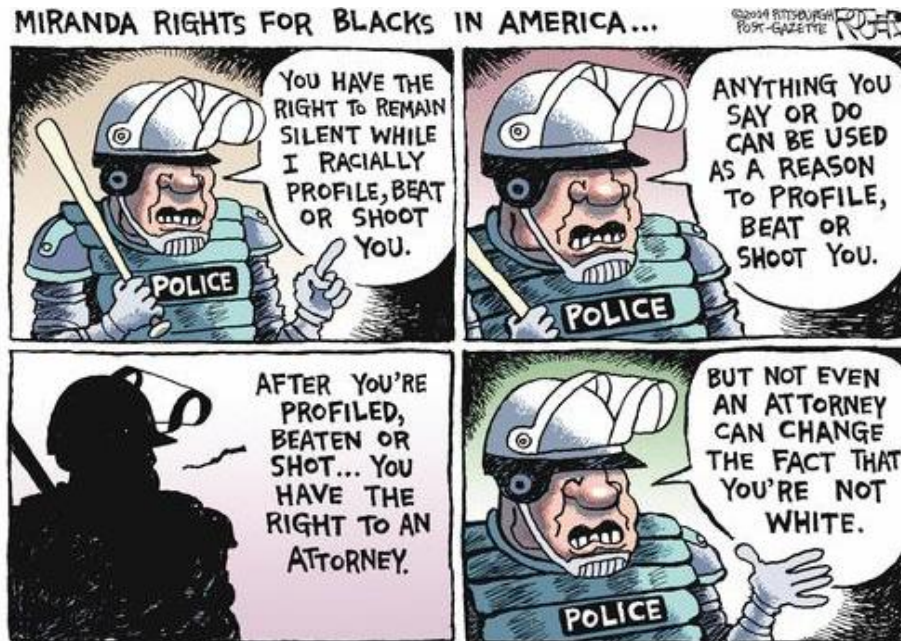


Military Resistance 12H9



Last Tango In Kabul
“You Are Not Safe On Our Streets. You Are Not Safe In Our Restaurants. You Are Not Safe In Kabul”
“Their Ostensible Afghan Allies Would Suddenly Turn Their Guns On Them’

“An Imperial Misadventure Whose Participants Were More Concerned About Their Bank Accounts Than The People Of This Country”

“The U.S. Has Managed To Prop Up Only A Polite Veneer Of Democracy Stretched Over A Naked And Brutal Landscape Of Power”

23 August 14 By Matthieu Aikins, Rolling Stone [Excerpts]

In the heart of Kabul's heavily guarded diplomatic district, down a quiet side street, sits a dilapidated two-story building fronted by a beige boundary wall topped with razor wire.

Its front entrance is a gaping hole blocked with corrugated iron, and its windows, missing their glass, have faint scorch marks at the corners, like raised eyebrows above sightless eyes. The alley to the right is pocked with bullet holes.

The place is abandoned now. These faint signs of violence are all that's left to mark the 21 people who were murdered inside last winter.

La Taverna du Liban. It was a popular restaurant that I had visited often over the past six years I've lived in Kabul. Restaurants like this, along with private homes and guesthouses, comprised the hidden archipelago of expatriate social life in the capital. They always had a bit of a speakeasy feel to them. Alcohol is illegal in Afghanistan, but places that catered to foreigners were allowed to serve it to non-Muslims. There was rarely any signage, though the sandbags and heavy steel door were a giveaway.

You'd knock and a little metal grate would slide open to permit a once-over. The door would swing open and you'd be admitted into the vestibule for a body and bag search; if you were a young Afghan male – or looked and spoke like one, like I do – you might face some questions about your business there. Finally, you'd be let into the restaurant proper. Most of these places look like a cross between a backpacker cafe in Thailand and a World War I bunker; La Taverna, with its reed mats and Christmas lights lining the walls, was pretty much par for the course.

I'd never seen it empty.

It was one of the few expat restaurants in Kabul whose fare would have justified its existence anywhere else: tart tabbouleh, falafels that arrived crispy and steaming hot, baba ghanoush made with eggplants that had been roasted to the proper point of smokiness, and a constant supply of fresh, fluffy bread to scoop it all up with. The

Lebanese proprietor, Kamel Hamade, liked to hang out in the corner, where he'd keep an eye on the waiters and send over complimentary appetizers and desserts to guests. You always left stuffed.

It was also one of the diminishing number of places in the city where you could get beer or wine, served discreetly in teacups. And because it was in the heavily guarded Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood, it usually kept its place on the constantly changing "green" lists of sites that those who worked for embassies and NGOs were allowed to visit. And that meant business, especially on a Friday night.

On the chilly evening of January 17th, a couple of weeks into what President Barack Obama had promised would be the last year of America's war in Afghanistan, a man walked up to the entrance of the restaurant and, as diners sat down to their meals, blew himself up, killing the guards and caving in the front door.

Two more attackers followed, weighted down with ammunition and carrying assault rifles. There was nowhere to go. Some of the Afghan staff managed to jump from the roof, but everyone else was massacred at their tables, including Hamade, who tried to put up a fight with the pistol he kept in the restaurant.

The whole thing lasted nearly two hours before the attackers were killed by the police. Among the dead were two young Americans who worked at the American University of Afghanistan, Lexie Kameron and Alexandros Petersen. It was Petersen's fifth day in the country.

“The Massacre Came At A Time Of Growing Hostility Toward Foreigners In Afghanistan”

The attack shook the city's expat community; pretty much all of us had eaten at La Taverna. One of my housemates had been planning to go that night, but had canceled at the last minute.

Despite what you heard on the news, the city, until now, had been reasonably safe for foreigners. We all wondered: Was this the end of the Kabul we knew?

The massacre came at a time of growing hostility toward foreigners in Afghanistan, some of it fueled by Afghan politicians who have blamed the West for the country's problems. Outgoing president Hamid Karzai, in particular, has been increasingly venomous, drawing parallels between U.S. airstrikes and Taliban attacks on the capital.

On March 8th, at an International Women's Day event, Karzai, whose administration has been marked by controversial prosecutions of women for "moral crimes," made a gibe at the foreigners' expense. "Afghan men shouldn't test their strength against the women," Karzai told his audience. "If they're so strong, they should go test it against America."

Three days later, a Swedish reporter named Nils Horner paid a visit to the burned-out shell of La Taverna. Fifty-one years old, with snowy, receding hair and a mellow demeanor, Horner had been in the capital for only two days, on one of the few short trips he made each year as the Asia correspondent for Radio Sweden, the country's public broadcaster.

The day he landed, he had gone to meet a local journalist named Sardar Ahmad, who ran his own media company, Kabul Pressistan. Horner wanted to do a story on the attack, and Ahmad set him up with a translator and a driver. There had been a cook who had survived the massacre; hoping to find a way of contacting him, they went to another Lebanese restaurant nearby.

Around the corner from La Taverna is the main road, called Street 15, a bustling avenue lined with embassies and foreign-media offices, patrolled by armed guards. It seems like the last place you'd expect trouble. But as Horner spoke to a guard at the second Lebanese restaurant, a man approached him, raised his pistol, and fired a single shot into his head. Horner crumpled to the ground as his driver and translator watched in horror.

The assailant, along with a companion, sprinted away. Despite the fact that there were guards along the street, no one stopped them. The murder was never claimed by the Taliban, and remains unsolved. "He didn't do investigative reporting," Caroline Salzinger, Horner's editor, tells me. "Not the kind of stories where anyone would have taken any offense."

**“You Are Not Safe On Our Streets. You Are Not Safe In Our Restaurants.
You Are Not Safe In Kabul”**

It seemed a clear message to the internationals: You are not safe on our streets. You are not safe in our restaurants. You are not safe in Kabul. But the La Taverna massacre was just the first in a series of escalating and baffling attacks against civilians, of which Horner's own murder would just be the next in sequence. The blows came one after the other, like a hammer setting a nail: six attacks in four months. By the end of April, more foreign civilians had been killed in Afghanistan this year than foreign soldiers.

The violence brought to the surface what has been growing more and more obvious: The West is desperate to get out. NGOs and embassies, already in the process of drawing down their activities, have closed up like clams under drastically heightened security restrictions. The boomtown Kabul of the Surge has come and gone like a dream.

Blast-walled and barbed-wired, with streets that are empty by 10 p.m., it's a city whose social life takes place behind closed doors.

When I first arrived in 2008, the city's expat scene had an open, piratical feel to it. Loud white men in cargo pants and wraparound shades still swaggered about with guns on their hips on the unpaved streets, which were constantly gridlocked. If you were broke and unemployed, like I was, you could stay in the Mustafa Hotel, next door to the Ministry of Interior, for 20 bucks a night, along with junkie freelancers and ne'er-do-well mercenaries.

But the world soon descended on Kabul. A year after being elected, President Obama traveled to West Point and announced that he would send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan. America would double down on what would become the longest war in her history, and would do so in what has become our way of war in the 21st century: tens of

thousands of soldiers and contractors living on massive, logistics-heavy bases, and billions of dollars in quick-fix spending disbursed through private, for-profit companies.

By 2010, the Surge was in full swing, and suddenly Kabul was the place where every ambitious aid worker, war correspondent or diplomat wanted to be. At the top of the food chain were the big swinging dicks of the Defense and State departments: oversize egos like Gen. David Petraeus and special envoy Richard Holbrooke, trailing hundreds of hand-picked satellite staffers.

You came for a year and made your career.

It all grew into a once-in-a-lifetime scene, grotesque and vibrant, as brash and cynical as the expats who formed it. At the peak of the Surge, between 2010 and 2011, there were thousands of foreigners living in Kabul. The vast majority were troops and contractors, but the rest got out enough to keep dozens of restaurants, bars and guesthouses thriving – all of them unaffordable, and in some cases explicitly off-limits, to ordinary Afghans. During the day you could walk the bazaars openly, and in the evenings your choices ran from embassy favorites like Boccaccio, with its imported steaks and waitresses, to Sufi, where staff in embroidered vests served local food at expat prices, to the bistro L'Atmosphere, with its DJ'd pool parties.

And if you felt like staying home, the shops lining Flower Street all sold bootleg Heineken for \$2, then \$3, then \$4 a can as the cops got greedier.

Every Thursday night – Friday is the traditional day of rest in the Muslim world – there would be a slew of parties hosted by the NGOs and embassies that served free booze and went very late, the most desirable – the ones with all the pretty interns and A-listers – always the subject of frantic guest-list negotiations. Escapism was the objective, with people cooped up all week in their compounds now blowing off steam. There wasn't much to do in Kabul besides work, drink and get high on cheap hash. There was plenty of sex, especially if you were a woman and liked meatheads.

"People had this idea that the rules that governed normal society were just out the window," says Tom A. Peter, a freelance journalist who lived in Kabul during the Surge. "You're at the center of this big world event, and in a weird way that social culture is all part of that – it makes everybody feel like they're really important." A heady mix of entitlement, adrenaline and alcohol led to plenty of fistfights, adultery and general bad behavior – like the contractor who, to one-up his drunken buddies, fired his pistol through the roof of a cab, or the time my friends and I accidentally burned down a warlord's cottage.

“And It Was, It Must Be Said, All About The Money”

Of course, in the rest of the country the war was getting more and more violent, and the dead, mostly Afghans, were piling up. But it was easy to ignore it inside the Kabubble, as we called it. There were occasional, brutal intrusions like the attack on a pair of guesthouses in 2010 that killed 16 people, 11 of them foreigners, but normalcy returned quickly. Maybe it was the constant turnover, the fact that most people came and went after a year or so, but we were like a city of amnesiacs.

And it was, it must be said, all about the money. A lot of money, your money, to be exact. America has spent more than \$700 billion on Afghanistan since hostilities began in the fall of 2001, most of it during the Surge. Out of the \$104 billion appropriated since 2002 for rebuilding the country, \$64 billion was earmarked in the past four years – this in a country with an annual GDP of \$20 billion.

There was so much money in Kabul that even with all the waste and corruption – by 2011 up to \$60 billion was lost to fraud and mismanagement in Iraq and Afghanistan – much of it went unspent. Organizations were desperate to up their "burn rate" and clear out their budgets before the years end so they could ask for more the next year. It was so easy to make money in Kabul that it felt like we were all citizens of some Gulf oil state.

If you could string a few coherent sentences together into a grant application, odds were that there was some contracting officer out there who was willing to give you money, no matter how vapid your idea. Want to put on a music festival in Kabul? Here's a few hundred thousand. Shoot a soap opera about heroic local cops? A million for you. Is your handicraft business empowering Afghan women? Name your bid.

The Kabubble economy was so hot that kids out of college were making six-figure salaries, and former midlevel paper pushers were clearing a thousand a day as consultants for places like the World Bank.

"All of your expenses are paid for, you don't buy anything, you're getting this massive salary that you bank," Peter, the journalist, says. "Do that for a few years and you've saved half a million before you're 30. You could basically class-jump, by going to Kabul."

It was the high life. People were flying to Sri Lanka for the weekend, or buying homes in the States. We had it good, even my friends and I, the second, or, to be honest, more like third tier of expats, the junior reporters and freelancers and entry-level NGO types.

There weren't any jobs back home, and here we were, working our dream gigs. Some of us got killed or kidnapped, or lost our minds, but a lot more of us got rich or made our careers.

Then, as abruptly as it came, the party was over.

Sardar Ahmad had been shaken by the Swedish journalist's murder. A fixture on the Kabul scene, he juggled a job as a reporter at the wire service Agence France-Presse with running Kabul Pressistan. A hard worker with an eye for business, Ahmad had spotted early on that the Surge would mean boom times for Afghanistan's fixers, and Pressistan, known for being reliable and efficient, had become a mainstay for visiting correspondents. Horner had been no different from the rest of them. On the day he flew in, Ahmad met with Horner to discuss the stories he wanted to do – short packages on the elections, women's rights, the attacks in Kabul, standard fare – and then, after setting up some meetings, had a young translator show Horner around. But not long after leaving the Pressistan office, the Swede was dead. "I just met the guy, I can't believe this," Ahmad's friend Courtney Body, an American freelance journalist, recalls him telling her soon after.

Like most of the city's expats and the small circle of Afghans who worked and socialized with them, Ahmad had been deeply upset by the massacre at La Taverna, a favorite spot for meeting clients. The Taliban had never targeted a restaurant like that before – in the past, they had been interested in military bases and embassies. Now the city's expat restaurants were practically deserted.

Ahmad refused to go to any of them, and seemed to obsess over the possibility of being at the wrong place at the wrong time. "Every day, he would talk about how 'I'm so scared,' and I'd be like, 'Stop it,'" says Body. "And it was the craziest thing, because his fear came true."

March 20th was the eve of the Persian New Year, and Ahmad decided to take his wife and three kids to the buffet special at the Serena, Kabul's top luxury hotel. It was a hangout of the city's elite; that night, several members of the parliament were present in the restaurant. "It was the one place he felt safe," Body recalls.

The Serena had been hit in 2008 by a team of gunmen in one of the first Taliban attacks against a high-profile civilian target in Kabul. Since then, it had been built into a fortress, with concrete walls and metal barriers meant to fend off a car bomb. This time, the insurgents chose guile over force.

Not long after Ahmad and his family sat down to dinner, four well-dressed young men arrived and passed through the metal detector and body search. After wandering the glass-and-marble hallways, they sat down at a table in the restaurant, ordered juice, and then departed as a group to the washroom. There, they pulled out the palm-size pistols that had been concealed in their shoes: tiny .25-caliber semiautomatics, like the kind Al Capone used to keep in his vest pocket. Pistols in hand, they came back into the dining room.

Ahmad and his family were first in their line of fire. His wife tried to shield her children, but, perhaps trained to make the most of their small-caliber pistols, the gunmen shot them at close range, before moving on to the other patrons. By the time security forces could stop them, they had killed nine people, including four foreigners.

Only Ahmad's youngest son, two-year-old Abuzar, survived, despite having been shot in the head with the rest of his family. Their horrific murders shook even the most hardened in Kabul's small media community, but there was barely time to process it before the insurgents struck again the following week, targeting a Christian center in the west of the city.

The center ran a day-care program for the many Christian NGOs, whose staff often bring their families with them; the mass slaughter of children was probably only averted by the fact that the attackers – who were following in the wake of a suicide bomb – apparently got confused and ran into the wrong house, where a group of heavily armed American contractors and their guards were ready for a fight. In the shootout that followed, all the attackers were killed, along with two Afghan bystanders.

The Taliban seemed to be taking advantage of the world's attention on the presidential election to show they could still hit foreigners in Kabul.

"There Was Panic, The Planes Weren't Going, We Couldn't Get Other Flights" "It Felt Like A Desperate Evacuation"

"We literally felt that on election day the whole city was going to be a ball of fire," says Body. "Because they were specifically targeting foreigners, they were trying to hit the children, and that's what was so awful and different about it."

The police started closing down foreign guesthouses and restaurants in an attempt to keep expats inside their compounds, while the main election-monitoring groups announced that they were pulling their missions out of the country. When the Taliban hit an election-commission office near the airport on March 29th, the fighting closed the runway. Body had been due to fly out that day, and the airport was full of missionary families with their children who were trying to leave the country. "There was panic, the planes weren't going, we couldn't get other flights," Body tells me. "It felt like a desperate evacuation."

Unlike in Baghdad, where Westerners were largely holed up in the Green Zone in heavily armed compounds, in Kabul there was an assumption that the Taliban weren't interested in targeting foreign civilians, and that the real threat was against high-profile targets like embassies, military bases and government ministries. "It's very easy to kill foreign civilians in Kabul," says Kate Clark, country director for the Afghanistan Analysts Network, a Kabul-based research organization. "There are enough of us around and about that don't live in fortresslike embassies."

When I arrange a telephone interview with the Taliban's main spokesman, known as Zabiullah Mujahid, his answers are less than reassuring. "In the past, most of our operations were focused on American soldiers who were based in the rural areas," Mujahid says. "Now they are no longer there, and they've gone to the cities."

But why did the Taliban feel justified in targeting foreign aid workers? "The invasion is not only military, it has a civilian aspect," he says. "The people who are from the invading countries and work as civilians here are also targets." He says that as part of their latest offensive, dubbed "Operation Khaibar," they would step up their attacks on foreigners – including a recent suicide attack that killed five foreign contractors in Kabul in late July. "All their places, whether hotels, guesthouses or offices, they will be attacked. They are part of our plan, and we will target and kill them."

These days, expatriate life in Kabul is a sad reflection of its former self. Diplomats and aid workers operate under drastic security restrictions that keep them from attending restaurants or private parties, a condition that has been prolonged by the drawn-out crisis over the presidential election and who will succeed Karzai. Several of the restaurants and guesthouses that sustained the expat scene here have closed down. "A lot of people reached the point where they were like, 'OK, I'm out, I'm done,'" says Luisa Walmsley, a media consultant living in Kabul. "You start realizing that you're really close to all this stuff and that it's just a matter of time that you're going to lose someone."

Kabul had finally lost its sense of distance from the war. As brutal as the other attacks were, it was Horner's that bothered me the most. He had been here only two days, and he wasn't working on anything sensitive – it seemed hard to imagine that he had been specifically targeted. But did that mean there were now killers stalking the streets of Kabul, looking for random foreigners to shoot in the face?

The Taliban have denied any responsibility for his murder. "This journalist was killed by someone for their own personal reasons," Mujahid tells me. Rather, an obscure group known as Fedai Mahaz, or the Suicide Attacker Front, told the media it had assassinated Horner, because he had been a spy working for MI6, without providing any corroborating details. ("It's the most ridiculous claim that I've ever heard," Salzinger, Horner's editor, says about the espionage allegation. "We are 100 percent sure that it's not true.")

Fedai Mahaz was a Taliban splinter group opposed to any negotiations with the U.S., though no one was sure how much strength on the ground it actually had. It was also known for making unlikely or even obviously false statements. "They jump to claim incidents without really having a battlefield presence, or providing supporting details," says Borhan Osman, a Kabul-based researcher who studies the insurgency. "They're obsessed with publicity."

Part of the problem was that no real investigative work had been done on the case. According to Body, Ahmad's friend, after the killing, the local station police officer who interviewed Ahmad and his colleagues was more interested in extracting a bribe from them than anything else.

There is another, even more terrifying possible explanation for Horner's murder.

“Their Ostensible Afghan Allies Would Suddenly Turn Their Guns On Them”

In recent years, the U.S.-led International Security Assistance Force began experiencing a phenomenon that became known as "green-on-blue" attacks, where their ostensible Afghan allies would suddenly turn their guns on them. At their peak in 2012, these attacks killed 64 troops and caused 16 percent of all fatalities. While some were premeditated, others bore a stronger resemblance to crimes of passion. Like mass shootings in the U.S., it was not always clear why an attack had happened. Hitherto, they had been directed against the military and its contractors. But in April, two brutal attacks happened to change that.

On April 4th, the day before the presidential election, two longtime veterans of the AP, the Canadian reporter Kathy Gannon and the German photographer Anja Niedringhaus, had set off with a government convoy that was delivering ballots in the province of Khost. As they sat in the back of their Toyota station wagon, an Afghan police commander named Naqibullah spotted the two foreign women.

He walked over to the side of the car, shouted, "Allahu akbar," and emptied his Kalashnikov into the rear passenger door. Niedringhaus was killed on the spot; Gannon was badly injured but survived after being evacuated to a hospital. Naqibullah then surrendered to his horrified comrades.

Three weeks later, on April 24th, a guard at the Cure Hospital, a modest compound run by a Christian charity on the outskirts of the city, shot and killed three Americans, including a doctor.

The attacker was subsequently shot, but survived, after the doctor's colleagues operated on him. Afghan officials are usually quick to blame the Taliban for any incident, but the ones I spoke to admitted that they had been unable to find any link between the insurgency and the shooters involved in the Cure Hospital and Khost attacks. Mujahid, the Taliban spokesman, also denies involvement. "It was good that the Americans were killed," he says. "We have started our investigation, but so far we don't have any concrete information."

"If he had links with the Taliban, then he would have gotten support from them, and managed to escape," says Sayed Hashimi, an Afghan police colonel, of the hospital shooter. "No, this was something that he decided to do on his own, for political reasons, because they were foreigners."

For his part, Naqibullah reportedly cited an airstrike that had caused civilian casualties in his home district. According to an official who visited him in the intelligence lockup, he was incoherent and exhibiting symptoms reminiscent of a psychotic break – though it was unclear whether it was a pre-existing condition, or something triggered by the treatment he had received by the Afghan police, who are notorious for torturing prisoners. In a country that has suffered three decades of war, it's hard to tell exactly where the trauma is from.

Could some similar spasm of random violence have been what happened with Nils Horner?

Two days before Horner's assassination, Afghanistan's vice president, Mohammad Qasim Fahim, had died at the age of 57 of a heart attack. That morning, following a ceremony at the palace, he was buried on a hilltop in Kabul, near the women's prison. Thousands of people showed up, and the mood began to turn ugly, with mourners denouncing both the Taliban and the foreigners. "Down with America," they chanted. "Down with the West."

Kabul's security services are heavily dominated by Fahim's network of former mujahedeen fighters – just the kind of men likely to be walking around Wazir Akbar Khan with a pistol in their pocket.

Was it possible that, having come from the emotion of the funeral, one of them spotted Horner and shot him on impulse? The comfort with which the men jogged past several guard posts, and the fact that one of them was apparently wearing the olive-green pants of the Afghan security forces, point to the possibility that Horner's murder might have been a spontaneous insider attack – as well as that someone inside the Afghan military knows who they are.

"I don't feel like there is going to be an answer to who killed him and why," says Salzinger. "And we will just have to live with that." A Swedish police team has begun its own investigation into the case, but, according to Western officials I spoke to, no significant progress has been made.

For all the schools and health clinics, it sometimes feels like the U.S. has managed to prop up only a polite veneer of democracy stretched over a naked and brutal landscape of power, the product of decades of warfare, gangsterism and the Pentagon's cynical expediency in choosing its allies.

Even with the recent catastrophic disintegration of Iraq's security forces, Congress has hardly blinked at the administration's plans for a drastically scaled-down presence, and a complete pullout by 2017. In the meantime, Kabul's expats are packing up.

The days of the Kabubble are over, and for those who have watched the Surge come and go, it's hard to feel nostalgic for an imperial misadventure whose participants were more concerned about their bank accounts and careers than the people of this country.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

The development of civilization and of industry in general has ever shown itself so active in the destruction of forests, that everything done by it for their preservation, compared to its destructive effect, appears infinitesimal.
-- Karl Marx; Capital: A Critique Of Political Economy; Volume II; The Process Of The Circulation Of Capital

US Military Bars Access To News Site Reporting On Leaked Govt Secrets:

“Why Does The Military Mistrust Its Own Soldiers With Information?”

“They Might Just, Well, What Abused People Who Learn The Truth Often Do, They Rebel”

From: Sanford Kelson, Military Resistance Organization

To: Military Resistance Newsletter

Sent: August 22, 2014

Subject: US Military Bars Access to News Site Reporting on Leaked Govt Secrets

Maybe the Intercept [see below] will publish secrets that would expose that the troops are being put into harm's way for reasons not associated with national defense.

Like maybe profits?

Maybe the troops would learn that they are being lied to by their own gvmt.

If I were still in the service, I would read whatever the gvmt did not want me to read.

I was not a child when I was in the army.

Why does the military mistrust its own soldiers with information?

Are the soldiers terrorists?

Would they use the info they read to the detriment of their own country?

Hell no, but they might, if they learn they are being horribly lied to and misused, they might just, well, what abused people who learn the truth often do, they rebel.

“US Military Bars Access to News Site Reporting on Leaked Govt Secrets”
<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2014/08/21/us-military-bars-access-news-site-reporting-leaked-govt-secrets>

Against Imperial War: [1915]

**“Imperialism Is The Progressing
Oppression Of The Nations Of The
World By A Handful Of Great
Powers”**

**“Basing Ourselves On Democracy As It
Already Exists, Exposing Its
Incompleteness Under Capitalism, We
Advocate The Overthrow Of Capitalism”**

We demand the freedom of self-determination, i. e., independence, i. e., the freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, not because we dream of an economically atomized world, nor because we cherish the ideal of small states, but on the contrary because we are for large states and for a coming closer, even a fusion of nations, but on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is unthinkable without the freedom of separation.

1915, By V. I. Ulyanov: Excerpts from Right To Self Determination, November 1915 & Imperialism And World Economy, 1915 [The writer used the pen name “Lenin” to keep the government from terrorizing his family.]

The proletariat cannot become victor save through democracy, i. e., through introducing complete democracy and through combining with every step of its movement democratic demands formulated most vigorously, most decisively.

It is senseless to contrast the Socialist revolution and the revolutionary struggle against capitalism to one of the questions of democracy, in this case the national question.

On the contrary, we must combine the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary program and revolutionary tactics relative to all democratic demands: a republic, a militia, officials elected by the people, equal rights for women, self-determination of nations, etc.

While capitalism exists, all these demands are realizable only as an exception, and in an incomplete, distorted form.

Basing ourselves on democracy as it already exists, exposing its incompleteness under capitalism, we advocate the overthrow of capitalism, expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a necessary basis both for the abolition of the poverty of the masses and for a complete and manifold realization of all democratic reforms.

Some of those reforms will be started prior to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, others in the process of the overthrow, still others after it has been accomplished.

The Socialist revolution is by no means a single battle; on the contrary, it is an epoch of a whole series of battles around all problems of economic and democratic reforms, which can be completed only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

It is for the sake of this final aim that we must formulate in a consistently revolutionary manner every one of our democratic demands.

It is quite conceivable that the workers of a certain country may overthrow the bourgeoisie before even one fundamental democratic reform has been realised in full.

It is entirely inconceivable, however, that the proletariat as an historical class will be able to defeat the bourgeoisie if it is not prepared for this task by being educated in the spirit of the most consistent and determined revolutionary democracy.

Imperialism is the progressing oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of great powers; it is an epoch of wars among them for the widening and strengthening of national oppression; it is the epoch when the masses of the people are deceived by the hypocritical social-patriots, i. e., people who under the pretext of "freedom of nations," "right of nations to self-determination," and "defence of the fatherland" justify and defend the oppression of a majority of the world's nations by the great powers.

This is just why the central point in a programme of Social-Democrats must be that distinction between oppressing and oppressed nations, since the distinction is the essence of imperialism, and is fraudulently evaded by the social-patriots ...

This distinction is not important from the point of view of bourgeois pacifism, or the petty-bourgeois Utopia of peaceful competition between independent nations under capitalism, but it is most important in the point of view of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

From this distinction there follows *our* consistently democratic and revolutionary definition of the “right of nations to self-determination,” which is in accord with the general task of the immediate struggle for Socialism.

It is in the name of this right, and fighting for its unequivocal recognition, that the Social-Democrats of the oppressing nations must demand the freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, for otherwise recognition of the equal rights of nations and international solidarity of the workers in reality remains an empty phrase, a hypocritical gesture.

Russia is a prison of peoples not only because of the military, feudal character of tsarism, not only because the Great-Russian bourgeoisie supports tsarism, but also because the Polish, Lettish, etc., bourgeoisie has sacrificed the freedom of nations and democracy in general for the interests of capitalist expansion.

The proletariat of Russia, marching at the head of the people, cannot complete the victorious democratic revolution (which is its immediate task); neither can it fight together with its brothers, the proletarians of Europe, for a Socialist revolution, without demanding at once full and “unreserved” freedom of separation from Russia for all the nations oppressed by Russia.

This we demand not as something independent from our revolutionary struggle for Socialism, but because this struggle would remain an idle phrase if it were not linked up with a revolutionary approach to all the questions of democracy, including the national question.

We demand the freedom of self-determination, i. e., independence, i. e., the freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, not because we dream of an economically atomized world, nor because we cherish the ideal of small states, but on the contrary because we are for large states and for a coming closer, even a fusion of nations, but on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is unthinkable without the freedom of separation.

In the same way as Marx in 1869 demanded the separation of Ireland, not for the purpose of splitting England, but for a subsequent free alliance of Ireland with England, not for the sake of “justice to Ireland,” but for the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the English proletariat, so we at present consider the refusal by the Socialists of Russia to demand freedom of self-determination for the nations, in the sense indicated by us above, as a direct betrayal of democracy, internationalism, and Socialism.

[H]e who rejects the hard tasks of today in the name of dreams about easy tasks of the future becomes an opportunist. Theoretically it means to fail to base oneself on the developments now going on in real life, to detach oneself from them in the name of dreams.

War is a “terrible” thing? Yes.

But it is a terribly profitable thing.

ANNIVERSARIES

Honorable Anniversary: August 28, 2008



Iraq Veterans Against The War, Denver [www.ivaw.org/]

**“Soldiers In Uniform Began The
Four-Mile March To The Pepsi
Center In Downtown Denver To
Protest The Iraq War”**

[From GI Special 6H20: 8.29.08]

The thing that stays with me is the sight of those troops looking worried but determined in the face of police force and possible public hostility, trying to make their statement for peace, and how, at the last moment, the whole, huge crowd of

civilians had joined them, lifting up their little march and transforming it into an enormous, uplifting show of support.

August 28, 2008 By Ruth Conniff, The Progressive & By Patti Thorn, Rocky Mountain News (Colorado) &lvaw.org/ & By Paul A. Anthony, Rocky Mountain News [Excerpts]

It started as a modest sized march.

Two squads of 25 IVAW members each formed up outside the venue and began marching to the Pepsi center.

From the Rage Against the Machine concert at the Denver Coliseum, about 150 soldiers in uniform began the four-mile march to the Pepsi Center in downtown Denver to protest the Iraq War.

The squads were led by members in dress uniforms and combat uniforms, with thousands of supporters marching behind them in support.

The group of mostly young people walked behind a banner that said: “Support GI Resistance.”

“Support GI Resistance”



Protesters march behind Iraq Veterans Against The War Wednesday from the Denver Coliseum to the Pepsi Center after a concert by Rage Against the Machine. Tim Hussin: The Rocky Mountain News

Though the event, co-sponsored by the anti-war group Tent State University and Iraq Veterans Against the War, was unpermitted, the parade proceeded peacefully.

Behind the troops, who marched calling cadence and chanting antiwar slogans, came a larger group in civilian clothes, cheering and waving signs, and growing larger and larger as the marchers wended their way through the downtown.

Wearing T-shirts and stickers with slogans such as “Arrest Bush” and “Make Out Not War,” they sang rolling chants, Marine- style. “Tell Me What We’re Marching For,” sang one group. “Stop the torture, stop the war,” answered another.

People lined the streets to watch, most approvingly.

As the marchers wound their way through the neighborhoods west of the coliseum, they found solidarity with a group of Latinos holding up an anti-war sign and cheering them on.

“Si, se puede!” shouted some young marchers. “Yes, we can!”

Not everyone was as respectful.

From the balcony of an apartment complex, a man yelled at the throngs of protesters to move on. “Don’t come back here,” he said.

But one protester had the last word: He suggested the man join the Army.

As they drew near the heavily guarded convention center, cops in riot gear lined the street, and helicopters buzzed overhead. At an intersection, the group stopped facing squad cars with lights on and a phalanx of black-clad police.

“We can go on here or not,” one of the march’s organizers told the troops through a megaphone. The march was unauthorized and it was unclear whether the police intended to have a confrontation.

She seemed to be trying to calm everyone for a moment, pointing out that the Denver police so far have not been “prone to violence.”

The march continued, and the civilians bringing up the rear cheered.

It was quite a spectacle: the soldiers in dress uniform and fatigues, and the cops in riot gear watching them from the sidelines.

The soldiers chanted:

“Everywhere we go
People want to know
Who we are
Where we came from.
We are the veterans
Iraq War veterans
Antiwar veterans
Pissed-off veterans”

At an intersection, the group stopped to read a letter to Barack Obama asking that he agree to three core principles: the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq, full and adequate health care for all returning U.S. service members, and reparations to the Iraqi people.

The letter also upbraided the Democratic Party for their “initial and continued” support for the war.

The police presence intensified. I passed a cop videotaping the marchers and a marcher in a green “copwatch” vest videotaping him right back.

Over the long course, from the outskirts of town into the denser downtown, the energy from the crowd seemed to build. The marchers chanting had a hypnotic effect.

“It’s alright
It’s OK
Remember MLK
He tried to lead the way
But he was shot one day
early in the morning”



Members of Iraq Veterans Against The War (IVAW) march in downtown Denver, leading several thousand activists towards The Pepsi Center. (Photo: Rocky Mountain News)

Thus far, the march has been peaceful and well received, as residents along the route sprayed the marchers with hoses and provided water from their homes and businesses.

More and more people joined the march, until, suddenly, looking back as the group crossed a bridge and then paused right outside the Pepsi Center, you could see several thousand people in a line stretching as far as the eye could see.

As the group passed into the perimeter of the convention hall, the police presence grew more threatening.

“Hey, those ones have masks,” someone pointed out. A group of police in gas masks were pulling on thick gloves and grabbing their batons. A white van with police in black flak jackets hanging off it rolled alongside the marchers.

The feeling of the whole, thousands-strong group was moving. “It’s beautiful,” one marcher said, looking back at the crowd in the late afternoon sun. Joey Minicucci, 18, of Littleton, noted that his brother was in the military and would soon be sent to Iraq. That was one of the reasons he was going to the march.

Anne Hill, of Montrose, had other reasons. “I’m marching because it seems to be the last vestiges of our free speech and because people have demands and our government’s not listening,” she said.

The march came to a standstill at the perimeter of the Pepsi Center around 6:30 p.m., at which time the veterans attempted to have their statement delivered to Obama.

Tension with police seemed to escalate, until several veterans stepped forward and saluted police. “We are your brothers and sisters in arms,” said one.

“We don’t want to hurt you. We don’t want you to hurt us.”

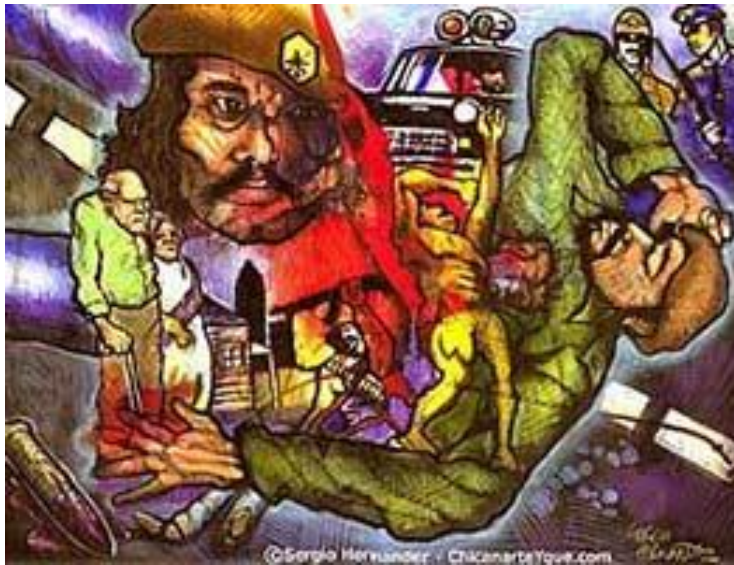
With that, the standoff melted away and soon an appropriate aide was contacted. “I figured as long as we kept things peaceful, they would hear us, and they did,” said Army veteran Jeffrey Wood.

Nancy Pelosi, meanwhile, was answering tough questions from the founder of Digg on CNN about why the Democrats in Congress have failed to pull the troops out of Iraq.

The thing that stays with me is the sight of those troops looking worried but determined in the face of police force and possible public hostility, trying to make their statement for peace, and how, at the last moment, the whole, huge crowd of civilians had joined them, lifting up their little march and transforming it into an enormous, uplifting show of support.

August 29, 1970: In Memoriam: The Los Angeles Police Murder Ruben Salazar As Thousands Of Chicanos

Demonstrate Against The War On Vietnam



Carl Bunin Peace History Aug 27-Sept 2

Between 15 and 30 thousand predominantly Chicanos (Americans of Mexican descent) gathered in East LA's Laguna Park as the culmination of the Chicano National Moratorium.

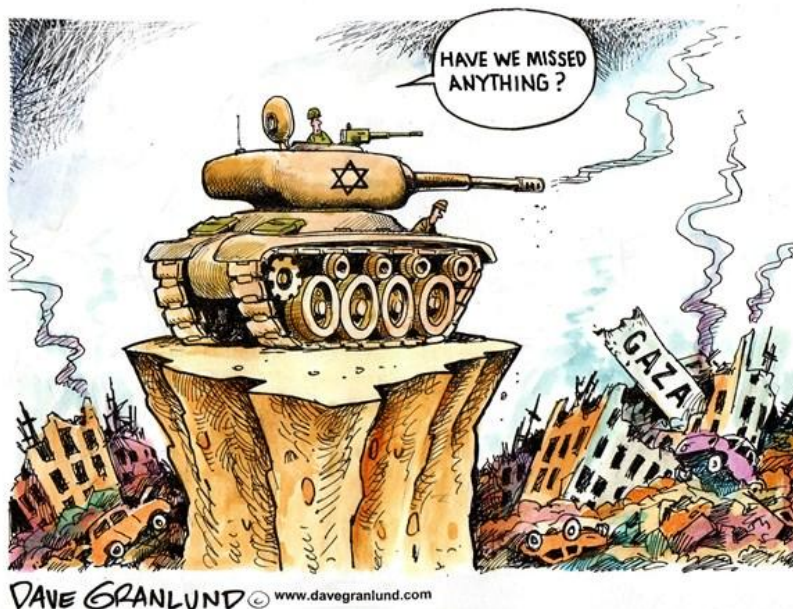
It was organized to protest the disproportionate number of deaths of Chicano soldiers in Vietnam (more than double their numbers in the population). There had been more than 20 other such demonstrations across the southwest.

Three died when the anti-war march turned violent. The Los Angeles Police Department attacked and one gunshot, fired into Silver Dollar Bar, killed Ruben Salazar, a Los Angeles Times columnist and a commentator on KMEX-TV (he had been accused by the LAPD of inciting the Chicano community).

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE



“They Build Up Zion With Blood, And Jerusalem With Iniquity”

The Prophet Micah; King James Bible, 1611 + early revisions: [Excerpts]

And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; *Is it not for you to know judgment?*

You who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off the good, and their flesh from off their bones;

Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.

Then shall ye princes of Israel cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, check out:

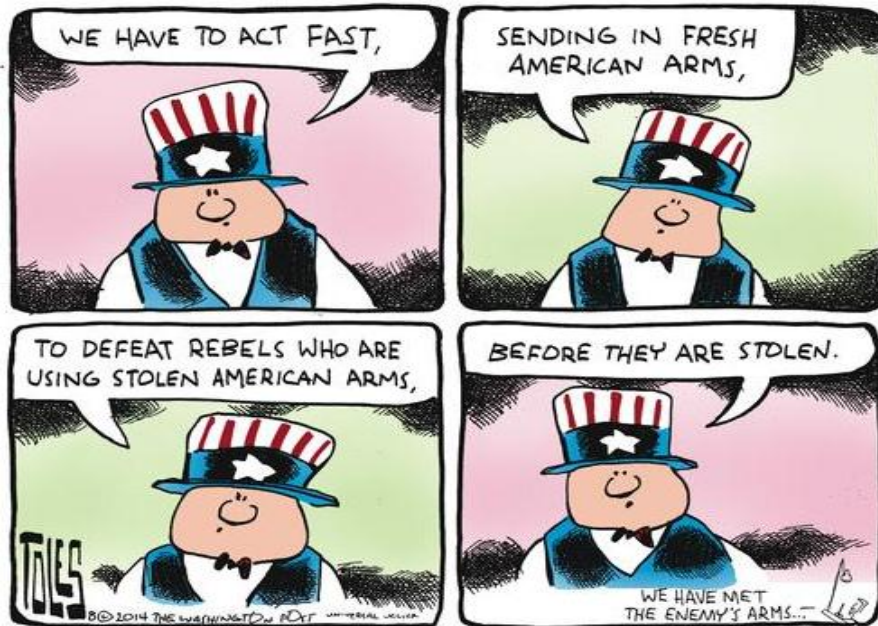
<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Unpopular Police Officer Thinking About Committing Racially Motivated Offense For A Little Support

Aug 27, 2014 The Onion

INDIANAPOLIS—Tired of being overlooked by everyone in his precinct, unpopular Indianapolis Police Department officer Kyle Norris told reporters Wednesday he was considering committing a racially motivated offense to generate a little support.

“To be honest, I’m not the most well-known or looked-up-to guy around here, but I’m thinking that if I get caught up in a controversy after shooting a minority resident under questionable circumstances, things would really change for me,” said Norris, who added that having his coworkers immediately rally around him after the incident, watching consecutive nights of public demonstrations defending his actions, and finally receiving praise directly from the chief of police would be a nice change of pace from his day-to-day life as an ignored and unappreciated member of the force.

“Obviously, I’d take some heat from some citizens, but I think it would be worth it when just as many people respond by openly speaking about my exemplary record as an officer and calling me a pillar of the community.

“No one’s ever said that about me before. If this thing gets big enough, I might even see some people on Twitter and TV calling me a hero—that would feel good.”

Norris added that it would probably also be a nice little boost when the 12 members of his jury take less than an hour to declare him not guilty.

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL

If you wish to receive Military Resistance immediately and directly, send request to contact@militaryproject.org. There is no subscription charge. Same address to unsubscribe.

RECEIVED:

PLEASE PROTEST: Free Palestine Billboard Removed



[Thanks to Niko Leka, Australia, who sent this in.]

Justice for Palestine Matters Aug 21, 2014 [Excerpts]

Aug 21, 2014

Editor's note: It seems that even the images and words of two of the world's greatest statesmen in support of a free Palestine couldn't stop our banner from being removed.

Barely up for 48 hours, Australians for Palestine was told that due to "unprecedented complaints" the decision was taken to remove the banner pending an Advertising Standards Board review.

We have just now received an email from the Chief Financial and Operating Officer of oOh! Media in which he advises us of the following:

“As a result of the significant number of complaints, we are seeking independent third party advice from legal advisors, the Advertising Standards Board and other authorities to determine the appropriateness of displaying the content, taking into account legal requirements and the implications on the community. This process has already commenced and we will hope to have a determination in the near future.

“In the interim, we have taken the decision to suspend the display of the advertisement until we receive this advice. Please note, this was not a decision that we took lightly, but given our preliminary advice on this matter, one we felt was the most appropriate course of action at this time.”

The Australian newspaper today (21 Aug) decided to add its own comments on the billboard's message:

‘Apartheid’ Billboard Fuels Gaza Friction

by Christian Kerr, The Australian, 21 Aug 2014

A billboard equating Israel with apartheid-era South Africa has appeared beside one of the busiest roads in central Melbourne, prompting condemnation from the state government and Jewish leaders.

“Apartheid,” it reads. “Wrong in South Africa. Wrong in Palestine. Free Palestine.”

The slogan is accompanied by quotes from Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu and their pictures.

The billboard sits alongside the busy Kings Way overpass in Southbank, home to a restaurant and retail strip, arts precinct and Crown casino.

State Multicultural Affairs Minister Matthew Guy called on those responsible to reconsider the billboard. “This type of advertising achieves nothing except to cause more friction in our community,” he said.

Executive Council of Australian Jewry executive director Peter Wertheim said anyone who had visited Israel knew apartheid was not practised there. He described Israel as the only Middle East country enjoying democracy and free speech.

“At a time when Islamist fanatics in Syria and Iraq are ethnically cleansing Christian and other minorities, and beheading and crucifying people ... the obsessive focus on the much smaller numbers of people affected by the Gaza conflict tells us much about the real motivation of the advertisers, which is not to support Palestinians but to try to delegitimise Israel.”

A City of Melbourne spokeswoman said the council had no control over billboard content and complaints should go to the Advertising Standards Bureau.

The row over the billboard comes amid fears of ugly scenes at the opening of the Israeli Film Festival in Sydney this evening.

The implications are of course yet another example of shutting down free speech when it comes to providing a voice for Palestine.

The banner was put up to make people think about the inhumanity of oppression, particularly in light of the bombardment of Gaza and the death, devastation and trauma that has been wrought on 1.8 million people under siege from Israel.

The banner's message does not point the finger of blame at any particular community here in Australia, nor does it actually name Israel. It merely highlights Mandela's and Tutu's words calling for the world to recognise the plight of the Palestinians.

Hardly an offensive plea, particularly when some 2000 Palestinians have just been killed, thousands of others wounded, hundreds of thousands traumatised and Gaza's infrastructure bombed back to a wasteland.

However, if Israel is the concern, then perhaps people should pay heed to Tutu's words that he used in his open letter to the Israeli people published in the Israeli Haaretz newspaper on 14 August 2014:

. . . The past weeks have witnessed unprecedented action by members of civil society across the world against the injustice of Israel's disproportionately brutal response to the firing of missiles from Palestine.

If you add together all the people who gathered over the past weekend to demand justice in Israel and Palestine – in Cape Town, Washington, D.C., New York, New Delhi, London, Dublin and Sydney, and all the other cities – this was arguably the largest active outcry by citizens around a single cause ever in the history of the world. . .

. . . Besides the recent devastation of Gaza, decent human beings everywhere – including many in Israel – are profoundly disturbed by the daily violations of human dignity and freedom of movement Palestinians are subjected to at checkpoints and roadblocks. And Israel's policies of illegal occupation and the construction of buffer-zone settlements on occupied land compound the difficulty of achieving an agreement settlement in the future that is acceptable for all. . .

. . . Those who continue to do business with Israel, who contribute to a sense of "normalcy" in Israeli society, are doing the people of Israel and Palestine a disservice. They are contributing to the perpetuation of a profoundly unjust status quo. . .

. . . the people of Palestine have every right to struggle for their dignity and freedom. It is a struggle that has the support of many around the world. . .

. . . We South Africans know about violence and hatred. We understand the pain of being the polecat of the world; when it seems nobody understands or is even willing to listen to our perspective. It is where we come from. . .

. . . We are opposed to the injustice of the illegal occupation of Palestine. We are opposed to the indiscriminate killing in Gaza. We are opposed to the indignity meted out to Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks. We are opposed to violence perpetrated by all parties. But we are not opposed to Jews. . .

. . . I implore you to take this message home: Please turn the tide against violence and hatred by joining the nonviolent movement for justice for all people of the region.

When you have people of the stature of Tutu and Mandela making public statements about the inhumane treatment of the Palestinians over decades, one has the moral duty to ask oneself what actually is happening there. This is about our collective humanity: our right to champion those whose humanity is being oppressed, our right to freedom of speech.

Australia has a commitment to those rights both in law and in the values we hold dear.

Our billboard's message is truthful and meant to inform those who are not aware of the deprivation of people's rights in occupied Palestine.

We are not giving up.

We are waiting to see what determination will be made by the third party authorities and we are also seeking advice.

In the meantime, you may wish to support our right to freedom of speech by writing to oOh! Media and asking why the board was taken down before a determination has been made. Please send your emails to:

nick.errey@oohmedia.com.au

A huge response from all those who support human rights, justice, freedom and peace may well help us continue providing a voice for Palestine.

Thank you for all your support.

Sonja Karkar

Australians for Palestine
Women for Palestine
Melbourne - Australia

Australians for Palestine
PO Box 2099
Hawthorn VIC 3122
AUSTRALIA

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email: contact@militaryproject.org

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



CHANGE WE CAN BEREAVE IN

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to injustices, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

*This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



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www.militaryproject.org

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out
Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website
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