

## **Military Resistance 12B9**



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It's time  
to give  
class  
warfare  
a chance.

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**“The Political Elites In Croatia  
And Serbia Are Afraid, Among  
Other Things, That What Some  
Already Call The ‘Bosnian  
Revolution’ May Spill Over The  
Borders Into Their Countries”  
“This Uprising Is An Integral Part  
Of The Global Uprisings We Have  
Seen In The Last Couple Of Years”**

**The Plenum Of Tuzla:  
“The Plenum Is Open For Everybody To  
Participate, Discuss And Vote, Except  
For The Members Of The Old Parties And  
Government”**





[Police Cars]

**Comment: T**

**Major media coverage of the Bosnian events is, for the most part, shallow and empty.**

**Coverage by the left in the US and elsewhere is, for the most part, shallow and emptier. Long, tedious recitations of 30 or more years of past history combine with third hand scraps from major media news reports.**

**What is missing from 99% of both is information about what is happening on the ground now and what it means.**

**Unlike that stale shit, the articles below report fresh on the proliferation of plenum meetings in Bosnian cities, which a writer rightly notes are counterparts of the workers councils that have appeared during other working class revolutionary movements from below.**

**Demoralized radical formations who claim to love workers councils are curiously silent about this development, appearing now in a real life revolutionary situation. For those used to living in a world of abstraction, fiery reality can be disturbing; a threat to tepid, comfortable, stale “politics” as usual.**

**So of course most of the U.S. “left” hasn’t had one word to say about the councils.**

**They wouldn’t know what to report about a revolutionary working class movement from below, with the first signs of the emergence of councils beginning to organize for dual power, if it bit them on the ass. For these bureaucratized conservatives wearing radical masks, silence is safety.**

**As Mate Kapovic notes below:**

**“Left internationalism and global solidarity cannot just be a theoretical exercise; it must be practiced as well.**

**“What is curious, however, is that the European Left also remains largely silent. This is not very laudable for a political force that revels in its own internationalism.”**

**But hardly surprising.**

**Most of the European and American Left is hopelessly reformist, despite empty revolutionary rhetoric. The precariously perched reformers have a horror of revolution from below. They hate the ruling class above them, but fear the working class below them.**

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February 15th, 2014 By Mate Kapovic, Zagreb; PopularResistance.Org.

Mate Kapović is an assistant professor at the University of Zagreb in Croatia and a left political activist.

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With its radical demands and popular assemblies, the rebellion in Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that the global cycle of struggles is far from over.

**On Friday, February 7, government buildings were on fire all over Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

**Its people, silent for a long time, finally decided to speak their mind.**

**And when they did, what came out was not just words — it was a roar.**

**It was fire, stones and heavy fighting with the police.**

**The most impressive and symbolic picture of the first few days of the rebellion was the one depicting a burning government building in Tuzla, the city where it all began, with the graffiti “death to nationalism” written on it.**

Since nationalism has long been a favorite refuge of the country’s political elites, who used it to justify their political and economic oppression, this was indeed a powerful message.

**Prime Ministers of cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina started handing in their resignations, one by one.**

On Sunday, February 9, the Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanović went to Mostar — a city in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a large Croatian population — to meet with the Croat leaders there, while the President of the Republic of Srpska (the Serbian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Milorad Dodik, was summoned to Serbia to meet with the first Vice-President Aleksandar Vučić (the unofficial leader of Serbia).

The reasons were clear.

Both the political elites in Croatia and Serbia are afraid, among other things, that what some already call the “Bosnian revolution” may spill over the borders into their countries.

The economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is undoubtedly terrible.

The country was once known for its many factories and a strong working class — even the coat of arms of the former Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (part of Yugoslavia) used to feature factory chimneys. Now, many of those factories are closed, the rest are privatized by foreign corporations or a newly formed capitalist class, and in some of them the workers are working but are not receiving their salaries (which is quite common in the post-Yugoslav economy).

The country has an unemployment level at about 45%. Neighboring Croatia and Serbia are not in such a bad shape, but still their elites have a lot to worry about as well, since the general situation is also very far from being even mildly satisfactory. For instance, youth unemployment in Croatia is at almost 53%, second only to Greece and Spain in the EU.

**The explosive and in some cases quite violent rebellion in Bosnia and Herzegovina certainly had its own local reasons — rampant poverty, vast inequalities, a huge bureaucratic apparatus and the political and capitalist succubus at the top.**

**However, this uprising is also an integral part of the global uprisings we have seen in the last couple of years.**

After the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008 and a few years of initial shock, a wave of great protests and uprisings began in 2011 with the Arab Spring, the indignados in Spain and Occupy Wall Street in the US. Last year, we saw huge uprisings in Turkey and Brazil. Former Yugoslavia was not spared in this wave.

Already in 2011, there were large “Facebook protests” in Croatia that went on for a month in March. Although quite politically heterogeneous, it was also the first time that openly anti-capitalist messages were displayed in any of the post-Yugoslav countries, and the protests in many ways anticipated the indignados and OWS, sharing with them a clear common zeitgeist.

In 2012-'13, Slovenia was shaken by a popular “Slovenian uprising” that hugely influenced the public discourse in the country and gave rise to new political forces (such as the potentially promising Initiative for Democratic Socialism).

In 2014, it was time for Bosnia and Herzegovina. They were the last to react, but their response was by far the most powerful.

## **A Social Rebellion**

**Since the rebellion began, almost all the analysts have insisted that it had been inevitable and that they had been sure all along that something like this was bound to happen sooner or later.**

**Of course, this is not true.**

**Although the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was indeed catastrophic, prior to all of this most analysts would have claimed that this kind of uprising was impossible because the people are passive, inert and divided by nationalism.**

But, as is often the case, there was an unpredictable spark and it all grew quickly from there.

**The uprising began in Tuzla in the North-East of the country; a city with a long left-wing and working class tradition.**

“A different city”, as is often claimed, because nationalism has never firmly established itself there, unlike the rest of the country. So it’s no wonder that it was this city that found itself in the eye of the storm.

There, the workers of a number of privatized factories (like Dita, Polihem and Konjuh) have been protesting peacefully for various reasons for quite some time.

However, on Wednesday, February 5, they were joined by the city youth, the unemployed and other people — and the protest rapidly began to escalate, spreading in the following days to most of the country.

The most prominent actions occurred in Tuzla, Sarajevo, Zenica, Mostar and Bihać, which are among the largest cities in the country, with the majority of violent clashes and burning occurring on Friday, February 7.

The protests were clearly spontaneous and had social demands at their roots.

Many protesters claimed that they simply have nothing to eat, that they have been unemployed for ages, and expressed deep contempt for the criminal political and economic elite.

Although the rebellion has occurred mostly in parts of Bosnia inhabited by the Muslim Bosniaks (which Croatian and Serbian nationalists were happy and quick to point out), the rebellion was clearly — some provocations, acts of sabotage and stray people aside — a social and not a nationalist rebellion.

Of course, as is often the case, the protests are very heterogeneous, with large numbers of football fans joining the militant wing of the mobilization as well.

Today, the protests continue mostly in those parts of the country where the Bosniaks are predominant, but there are a number of exceptions as well.

In Mostar, the city in the South-West of the country, both Croats and Bosniaks were involved in torching the headquarters of both the Croatian and Bosniak main nationalist parties (HDZ and SDA).

Ethnic Croats have also protested in Livno and Orašje, while ethnic Serbs organized a couple of smaller scale protests and gatherings in Prijedor, Banja Luka, Bijeljina and Zvornik.

Although the protests are clearly social, the national question, used to their advantage by the political elites (although not completely unfounded in the case of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina), is still a great problem. Many Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still suspicious and afraid of the protests taking a different political turn, quoting, for instance, the Islamist turn of the Egyptian revolution (although this kind of scenario is highly unlikely in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

This fear is actively fed by the political elites and the media, which are trying to prevent protests in the Croat and Serbian parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In that quest, a wide array of conspiracy theories have gained some popularity. Thus, Bosniak nationalists and politicians claim that this is all a plot against Bosniaks; Croat nationalists and politicians claim that it's all a plot against Croats; and Serb nationalists and politicians claim that it's all a plot against Serbs.

**It's also very significant that Croat and Serb nationalist intellectuals and media are silently cooperating in a desperate attempt to prove that we are dealing with a "Bosniak spring" only.**

**"The Organization Of The Veteran Soldiers Of The Serb Part Of The Country"**

Still, not everybody is prone to such nationalist propaganda.

For instance, one union from Drvar (with most members of Serb nationality) have given their support to the mostly Croat protesters in Livno.

**Also, the organization of the veteran soldiers of the Serb part of the country have openly pressured their president Milorad Dodik to start dealing with social problems, injustice and privatization crimes.**

However, in Bijeljina (in the Serbian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina) the protesters giving support to the rebellion were met with a counter-protest by the Serb nationalists.

**The same happened during a solidarity protest in Belgrade in Serbia (at the same time, the police union in Serbia proclaimed that in the case of the protests spilling over borders to Serbia, they will not act against the protesters).**

**In Croatia, however, activists on both the left and the right are organizing protests in the coming days inspired by what is happening just across the border.**

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains very tense.

Some left leaning intellectuals and public figures are giving their support to the protests, but most of the media and the entire political class is united against them.

**There are a lot of nationalist claims, conspiracy theories, fake manifestos, false statements, fabricated reports and narratives.**

**The elites and regime intellectuals are trying as hard as they can to maintain the status quo.**

**Still, there is a lot of confusion in liberal, conservative and nationalist circles.**

**The establishment's analytical apparatus is not really equipped to deal with this type of development since it cannot really perceive the working class, the unemployed and the poor as an active political subject.**

**To this, we should add the usual petty bourgeois moralizing about burned buildings, "hooligans", unnecessary violence, and so on.**

**The liberals and conservatives are calling for "peaceful and dignified" protests, in spite of the obvious fact that without violence none of this would have happened, and in spite of the fact that the careful coordination between politicians and the media has clearly shown what bourgeois democracy and the "freedom of the press" really stand for: protecting class privilege.**

**As always, the media have made a case of pointing out that the protesters don't know what they're doing, that they have no clear goals or political program.**

**This is not true.**



**The protesters' demands are becoming more and more clear by the day.**

**For instance, the workers and protesters of Tuzla — who are most progressive, politically coherent and articulated — have demanded more equal wages, health protection for the workers; legal action against economic crimes; the confiscation of illegally obtained wealth; a reassessment of the privatization process of the Dita, Polihem, Poliolhem, Gumara and Konjuh factories; the nationalization of the factories and the resumption of production under workers' control; cutting down the privileges of the political elite; and so on.**

Of course, it is still difficult to tell how this nascent political program will develop and what parts of it are just rhetoric.

### **The “Plenum” Of Tuzla:**

One of the most interesting and exciting aspects of the mobilization is the appearance in Tuzla — right at the center of the rebellion, where the former government handed in its resignation some days ago – of a revolutionary organizational body called the “plenum”.

This plenum (or general assembly) is very similar to the original Russian soviets.

The protesters are using them in order to reach collective decisions and demands in a direct democratic manner.

What is interesting is that the idea of the plenum, as a political body for democratic decision-making, originated in the 2009 wave of student occupations in Croatia, while the Croatian student movement itself got the idea from the 2006 Belgrade student movement. This, in other words, is a fine example of post-Yugoslav left activist cooperation and mutual inspiration. The protesters in the capital Sarajevo and in the town of Zenica are now trying to organize a plenum as well.

Some of the demands of the Tuzla plenum, accepted by the remnants of the old government, were to form a new transitional canton government, made up of candidates suggested by the people of the region but excluding the people already compromised by taking part in previous governments or being members of the old political parties.

The newly elected government should also have much lower wages and no additional privileges.

**The plenum is open for everybody to participate, discuss and vote, except for the members of the old parties and government (which essentially makes this “the dictatorship of the proletariat”, speaking in classical terms).**

**Of course, while this kind of democratic decision-making is highly commendable, for now it seems mostly like a temporary phenomenon, which could be highly problematic when scaled up to the whole city (or even canton). The session on Monday, February 10 of the Tuzla plenum had, according to participants, approximately 200 people in attendance, while the population of Tuzla is about 130.000 people.**

**“What Is Curious, However, Is That The European Left Also Remains Largely Silent. This Is Not Very Laudable For A Political Force That Revels In Its Own Internationalism”**

It is impossible to tell how these events will unfold in the future.

One thing is certain, though: Bosnia and Herzegovina (and the region as a whole) will not be the same after this.

One could say that a lot has already been achieved (at least symbolically), especially when one considers the fact that in Bosnia and Herzegovina — and in former Yugoslavia in general — there are no real mass organizations of the left.

Now, after just a week of protests, popular ideas and the public discourse are already beginning to change. The elite will definitely be more afraid of the people in the future, not just in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One can only hope that all of this will feed into the formation and growth of progressive forces and organizations in the country.

**The dramatic developments of the past week have caused quite a stir in the country and among its neighbors.**

**In the West, however, the events have so far been largely ignored.**

While the international media devote a lot of attention to Ukraine, where the EU and the US have concrete vested interests, the social upheaval in Bosnia and Herzegovina (which is, admittedly, a much smaller country), is largely ignored.

Clearly the rebellion of workers and the unemployed is not a very positive development from the point of view of Europe’s neoliberal status quo, especially since neighboring Croatia is the EU’s newest member.

**What is curious, however, is that the European Left also remains largely silent.**

**This is not very laudable for a political force that revels in its own internationalism.**

The Left in the developed countries of the West should work much harder on overcoming its own “core parochialism”.

**Left internationalism and global solidarity cannot just be a theoretical exercise; it must be practiced as well.**

**Radical and progressive social forces in Europe and North America should not just satisfy themselves by looking at “selected topics” in their own immediate environment.**

**It’s not just that the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina need international support; it’s also that their rebellion constitutes a very interesting and important development for the international left.**

It shows that the global cycle of struggles that began in 2011 is still very much alive.

MORE:

## **The Exceptional Meaning Of The Tuzla Plenum:**

**“Workers, The Unemployed, Students  
And Pensioners Of Tuzla, Be  
Conscious Of The Fact That You Are  
The Embryo Of A New Government”**

**“Let The Government Of The Plenum  
Forever Prevent The Return Of The Old  
Order Of Things And Begin Building A  
New Society!”**



“For freedom and justice we'll topple any government”

**Whenever in the coming years workers and other oppressed groups – not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia and beyond – find**

**themselves, in their own struggles, before the question of how best to organize themselves, the way shown by Tuzla's workers will stand before them.**

February 13, 2014· by kolekili, <http://bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/>

***The following is an article by 'Radnicka Borba' (Workers' Struggle) [Radnička borba bori se za ostvarivanje neposrednih socijalnih zahtjeva radnika, studenata i nezaposlenih] and first appeared on their website.***

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**The most significant gain to date of the workers' uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the foundation and daily activities of the Tuzla Plenum.**

It's natural that in the town where the uprising began, where from the very beginning the strength of the movements' working base was most clearly expressed – which had gathered around it the students, the unemployed and pensioners – would be the first to introduce into the life of the country a new political form in the service of the oppressed.

**Unlike all other governments' and parliaments, which by their very nature are necessarily bureaucratized, corrupt and represent a tool in the hands of politicians allied with tycoons and capitalists of all stripes, the Plenum is a body of the very people it represents and of their interests.**

**For this reason, the Tuzla Plenum represents the most important political event of recent decades, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in the whole region.**

The layer of petty-bourgeois 'analysts' and 'journalists,' who are limited by the horizon of their 'national colours' and identities, can let rip their hyena-like laughter as much as they want when hearing these observations.

The meaning of the Plenum isn't temporary, nor does it represent a one-off episode.

However the movement develops in the following weeks and months, no one will be able to erase its existence from the memory of the working class.

Whenever in the coming years workers and other oppressed groups – not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia and beyond – find themselves, in their own struggles, before the question of how best to organize themselves, the way shown by Tuzla's workers will stand before them.

**The plenum mode of organizing workers and allied groups has been around since the beginnings of the modern workers' movement.**

**The first time such a forum was organized at the scale of an entire city was in St. Petersburg in 1905.**

In our region, in recent decades, the plenum form of organizing can be seen in the student movement – from the meetings held during the occupation of the university in Belgrade, to the plenums that were created during the blockade of universities in Croatia.

However, it is precisely in Tuzla that the whole story was raised to a new and immeasurably higher level.

The workers of failed enterprises in Tuzla, in cooperation with activists involved in organizing the uprising, convened a plenum at the scale of the entire town, in order to define the demands with which they will present before the Parliament of the Tuzla Canton.

The extraordinary significance of the Tuzla Plenum flows from three things.

First, the working-class is dominant within the Plenum, the only class that is able due to its strength and social role to put forward the framework for the creation of a new society (as opposed to the student population, which till now has been the only one represented in the organization of plenums).

Besides, this Plenum doesn't represent the interests of a narrow group, but is open to the broadest masses.

Finally, it seeks to realize the interests of the people in the entire city, and with its decisions has openly involved itself in the political life of the country, demanding the formation of a new government.

**The Plenum has finally found the recipe in practice that would respond to the question of how the oppressed can organize outside of participation in parliaments, without appealing to corrupt governments and asking for the mercy of the ruling classes.**

It represents a consistent expression of understanding for how the oppressed can't rely on existing institutions and political parties, but need to self-organize and through struggle protect their interests.

**The Plenum, thus, isn't an organization or an informal group, or a body that should only have a consultative and temporary character. The Tuzla Plenum is a new political institution.**

**Just as presidents, ministers, governments, parliaments exist – which serve the elite, create corruption, crime, and the impoverishment of the people – so too, on the other hand, there is the plenum, which expresses the interests of the ordinary person, and which by the way it functions prevents the abuse of power, acting as the fighting body of the movement.**

The development of the uprising in Bosnia, which would truly bring about considerable and decisive change in social and political life must include the country-wide spread of the plenums, their strengthening, networking and the creation of a joint government based on the plenary system.

**Parallel to this, in every place and neighbourhood local plenums should be organized, which would send delegates to the plenum for the whole city – it's only in this way that it will be possible to create a democratic and effective functioning of the plenary system.**

The solution cannot be based on replacing people in current governments, nor simply banning their renomination (thought this can be used).

The conditions in Bosnia aren't a result of corrupt politicians and greedy capitalists, but are a product of the existing economic and political system that will continue to produce such individuals as long as these systems exists.

**The only alternative – all power to the plenums!**

**At moments when the plenums pass through their natural birth pangs, and when they're only beginning to be build, it's natural that it wouldn't be fully aware of its importance and unmeasured political power.**

**There will be many of those – some of whom will participate in its work – who will wrongly insist on its temporary and frivolous character, and its possible that occasionally a majority of its participants – unaware of their own power and significance – will seek 'real' answers again within the framework of existing institutions and models.**

There will be those, as well, who will insist on its form, not on its content, who will want to transform some particular experiences and settings (of the plenums) into a fixed dogma.

The plenum shouldn't be a slave to any forms, rather its rules and manner of functioning should be determined and changed according to their efficiency and the current context of the work being done (obviously, never losing site of its directly democratic and class character).

**On the other hand, all the forces seeking to preserve the current order, will want to immediately wipe the plenums' off the face of the planet and to return everything to 'normalcy' – in the embrace of the old institutions that protect their interests.**

**It's therefore important to vigilantly protect the Plenum as the focal point and backbone of the movement.**

Workers, the unemployed, students and pensioners of Tuzla, be conscious of the fact that you are the embryo of a new government that is emerging from the people and demand that this government arise from the Plenum!

Let the new government of the Tuzla Canton be chosen, accountable to, and at any movement replaceable by the Plenum.

Let the government of the plenum forever prevent the return of the old order of things and begin building a new society!

**MORE:**

**“There Is Something Truly  
Perfidious In The Media That  
Found It Appropriate To  
Interview Intellectuals And  
Cultural Workers About The  
Citizens’ Plenums”**

**“A Thousand Of Those Citizens —  
In Sarajevo Alone! — Showed Up  
And Could Have Been  
Interviewed”**

**“They Would Have Had To Show The  
Very Thing That Was Nowhere To Be  
Found In Yesterday’s News —  
Namely, The Deeply Class-Based  
Nature Of This Rebellion”**

**“When The Next Plenum Starts In  
Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Bihać, Etc,  
Remember These Regular People And  
Ask Them What They Think And Why  
They Are There” “The Answers Might  
(Un)Pleasantly Surprise You”**



February 14th. The second citizens' Plenum of Sarajevo. [bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/](http://bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/)

February 16, 2014 **by marinaantic, reporting from Bosnia:**  
[www.media.ba/bs/magazin/ponekad-je-plenum-samo-plenum](http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin/ponekad-je-plenum-samo-plenum)

*"Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children." –Amilcar Cabral*

**Reading the news tonight (Feb 14), you could perhaps glean that something unusual is going on Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

**Somewhere in between entertainment news, the war in Syria, and the squawking of local political party hacks, there would be a short report about the citizen plenum in Sarajevo or Mostar or Tuzla, or wherever else.**

**You could even perhaps figure out that the people at these meetings are awfully unhappy with their regional governments, but not much more than that.**

**And on the rare occasion that a somewhat longer piece got through the editorial desk, it usually consisted of first impressions by somewhat more famous participants.**

For example, Mladen Jeličić-Troka said about the plenum in Sarajevo: "this was a collective therapy session where everyone could air their grievances and use up some of that adrenalin"; Asim Mujkić claimed that "this form of citizen organizing is promising, and we should keep it as a corrective to the system of parliamentary democracy"; while Srećko Horvat went the furthest, saying that "the protests are not enough on their own. This is why it's good news that all over Bosnia, plenums were being created, where citizens finally have a chance...to decide their own destiny."

For Horvat, the plenums are therefore "definitely the most important surprise coming out of the protests."

**And so, only with Horvat's commentary did anyone even remember to mention the protests — but alas, only for long enough to declare them less important than the plenum.**

There is nothing weird or bad that a professor of political science (Mujkić) or an intellectual like Horvat would see the most value in that which is the most familiar to them: discussions and exchange of opinions in a public meeting.



**But there is something truly perfidious in the media that found it appropriate to interview intellectuals and cultural workers about the citizens' plenums, even while a thousand of those citizens — in Sarajevo alone! — showed up and could have been interviewed at such plenums — they who used up their “adrenalin” to express just how much this system had humiliated them, denied them basic rights, made them bitter and brought them to the very edge of existence.**

**Because, you see, had they interviewed them, they would have had to show the very thing that was nowhere to be found in yesterday's news — namely, the deeply class-based nature of this rebellion, the sheer hunger and bitterness of these citizens who came not only for the “collective therapy” as Jeličić would have it, but in order to transform some of that anger, sadness, and despair into some action for a better tomorrow.**

Maybe then the media would also have to show the rather uncomfortable and unrefined expressions of the people who do not have any distance from the anger and social unrest that transformed into violence last week, the distance that highly educated cultural workers and professors whose opinions I was reading last night could have.

**In other words, while that past Friday I could hear and read something about the socio-economic problems of workers, students, the unemployed, about the corruption of the entire government system in this state, about the kleptocratic privatization that was enacted over the backs of precisely those workers in Tuzla who brought out all of Bosnia onto the streets — tonight, I couldn't find any of it.**

The violence that happened just a week ago was already well past us, there only in so far as we were all distancing ourselves from it, having forgotten, of course, that such violence is only a reaction to the kind of violence perpetrated by this state for over 20 years.

And what is more important, that as soon as the violence stopped, so have the government step downs.

Today, we're all talking about the plenums, but without any context or any idea what these people are doing there and what brought them into that gathering to begin with or what they are planning as their next step.

To make matters worse, no one is questioning the causes or the consequences of this entire rebellion, but rather, most are reflecting on the psychological or the intellectual effects of the gathering itself.

Well, damn it, it seems that the buildings of the cantonal governments went up in flames because they wouldn't let us have plenums earlier!

This is also why, I guess, it didn't occur to anyone to connect what was happening at the plenum in Sarajevo with today's strike of all 140 workers of the Holiday hotel; that is, to show how these plenums were set up exactly for the purpose of organizing a more constructive type of rebellion than the spontaneous one that had engulfed all of Bosnia last week, and with such organization, bring about basic changes in this society so that it would no longer be possible for hotel owners to hold 140 workers as slaves for months!

It also didn't occur to anyone to connect the Mostar plenum with the shameful and cowardly attack on Josip Milić, the president of the Union of independent Labor Unions of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While fascists with baseball bats understand quite well who, why, and in what way is responsible for the rebellion, such a lesson escapes the Bosnian media. The same is in Tuzla, where you can find dozens of statements by professor Damir Arsenijveć, before you will hear just one interview with the workers of Dita or with some other everyday victims of this system.

What is a plenum and what is its purpose?

Catharsis is important, to literature professors as much as to those who are living the tragedy of "transition" in Bosnia today. OK, let that be one of the functions of the plenum.

**But the way the media have served up the plenums, it seems like they are a pure idyll of some liberal understanding of democracy, in which, you see, the people came to lead themselves out of trouble, on some magical path akin to the one Alice in Wonderland takes.**

Except, it's unclear which way or by what means one should go on such a path.

**What is lost in all of that is that a plenum is first and foremost a meeting of citizens, not for the purpose of the meeting itself, but explicitly for some other purpose.**

These people at plenums were not there to supplement representative democracy, nor were they there to fruitlessly complain – the latter is a sport so well developed in Sarajevo cafés that people don't need an excuse to engage in it.

**Those thousand people who showed up tonight at the Youth Hall in Sarajevo came to plan out their next move: the torch had been lit in Tuzla Friday a week ago; people have been on the streets for 8 days straight; but now that spontaneity has to be organized into a program, into some plan by which they would reach the demands that were read out tonight.**

Demands are one thing; the path to their realization something different.

And that is precisely the purpose of the plenum: to organize that same crowd on the streets, but what is more important, to find a way to organize the 93% (in the Federation) or 88% (in Bosnia/Herzegovina as a whole) of citizens that support this rebellion privately but are still waiting on the sidelines, fearful or unconvinced that this could possibly work.

**To organize them to join the protests and a movement that will create some other system that should be more just than the one we have now.**

**But that new system will not fall down from the sky at one of the plenums; rather, the small army that has gathered at the plenums will organize it in the streets and squares of the cities, at workplaces and unions, at universities and high schools,**

and in the final analysis, in the homes and lives of those silent 88% of Bosnia's citizens.

So, to return to comrade Cabral from the beginning:

People who struggle for something, never struggle just for ideas, the way it might seem to us professors at times; they always and in every case, fight for concrete improvements of their work conditions and life, as well as the work conditions and lives of their compatriots.

So, when the next plenum starts in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Bihać, etc, remember these regular people and ask them what they think about the whole thing and why they are there.

The answers might (un)pleasantly surprise you.

MORE:

## **Tuzla:**

**“Something Unexpected Happened, Something The Authorities Were Wholly Unprepared For”**

**“The Protest Gained Mass Support”**

**“Like A Force Of Nature, Other Workers, The Unemployed, And The Students Filled The Streets In Solidarity In The Struggle Against The System That Had Robbed And Wronged Them”**

# **“What Followed Was An Awakening Of All The Peoples In Bosnia-Herzegovina, And A Revolution That Spread Across The Entire Country”**

February 14, 2014 by Amila Bosnae, Bosnia-Herzegovina Protest Files.  
This text by Nikola Čupas originally appeared on 9.2.2014 at  
<http://037ks.com/2014/02/a-ukomsiluku-revolucija/>

\*\*\*\*\*

It was quiet in Kruševac this Sunday.

Nothing remarkable happened. No doubt people are waiting for the election campaign to kick off.

Election campaigns, as we have learned, mean politicians peddling a great big bag of lies and promises to the people.

These promises are always tailored to the broadest possible interest of the people.

And then, in spite of it all, we find ourselves yet again struggling with deficits, bills, poverty, unemployment.

How are people then supposed to fight for themselves?

Across the river Drina, 350 km from Kruševac, on Wednesday 5th of February, a few hundred workers and inhabitants of Tuzla gathered in a protest in front of the building of the Tuzla Canton. This would have probably ended up like any other protest with the authorities handling it according to the same old plan: by promising to find a quick solution.

Except something unexpected happened, something the authorities were wholly unprepared for.

The protest gained mass support.

Like a force of nature, other workers, the unemployed, and the students filled the streets in solidarity in the struggle against the system that had robbed and wronged them.

They chose to fight for social justice.

What followed was an awakening of all the peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and a revolution that spread across the entire country.

The authorities in Republika Srpska tried to spin the protests as anti-Serb and instigated from outside in an effort to maintain the supposed national unity. However, their actions only showed how little they care about the people in this region, and how important they feel it is to maintain status quo and the dominance of the national bourgeoisie.

But their cheap shots flopped when the people denounced them.

**This is a struggle which transcends any ethno-racial, religious or national concept.**

The people took to the streets because their bellies were empty.

Hunger forced them to fight for justice.

**But there is no justice as long as there are classes!**

**Not as long as there are oppressors and oppressed; those who exploit and those who are exploited; those who know no hunger and those who are starving.**

The power holders in Bosnia-Herzegovina showed with their actions that little, indeed, does the fat man know what the lean one thinks.

**Realising the anger and the threat from the suffering people, they brought police out on the streets who clashed with the protesters.**

**There was tear gas, rubber bullets and beatings, but the people stood together and firm in their resolve to take on the robbing and thieving ruling classes. At least for now.**

**They occupied the building of the Tuzla Canton.**

**The police in Bihać admirably joined the protesters.**

**They refused to obey a system that manipulates them in order to sustain itself and chose to stand with the working class.**

**The events in Bosnia-Herzegovina are our lesson of the week.**

**They are proof of how powerful the working masses actually are when they raise a unified fist.**

**They also show how much the ruling political structures fear a working class that unites.**

**I am not insinuating anything and I won't rattle on about poverty, unemployment, harassment, exploitation, corruption, thieving etc.**

**No, I only have one question for you:**

**How hungry are you?**

**MORE:**

## **“The Most Evident Sign Of The Ethnic Unity Arrived When The Predominantly Serbian Town Of Banja Luka Joined The Other Protesting Cities”**

February 13, 2014 by Ilija M. Trojanovic, CounterPunch [Excerpts]

While the sweeping protests all over Bosnia are uniting a nearly extinct middle class and creating an economic protagonist to battle the antagonists of Bosnia’s economy such as corruption and failed plans for privatization, they are also acting as a band-aid for the ethnic tensions which many felt could never be patched.

**The most evident sign of the ethnic unity arrived when the predominantly Serbian town of Banja Luka joined the other protesting cities demanding, as local journalist Sead Numanovic told the BBC, “change and justice, that’s all we want.”**

Famed Bosnian peace activist Mevlida Kunosic-Vljajic, told me “I hope this is the beginning of the new spring in Bosnia and Herzegovina, like that of the Husinska rebellion [see below] in 1920 which bore many similarities with our protests today.”

The early stages of the second decade of the 2000s is clearly making its name as the decade of the protester, of demonstrating, and of fighting for your rights and beliefs.

**MORE:**

## **The Husinska Rebellion: “The Uprising Was Put Down, But Its Memory Was Preserved As Part Of Tuzla’s Anti-Authoritarian Legacy”**

Wikipedia [Excerpt]

The Husino uprising (Bosnian: Husinska buna) was a short-lived miners’ strike and armed uprising against industrial slavery in the new, post-World War I, Yugoslav regime.

7,000 miners, from Tuzla, Breza and Zenica in central Bosnia, participated in the strike.

When the local government tried to force miners back to work, they resisted with firearms and the uprising was put down with great violence. Seven workers were killed and four hundred arrested.

The uprising was put down, but its memory was preserved as part of Tuzla's anti-authoritarian legacy.

The rebellion, named after the village Husino in Tuzla where it took place, has been called one of the most important historical events in the former Yugoslavia and has remained an example of class struggle against injustice and oppression. [

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?**

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether at a base in the USA or stationed outside the Continental United States, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

## **ACTION REPORTS**

# **“I'm With You But Don't Tell My Sergeant”**

## **[Outreach To New York National Guard]**

From: Alan S  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Subject: 2/8/14 Outreach To New York National Guard  
Date: Feb 10, 2014

Harlem Armory Outreach (2/8/14)

This time, upon arrival at 6:15 am, we found both units that use the armory assembling. One, the 719th, was getting ready to leave for upstate drill.

Of the 74 lit packs (specially prepared handout + 10 Military Resistance newsletters and intro cards), 41 DVDs of “Authority & Expectations” 13 of “Sir! No Sir!” and 55 snacks we managed to distribute close to half of what we brought before 6:45 am.

[Cards: see below. Authority & Expectations: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyfkLubnyBw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyfkLubnyBw)]

Once that unit left the 369th was accommodated as they began arriving singly or in groups of two or three.

We experienced probably 25-30% turn-downs (all polite) except for two: one an officer visibly soured approaching us and asked rudely (nodding at a handout) "What's this?" then cold shouldered us entering the lone gate (at center) being used exclusively now since extensive rehab work goes on at the armory closing gates at 142nd and 143rd Streets.

A second unhappy driller, a sergeant who must have known us from previous outreaches let out an f-bomb wanting us "to get that BS out of my face" as he stalked by. No need to report he refused our offerings

Nevertheless, another sergeant told us he's not interested in our material unless it helps to cut taxes.

Adamant on this point and referring to the difficult future his family faces financially, he attentively listened as he was told we oppose the same politicians that threaten his family's welfare not to mention his life. He then took what was offered and headed inside.

A young private, a bit later on, glanced at a handout and said "I'm with you but don't tell my sergeant; I didn't get into this to go to war."

We left earlier than I can remember, 7:15, because serving two units caused material to run out faster than usual. At any rate, carrying more next outreach (3/8/14) should be a necessary precaution.

We left with only 9 snacks and 5 DVDs of "Sir! No Sir!"

**Military Resistance**



(888) 711-2550

[www.militaryproject.org](http://www.militaryproject.org)

[contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org)

**SUPPORTING GI RESISTANCE**

**MORE:**

**ACTION REPORTS WANTED:**



# FROM YOU!

An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to Military Resistance for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so.

If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out. Reporting what went wrong and/or got screwed up is especially important, so that others may learn from you what to expect, and how to avoid similar problems if possible.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

## NOTE WELL:

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the wars.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs identifying information be published in reporting on the action.

## MORE:

# The Military Resistance Organization:

## Military Resistance Mission Statement:

1. The mission of Military Resistance is to bring together in one organization members of the armed forces and civilians in order to give aid and comfort to members of the armed forces who are organizing to end the war of empire in Afghanistan. The long term objective is to assist in eliminating all wars of empire by eliminating all empires.

**2. Military Resistance does not advocate individual disobedience to orders or desertion from the armed forces. The most effective resistance is organized by members of the armed forces working together.**

**However, Military Resistance respects and will assist in the defense of troops who see individual desertion or refusal of orders as the only course of action open to them for reasons of conscience.**

**3. Military Resistance stands for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and other occupation troops from Afghanistan.**

**Occupied nations have the right to independence and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation by force of arms.**

**4. Efforts to increase democratic rights in every society, organization, movement, and within the armed forces itself will receive encouragement and support.**

**Members of the armed forces, whether those of the United States or any other nation, have the right and duty to act against dictatorships commanding their services, and to assist civilian movements against dictatorship.**

**This applies whether a political dictatorship is imposed by force of arms or a political dictatorship is imposed by those in command of the resources of society using their wealth to purchase the political leadership.**

**5. Military Resistance uses organizational democracy.**

**This means control of the organization by the membership, through elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels.**

**Any member may run for any job in the organization. All persons elected are subject to immediate recall, by majority vote of the membership.**

**Coordinating bodies report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them, and may be overruled by a majority of the membership.**

**6. It is not necessary for Military Resistance to be in political agreement with other organizations in order to work together towards specific common objectives.**

**It is productive for organizations working together on common projects to discuss differences about the best way forward for the movement.**

Debate is necessary to arrive at the best course of action.

## **Membership Requirements:**

7. It is a condition of membership that each member prioritize and participate in organized action to reach out to active duty armed forces, Reserve and/or National Guard units.

8. Military Resistance or individual members may choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Afghanistan, but do not support a candidate opposed to immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

9. Members may not be active duty or drilling reserve commissioned officers, or employed in any capacity by any police or intelligence agency, local, state, or national.

10. I understand and am in agreement with the above statement. I pledge to defend my brothers and sisters, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

------(Signed)

(Date)

----- (Application taken by)

Military Resistance: [Contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:Contact@militaryproject.org)  
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657  
888-711-2550

MORE

**You Can Take Action That Makes  
A Difference:  
Join The Military Resistance  
Organization:  
MILITARY RESISTANCE MEMBERSHIP  
APPLICATION**

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Armed Forces? (Branch) \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran? Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Union: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Landline): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

\$ dues paid \_\_\_\_\_

(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

NOTE: Civilian applicants will be interviewed, in person if possible, or by phone.

**Military Resistance: [Contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:Contact@militaryproject.org)  
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657  
888-711-2550**

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

**Heroic Zionist Occupiers Win Battle  
After Battle In Their Magnificent War  
On Palestinian Olive Trees:**

# 1. Settlers Uproot Over 400 Olive Saplings North Of Ramallah

09 February 2014 The Middle East Monitor

Early this morning, settlers uprooted and destroyed over 400 olive saplings in the village of Sinjil, located north of Ramallah.

According to the mayor of Sinjil, Ayoub Sweed, a number of settlers raided the village, and carried out their attacks on agricultural land in which olives saplings were planted.

He noted that this was the third attack in less than a month.

**He also pointed out that the olive saplings that were uprooted were planted as a part of the village's reforestation project funded by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which aims to reclaim and cultivate the land.**

**The number of saplings that were uprooted in less than a month is estimated at about 3,000 saplings.**

**MORE:**

## 2. Israeli Forces Protect Settlers As They Cut Down Palestinian Family's Trees

12 February, 2014, International Solidarity Movement, Khalil Team

Hebron, Occupied Palestine

On the afternoon of February 11, 2014, settlers in the Tel Rumeida neighborhood of Al-Khalil (Hebron) cut down trees belonging to the Abu Eisheh family.

While attempting to film the destruction of the trees, four human rights activists were arrested by Israeli police.

At approximately 3:30 p.m., three activists, a Swiss-American, an American, and an Italian, were sitting in their apartment in Tel Rumeida when they heard a commotion outside.

Outside the apartment, they found a group of settlers, Palestinians, Israeli soldiers and Israeli police. They were informed by the Palestinians that a group of settlers was cutting down trees at a house just up the road.

The three activists began filming but were not allowed up the road to where the tree-cutting was taking place.

**While filming, the American activist was physically assaulted by a settler. None of the soldiers or police officers present intervened. Instead, the Israeli police took the passports belonging to the American and Swiss-American and told them to sit on the ground.**

At this time, the Italian citizen returned to the apartment, where she was joined by a fourth activist, an American, who had just arrived.

Shortly thereafter, a group of soldiers and police officers attempted to enter the apartment. They were not allowed entry, but briefly questioned the two activists outside the apartment door.

The Israeli police then confiscated the passports belonging to the American and the Italian.

Not long after, all four activists were transported to the police station near Kiryat Arba, where they were interrogated and threatened with deportation.

After seven hours, the activists were released.

**The following day, February 12th, two activists from Christian Peacemaker Teams visited Tel Rumeida to document the destruction of the trees.**

**They were not there long before several Israeli soldiers approached them, told them to stop filming, and took their passports.**

They were held for two hours before their passports were returned.

**Israeli soldiers informed the two activists that if they approached the trees again they would be arrested.**

The destruction of Palestinian trees by settlers is a chronic problem, not only in Tel Rumeida, but all over the West Bank.

**In the past month alone, more than 2500 trees in the village of Sinjil were destroyed by settlers.**

Trees have also recently been destroyed by settlers in Qusra, Ramallah, and Nablus.

**Fruit trees are an essential resource for the Palestinian community, and their damage causes serious economic loss.**

**It takes as long as 12 years for an olive tree to reach full maturity.**

**MORE:**

### **3. Eighty Young Olive Trees Uprooted In South Hebron Hills**



The Field Affected



Uprooted olive tree (Picture by B'tselem

February 14, 2014 by Operation Dove, The International Solidarity Movement  
At Tuwani, Occupied Palestine

On the afternoon of February 11, Palestinians discovered about eighty olive trees uprooted alongside bypass road 317 near the Susiya junction in the South Hebron Hills.

The olive tree grove belongs to the Hushiya family from the nearby town of Yatta and had been planted only three weeks ago.

Yesterday afternoon the owners and B'tselem staff members gathered near the destroyed trees, waiting for the police. The Israeli police and District Coordination Office arrived on the scene and documented the incident. Today Operation Dove volunteers and B'tselem staff went there to take more pictures.

**This field is part of the area that settlers from the nearby settlement of Susiya illegally occupied during 2007, planting a vineyard.**

Immediately the Palestinians with the help of Rabbis for Human Rights filed a complaint and started a legal process concerning this land (for more details click here). In 2013 the Israeli High Court ordered the army to dismantle these crops and the order was implemented by force.

**The number of Palestinian-owned trees uprooted and damaged in the South Hebron Hills area since the beginning of 2014 has risen to 100. Olive trees are an essential resource for the Palestinian community, and their damage causes serious economic loss.**

Nevertheless the Palestinian communities of the South Hebron Hills area are still strongly involved in using nonviolence as a way to resist to the Israeli occupation.

Just two days ago twenty-five Palestinians planted sixty new olive trees on their own land close to the illegal Avigayil outpost (for more details clickhere).

Operation Dove has maintained an international presence in At-Tuwani and the South Hebron Hills since 2004.

**MORE:**

## **4. Settlers Destroy Over 150 Olive Trees Near Bethlehem**

2/16/2014 Ma'an

BETHLEHEM -- Settlers cut down 150 olive trees in the Bethlehem-area village of al-Khader on Tuesday, land owners said.

One of the owners, Muhammad Shawqi al-Zayyah, told Ma'an that settlers destroyed around 150 olive trees that his family planted two years ago.

Several vines were also cut down.



The fields are located near the illegal Israeli settlement of Neve Daniel and a nearby outpost called Sde Boaz.

The settlers there are led by a Jewish extremist known as Hananiya, who runs an illegal outpost nearby on eight dunams (two acres) of private Palestinian land.

Israeli authorities rarely investigate violent crimes carried out by settlers against Palestinian communities.

Since 1967, approximately 800,000 olive trees have been uprooted in the occupied West Bank, according to a joint report by the Palestinian Authority and the Applied Research Institute -- Jerusalem.

**The olive industry supports the livelihoods of roughly 80,000 families in the occupied West Bank.**

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

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