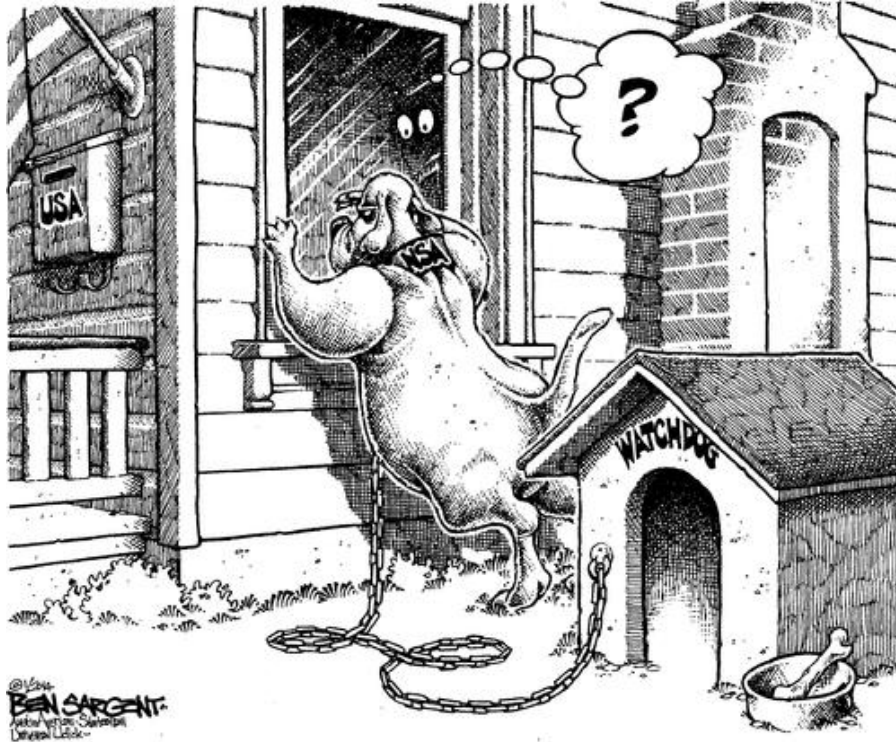


Military Resistance 12A17



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation “Service Member” Killed In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced; “Insurgents Were All Were Wearing Coalition Uniforms”

Jan. 20, 2014 The Associated Press

An assault by bombers and other attackers against a foreign military base in southern Afghanistan on Monday killed one service member.

The nationality of the service member was not released.

Jawed Faisal, a spokesman for the governor of eastern Kandahar, said nine insurgents took part in the attack against the base.

“First a suicide car bomber exploded near the entrance of the base, then other attackers armed with weapons engaged,” he said, adding that the insurgents were all were wearing coalition uniforms — a common Taliban tactic.

The U.S. -led International Security Assistance Force said in a statement that the attack was carried out by a car bomber and insurgents with automatic rifles who were also wearing vests with explosives.

Pentagon Asks For Bids For Air-Dropping Supplies To Cut- Off U.S. Troops:

**“Too Many Troops Had Been
Wounded On The 12-Hour
Overland Convoys”**

**“It Doesn’t Matter Who Goes Out,
Someone’s Getting Hit Every Day”**

**“These Clauses From The Solicitation
Read Like A Blueprint For Retreat Under
Fire”**

Jan. 12, 2014 By Mark Thompson, Time [Excerpts]

The presumption in warfare — especially counterinsurgency — is that as you win the local population over to your side, things should begin to return to normal.

That has rarely been true in Afghanistan, where the volume of supplies air-dropped to U.S. troops — because ground support was too dangerous or difficult — soared from 2 million lb. (900,000 kg) in 2005 to 99 million lb. (45 million kg) in 2012.

Delivering food, fuel and weapons to the remaining 38,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan isn't easy.

These clauses from the solicitation [revised solicitation issued last week for what it calls its Low Cost/Low Altitude Aerial Drop] read like a blueprint for retreat under fire:

- Aircraft are not to land in areas where there is active fighting.
- If an aircraft has been disabled in enemy territory and is likely to be seized by the enemy, the contractor shall make every reasonable effort to destroy the cargo to prevent it from being recovered by the enemy.
- Authorized marking on all aircraft will be the contractor's name on each side as well as required markings such as tail numbers.
- Other identifying marking, such as 'U.N.,' 'ISAF,' 'NATO' or 'SFOR' are not allowed and must be removed.
- It is in the best interest of all parties that aircraft not be painted in a color that is close to military colors and paint schemes.
- Any color other than white should be reviewed and approved by the government prior to deployment.
- Aircraft must have ballistic protection around the windshield, aircrew seats and crew area.
- The government accepts no liability should any contractor be taken hostage or be killed during any mission or while under contract with the government.
- Due to constraints on size of (drop zones), contractor shall be required to perform paradrop of equipment bundles at altitudes as low as 150 ft. above ground.
- Government Security Forces and Quick Response Forces personnel will provide security and force-protection procedures for the contractor while on military installations and during contract performance.
- It is the contractor's responsibility to obtain prior approval from the combatant commander to arm its personnel or install armament on its aircraft.
- The contractor shall establish a program to prevent unlawful seizure of aircraft.
- In the event a contractor is illuminated or 'spotlighted,' or is fired upon in the air or on the ground, the crew shall note the date, time and approximate area from which the event originated.

This method of delivery has been growing in popularity in Afghanistan recently. Unlike bigger bundles dropped from high altitudes from big Air Force cargo planes, these — which have been delivered by a DHC-4T Caribou aircraft — fly low and slow and drop their bundles within 20 m of their target. Civilian pilots have debated the wisdom of signing up for such assignments.

Aircraft must be ready to fly 24/7, although they are limited to 10 hours on any single day, and are expected to average about five.

The contractor is expected to launch “emergency resupply missions” on six hours’ notice and be ready to deliver some 400 bundles monthly to “forward operating bases, combat outposts and/or associated drop zones.” The air-dropped packages range in weight from 250 lb. (113 kg) to 560 lb. (254 kg)

Such flights began delivering supplies from Bagram to Ghazni in May. “It saves lives — it takes soldiers off the road,” one soldier told an Army public-affairs officer in August.

Too many fellow troops had been wounded on the 12-hour overland convoys, he added, “It doesn’t matter who goes out, someone’s getting hit every day.”

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL

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**What Withdrawal?
U.S. Pumps More Cash Into
Afghanistan’s \$500 Million Dam:
“The U.S. Military No Longer Has
Control Of The Region Or The Road It
Cleared In 2011 To Make Way For The
Supplies Needed To Complete The
Project”
“The Dam In Kajaki Has Captured
Attention For Its Beauty, Gross
Mismanagement, And Surrounding
Violence”**



Kajaki Dam: State Department Photo

JANUARY 13, 2014 by Dan Lamothe, Foreign Policy [Excerpts]

In October 2011, U.S. Marines in Afghanistan launched a massive operation, pushing northeast along treacherous Route 611 in Helmand province to tangle with insurgents in Kajaki, then one of the last districts in Helmand without a large presence of U.S. forces.

The major goal at the time: root out the Taliban in a series of firefights and connect the landmark hydroelectric facility in the region, with the rest of province.

Doing so would allow at long last for the belated installation of a third turbine planned to jump-start electricity for tens of thousands of people in the region.

More than two years later, the U.S. military and civilian presence in Afghanistan is trying, finally, to complete the project, which began in 2002 and has cost an estimated \$500 million.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide oversight as Afghanistan's power utility launches a contract competition to decide which company will install the third turbine.

The two-phase project will likely cost about \$75 million, according to a recent letter from John Sopko, the U.S. special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction (SIGAR).

USAID also has reached a new two-year, \$3 million with Black and Veatch, the Kansas-based engineering company that has worked on the dam for years. The company will continue to provide technical support to Afghanistan and whoever it selects to install the third turbine.

But the work to install the final turbine, said to be collecting dust at the dam since it was delivered in late 2008, will come at a tenuous time.

The U.S. military no longer has control of the region or the road it cleared in 2011 to make way for the supplies needed to complete the project.

Marines left their last base in Kajaki in December, turning over control of the security to Afghan forces, 1st Lt. Garth Langley, a Marine Corps spokesman, told Foreign Policy.

The U.S.-led military coalition has ceded control of security across most of the country to Afghan forces despite serious questions about their long-term viability.

Nevertheless, USAID maintains that the dam can blossom. The organization also says that although U.S. military commanders protested a decision last year to put Afghanistan's power utility, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) in charge of the project, it has enough oversight to make sure work is completed. Putting the Afghans in charge, USAID maintains, is part of the U.S. transition out of the country. USAID already has rehabilitated the first two decrepit turbines at the dam despite significant security challenges, boosting power to the point that 185,000 Afghans receive it, the organization said.

If the work is not completed, it would perpetuate more than a decade of heartbreak and frustration in the region.

Dozens of U.S. Marines have been killed fighting insurgents in the region, and a tour of the nearby village by this writer in spring 2012 showed that it was devastated from years of fighting, with power lines hanging at grotesque angles and walls on many compounds crumbling.

Civilians lived there anyway, primarily along a straight stretch of paved road said to be a runway the Soviet military built after invading the country in 1979.

Construction of the dam was first completed by the United States in the 1950s as part of an ambitious project to introduce irrigation and electricity across the region. After years of fierce fighting between the Soviet army and the mujahedeen, the Soviets pulled out of the country, leaving behind tanks, anti-aircraft guns, and other military equipment that dotted picturesque cliffs and hills that would have been inviting, were it not for the land mines hidden there.

The work isn't the only electric project the United States has planned in coming years in Afghanistan, either. It continues to move on the Power Transmission Expansion and Connectivity project, an expansive effort that would join a network of power stations built in several parts of the country.

The United States has set aside more than \$260 million for the effort, according to SIGAR.

It is considered Afghanistan's major power initiative, and it will link smaller networks in the northern and southern portions of the country, according to the Pentagon's November report to Congress on Afghanistan. Several related efforts are ongoing,

including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently advertising that it wants to erect up to \$100 million in power lines across the northern network in Kabul and Logar provinces.

Still, it is the dam in Kajaki that has captured attention for its beauty, gross mismanagement, and surrounding violence.

It's a metaphor, in many ways, for the country as a whole.

MILITARY NEWS

General In Command Of Michigan Air National Guard A Corrupt, Thieving Piece Of Shit

Jan. 13, 2014 By Andrew Tilghman, Staff writer; Army Times [Excerpts]

A one-star general and former commander of the Michigan Air National Guard improperly received nearly \$200,000 and broke the law by collecting a federal paycheck while performing a state-level job for 16 months, according to a newly released IG report.

Brig. Gen. Richard G. Elliot, Michigan's former Air adjutant general, also "used his public office for private gain" when he approved his own time and attendance records while serving as the state's top Air Guard official, the IG investigation found.

Elliot also received nearly \$20,000 in temporary duty travel money that was unwarranted, the IG found.

Before taking command of the state's Air Guard, Elliot served as a full-time guardsman, known as a "federal military technician," commanding the 127th Wing of the Air National Guard. In that position, he received a federal paycheck.

In December 2005, he was appointed to serve as the Air adjutant general and commander of the Michigan Air National Guard, making him a full-time employee of the state.

But in an effort to qualify for retirement benefits, Elliot failed to terminate his federal position as required by law and instead continued to approve his own time and attendance records.

As a result, he received more than \$194,000, the IG found.

At the time Elliot was appointed to command the state Air Guard in December 2005, he was eight months shy of qualifying for a military technician's retirement package.

Elliot also claimed more than \$19,000 in temporary duty travel money, approving his own travel claims, the IG said.

In 21 trips, Elliot violated regulations by claiming TDY money for trips to Lansing, Mich., which was technically his duty station and therefore not authorized for TDY reimbursement, the IG said.

When he submitted the paperwork for that money, Elliot “signed the vouchers himself as both the claimant and the supervisor,” the IG said.

The IG report was released for the first time Monday following a Freedom of Information Act request from Military Times.

The investigation ultimately lasted five years and was completed in April 2012.

The IG completed an initial probe in 2009 and referred the matter to criminal authorities, but federal prosecutors declined to prosecute and recommended the case be handled administratively.

The IG recommended that the secretary of the Air Force review the case and consider trying to recoup some money from Elliot and also to determine whether he is eligible for retirement benefits in light of the investigation.

A spokeswoman for Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James was unable to say Monday whether her office had taken any action regarding Elliot’s case.

The IG probe found that Elliot’s boss, Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler, then Michigan’s adjutant general, knew that Elliot was trying to reach his retirement date and sought to help Elliot remain on the books as a military technician.

Michigan officials said Elliot did not go on the Michigan state payroll until August 2006, or about seven months after he began performing the role of commander of the state Air Guard.

Cutler formally terminated Elliot as a federally paid military technician in April 2007, about seven months after Elliot became retirement eligible, according to the IG report.

Air Force Academy To Teach Cadets “The Do’s And Don’ts Of Formal Dining, Receiving Line Etiquette & And Social Event Planning”

Also “Proper Invitation And RSVP Procedures, How To Plan Social Events, How To Be A Guest, Social Conversations, And Writing Thank-You Cards”

[No, Not From The Duffle Blog]



Getty Images

While the social-decorum program has been under development, seniors have been served what the academy newspaper calls five-course meals—” beef medallions, roasted baby baker potatoes, salad, mixed vegetables and white chocolate raspberry Brule cheesecake”—in the academy’s formal dining hall to help them hone their etiquette skills.

Jan. 10, 2014 By Mark Thompson, Time

Sure, you’re learning how to bomb an enemy capital back to the Stone Age with that old tried-and-true “shock and awe” strategy.

But do you become flustered at a fancy dinner party when you have to pick the right salad fork?

Have no fear, Air Force Academy cadet: the service is seeking outside help to calm those Aim-High-society jitters.

The Colorado Springs, Colo., academy “has a requirement for a comprehensive etiquette training program instructing cadets and staff in military protocol for social and business situations as well as the skills they need to succeed in the U.S. Air Force and in life,” it said in a Thursday contract solicitation.

That's because being an Air Force officer is not all tarmac, cockpits and ready rooms.

According to the academy, it's also "table etiquette (settings, seating, decorum, conversation), the art of conversation (tact and diplomacy, small talk, use of proper language style, body language and non-verbal communication), social conduct in stressful situations, leadership roles outside the military structure, and ceremonies."

What the academy calls its "social decorum" curriculum has been under development for "several years."

Following this single-year contract, the academy says such training will be done by academy employees.

The program is funded by donor—not taxpayer— funds, an academy spokesman said.

The topics in each annual hour-long class will vary by year, but interested bidders are told not to worry about repeating themselves. "Training may be repetitive and cumulative," the solicitation says, "to ensure proper social behavior is inherent by graduation."

Freshmen training "shall emphasize courtesies and standards of behavior, proper hygiene, how to be a guest, social conversations, and writing thank-you cards."

Sophomores "shall be taught etiquette in small group situations, proper civilian dress standards, table etiquette (settings, seating, decorum, and conversation), receiving line etiquette and military dining-in/out etiquette."

Juniors "shall be taught social introductions, how to behave when alcohol is available, how to plan social events, and how to communicate standards of behavior to their peers and subordinates."

Seniors will get "Formal Decorum Training," which means they'll receive "experiential, semi-formal dinners to teach first-class cadets the do's and don'ts of formal dining.

The events will also be used to teach proper invitation and RSVP procedures, proper semi-formal civilian attire standards, and social event planning."

While the social-decorum program has been under development, seniors have been served what the academy newspaper calls five-course meals—"beef medallions, roasted baby baker potatoes, salad, mixed vegetables and white chocolate raspberry Brule cheesecake"—in the academy's formal dining hall to help them hone their etiquette skills.

"The intent is to practice so they understand," the academy's social-decorum consultant told the Academy Spirit.

"We want to take them from clueless to a class act."

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.”

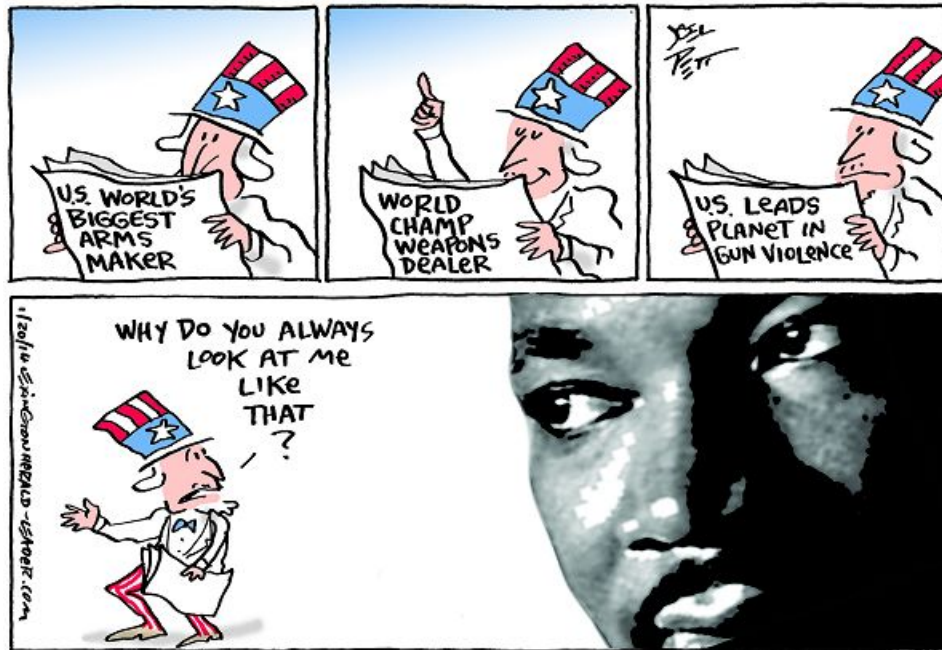
“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

The Social-Democrats ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression no matter where it appears no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.”

-- V. I. Lenin; What Is To Be Done

Number One



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in with caption. She writes: "Once again, we're number one. USA! USA!"]

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Settler Beats Up Two Palestinian Kids In Occupied Yabud Town

17/01/2014 PIC

JENIN - A Jewish settler physically assaulted two Palestinian minors from Yabud town, south of Jenin, and threatened to kill them during their presence near the illegal settlement Hermesh.

Local sources reported that Ahmed Ghassan and Ahmed Armelah, both 15, were walking in an area belonging to Yabud town near the settlement, when a settler working as a security man intercepted them and took them to the entrance of Hermesh.

They added that the security man severely beat them and threatened to shoot them if he spotted them again walking near the settlement.

[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.”]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Huge Majority Of Egyptians Refuse To Vote For The Military Dictatorship:

“Turnout Was Low, At Less Than 39%”

“This Is A Very Alarming Figure. ... Something Has Gone Very Wrong”

“Ominously, Only 16 Percent Of Egyptians Ages 18 To 30 Are Said To Have Voted”

Ominously, only 16 percent of Egyptians ages 18 to 30 are said to have voted. That is the segment of the population that served as the engine of the 2011 revolution and the big anti-Morsi demonstrations in June and July last year.

January 19, 2014 By HAMZA HENDAWI Associated Press [Excerpts]

Hendawi, who has covered the Middle East for the AP since 1995, is the Cairo chief of bureau. AP Reporter Maggie Hyde contributed to this report.

For all the self-congratulatory headlines in Egypt's pro-military media, the results of last week's constitutional referendum may have fallen short of the emphatic popular mandate the nation's military chief was looking for before announcing his presidential run.

Moreover, the outcome — nearly everyone who cast a ballot approved the draft constitution, but turnout was low, at less than 39 percent — has put on display the country's enduring divisions six months after the ouster of Islamist president Mohammed Morsi and nearly three years after autocrat Hosni Mubarak was overthrown.

Another worrying aspect is that young Egyptians appear to have stayed away from the polls, probably because of frustration over the lack of real change and anger over the perceived return of Mubarak-era figures, along with such hated practices as police brutality and other heavy-handed tactics by security agencies.

The 98.1 percent “yes” vote cannot be seen as an accurate reflection of public opinion in “a country as big and as complex and divided as Egypt,” said Khaled Fahmy, a political analyst who chairs the history department at the American University in Cairo. “This is a very alarming figure. ... Something has gone very wrong.”

While no one is claiming the vote was rigged or fraudulent, it took place amid a climate of intimidation, with a de facto ban on campaigning for a “no” vote and a media frenzy that projected a “yes” vote as the only way out of the country's deadly turmoil and economic and social ills.

“Even the most optimistic of [military dictator] el-Sissi's supporters admit that the turnout was less than ideal,” prominent analyst Nervana Mahmoud wrote in her blog on Sunday. “Despite aggressive campaigning by state and private media as well as top religious figures and political parties, including the Salafi Al-Nour, the overall turnout failed to reach the desired target of 40 percent or above.”

The relatively low turnout, according to three senior officials familiar with the thinking of the military's leadership, suggests the emergence of serious cracks in the el-Sissi-led coalition that led the opposition and eventual removal of Morsi last year.

Ominously, only 16 percent of Egyptians ages 18 to 30 are said to have voted. That is the segment of the population that served as the engine of the 2011 revolution and the big anti-Morsi demonstrations in June and July last year.

“Many seniors and middle-aged Egyptians are promoting stability and realpolitik, and are willing to accept the repressive measures of the authority in return for having a functional state, in comparison to a substantial portion of the younger generation who are still in the mood for revolution,” said Mahmoud, the blogger.

**“We Have Decided To Organize
Our Self-Defense Group In Order
To Expel Organized Crime From
Our Town”**

**“We Invite Other Towns, Villages And
Communities In The Municipality Of
Aquila To Join Our Struggle, As We
Seek Only Well-Being And Social
Peace”**

**[First Statement From The Self-Defense
Group Of Aquila, Michoacán]**



January 19, 2014: First Statement from the Self-Defense Group of Aquila, Michoacán, El
Enemigo Común. Translated by Scott Campbell

Aquila, Michoacán January 18, 2014

From the Self-Defense Group of Aquila, Michoacán to the general public:

Today, the residents of the municipal seat of Aquila, tired of the extortions, rapes,
killings, kidnappings and all sorts of criminal acts committed by the Knights Templar;
given the complete abandonment of the citizenry by the municipal and state

governments who for 12 years did not provide the security needed for our people to have a peaceful and dignified life; we have decided to organize our self-defense group in order to expel organized crime from our town, and we invite the rest of the people of the municipality to rise up against crime, so they never again feel fear or pay protection fees.

As is known from the national and international media, our municipality previously attempted to remove the yoke of organized crime.

This movement was led by members of the indigenous community of San Miguel Aquila.

This community is one of the four that comprises the municipality, and is owner of an iron mine whose resources are exploited by the transnational mining company Ternium.

This company pays a royalty to the indigenous community for the extracted iron, which it hauls from Aquila, Michoacán to Tecomán, Colima, and organized crime charges them a monthly quota.

That is to say, they ask the residents to part with the money they receive.

If they don't pay, they kill them.

So the indigenous from this community decided to form their community guard in order to protect their heritage, life and dignity. They invited us to join them, but we, as prisoners of fear of the reprisals from organized crime, decided not to support them.

The illegitimate municipal president, Juan Hernández Ramírez, was invited to join the movement and to stop paying fees to the criminals in the region, but instead decided to flee and to leave his people at the mercy of organized crime.

It is known that this president obtained his post as a result of fraudulent elections, during which the Knights Templar cartel undertook to intimidate people into voting for Juan Hernández. They also burned ballot boxes where he had a clear disadvantage.

But all of their tricks were not enough, as the rival candidate won the elections. So the criminals threatened him with death so he would not take the position.

And that was how Hernández Ramírez became municipal president at the hands of the Templars.

The period of July 24 to August 13, 2013 – when the community guard of the indigenous from the community of San Miguel Aquila operated in the area – was one of immense calm.

The rapes, kidnappings and payments of protection fees disappeared as the criminals fled. Seeing the results of the community movement, we became inspired to support the cause of the community.

However, on August 14, a joint state and municipal government operation, together with the Marines, entered Aquila and dismantled the community movement. They took 45 prisoners.

The Special Operations Group (GOES) and State Judicial Police killed two and also beat women, children and elderly who called for them to return the men who were defending them from organized crime.

When the community guard was dismantled, the Knights Templar, under the auspices of the state and municipal governments, decided to “exterminate” all the residents of San Miguel Aquila. Miguel Alcalá Alcalá, Emilio Martínez López and Miguel Martínez López were tortured and murdered by Templar criminals.

Later, Ignacio Martínez de la Cruz, Francisco Javier Ramos Walle and Carlos Zapien Díaz were disappeared on November 25, 2013 and haven't been heard from since. The remaining residents were displaced, prisoners of panic and sadness as their government did nothing to protect them.

Once the community guard was completely dismantled by the tripartite alliance of the Knights Templar-State Government-Municipal Government, the Knights Templar decided to charge fees from the entire population, which particularly impacted our humble neighbors who are of limited means.

We thought that if we didn't support the community guard, the Templars would have compassion on us and wouldn't charge us fees, or at least would not increase them, nor hassle our families. However, they returned more ambitious and bloodthirsty.

The Templars increased the fees because they lost income from those who were jailed, murdered, disappeared and displaced. Only some in the community hand over payment to the Templars, but they are the ones who have ties to them. They are José Cortes Méndez, Miguel Zapien Godínez, Fidel Villanueva Espinosa, Juan Carlos Martínez Ramos, Juan Zapien Sandoval, among others.

The self-defense phenomenon in Michoacán has great momentum, every day there are more people who decide to expel the criminals from their regions, which has caused the Templars to migrate to neighboring regions, in particular into our area, increasing the wave of violence in Aquila.

So we are faced with the panorama of violence which we are returning to live in again, with the complicity of our state and municipal government and the apathy of our federal government.

It is for these reasons that the residents of the municipal seat of Michoacán opened our eyes and decided to organize as a self-defense group in order to expel all criminals from the area.

Our social struggle will not end just when Federico González, alias “El Lico,” the boss of the Knights Templar cartel in the Aquila-Coahuayana region, falls, but when all his partners and gunmen do.

Our self-defense movement organized by the residents and people in general of the Aquila area is inclusive.

Because of this we gave a vote of confidence to municipal president Juan Hernández Ramírez and invited him to join the struggle against crime. But the mayor once again showed his Templar leanings, he decided to leave the area.

As such, our self-defense group and the people who support the movement condemn the criminal and indifferent attitude of Juan Hernández Ramírez.

Let it be clear that our self-defense movement was born of social necessity, against organized crime.

It seeks to reestablish peace and order for our people.

We invite other towns, villages and communities in the municipality of Aquila to join our struggle, as we seek only well-being and social peace.

SINCERELY

The Self-Defense Council of Aquila, Michoacán

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**“Rebel Groups Have Tightened
Their Grip On Falluja”**

**“The Tribes Scattered Around Falluja
Have Zero Loyalty To The Central
Government”**

**“Now They (The Army) Are Not
Controlling Anything And No Roads
Can Be Closed”**



Insurgents clash with Iraqi government forces outside the city of Falluja, 70 km (44 miles) west of Baghdad, January 19, 2014.

Police special forces and helicopter gunships attacked militants in the nearby city of Ramadi on Sunday, but halted the assault after at least eight of their number were killed, police and health officials said. There was no word on casualties among the militants.
REUTERS/Stringer

18 January 2014 World Bulletin/News Desk [Excerpts]

Rebel groups have tightened their grip on Falluja, defying the Iraqi government's efforts to persuade local tribesmen to expel them from the Sunni Muslim city, residents and officials say

Despite an army siege, fighters and weapons have been flowing into the city, where U.S. troops fought some of their fiercest battles during their 2003-11 occupation of Iraq.

[F]ighters have sneaked into the city along with an array of weaponry ranging from small arms and mortars to Grad missiles and anti-aircraft guns, according to security and local officials, residents and tribal leaders.

“Our sources in Falluja indicate that militant numbers have increased to more than 400 in the last few days and that more anti-aircraft guns were received,” said a senior local official who declined to be named. His figure could not be confirmed.

Militants controlling a mainly Sunni area west of Baghdad are so well-armed that they could occupy the capital, a top Iraqi official warned Monday, a frank and bleak assessment of the challenge posed in routing the insurgents

“The weapons that were brought inside Fallujah are huge and advanced and frankly enough to occupy Baghdad,” Deputy Interior Minister Adnan al-Asadi said in a speech.

The weapons and fighters are reaching Falluja mainly from its southern environs, an area entirely under the sway of tribes hostile to the government, security officials said.

“The tribes scattered around Falluja have zero loyalty to the central government,” Sheikh Mohammed al-Bajari, a tribal leader and negotiator in the city, told Reuters by phone.

“Now they (the army) are not controlling anything and no roads can be closed,” he said of Falluja’s southern approaches.

Many people in Falluja loathe Maliki’s government, which they see as oppressive and provocative towards minority Sunnis, but also fear the revival of militant rule.

Last week Falluja community leaders nominated a new police chief and mayor.

The militants responded by blowing up the police chief’s house on Tuesday and briefly holding the mayor. Both men have since fled north to Iraqi Kurdistan.

MORE:

Government Forces At Ramadi “Struggling To Advance In The Face Of Tough Resistance” “Security Forces Withdrawn After Suffering Casualties”

“Four Of Their Humvees, Two Tanks And An Armored Truck Destroyed”

Jan. 20, 2014 The Associated Press & January 19 By Loveday Morris, Washington Post

Iraqi government forces backed by some tribal militias launched an all-out offensive Sunday to seize back control of Ramadi and surrounding areas from the militants.

Ahmed Abu Risha, a prominent tribal leader who sides with the government, said the worst of Sunday’s fighting in Ramadi had occurred around the sports stadium, where insurgents were holed up.

He said he lost no men. However, Anbar officials cited by the Associated Press said 20 police officers and pro-government tribesmen had been killed or injured in the offensive.

A local journalist, who spoke on the condition of anonymity for security reasons, said Abu Risha’s men and security forces had withdrawn after suffering casualties.

Four of their Humvees, two tanks and an armored truck were destroyed, the journalist said.

Fierce clashes continued Monday, with government forces and allied tribesmen struggling to advance in the face of tough resistance, according to local police.

“The government is worried that if they give the tribes weapons in the day, the same weapons will be used to shoot them at night,” the official said.

Militants are especially active at night, and are employing snipers to stop government forces from advancing.

Two policemen and a local television cameraman who had been accompanying them were killed when a roadside bomb hit their convoy inside Ramadi, police said.

MORE:

The Maliki Regime Blames All Terrorist Acts On Al-Qaeda “Iraqis, However, Suspect An Abundance Of Diverse Actors Including The Regime Itself”

“Its Security Officers Strive To Increase Their Funding And Its Officials Resort To Covering Up Tracks, Burning Documents And Eliminating Rivals”

Adding to its crimes against Iraqi people, the US continues to deliver to al-Maliki’s regime weapons and equipment, abetting its militarization and uncontrollable violence against civilians. –

January 18, 2014 by Haifa Zangana, MWC News [Excerpts]

Haifa Zangana is an Iraqi novelist, artist and activist. Among her books are Dreaming of Baghdad and City of Widows: An Iraqi woman’s account of war and resistance. She co-authored The Torturer in the Mirror with Ramsey Clark and Thomas Ehrlich Reifer. -

The Maliki government has been harvesting over \$100bn a year for some time now, from the nation’s oil wealth.

That amounts to about \$20,000 a year per average Iraqi household of 7 people, except that Iraqis are left deprived of basic commodities.

The wealth is squandered or stolen, a situation illustrated by Transparency International as: “Massive embezzlement, procurement scams, money laundering, oil smuggling and widespread bureaucratic bribery have led the country to the bottom of international corruption rankings, fuelled political violence and hampered effective state building and service delivery.”

Terrorism thrives through official corruption, since any officer has a price for letting go of a car or a convict. The officers themselves pay to get their positions, and they have to cover the costs for acquiring them.

The Maliki regime blames all terrorist acts on al-Qaeda, and recently on Daish. Iraqis, however, suspect an abundance of diverse actors according to where and when a terrorist act is committed, including the regime itself, its security officers who strive to increase their funding and its officials who resort to covering up tracks, burning documents and eliminating rivals.

Al-Maliki also selectively chooses not to mention the regime’s own militias: Asaib Ahl al-Haq, Iraqi Hezbollah, the Badr brigades, factions of the Mahdi army and the Mokhtar army.

The latter’s leader has bragged on Baghdadiya TV, about their responsibility for several attacks. No investigation has been done and no one was arrested.

There is also hardly any mention of the Iraqi Special Forces inherited from the occupation, especially trained by Colonel James Steele under US ambassador John Negroponte and attached now directly to al-Maliki's office.

Above all, there is no mention of the plethora of foreign-led special operation agents, private security contractors, and organized networks of professional killers, some of whom, many Iraqis believe, are protected by the regime, in the shadow of the US' biggest embassy in the world, in the fortified green zone in Baghdad.

Added to this list is Iran and its using of Iraq as a battle ground to settle scores with the US, or making their presence felt in the ongoing bargaining about its regional role.

Al-Maliki's political alliance, originally designed by the US-led occupation and carried on by the same players despite the fallacy of an electoral process, proved to be a complete failure leading the country from one disaster to another.

A political process based on a sectarian-ethnic quota is the Frankenstein created and nurtured by the US and the UK to divide and conquer by positioning themselves to be the indispensable arbitrator.

But like all rootless monsters, and oppressive subservient rulers navigating between masters, it has grown beyond the control of its creator planting the seeds of fragmentation and animosity.

The squabbling of the politicians, calling themselves partners in al-watan (homeland), has developed, in some cases, into a full-blown bloody clash, such as when security forces raided the home of MP Ahmed al-Alwani in Ramadi, which led to the killing of his brother and five guards.

Under current Iraqi law, 48 offenses are subject to the death penalty.

Men as well as women are executed in an unprecedented rate.

Just in 2013, 169 people were executed, the highest such figure since the 2003 US-led invasion, placing it third in the world, behind China and Iran.

Iraq's justice system is "too deeply flawed to warrant even a limited use of the death penalty, let alone dozens of executions at a time," the United Nations human rights chief Navi Pillay said, warning that the death penalty undermines efforts to reduce violence and achieve a more stable society.

Torture, sexual abuse and the threat of rape and actual rape are frequently inflicted on detainees, regardless of their gender.

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



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

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**Ecuador's Capitalist
Dictatorship Attacks Indigenous
Leaders Opposing Big Oil
Corporations Taking Away Their
Land:**

“The Government Is Now Attempting To Take Down Ecuador’s Indigenous Leaders”
“The Government Of The Ecuador, Through The Ministry Of Hydrocarbons, Continues To Criminalize Ecuadorian Indigenous Leaders”
“The Complaint Asks For The Leaders To Be Imprisoned”



Humberto Cholango, CONAIE President, speaks at a press conference in Quito on Jan. 9, 2014.

January 10, 2014 by Adam Zuckerman, Amazon Watch

Following the close of the 11th Round oil auction on November 28th, 2013, plain-clothes officers in Quito, Ecuador summarily closed the offices of Fundación Pachamama, a nonprofit that for 16 years has worked in defense of the rights of Amazonian indigenous peoples and the rights of nature.

The dissolution, which the government blamed on their “interference in public policy,” was a retaliatory act that sought to repress Fundación Pachamama’s legitimate right to disagree with the government’s policies, such as the decision to turn over Amazonian indigenous people’s land to oil companies.

After attacking some of their closest allies, the Ecuadorian government is now attempting to take down Ecuador’s indigenous leaders who are committed to defending their territory from any oil development plans by companies including PetroAmazonas, Andes Petroleum, ENAP, Belorusneft and Repsol.

The Secretary of Hydrocarbons has filed a formal complaint against eight indigenous leaders who have dedicated their lives to defending the Amazon, including Franco Viteri (President of GONOA), the presidents of the Achuar & Zapara nationalities, the president and vice president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and pioneering female leaders Patricia Gualinga from Sarayaku and Gloria Ushigua of the Zapara.

The complaint, which has led to a preliminary investigation by the Attorney General, accuses the leaders of “the crime of (making] threat(s)” during protests against the oil auction on November 28, and accuses them specifically of (1) Obstructing entry to buildings, (2) not having a permit to protest, (3) impeding the opening of the envelopes from the oil auction, and (4) injuries. Most disturbingly, it asks that they be imprisoned.

Humberto Cholango, President of CONAIE, spoke at a press conference yesterday in Quito. CONAIE released the following statement (translated by Amazon Watch):

CONAIE Denounces Secretary of Hydrocarbon’s Accusations Against Indigenous Leaders:

Department of Communications, CONAIE

Today at a press conference with his governing council, Humberto Cholango , President of CONAIE, brought to light the Secretary of Hydrocarbon’s denunciation of the events of November 28, 2013.

Secretary Gustavo Andrés Donoso’s complaint has led to a preliminary investigation by the Attorney General against Cholango and Amazonian indigenous leaders.

The complaint asks for the leaders to be imprisoned.

In it, the Secretary requests that the Attorney General also investigate Bartolo Ushigua, Vice President of CONAIE , Franco Viteri Gualinga, President of the Governing Body of the First Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon (GONOA), and seven other leaders.

The attorney general will investigate the accusation of the crime of threatening, including (1) Obstructing entry to buildings, (2) not having authorization for the public act, (3) impeding the opening of the envelopes from the oil auction, and (4) injuries.

CONAIE President Humberto Cholango stated that, "The government of the Ecuador, through the Ministry of Hydrocarbons, continues to criminalize Ecuadorian indigenous leaders.

He said, "As President of CONAIE and especially as an Ecuadorian citizen, I am not going to evade justice.

I am going to face forward without hiding because my acts of struggle are transparent to the light of day and have not caused any damage to the State nor to any Ecuadorian or foreigner. T

he denunciation presented by the Secretary of Hydrocarbons Gustavo Andrés Donoso seeks the penalty of prison."

Lastly, Cholango noted that the prosecutor trying the case is Dr. Bayron Granda and that today at 3pm Cholango will go with his lawyers to the office of the Attorney General to sign the registry at the courthouse to begin defending himself from this unjust accusation.

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.



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