

Military Resistance 12F8

**Exhausted And Bereft,
Iraqi Soldiers Refusing
To Fight For The Tyrant
Maliki:**

**“Thousands Laying Down Their
Arms, Gutting Front-Line Units
Across The Country”**

**“Above All, The Soldiers — Young
Men From Southern Iraq, Or The
Outskirts Of Baghdad, Who Joined
The Service For Its Relatively**

**Good Salary — Felt ‘Abandoned’”
“They Are Thrown Into This Fire,” He
Said. “It’s A Nightmare.”**

**“One 25-Year-Old Deserter Said His
Mother Was So Terrified Of The Fighting
That She Burned His Uniform Every Time
He Returned Home On Leave”**



Fleeing Iraqi soldiers head toward Baghdad from a base in the north after Islamist fighters made gains. European Pressphoto Agency

JUNE 10, 2014 By KAREEM FAHIM and SUADAD AL-SALHY, New York Times
[Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — The infantryman and his colleagues were already worn down after six months of fighting militants in western Iraq, men flush with weapons and zeal.

Army commanders had no answer for the daily deadly ambushes and no broader strategy for prevailing in the longer war.

The final straw was the death of a friend, killed two weeks ago by a sniper's bullet. The infantryman, Bashar al-Halbousi, deserted, making the same choice as hundreds of other soldiers in his battalion, he said.

“The state is weak,” Mr. Halbousi said. “This will be an endless battle.”

After months of grinding conflict against a resurgent militant movement, the Iraqi Army is having its power blunted by a rise in desertions, turning the tide of the war and fragmenting an institution, trained and funded by the United States, that some hoped would provide Iraqis a common sense of citizenship.

In a nation tearing apart along sectarian lines, Sunnis and Shiites have served together in the military.

But the defections of Sunni soldiers threatened to deepen the growing perception among Iraq's Sunnis that the military serves as an instrument of Shiite power, even while Shiites soldiers have also fled.

The toll of the desertions came into sharp relief on Tuesday, as soldiers and their commanders abandoned bases in Mosul, all but ceding Iraq's second-largest city to extremist fighters belonging to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

The fleeing troops left weapons, vehicles and even their uniforms behind, as militants took over at least five army installations and the city's airport. In a desperate bid to stem the losses, the military was reduced to bombing its own bases to avoid surrendering more weapons to the enemy.

American officials who had asserted that the \$14 billion that the United States had spent on the Iraqi security forces would prepare them to safeguard the country after American troops left were forced to ponder images from Mosul of militants parading around captured Humvees.

In interviews over several days, soldiers and army commanders said the desertions had become widespread, with thousands of men laying down their arms, gutting front-line units across the country.

Before the troops dissolved in Mosul, the army was losing as many as 300 soldiers a day, between desertions, deaths and injuries, according to a security analyst who works with the Iraqi government and requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the military.

One former soldier who would give only his first name, Mohamed, because deserting is illegal, said that he had served in Ramadi and that his colleagues started deserting months ago as the deaths started mounting.

"I felt like I was fighting armies, not an army," said Mohamed, 24.

The militants came in waves, sending bombers when their ammunition grew scarce.

Mohamed said that eight of his friends had died and that he almost did, too, when a mortar shell struck his Humvee. When militants singled him out as a target for assassination, forcing him to flee, it was almost a relief.

"I'm tired," he said. "Everyone is tired."

The government has played down the scale of the crisis, in part by registering soldiers as "missing" rather than as deserters.

Officials also blamed the problem on unrelated issues — saying, for instance, that soldiers were not returning from home leave, but only because roads leading to the battlefields had become unsafe.

Lt. Gen. Rashid Fleih, the commander of operations in Anbar Province, said last week that recent successes by the army in clearing several highways would resolve that issue. "Now the soldier who is on leave can go back to his unit without any problems," he said.

After the defeat in Mosul, though, the crisis could not be so easily brushed away.

For the first time on Tuesday, the government publicly invoked the law forbidding desertions, threatening harsh punishments, including the death penalty, according to a media adviser for the prime minister, Nuri Kamal al-Maliki.

The government, though, seemed to have limited leverage.

In interviews, several deserters cited the ferocity of the battle as their primary reason for leaving.

They spoke of nerve-racking patrols in remote areas or in contested cities, surrounded, at times, by hostile residents.

They searched booby-trapped houses and traveled roads full of bombs. Most terrifying, though, they said, were the snipers.

Some soldiers said their families begged them to leave the service.

One 25-year-old deserter said his mother was so terrified of the fighting that she burned his uniform every time he returned home on leave.

Two months ago, he said she raised the stakes, threatening to kill herself if he returned to his unit.

“We lost so many troops — I lost three or four of my friends,” said the former soldier, who was sent straight to the front line in Falluja after basic training.

“The fighting was so fierce.”

The desertions threaten to transform Iraq’s vicious conflict into something even more dangerous, by starving the government of fighters as it struggles to recapture lost territory: in Falluja, which was taken over by the militants six months ago, and now in Mosul.

With fewer men to face the militants, the army is relying on artillery and airstrikes — including, human rights workers say, the use of indiscriminate barrel bombs — increasing the risks to civilians.

The desertions of men like Mr. Halbousi — a Sunni in an army dominated by Shiites, the majority sect in Iraq — is another dangerous development.

But above all, the soldiers — young men from southern Iraq, or the outskirts of Baghdad, who joined the service for its relatively good salary — felt “abandoned,” Mr. Khoei said.

“They are thrown into this fire,” he said. “It’s a nightmare.”

MORE:

“Baghdad Is In A State Of Panic”

“There Is No Army And No Security Forces Except In The Green Zone, And Their Loyalty Is Now Questionable”

“Senior Officers Turned Against The Government And Handed Their Military Areas To The Newcomers”

June 12, 2014 By: Elie Chalhoub; Al-Akhbar English [Excerpts]

Baghdad is in a state of panic.

The streets are empty.

Insurgents are 20 kilometers (12.42 miles) away from the capital.

As troops stood guard at the city’s northern flanks, queues formed at the main airport while banks saw large number of customers attempt to withdraw money.

Last night the internet also went down in Baghdad for an hour, adding to the atmosphere of unease.

All eyes are on Diyala, the gateway to the south by the Iranian borders.

There is no army and no security forces except in the green zone, and their loyalty is now questionable after information was confirmed that senior officers turned against the government and handed their military areas to the newcomers.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki addressed his military officers on TV in light of security reports stating that the attackers are Baathists affiliated with Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri - who was vice president under Saddam - as well as officers from the former Iraqi army and Fedayeen Saddam.

According to the reports, more than 40 officers who had served in Saddam Hussein’s army conspired with the attackers.

There are tales of betrayal involving senior military leaders including General Abboud Qanbar, Lieutenant General Ali Ghaidan and General Mahdi al-Ghazzawi, all members of the former army.

The only solution left is to organize a “popular army” and the enlistment campaign has already started, with the aim of forming a paramilitary organization similar to the National Defense Forces in Syria.

It is a return to the notion of self-security which prevailed after the US invasion.

It is also a recognition that there is no army, leading to questions like where did US \$41 million - that was supposedly spent to strengthen the military over the last three years - go?

All of this to justify a story that sounds more like a fantasy; that within hours, 1,500 fighters from ISIS succeeded in occupying Mosul, where a military garrison consisting of 52,000 soldiers is stationed, before invading Salah al-Din and controlling many neighborhoods in Kirkuk.

Everyone agrees that even Samarra has fallen militarily but it was not taken over by takfiris, not because they could not but because they chose not to. Iraqi military units are fleeing their positions whenever ISIS fighters advance and orders are issued to security forces to withdraw from neighbouring cities.

In a situation like this, there is no room for politics, as military action has the last word.

The position of the Kurds in this context is noteworthy. Appeals were made from more than one side for Peshmerga forces to take part in thwarting the invading forces. But they refused, arguing that they only defend Kurdish and ethnically mixed areas.

It is said that US pressure was exerted on Erbil in this regard which led to an understanding between Maliki and Nijirfan al-Barazani stipulating that Peshmerga forces will take part in the battle to recapture Mosul in return for agreeing to secure exports of oil from Kurdistan.

The situation in the occupied areas does not seem as bad as it is portrayed in some media outlets.

All the forces involved in the political process left the areas controlled by ISIS, including the governor of Nineveh Athil al-Nujaifi, the more influential brother of Osama al-Nujaifi.

He moved to Erbil leaving behind business projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars in Mosul. It is true of course that tens of thousands of Iraqis left their homes for fear of what is happening and what is to come.

No one, however, can deny that years of political, social and economic marginalization, in addition to undermining Sunni leaders, will guarantee ISIS - or any other faction that rises up against the political leadership in Baghdad - popular support among individuals and tribes, even if it is temporary.

It was interesting that the Shia authority Bashir al-Nujaifi blamed the “incompetence and dereliction of duty towards their country by those fighting” for “what we have come to in Iraq.” He called for “speeding up the process of forming a foresighted salvation government imbued with loyalty and love of country.”

This allusion was the first of its kind, regarding the political discord going on in Iraq since Mosul fell and the sound of bullets dominated the political arena in the country.

The reality on the ground poses more questions than it provides answers.

What are the repercussions of the Shia authority's appeal to unite in the face of the terrorists?

What are the implications of ISIS' victories in Iraq on the Syrian front given the financial and military spoils it gained from Iraq?

MORE:

Iraqi Insurgent Surge Overruns Tikrit And Much Of Salaheddin Province:

“Our Forces Were Caught By Surprise, They Never Expected ISIS Would Use Police And Army Humvee Vehicles”

At Mosul, “Two Divisions Of Iraqi Soldiers – Roughly 30,000 Men – Simply Turned And Ran In The Face Of The Assault By An Insurgent Force Of Just 800 Fighters Leaving Behind Uniforms, Weapons And Armored Vehicles”

Insurgents “May Have Seized Up To \$480m In Banknotes From The City's Banks”



Burnt vehicles belonging to Iraqi security forces are pictured at a checkpoint in east Mosul, one day after insurgents seized control of the city, June 11, 2014. Credit: REUTERS/Stringer

Mosul, a predominantly Sunni city with 1.6 million residents, collapsed swiftly. American-trained Iraqi forces ran in the face of the onslaught, leaving behind uniforms, weapons and armored vehicles.

The Iraqi Army was widely disliked and seen as occupiers from the Shiite south.

Residents of Mosul and towns like Tikrit have flocked to the fight against the central government.

Not all Mosul residents condemned the Isis rout. Ali Aziz, 35, a humanitarian worker, said: "We got statements by them confirming that they won't cause harm to anyone and all the minorities will be protected by them. They are really welcomed and we are so happy to have them rather than having Maliki's bloody, brutal forces.

"I feel we have been liberated of an awful nightmare that was suffocating us for 11 years. The army and the police never stopped arresting, detaining and killing people, let alone the bribes they were taken from the detainees' families."

June 11, 2014 AFP & By Ghazwan Hassan, Reuters & CBS News & By SUADAD AL-SALHY and TIM ARANGOJUNE, New York Times & June 12, 2014 By Jim Sciutto, Nic Robertson and Laura Smith-Spark, CNN & By Colin Freeman, Telegraph Media Group Limited & By Ariel Zirulnick, Staff writer, Christian Science Monitor & By Dan Murphy, Staff writer, Christian Science Monitor & by Ali A. Nabhan, New York Times [Excerpts]

Militants took control of the Iraqi city of Tikrit, 80 miles north of Baghdad, and freed hundreds of prisoners on Wednesday, police said, the second provincial capital to fall in two days.

Witnesses said soldiers abandoned their posts before the fighters were even within sight on Wednesday.

In some instances, hundreds of well-armed government troops retreated in the face of attacks by only a few dozen militants.

Many doffed their uniforms, put on civilian clothing and fled on foot.

Security sources said ISIS militants on Wednesday drove more than 60 vehicles into Tikrit, the home town of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, which lies about 100 miles (160 km) north of Baghdad.

Local security forces in Tikrit said the militants' ranks were swollen by as many as 70 convicts who joined the fight after ISIS raided prisons and freed inmates in Mosul and Tikrit.

The militants occupied the provincial government headquarters and raised the black flag of ISIL.

"Our forces were caught by surprise, they never expected ISIS would use police and army Humvee vehicles, we mistook them for government forces and it was too late to stop them," said a police captain who fled from Tikrit to Samarra.

"We are fighting devils and not ordinary people".

Residents of Tikrit reported remarkable displays of soldiers handing over their weapons and uniforms peacefully to militants who ordinarily would have been expected to kill government soldiers on the spot.

"They did not kill the soldiers or policemen who handed over their weapons, uniform and their military ID," a security official in Tikrit, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Wednesday. "They just took these things and asked them to leave."

An audio recording purportedly from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria promises more fighting in more Iraqi cities, including Baghdad.

"Continue your march as the battle is not yet raging," a voice said to be that of ISIS spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani says on the message posted early Thursday (last Wednesday night ET) on the group's media website. "It will rage in Baghdad and Karbala. So be ready for it."

"All of Tikrit is in the hands of the militants," a police colonel said of the Salaheddin provincial capital, which lies roughly half way between Baghdad and Iraq's second city Mosul which fell on Tuesday.

Mosul, a predominantly Sunni city with 1.6 million residents, collapsed swiftly. American-trained Iraqi forces ran in the face of the onslaught, leaving behind uniforms, weapons and armored vehicles.

The Iraqi Army was widely disliked and seen as occupiers from the Shiite south.

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Not all Mosul residents condemned the Isis rout. Ali Aziz, 35, a humanitarian worker, said: "We got statements by them confirming that they won't cause harm to anyone and all the minorities will be protected by them. They are really welcomed and we are so happy to have them rather than having Maliki's bloody, brutal forces.

"I feel we have been liberated of an awful nightmare that was suffocating us for 11 years. The army and the police never stopped arresting, detaining and killing people, let alone the bribes they were taken from the detainees' families.

"Me and my neighbours are waiting for the news that the other six Sunni protesting provinces falling in the hand of the Isis fighters to declare our Sunni region like the three provinces in Kurdistan."

Insurgents stripped the main army base in the northern city of Mosul of weapons, released hundreds of prisoners from the city's jails and may have seized up to \$480m in banknotes from the city's banks.

Iraqi officials told the Guardian that two divisions of Iraqi soldiers – roughly 30,000 men – simply turned and ran in the face of the assault by an insurgent force of just 800 fighters.

Two Iraqi security officials confirmed Tikrit was under the control of ISIS insurgents, and said the provincial governor was missing.

As night fell, several hundred insurgent troops were in Tikrit, with clashes still taking place between the insurgents and military units on its outskirts, said Mizhar Fleih, the deputy head of the municipal council of nearby Samarra.

Most of the weapons seized by Isis were taken from the al-Qayara base in Mosul, the fourth largest in the country, after two divisions of the Iraqi army fled the city en masse on Tuesday, allowing a far smaller extremist force to enter.

Government forces in the northern cities of Mosul and Tikrit ran when attacked this week, the officials said.

So many soldiers had fled Mosul that the price of firearms plummeted as troops flooded the market with their service weapons, said Shirzad, a taxi driver at the border of Iraqi Kurdistan, who had been ferrying Iraqi army deserters from the checkpoint towards Kirkuk.

According to the witnesses in Tikrit and the Samarra police officials, two police stations in Tikrit were on fire and a military base was taken over by militants.

The governor of Salaheddin province, of which Tikrit is the capital, was missing, according to the sources.

Overnight on Tuesday, ISIL militants moved on Baiji, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) north of the capital, Baghdad, home to Iraq's largest refinery, which can process 300,000 barrels per day and supplies oil products to most of Iraq's provinces and as well as Baghdad.

Residents of Baiji, a city of 200,000 about 110 miles south of Mosul, awoke Wednesday to find that government checkpoints had been abandoned and that insurgents, arriving in a column of 60 vehicles, were taking control of parts of the city without firing a shot, the security officials said.

Peter Bouckaert, the emergency services director for Human Rights Watch, said in a post on Twitter that the militants had seized the Baiji power station, which supplies electricity to Baghdad, Kirkuk and Salahuddin Province.

Security sources said the fighters drove into the town of Baiji in armed vehicles, torching the court house and police station before freeing prisoners.

The militants later withdrew into surrounding villages after tribal leaders persuaded them not to take over the energy installations in Baiji, local officials and residents said.

Baiji sits on the main highway north from Baghdad to Mosul that passes through rural areas in which ISIS has much influence.

For the government to reinforce its troops in Mosul, it needs to drive them through Baiji. If ISIS controls the town, the government's task will be much harder.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said the massive security failure in Sunni-dominated Ninevah province that allowed militants to seize Mosul was the result of a "conspiracy," and that those members of the security forces who fled rather than stand up to the militants should be punished.

He stopped short of assigning direct blame, however, choosing to focus instead on plans to fight back - without detailing the specifics. **[Lots of luck with that. T]]**

The goal of ISIS is to establish an Islamic state straddling the border of Iraq and Syria, and the group now moves fighters freely across that border. ["Goal?" Try "Accomplished fact."]

Ninevah governor Atheel al-Nujaifi told reporters that "Mosul is capable of getting back on its feet and getting rid of all the outsiders," and said authorities planned to mobilize residents into popular militias that would play a role in retaking the city. **[Press release from the Dept. of Bizarre Fantasies.]**

Maliki has called for arming of civilians to fight ISIS – which probably means Shiite militias. The Iraqi parliament failed to reach a quorum for a planned vote on a state of emergency that would give Maliki almost unchecked power.

Given that the government has routinely jailed and tortured political opponents with the powers it already has, alarm bells should be ringing.

More power for Maliki could well mean more such abuses, and more fuel for the Sunni Arab uprising.

MORE:

“Mililitants Have Already Hit Major Energy Infrastructure Throughout Northern Iraq”

“The 46th Brigade Of The Iraqi Army, Stationed Near The Riyadh Area, Surrendered To Rebel Tribes Handing Over Their Weapons”

“In Sulayman Bek, Iraqi Federal Police And The Iraqi Army's Task Force 4 Withdrew And Handed Over Its Weapons To ISIS”

“ISIS And Allies Are Capitalizing On Anti-Government Sentiment, Distrust Of The Iraqi Government's Ability To Protect Them, And A Superior Operational Capacity”

Jun 11, 2014 By Kamaran al-Najar, Ben Lando and Staff of Iraq Oil Report [Excerpts]

Kamaran al-Najar reported from Kirkuk. Adam al-Atbi reported from Baquba. Patrick Osgood, Rawaz Tahir and Andy Watkins reported from Erbil. Ben Lando reported from the United States. Iraqi staff contributing from Baghdad and Mosul are anonymous for their security.

KIRKUK - The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) is moving on the Baiji refinery and other energy infrastructure, one facet of a coordinated campaign that has seen it take over the city of Mosul entirely while spreading thin remaining Iraqi security forces, many of which abandoned post in Mosul and other areas on Tuesday.

Before a crackdown in 2007, the refinery was a major source of consistent revenue for insurgents.

Militants have already hit major energy infrastructure throughout northern Iraq.

The Iraq-Turkey Pipeline (ITP) has been offline since attacks in early March, and other energy infrastructure from Anbar to Diyala province has also been targeted.

The stated goal of ISIS, as its name suggests, is to create a new state based on a radical interpretation of Sunni Islam. The group has already created the so-called Daash Emirate – "Daash" is a transliteration of the group's Arabic name – in Ninewa, Kirkuk and Diyala provinces. The "Jazeera Emirate" (or "Desert Emirate") is in Anbar province, where ISIS has maintained control over Fallujah, parts of Ramadi, and vast stretches of desert for five months.

Just like ISIS did last year, staging coordinated attacks on the Taji and Abu Ghraib prisons that freed hundreds of prisoners – who in turn went to the battlefields in Syria and Iraq – hundreds if not thousands of prisoners were released as ISIS took over security headquarters and prisons.

"ISIS took over Mosul in a very short time. Also they reached Sherqat (in Salahaddin province). It means that they are about 70 kilometers from the Baiji refinery," said a senior official at the North Oil Company (NOC), which operates Iraq's Kirkuk, Bai Hassan and other fields in the north, which feed Baiji and other refineries and exports into Turkey, when the ITP is operational.

The area of Sinia, nearby the city of Baiji, is "totally controlled by the terrorists, which means the refinery is almost under their control," said a second senior NOC official.

The NOC is producing around 240,000 barrels per day (bpd) now, the official said, adding that ISIS control over Baiji will mean partial curtailments with as much as 200,000 bpd staying in production and then re-injected "in order to keep gas production sustained continuously," to the detriment of the oil field.

Multiple senior officials in Iraq's security forces and oil sector, as well as first-hand accounts as observed by Iraq Oil Report, depict a fluid situation in which ISIS and allies are capitalizing on both anti-government sentiment, distrust of the Iraqi government's ability to protect them, and a superior operational capacity.

"They are approaching Kirkuk from two axes," said the second senior NOC official. The Tikrit-Kirkuk road is under ISIS control, the official said late Tuesday evening, as close as 20 kilometers from Kirkuk city. From the north, in the heavily Kurdish Dibis area of Kirkuk, ISIS is battling to control the police headquarters in the center of the town.

"Our access to the main field at Bai Hassan is through Dibis, as well as the four of our gas compression stations," the official said. The NOC headquarters and the nearby Baba Dome of the Kirkuk oil field remain under government control as of late Tuesday night, as are the small refineries at Kirkuk and in Anbar's Haditha, the official said.

Before ISIS launched the campaign for Mosul and its push to secure its Daash Emirate, the Oil Ministry had said the repairs along the ITP would be completed this month – a lofty and ultimately impossible target.

NOC repair crews had been prevented from accessing the site for months, and were only able to begin work in late May, with heavy protection from Iraqi security forces. "The ITP has been in the hands of the insurgents since more than a hundred days ago," said the first senior NOC official.

ISIS has been seen in control of areas further north, as the pipeline moves in Ninewa toward Turkey. "The situation is very difficult. I think if they decide to bomb the ITP they could do it anytime."

The Qaiyarah oil field, in southern Ninewa, "is totally under ISIS control," said the second senior NOC official. A rough patch of Iraq to begin with, Qaiyarah has been attacked numerous times over recent years, so much that Angolan state oil firm Sonangol has relinquished its contract to develop it and nearby Najmah.

A kerosene depot outside of Ramadi, the capital of Anbar, was attacked on Monday, and set ablaze.

All throughout the area of ISIS's operations, Iraqi security forces have been decimated by defections.

"On Tuesday afternoon, the 46th Brigade of Regiment 12 of the Iraqi Army, stationed near the Riyadh area, surrendered to rebel tribes," said Sheikh Saadoun Fendi Obeidi, the spokesperson of the self-proclaimed "Rebel Tribes."

More than 100 soldiers and an officer surrendered later in the evening, handing over their weapons, he said.

"Rebel Tribes' fighters are stationed 25 kilometers from the city of Kirkuk, which is only 5 kilometers from the Peshmerga forces stationed near the North Gas Company," Obeidi said.

In Sulayman Bek, a senior police official there said Iraqi Federal Police and the Iraqi Army's Task Force 4 withdrew and handed over its weapons to ISIS.

"The same scenario that happened in Mosul occurred in the areas southwest of Kirkuk and in Sulayman Bek," the official said.

"Hawijah and al-Zab areas fell into the hands of ISIS and there is no any presence now of the ISF in those two areas," a senior Kirkuk police official said.

MORE:

“The U.S. Embassy In Baghdad Is Preparing Contingency Plans To Evacuate Its Employees”

“Mortar Rounds And Rockets Have Hit Baghdad International Airport”

Jun. 11, 2014 by Sara Carter, TheBlaze Inc

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad is preparing contingency plans to evacuate its employees if necessary now that one of the deadliest Islamic militant groups in the region has taken control of large swaths of Iraq, a U.S. official told TheBlaze.

The U.S. official told TheBlaze that the U.S. Embassy, United Nations and other foreign organizations with a presence in Iraq are “preparing contingency plans to evacuate employees.”

Mortar rounds and rockets have hit Baghdad International Airport

MORE:

Insurgent Offensive Bogs Down After Capturing US Humvees



Photo Credit: Twitter

June 12, 2014 by G-Had, The Duffel Blog. Duffel Blog correspondents John Mittle, Dark Laughter, Dick Scuttlebutt, Jay-B, Frederick Taub, and Smelly Infidel contributed to this article.

MOSUL, Iraq — Just days after the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) seized control of Iraq's northern cities of Mosul and Tikrit, the group's lightning offensive has reportedly ground to a halt after ISIS unsuccessfully attempted to use dozens of captured U.S. M1114 Humvees.

"We were considerably more mobile with Toyota Technicals," complained ISIS cell leader Ibrahim ibn Abdullah ibn Sabah Al-Rahman.

"But once we captured these unreliable monstrosities, our leadership started worrying about our safety."

"Now we can't even leave our base without at least four up-armored Humvees and an RPG team, plus we have to have three ground guides with reflective belts every time we are backing out of our parking spot," Al-Rahman said as he angrily gestured towards a dilapidated Humvee.

"And don't get me started on all the protective gear we have to wear. Even the suicide bombers were told they wouldn't be getting into paradise if they were caught in one without a helmet, flak, gloves, and flame retardant clothes!"

During the course of the interview, Al-Rahman was interrupted by at least one angry phone call from ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, demanding to know why none of the Humvees had their drip pans and chock blocks in place.

The M1114 HMMWV, known to the public as the "Humvee" and to the American soldier as "the fucking Humvee," is the U.S. military's all-purpose mobile field kitchen, capable of cooking up to six soldiers alive in as many minutes.

During the Iraq War, the U.S. discovered that they were also extremely effective at uncovering IEDs, leading to the war-winning strategy of driving over them as frequently as possible.

At the end of the Iraq War — in a gesture of revenge — the U.S. abandoned thousands of Humvees in Iraq, an act compared to the Soviets seeding millions of land mines in Afghanistan, and with similar results once the Iraqis began to drive them.

The Humvees were captured by ISIS on Tuesday after being abandoned by Iraqi soldiers unable to locate the vehicles' keys, which they claimed the U.S. advisers who alerted them to this feature had never provided.

Although ISIS attempted to use the vehicles immediately, they were unable to properly employ them because of the Humvee's incredibly poor fuel consumption, as well as unsuccessful attempts to obtain spare parts from manufacturer A.M. General in Indiana.

To make matters worse, in an almost-karmic act of retribution, retreating Iraqi soldiers have begun emplacing landmines and other ordnance along the roads, easily blowing up the few ISIS Humvees that have ventured south of Mosul.

“In the name of the Blessed Prophet, these things are death traps!” exclaimed one of Al-Rahman’s fighters. “How the hell could anyone drive these things around a parking lot, let alone into a combat zone?”

Al-Rahman then reminded him that you go to jihad with the mujahideen you have, not the mujahideen you wish you had.

Following a 35% increase in casualties caused by repeated Humvee rollovers, Al-Baghdadi called a halt to offensive operations, pending a series of mandatory safety classes for ISIS fighters.

ISIS sources have vowed that the offensive would resume as soon as the classes had achieved 100% attendance, which would also give them time to capture some wreckers so they could at least tow the Humvees into battle.

ISIS has also apparently captured a dozen U.S.-made MRAPs from the Iraqi Army, but after two days had still not figured out how to drive them out of the motor pool.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

All Polish Soldiers Come Home From Afghanistan; Polish President Calls Afghan Mission “An Uneasy Service”

June 10, 2014 The Warsaw Voice

Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski welcomed the last contingent of Polish troops coming back on Monday from the military mission in Afghanistan.

“You are coming back home, after an uneasy service, with honor, broad experience and higher skills”, Polish president told the soldiers.

President Komorowski, who took part in the welcoming ceremony of the 10th Armored Cavalry Brigade in Świetoszów, southwestern Poland said that the day when Poland ends its military part of Afghan mission is a good opportunity to thank the Polish soldiers. “I would like to thank all the soldiers who for so many years served the mission in Afghanistan. In particular, I want to pay my tribute and share my warm feelings for the families of all the 43 soldiers who gave their lives during the service in Afghanistan”, Komorowski said.

He added that the soldiers gave proof that the Polish army is a credible ally of NATO.

Polish President also said that his country's aim is for the NATO to return to "its fundamentals", such as the Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, known as the "one-for-all and all-for-one" article.

The President also assured that the Polish government will fulfill its promise of increasing military spending to the level of 2% of GDP.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

U.S. Senator Calls For Military Defeat Of Invading U.S. Army: Supporting Resistance, Corwin Says “If I Were A Mexican I Would Tell You, ‘Have You Not Room In Your Own Country To Bury Your Dead Men? If You Come Into Mine We Will Greet You With Bloody Hands, And Welcome You To Hospitable Graves”

[Corwin, along with many others, understood the war on Mexico was initiated by slaveholders controlling the U.S. government to grab more territory for slavery. Therefore, he, along with many others, made very clear which side he was on, as in this speech. The biographical information below is based on data from Wikipedia. He and this speech deserve to be well remembered.

[Thanks to Fabian Bouthillette, Iraq Veterans Against The War & Military Resistance Organization, for copying from a very old book. T]

By THOMAS CORWIN, of Ohio. Speech opposing the U.S. war on Mexico delivered February 11, 1847.

Corwin served in the U.S. Senate from March 4, 1845 to July 20, 1850. He was again elected to the House of Representatives in 1858, and returned to that body as a Republican and served from March 4, 1859 to March 12, 1861.

He resigned only a few days into the 37th Congress after being appointed by the newly inaugurated President Abraham Lincoln to become Minister to Mexico, where he served until 1864.

Corwin, well-regarded among the Mexican public for his opposition to the Mexican War while in the Senate, helped keep relations with the Mexicans friendly throughout the course of the Civil War, despite Confederate efforts to sway their allegiances.

Born 1794. Died 1865.

What is the territory, Mr. President, which you propose to wrest from Mexico?

It is consecrated to the heart of the Mexican by many a well-fought battle, with his old Castilian master.

His Bunker Hills, and Saratogas, and Yorktowns are there. The Mexican can say, "There I bled for liberty! and shall I surrender that consecrated home of my affections to the Anglo-Saxon invaders?"

What do they want with it? They have Texas already. They have possessed themselves of the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande.

What else do they want? To what shall I point my children as memorials, of that independence which I bequeath to them, when those battlefields shall have passed from my possession?

Sir, had one come and demanded Bunker Hill of the people of Massachusetts, had England's lion ever showed himself there, is there a man over thirteen, and under ninety, who would not have been ready to meet him — is there a river on this continent that would not have run red with blood — is there a field but would have been piled high with the unburied bones of slaughtered Americans before these consecrated battlefields of liberty should have been wrested from us?

But this same American goes into a sister republic, and says to poor, weak Mexico, "Give up your territory — you are unworthy to possess it — I have got one-half already — all I ask you is to give up the other!"

England might as well, in the circumstances I have described, have come and demanded of us "Give up the Atlantic slope — give up this trifling territory from the Allegheny mountains to the sea; it is only from Maine to St. Mary's — only about one-third of your Republic, and the least interesting portion of it."

What would be the response?

They would say, "We must give this up to John Bull." Why?

"He wants room."

The Senator from Michigan says he must have this. Why, my worthy Christian brother, on what principle of justice?

"I want room!"

Sir, look at this pretense of want of room.

With twenty millions of people, you have about one thousand millions of acres of land, inviting settlement by every conceivable argument — bringing them down to a quarter of

a dollar an acre, and allowing every man to squat where he pleases. But the Senator from Michigan says we will be two hundred millions in a few years, and we want room.

If I were a Mexican I would tell you, “Have you not room in your own country to bury your dead men? If you come into mine we will greet you with bloody hands, and welcome you to hospitable graves.”

Why, says the chairman of this Committee of Foreign Relations, it is the most reasonable thing in the world! We ought to have the Bay of San Francisco. Why? Because it is the best harbor on the Pacific!

It has been my fortune, Mr. President, to have practiced a good deal in criminal courts in the course of my life, but I never yet heard a thief, arraigned for stealing a horse, plead that it was the best horse that he could find in the country!

We want California. What for? “Why,” says the Senator from Michigan, “we will have it;” and the Senator from South Carolina, with a very mistaken view, I think, of policy, says, “You can’t keep our people from going there.” I don’t desire to prevent them. Let them go and seek their happiness in whatever country or clime it pleases them.

All I ask of them is, not to require this Government to protect them with that banner consecrated to war waged for principles — eternal, enduring truth.

Sir, it is not meet that our old flag should throw its protecting folds over expeditions for lucre or for land.

But you still say, you want room for your people. This has been the plea of every robber-chief from Nimrod to the present hour.

I dare say, when Tamerlane descended from his throne built of seventy thousand human skulls, and marched his ferocious battalions to further slaughter, I dare say he said, “I want room.” Bajazet was another gentleman of kindred tastes and wants with us Anglo-Saxons — he “wanted room.”

Alexander, too, the mighty “Macedonian madman,” when he wandered with his Greeks to the plains of India, and fought a bloody battle on the very ground where recently England and the Sikhs engaged in strife for “room,” was, no doubt, in quest of some California there. Many a Monterey had he to storm to get “room.”

Sir, he made quite as much of that sort of history as you ever will.

Mr. President, do you remember the last chapter in that history? It is soon read. Oh! I wish we could but understand its moral. Ammon’s son (so was Alexander named), after all his victories, died drunk in Babylon!

The vast empire he conquered to “get room” became the prey of the generals he had trained; it was disparted, torn to pieces, and so ended. Sir, there is a very significant appendix; it is this: the descendants of the Greeks — of Alexander’s Greeks — are now governed by a descendant of Attila!

Mr. President, while we are fighting for room, let us ponder deeply this appendix. I was somewhat amazed, the other day, to hear the Senator from Michigan declare that Europe had quite forgotten us till these battles waked them up. I suppose the Senator feels grateful to the President for “waking up” Europe.

Does the President, who is, I hope, read in civic as well as military lore, remember the saying of one who had pondered upon history long — long, too, upon man, his nature and true destiny? Montesquieu did not think highly of this way of “waking up.” “Happy,” says he, “is that nation whose annals are tiresome.”

The Senator from Michigan has a different view of this.

He thinks that a nation is not distinguished until it is distinguished in war; he fears that the slumbering faculties of Europe have not been able to ascertain that there are twenty millions of Anglo-Saxons here, making railroads and canals, and speeding all the arts of peace to the utmost accomplishment of the most refined civilization. They do not know it!

And what is the wonderful expedient which this democratic method of making history would adopt in order to make us known? Storming cities, desolating peaceful, happy homes, shooting men — aye, sir, such is war — and shooting women, too!

Sir, I have read, in some account of your battle of Monterrey, of a lovely Mexican girl, who, with the benevolence of an angel in her bosom, and the robust courage of a hero in her heart, was busily engaged, during the bloody conflict, amid the crash of falling houses, the groans of the dying, and the wild shriek of battle, in carrying water to slake the burning thirst of the wounded of either host.

While bending over a wounded American soldier, a cannon ball struck her and blew her to atoms!

Sir, I do not charge my brave, generous-hearted countrymen who fought that fight with this.

No, no! We who send them — we who know that scenes like this, which might send tears of sorrow “down Pluto’s iron cheek,” are the invariable, inevitable attendants on war— we are accountable for this.

And this — *this* is the way we are to be made known to Europe.

This — this is to be the undying renown of free, republican America!

“She has stormed a city — killed many of its inhabitants of both sexes — she has room!” So it will read.

Sir, if this were our only history, then may God of his mercy grant that its volume may speedily come to a close.

Why is it, sir, that we of the United States, a people of yesterday, compared with the older nations of the world, should be waging war for territory — for “room?” Look at your country, extending from the Allegheny mountains to the Pacific ocean, capable

itself of sustaining, in comfort, a larger population than will be in the whole Union for one hundred years to come.

Over this vast expanse of territory, your population is now so sparse that I believe we provided, at the last session, a regiment of mounted men to guard the mail, from the frontier of Missouri to the mouth of the Columbia; and yet you persist in the ridiculous assertion, "I want room." One would imagine, from the frequent reiteration of the complaint, that you had a bursting, teeming population, whose energy was paralyzed, whose enterprise was crushed, for want of space.

Why should we be so weak or wicked as to offer this idle apology for ravaging a neighboring republic? It will impose on no one at home or abroad.

Do we not know, Mr. President, that it is a law never to be repealed, that falsehood shall be short-lived?

Was it not ordained of old that truth only shall abide forever?

Whatever we may say to-day, or whatever we may write in our books, the stern tribunal of history will review it all, detect falsehood, and bring us to judgment before that posterity which shall bless or curse us, as we may act *now*, wisely or otherwise:

We may hide in the grave (which awaits us all), in vain; we may hope there, like the foolish bird that hides its head in the sand, in the vain belief that its body is not seen, yet even there, this preposterous excuse of want of "room," shall be laid bare, and the quick-coming future will decide that it was a hypocritical pretense, under which we sought to conceal the avarice, which prompted us to covet and to seize by force that which was not ours.

Mr. President, this uneasy desire to augment our territory has depraved the moral sense, and blunted the otherwise keen sagacity of our people.

What has been the fate of all nations who have acted upon the idea that they must advance?

Our young orators cherish this notion with a fervid, but fatally mistaken zeal. They call it by the mysterious name of "destiny."

"Our destiny," they say, is "onward," and hence they argue, with ready sophistry, the propriety of seizing upon any territory and any people that may lie in the way of our "fated" advance.

Recently, these progressives have grown classical; some assiduous student of antiquities has helped them to a patron saint.

They have wandered back into the desolated Pantheon, and there, among the Polytheistic relics of that "pale mother of dead empires," they have found a god whom these Romans, centuries gone by, baptized "Terminus."

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Angry Cab Drivers Gridlock Europe In General Strike Against Uber Taxi App:

“Demonstrations In London, Paris,
Madrid, Barcelona, Berlin, Milan And
Rome Cause Travel Chaos”



June 11, 2014 by Alexandra Topping, Ashifa Kassam and Lizzy Davies, The Guardian [Excerpts]

Several major European cities ground to a halt on Wednesday as licensed taxi drivers took to the streets in mass protests against the smartphone taxi app Uber.

Demonstrations in London, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Berlin, Milan and Rome caused travel chaos and long tailbacks, as taxi drivers protested against the app, which they argue is unregulated and threatens their livelihood.

In London, Trafalgar Square and Whitehall were jammed from the start of the planned "go slow" at 2pm, as thousands of black cabs gathered honking their horns, bringing total gridlock to the centre of the capital, while supporters waved banners and started occasionally chanting: "Boris, out!"

A spokeswoman for Uber, the US start-up which links minicab drivers to passengers via a GPS-based smartphone app, said the protests had boosted new users in London by 850%, as people tried to cope with the gridlock.

But the company, based in San Francisco and backed by Google and Goldman Sachs, came under increasing pressure to be more transparent about its tax set-up.

Taxi associations claim Uber routes its payments through headquarters in the Netherlands to minimise its corporation tax payments in France, the UK and Germany – in a similar manner to Apple and Starbucks, which have found themselves in the firing line for the practice.

Taxi drivers in Paris said on Wednesday that they were upset that they pay 20 percent more in taxes than Uber chauffeurs, as well as a 10 percent value-added tax on fares that is not required of Uber cars.

"Uber cabs are stealing our clients," said José Losada, 36. "We are regulated to death, while they circumvent the law."

Steve McNamara, the general secretary of the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association – which was joined by the London Cab Drivers Club and the transport workers' union RMT – said the cab drivers were not demonstrating against Uber but against Transport for London.

By using a driver's mobile phone to track a journey and charge a fare on the distance and time travelled, Uber was operating with a meter, he said, which under current regulations only licensed black cabs are allowed to do.

"The problem here is that Uber is operating outside the law. There is no question about that. But someone on high has made a decision to leave Uber alone. Why? It is sinister," McNamara said.

Transport for London has now referred the matter to the high court. McNamara questioned the issuing of a licence to Uber when its tax status was unclear. "Why do Uber's invoices go through Holland? I don't particularly care if Uber are paying enough tax in the UK, but that is something that should concern Boris."

Jo Bertram, the UK & Ireland general manager for Uber, said the number of people downloading the app in London had increased by 850%, compared with the same time on Wednesday last week. "The results are clear: London wants Uber in a big way," she said. "Unsurprisingly, the LTDA, which is stuck in the dark ages, is intent on holding London to ransom and causing significant economic impact to Londoners."

Asked what specific tax the company paid in the UK, and why its invoices go through an office in the Netherlands, she said she had nothing to add to the statement.

Leon Daniels, TfL's managing director of surface transport, said the strike had been "good natured" and he estimated the number of cabs at around 5,000.

"As a result of close co-operation between TfL and the Metropolitan Police Service the number of other road users caught in the congestion was minimised," he said. "The important thing now is continue with the process to get legal clarity on the issue of taxi meters. I hope that the industry will join us in taking that to a conclusion with all due speed."

In Italy, where Uber has been provoking protests from taxi drivers in Milan and Rome since last year, strikes and protests were held not only in the app's two Italian strongholds but also in other cities keen to stave off its arrival.

About 150 drivers protested in Naples, the Ansa news agency reported, while in the northern city of Verona drivers staged a one-hour strike – in solidarity with their Milanese colleagues but "above all against the possibility that the Uber app could spread to Verona too," a statement said.

In Milan, where the strike was due to last until 10pm local time, organisers said the action was about "not surrendering a sector to a multinational which cares about revenue and not service, without even paying taxes in Italy".

Spain saw similar scenes, as Madrid's ubiquitous white taxis began a 24-hour strike to protest against Uber and other similar smartphone apps.

In Madrid, Julio Moreno, the president of the Spanish taxi federation, told local news media that "100 percent" of taxi drivers had answered the call for a 24-hour strike, and passengers arriving at the city's main airport and train stations were greeted by deserted taxi stands.

While taxi licences in Spain cost between €80,000 and €200,000, there is no such requirement for drivers with Uber.

Protests were also held in Barcelona, the only Spanish city where Uber is currently in use. On Tuesday, two months after the app was introduced there, the Catalan government announced it would demand Uber "immediately" cease its activity in Barcelona, and drivers who use it could be fined up to €6,000 and see their vehicles impounded.

Uber has expanded rapidly since it was launched in 2010 by two US technology entrepreneurs, Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp. The company, which was last week valued at \$18bn (£11bn) in an oversubscribed fundraising, operates in London, Manchester and more than 100 cities in 37 countries and has faced opposition in most of them.

It is banned in Las Vegas and Miami and is facing lawsuits in Chicago, San Francisco and Washington, DC.

Speaking from his stationary cab in Whitehall, Carl Williams said cab drivers welcomed competition. "We've been in competition with minicabs for 40 years. This is not about competition, it's a regulation issue: if you want to give Uber meters fine – but, like ours, that meter should be regulated."

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

Nation's Cable Companies Announce They're Just Going To Take \$100 From Everyone

Jun 11, 2014 The Onion

NEW YORK — Offering no justification for the action aside from their own desire to do so, executives from the nation's leading cable companies announced plans Wednesday to take \$100 from every one of their subscribers.

"At midnight EST tonight, we will deduct exactly \$100 from each of our customers' accounts and, frankly, there is nothing that anyone can do about it," said Comcast

President and CEO Brian L. Roberts in a morning press conference, flanked by like-minded executives from Time Warner, Dish Network, Cox, and numerous other cable companies, all of whom confirmed the non-refundable \$100 charge would apply to all subscribers regardless of service package and would most certainly not be applied as credit toward future charges to the account.

“The bottom line is we want \$100 from you, so we’re just going to take it. As a cable subscriber, you really have no other option here. And we’ll probably do it again in a few weeks, too.”

The cable company CEOs added that any subscriber who was dissatisfied with the plan was more than welcome to call their customer service lines.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



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

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