mortar, rocket, and small arm attacks on US and coalition forces.

Recent reports indicate that many insurgents have resurfaced in the devastated city of Falluja. We had already claimed the situation under control, and were starting to turn our attention to the other problem city of Mosul. Suddenly we were backtracking our attention to Falluja.

Did the Department of Defense and the national press lie to the public and claim another preemptive victory?

Not necessarily so. Conventionally we won the battle, how could anyone argue that? We destroyed an entire city and killed thousands of its occupants. **But the main issue that both the military and public forget to analyze is that this war, beyond any shadow of a doubt, is completely guerrilla.**

Sometimes I wonder if the West Point graduated officers have ever studied the intricate simplicity and effectiveness of guerrilla warfare.

During the course of this war, I have occasionally asked a random lieutenant or a captain if he at any time has even browsed through Che Guevara's *Guerrilla Warfare*. Almost half of them admit that they have not. This I find to be amazing! Here we have many years of guerrilla warfare ahead of us and our military's leadership seems dangerously unaware of what it all means!

Anyone can tell you that a guerrilla fighter is one who uses hit and run techniques to attempt a breakdown of a stronger conventional force.

However, what is more important to a guerrilla campaign are the political forces that drive it. Throughout history, many guerrilla armies have been successful; our own country and its fight for independence cannot be excluded.

We should have learned a lesson in guerrilla fighting with the Vietnam War only thirty years ago, but history has a funny way of repeating itself. The Vietnam War was a perfect example of how quick, deadly assaults on conventional troops over a long period of time can lead to an unpopular public view of the war, thus ending it.

Che Guevara stressed in his book *Guerrilla Warfare* that the most important factor in a guerrilla campaign is popular support. With that, victory is almost completely assured.

The Iraqis already have many of the main ingredients of a successful insurrection. Not only do they have a seemingly endless supply of munitions and weapons, they have the advantage to blend into their environment, whether that environment is a crowded market place or a thickly vegetated palm grove.

The Iraqi insurgent has utilized these advantages to the fullest, but his most important and relevant advantage is the popular support from his own countrymen.

What our military and government needs to realize is that every mistake we make is an advantage to the Iraqi insurrection. Every time an innocent man, woman or child is murdered in a military act, deliberate or not, the insurgent grows stronger.

Even if an innocent civilian is slain at the hands of his/her own freedom fighter, that fighter is still viewed as a warrior of the people, while the occupying force will ultimately be blamed as the responsible perpetrator.

Everything about this war is political...every ambush, every bombing, every death. When a coalition worker or soldier is abducted and executed, this only adds encouragement and justice to the dissident fervor of the Iraq public, while angering and demoralizing the occupier.

Our own media will prove to be our downfall as well. Every time an atrocity is revealed through our news outlets, our grasp on this once secular nation slips away. **As America grows increasingly disturbed by the images of carnage and violent death of her own sons in arms, its government loses the justification to continue the bloody debacle.**

Since all these traits are the conventional power's unavoidable mistakes, the guerrilla campaign will surely succeed.

In Iraq's case, complete destruction of the United States military is impossible, but through perseverance the insurgency will drive us out. This will prove to be the inevitable outcome of the war.

We lost many soldiers in the final battle for Falluja, and many more were seriously wounded. It seems unfair that even after the devastation we wreaked on this city just to contain it, many more troops will die in vain to keep it that way.

I saw the look in the eyes of a reconnaissance scout while I talked to him after the battle. His stories of gore and violent death were unnerving. The sacrifices that he and his whole platoon had made were infinite. They fought everyday with little or no sleep, very few breaks, and no hot meals.

For obvious reasons, they never could manage to find time to email their mothers to let them know that everything turned out ok.

Some of the members of his platoon will never get the chance to reassure their mothers, because now those soldiers are dead.

The look in his eyes as he told some of the stories were deep and weary, even perturbed. He described in accurate detail how some enemy combatants were blown to pieces by army issued bazookas, some had their heads shot off by a 50 caliber bullet, others were run over by tanks as they stood defiantly in the narrow streets firing an AK-47.

The soldier told me how one of his favorite sergeants died right in front of him. He was taking cover behind an alley wall and as he emerged to fire his M4 rifle, he was shot through the abdomen with a rocket-propelled grenade.

The grenade itself exploded and sent shrapnel into the narrator's leg. He showed me where a chunk of burned flesh was torn from his left thigh.

He ended his conversation saying that he was just a dumb kid from California who never thought joining the army would send him straight to hell. He told me he was tired as fuck and wanted a shower. Then he slowly walked away, cradling a rifle under his arm.

hEkLe

Falluja, Iraq

p.s. -pass this on to all your friends, especially your republican friends. thanx.

The Origin Of The Golden Rule: [Those Who Have The Gold Make The Rules]

By Frederick Engels 1887. Source: Marx and Engels On Religion, Progress Publishers, 1957

The world outlook of the Middle Ages was substantially theological. The unity of the European world which actually did not exist internally, was established externally, against the common Saracen foe, by Christianity.

The unity of the West-European world, which consisted of a group of nations developing in continual intercourse, was welded in Catholicism.

This theological welding was not only in ideas, it existed in reality, not only in the Pope, its monarchistic centre, but above all in the feudally and hierarchically organized Church, which, owning about a third of the land in every country, occupied a position of tremendous power in the feudal organization.

The Church with its feudal landownership was the real link between the different countries; the feudal organization of the Church gave a religious consecration to the secular feudal state system.

Besides, the clergy was the only educated class. It was therefore natural that Church dogma was the starting-point and basis of all thought.

Jurisprudence, natural science, philosophy, everything was dealt with according to, whether its content agreed or disagreed with the doctrines of the Church.

But in the womb of feudalism the power of the bourgeoisie was developing.

A new class appeared in opposition to the big landowners.

The city burghers were first and foremost and exclusively producers of and traders in commodities, while the feudal mode of production was based substantially on self-consumption of the product within a limited circle, partly by the producers and partly by the feudal lord.

The Catholic world outlook, fashioned on the pattern of feudalism, was no longer adequate for this new class and its conditions of production and exchange.

Nevertheless, this new class remained for a long time a captive in the bonds of almighty theology.

From the thirteenth to the seventeenth century all the reformations and the struggles carried out under religious slogans that were connected with them were, on the theoretical side, nothing but repeated attempts of the burghers and plebeians in the towns and the peasants who had become rebellious by contact with both the latter to adapt the old theological world outlook to the changed economic conditions and the condition of life of the new class.

But that could not be done.

The flag of religion waved for the last time in England in the seventeenth century, and hardly fifty years later appeared undisguised in France the new world outlook which was to become the classical outlook of bourgeoisie, the juristic world outlook.

It was a secularization of the theological outlook.

Human right took the place of dogma, of divine right, the state took the place of the church.

The economic and social conditions, which had formerly been imagined to have been created by the Church and dogma because they were sanctioned by the Church, were now considered as founded on right and created by the state.

Because commodity exchange on a social scale and in its full development, particularly through advance and credit, produces complicated mutual contract relations and therefore demands generally applicable rules that can be given only by the community — state-determined standards of right — it was imagined that these standards of right arose not from the economic facts but from formal establishment by the state.

And because competition, the basic form of trade of free commodity producers, is the greatest equalizer, equality before the law became the main battle-cry of the bourgeoisie.

The fact that this newly aspiring class's struggle against the feudal lords and the absolute monarchy then protecting them, like every class struggle, had to be a political struggle, a struggle for the mastery of the state, and had to be fought on juridical demands contributed to strengthen the juristic outlook.

But the bourgeoisie produced its negative double, the proletariat, and with it a new class struggle which broke out before the bourgeoisie had completed the conquest of political power.

As the bourgeoisie in its time had by force of tradition dragged the theological outlook with it for a while in its fight against the nobility, so, too, the proletariat at first took over the juristic outlook from its opponent and sought in it weapons against the bourgeoisie.

The first elements of the proletarian party as well as their theoretical representatives remained wholly on the juristic “ground of right,” the only distinction being that they built up for themselves a different ground of “right” from that of the bourgeoisie.

On one side the demand for equality was extended so that equality in right would be completed by social equality; on the other, from Adam Smith’s proposition that labour is the source of all wealth but that the product of labour must be shared with the landowner and the capitalist the conclusion was drawn that this sharing was unjust and must be either abolished or modified in favour of the worker.

But the feeling that to leave this question on the mere juristic “ground of right” in no way made possible the abolition of the evil conditions created by the bourgeois-capitalistic mode of production, i.e., the mode of production based on large-scale industry, already then led the major minds among the earlier socialists — Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen — to abandon entirely the juristic-political field and to declare all political struggle fruitless.

Both these views were equally unsatisfactory to express adequately and embrace completely the working class’s desire for emancipation created by economic conditions.

The demand for the full product of labour and just as much the demand for equality lost themselves in unsolvable contradictions as soon as they were formulated juristically in detail and left the core of the question — the transformation of the mode of production — more or less untouched.

The rejection of the political struggle by the great Utopians was at the same time the rejection of the class struggle, i.e., of the only form of activity of the class whose interests they represented.

Both outlooks made abstraction of the historical background to which they owed their existence; both appealed to feeling: some to the feeling of justice, others to the feeling of humanity.

Both attired their demands in the form of pious wishes of which one could not say why they had to be fulfilled at that very time and not a thousand years earlier or later.

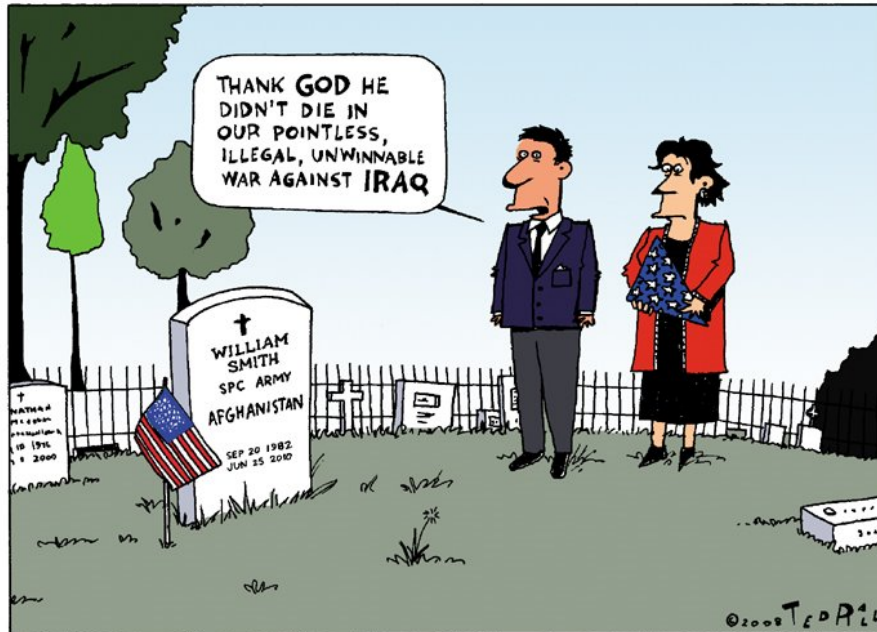
The working class, who by the changing of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode was deprived of all ownership of the means of production and by the mechanism of the capitalist mode of production is continually engendered anew in that hereditary state of propertylessness, cannot find an exhaustive expression of its living condition in the juristic illusion of the bourgeoisie.

It can only know that condition of life fully itself if it looks at things in their reality without juristically colored glasses.

But Marx helped it to do that with his materialist conception of history, by providing the proof that all man’s juristic, political, philosophical, religious and other ideas are derived in the last resort from his economic conditions of life, from his mode of production and of exchanging the product.

Thus he provided the world outlook corresponding to the conditions of the life and struggle of the proletariat; only lack of illusions in the heads of the workers could correspond to their lack of property. And this proletarian world outlook is now spreading over the world.

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.

READERS 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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“We Are Workers. We Are Not Slaves”



Domestic helpers and their supporters carry pictures of injured helper Erwiana Sulistyaningsih during a march to demand an investigation into her abuse, in Hong Kong January 19, 2014. Thousands of people rallied in Hong Kong on Sunday to demand justice for Erwiana, who was badly beaten by her employer in a case that has sparked widespread outrage and a police investigation into accusations of torture.
REUTERS/Tyrone Siu

“Self-Defense Groups Made Up Of Mexican Farmers And Other Local People Have Taken Over

Another Town That Had Been Overrun By Drug Traffickers” Militia Members Announced They Returned To Villagers Several Hundred Acres Of Land That Had Been Seized By The Drug Cartel: “Federal Forces In Recent Days Tried To Disarm The Local Vigilante Groups” “The Militias So Far Have Stood Their Ground”



19 January 14 By Agence France-Presse

Self-defense groups made up of Mexican farmers and other local people have taken over another town that had been overrun by drug traffickers in the restive state of Michoacan.

About 80 men armed with high-powered rifles Friday moved into the village of Huerta, population of about 500, in a convoy of trucks, an AFP reporter at the scene said.

They were followed by a contingent of federal police who did not try to stop them, despite government efforts in recent days to get civilian vigilante groups in the region to stand down.

The vigilantes also captured two suspected cartel members and confiscated weapons, jackets, radios and other goods and equipment.

Federal forces in recent days have moved into Michoacan, in western Mexico, and tried to disarm the local vigilante groups and flush out the Knights Templar drug trafficking gang, which has seized control of large swathes of Michoacan.

The militias so far have stood their ground, saying they want to see drug kingpins arrested before they back down.

Civilians first took up arms in February 2013 to oust the Knights Templar from the region, saying local police were either colluding with gangs or unable to stop the group's violence, kidnapping and extortion rackets.

The issue is even on the radar of Washington, where Secretary of State John Kerry on Friday expressed concern, and said the US government is prepared to offer assistance if needed.

"We're concerned," Kerry told reporters shortly before meeting with his Mexican counterpart Jose Antonio Meade in the US capital. "Afraid, no. Concerned, yes, and we will work with the government and we're prepared to try to be helpful if we can," Kerry said.

The foreign minister, meanwhile, told Mexican radio later Friday that his government has the situation under control.

"Mexico has all the elements needed to work toward and create the conditions needed for institutional governance sought by Michoacan's citizenry," Meade told Radio Formula.

Michoacan has become the most pressing security issue facing Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto, who inherited a bloody war on drugs from his predecessor in 2012 that has left more than 77,000 people dead since it was launched in 2006.

Also on Thursday, vigilante militia members announced that they had returned to villagers several hundred acres of land that had been once been seized by the cartel.

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Obama's NSA 'Reforms' Are Little More Than A PR Attempt To Mollify The Public: Obama Is Draping The Banner Of Change Over The NSA Status Quo; Bulk Surveillance That Caused Such Outrage Will Remain In Place; "The Goal Isn't To Truly Reform The Agency; It Is Deceive People Into Believing It Has Been So That They No Longer Fear It Or Are Angry About It"



17 January 2014 by Glenn Greenwald, The Guardian

In response to political scandal and public outrage, official Washington repeatedly uses the same well-worn tactic.

It is the one that has been hauled out over decades in response to many of America's most significant political scandals.

Predictably, it is the same one that shaped President Obama's much-heralded Friday speech to announce his proposals for "reforming" the National Security Agency in the wake of seven months of intense worldwide controversy.

The crux of this tactic is that US political leaders pretend to validate and even channel public anger by acknowledging that there are "serious questions that have been raised".

They vow changes to fix the system and ensure these problems never happen again.

And they then set out, with their actions, to do exactly the opposite: to make the system prettier and more politically palatable with empty, cosmetic "reforms" so as to placate public anger while leaving the system fundamentally unchanged, even more immune than before to serious challenge.

This scam has been so frequently used that it is now easily recognizable.

In the mid-1970s, the Senate uncovered surveillance abuses that had been ongoing for decades, generating widespread public fury. In response, the US Congress enacted a

new law (FISA) which featured two primary "safeguards": a requirement of judicial review for any domestic surveillance, and newly created committees to ensure legal compliance by the intelligence community.

But the new court was designed to ensure that all of the government's requests were approved: it met in secret, only the government's lawyers could attend, it was staffed with the most pro-government judges, and it was even housed in the executive branch.

As planned, the court over the next 30 years virtually never said no to the government.

Identically, the most devoted and slavish loyalists of the National Security State were repeatedly installed as the committee's heads, currently in the form of NSA cheerleaders Democrat Dianne Feinstein in the Senate and Republican Mike Rogers in the House.

As the New Yorker's Ryan Lizza put it in a December 2013 article on the joke of Congressional oversight, the committees "more often treat ... senior intelligence officials like matinee idols".

As a result, the committees, ostensibly intended to serve an overseer function, have far more often acted as the NSA's in-house PR firm.

The heralded mid-1970s reforms did more to make Americans believe there was reform than actually providing any, thus shielding it from real reforms.

The same thing happened after the New York Times, in 2005, revealed that the NSA under Bush had been eavesdropping on Americans for years without the warrants required by criminal law.

The US political class loudly claimed that they would resolve the problems that led to that scandal. Instead, they did the opposite: in 2008, a bipartisan Congress, with the support of then-Senator Barack Obama, enacted a new FISA law that legalized the bulk of the once-illegal Bush program, including allowing warrantless eavesdropping on hundreds of millions of foreign nationals and large numbers of Americans as well.

This was also the same tactic used in the wake of the 2008 financial crises. Politicians dutifully read from the script that blamed unregulated Wall Street excesses and angrily vowed to rein them in. They then enacted legislation that left the bankers almost entirely unscathed, and which made the "too-big-to-fail" problem that spawned the crises worse than ever.

And now we have the spectacle of President Obama reciting paeans to the values of individual privacy and the pressing need for NSA safeguards. "Individual freedom is the wellspring of human progress," he gushed with an impressively straight face.

"One thing I'm certain of, this debate will make us stronger," he pronounced, while still seeking to imprison for decades the whistleblower who enabled that debate. The bottom line, he said, is this: "I believe we need a new approach."

But those pretty rhetorical flourishes were accompanied by a series of plainly cosmetic "reforms".

By design, those proposals will do little more than maintain rigidly in place the very bulk surveillance systems that have sparked such controversy and anger.

To be sure, there were several proposals from Obama that are positive steps.

A public advocate in the Fisa court, a loosening of "gag orders" for national security letters, removing metadata control from the NSA, stricter standards for accessing metadata, and narrower authorizations for spying on friendly foreign leaders (but not, of course, their populations) can all have some marginal benefits. But even there, Obama's speech was so bereft of specifics – what will the new standards be? who will now control Americans' metadata? – that they are more like slogans than serious proposals.

Ultimately, the radical essence of the NSA – a system of suspicion-less spying aimed at hundreds of millions of people in the US and around the world – will fully endure even if all of Obama's proposals are adopted. That's because Obama never hid the real purpose of this process. It is, he and his officials repeatedly acknowledged, "to restore public confidence" in the NSA.

In other words, the goal isn't to truly reform the agency; it is deceive people into believing it has been so that they no longer fear it or are angry about it.

As the ACLU's executive director Anthony Romero said after the speech:

"The president should end – not mend – the government's collection and retention of all law-abiding Americans' data. When the government collects and stores every American's phone call data, it is engaging in a textbook example of an 'unreasonable search' that violates the constitution."

That, in general, has long been Obama's primary role in our political system and his premiere, defining value to the permanent power factions that run Washington.

He prettifies the ugly; he drapes the banner of change over systematic status quo perpetuation; he makes Americans feel better about policies they find repellent without the need to change any of them in meaningful ways.

He's not an agent of change but the soothing branding packaging for it.

As is always the case, those who want genuine changes should not look to politicians, and certainly not to Barack Obama, to wait for it to be gifted.

Obama was forced to give this speech by rising public pressure, increasingly scared US tech giants, and surprisingly strong resistance from the international community to the out-of-control American surveillance state.

Today's speech should be seen as the first step, not the last, on the road to restoring privacy.

The causes that drove Obama to give this speech need to be, and will be, stoked and nurtured further until it becomes clear to official Washington that, this time around, cosmetic gestures are plainly inadequate.

**“The Defining Characteristic Of
21st Century American Life Is That
Neither Of The Pro-Business
Parties Is Willing Or Able To Offer
The Slightest Concessions To The
People”**

**“Questions Of ‘Reform Versus
Revolution’ Have Little Relevance,
For The Simple Reason That Neither
Corporate Party Deigns To Entertain
Anything In The Way Of Reform”**

**“Both Agree That The Poor Will Find
Salvation In A Capitalists’ Paradise”**

Of the two capitalist politicians, Rand Paul is the more honest actor.

The free market barbarian from Kentucky dispenses his poison unadulterated, while the banker’s man in the White House mixes arsenic with Kool-Aid, in the form of easier access to existing federal programs and grants (which, of course, will be drawn from other needy “un-zoned” localities).

01/15/2014 by BAR executive editor Glen Ford, Black Agenda Report [Excerpts]

The defining characteristic of 21st century American life is that neither of the pro-business parties is willing or able to offer the slightest concessions to the people.

In such an environment, questions of “reform versus revolution” have little relevance, for the simple reason that neither corporate party deigns to entertain anything in the way of reform.

Although Republicans and Democrats now acknowledge that income inequality is, as President Obama puts it, “the defining challenge of our time,” both parties propose to

remedy the situation through more concentrated doses of corporate tax cuts and business deregulation.

Both agree that the poor will find salvation in a capitalists' paradise. So let it be written, so shall it be zoned.

President Obama, the corporate Democrat, wants to “cut taxes on hiring and investment in areas designated as Promise Zones – based upon the proven model of Empowerment Zones tax credits – to attract businesses and create jobs.”

Obama's plan would target five cities and regions, with the prospect of 15 more to follow. He would “cut red tape” to concentrate existing federal resources on the targeted zones, while spending no new money.

Sen. Rand Paul, the libertarian Republican, proposes to energize the economies of high poverty areas by drastically cutting taxes in “Economic Freedom Zones” – starting with Detroit.

“Reducing taxes in economically depressed areas is a stimulus that will work,” says Paul, “because the money is returned to businesses and individuals who have already proven that they can succeed.” New government expenditures are against his religion.

Of the two capitalist politicians, Rand Paul is the more honest actor.

The free market barbarian from Kentucky dispenses his poison unadulterated, while the banker's man in the White House mixes arsenic with Kool-Aid, in the form of easier access to existing federal programs and grants (which, of course, will be drawn from other needy “un-zoned” localities).

But Kool-Aid is not reform; it only makes death go down more sweetly, and the final agony is the same.

At its core, Obama's philosophy differs from Rand Paul's only in that the Democrat would provide more government “in-puts” to sweeten the deal for capital, in the form of publicly-financed charter schools, beefed up policing, and improved public infrastructure, in addition to deregulation, low taxes and subsidies.

Rand Paul would abolish unions in a wholly rezoned America, while Obama would simply let them die of attrition.

Black people would, for all official purposes, disappear under both regimes, because “there is not a Black America and a White America and Latino America and Asian America – there's the United States of America” – where the only race that matters is the race to the bottom.

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