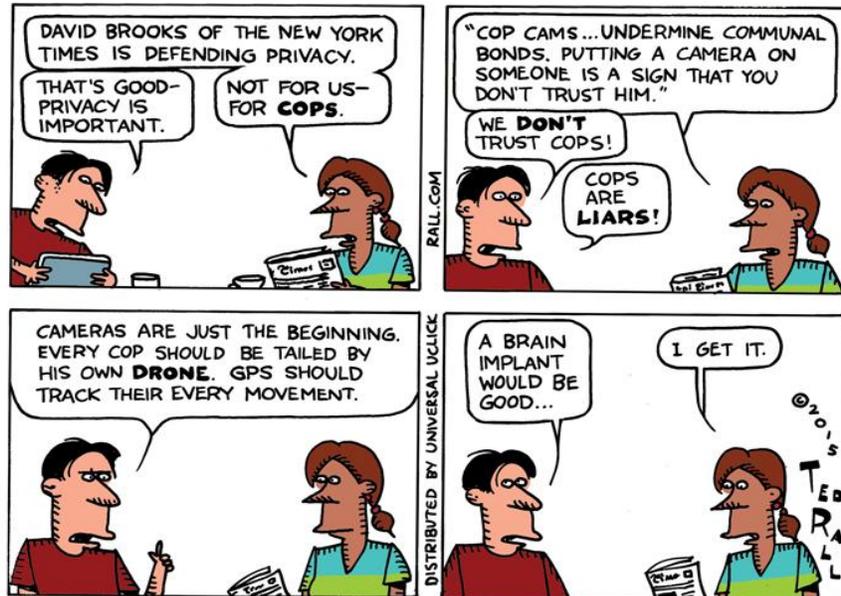


Military Resistance 13D10



Pentagon Can't Explain What Happened To \$1 Billion In Missing Afghan Reconstruction Aid: The Missing Money "Was Routed Directly To Military Officers" "Billions Of Dollars Lost To Waste Or Corruption"

April 23, 2015 By James Rosen, McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department can't account for \$1.3 billion that was shipped to force commanders in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2014 for critical reconstruction projects, 60 percent of all such spending under an emergency program, an internal report released Thursday concludes.

The missing money was part of the relatively small amount of Afghanistan spending that was routed directly to military officers in a bid to bypass

bureaucracy and rush the construction of urgently needed roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, water treatment plants and other essential infrastructure.

About 70 percent of the \$100 billion the United States has spent to rebuild Afghanistan during more than 13 years of war went through the Pentagon, with the rest distributed by the U.S. Agency for International Development and other civilian departments.

A yearlong investigation by John F. Sopko, the U.S. special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, found that the Pentagon couldn't – or wouldn't – provide basic information about what happened to 6 in 10 dollars of \$2.26 billion it had spent over the course of a decade on the Commander's Emergency Response Program.

"In reviewing this data, SIGAR found that the Department of Defense could only provide financial information relating to the disbursement of funds for CERP projects totaling \$890 million (40 percent) of the approximately \$2.2 billion in obligated funds at that time," Sopko's report says.

When Sopko's staff divided the Pentagon expenditures into 20 categories set under the emergency program, from transportation and education to health care, agriculture, water and sanitation, by far the largest category was a 21st that the inspector general termed "unknown."

That category applied to 5,163 projects, compared with 4,494 projects in the 20 defined areas.

The Pentagon didn't respond to Sopko's main findings in comments he'd sought while conducting the probe, which were released along with his report on the investigation.

In one comment, however, U.S. Central Command, which oversees military operations in Afghanistan and 19 other countries in the Middle East and Central Asia, suggested that some of the money was redirected from reconstruction aid to more direct war needs.

"Although the (inspector general's) report is technically accurate, it did not discuss the counterinsurgency strategies in relationship to CERP," the Central Command said in a Feb. 25 email to Sopko's office. "In addition (to) the 20 uses of CERP funds, it was also used as a tool for counterinsurgency."

The comment didn't explain why money set aside for reconstruction needs would need to be used to pay for counterinsurgency, which has been a core part of the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan since the October 2001 invasion following the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

The bulk of the Afghanistan war's \$800 billion price tag for the United States has gone to battlefield needs.

Counterinsurgency is not among the 20 categories defined by Pentagon regulations under the emergency-response program.

The closest categories to anything battle-related are “condolence payments” to Afghan civilians, or their families, who died or were injured because of the war and “hero payments” to the surviving spouses or next of kin of Afghan soldiers or police killed in the conflict.

The inspector general’s report suggests how intertwined U.S. military and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan became, and how difficult it is to separate the two.

While Sopko found that Commander’s Emergency Response Program money was disbursed for projects throughout virtually all of Afghanistan’s 35 provinces, almost half of it went to the two – Kandahar and Helmand – that have seen the most Taliban activity and the war’s bloodiest battles.

A total of 1,507 American service members have perished in Kandahar and Helmand, almost two-thirds of all 2,357 U.S. fatalities in the war.

Kandahar, dominated by ethnic Pashtuns on the Pakistan border in southern Afghanistan, has been a Taliban hub since the insurgents took it over in 1994 during the civil war that followed Soviet occupation of the Central Asian country.

About \$289 million, almost one-third of the CERP money the Pentagon could account for, was spent in Kandahar, according to the inspector general’s report.

The special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, a post Congress established in 2008 to track U.S. nonmilitary aid to Afghanistan, has issued dozens of reports documenting billions of dollars lost to waste or corruption.

In a report released last July, Sopko and his staff found that many of the tens of thousands of excess AK-47 assault rifles and other weapons the Pentagon had shipped to Afghanistan since 2004 had gone missing, raising concerns that they’d fallen into the hands of Taliban or other insurgents.

A report released in October 2013 concluded that the United States was continuing to give Afghan security forces a planned \$1.4 billion to buy gasoline through 2018 despite evidence that some of the money had been siphoned off for other, unexplained, uses.

Annual spending on the Commander’s Emergency Response Program peaked in 2009 at \$500 million, or 23 percent of its total disbursements over the decade. It was in that year that newly elected President Barack Obama sent additional troops to Afghanistan, fulfilling a campaign promise.

The end of 2009 was also when CERP’s operating procedures were brought into alignment with a broader U.S. program called Afghanistan First, which “encourages the use of Afghan contractors to the greatest extent possible,” according to the new inspector general report.

The number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan peaked at 100,000 in August 2010. Only 9,800 remain, although Obama has slowed his withdrawal plan, promising the Afghan government to keep that number there through this year and delaying the final exit to 2017.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

USAid Pulling Plug On Kandahar City Power: Closing “Thousands Of Factories And Homes, Potentially Aiding The Taliban”

**“USAid Has Gradually Decreased Its
Supplies Of Fuel For The Power
Plant, Leaving It Almost Defunct”
“The Insurgents Are Able To Secure A
Steady Power Supply To Areas Under
Their Control”**



An aerial view of Arghandab Valley in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan. The likely conclusion of a key USAid programme in the area poses a threat to development.

Photograph: Sang-hoon/Rex Features



The entrance to Shorandam Industrial Park in Kandahar, a \$7.8m roadside venture situated between the airport and the city. Photograph: Courtesy of Sigar

24 April 2015 by Sune Engel Rasmussen in Kabul, Guardian News and Media Limited

One of the US government's flagship programmes for development in the strategic south of Afghanistan risks running aground.

According to current plans, when the US Agency for International Development (USAid) withdraws funding for power in Kandahar city later this year, it will also pull the plug on thousands of factories and homes, potentially aiding the Taliban, which until 2001 had its stronghold in Kandahar.

The US's Kandahar Bridging Solution is set to end in September.

A key part of the project is the Shorandam Industrial Park, a new \$7.8m (£5.2m) venture built on the side of the highway between the airport and the city.

The park includes a power plant and an electrical distribution system to supply Kandahar with a stable source of electricity. It also has business facilities to stimulate growth and create jobs for local entrepreneurs.

However, the park does not produce enough electricity to power the city, largely because the US has already cut diesel supplies, and almost all business lots remain empty.

The US has no convincing plan to secure remaining electricity when it cuts funding, a US congressional watchdog warns in a new report.

"We are unconvinced that there are plans in place to ensure there is a reliable and sustainable power source for this strategically important city," says the Special Inspector for Afghanistan Reconstruction (Sigar).

The watchdog says that during a recent visit to Afghanistan, the US government did not provide the necessary insight into planning and quality assurance of the industrial park.

“USAid officials were unable to provide the requested contract documents and could not explain their inability to locate the documents,” Sigar says.

Kandahar, which used to be an underdeveloped bastion of the Taliban, is now a busy city of half a million people, with daily domestic and international commercial flights.

Yet, security in the province is tenuous.

Rasoul Baghi, director of the southern provinces for the state power firm Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (Dabs), said the Taliban controls more than a third of the output at the Kajaki plant, a facility in neighbouring Helmand province that helps power Kandahar.

An estimated 30% of Afghans have access to electricity, but the insurgents are able to secure a steady power supply to areas under their control, taxing residents in the process.

For the past few weeks, electricity from the Kajaki plant has been cut off from the grid because of fighting spilling over from Sangin district in Helmand, damaging the transmission line.

A recent two-month military operation named Zulfiqar failed in its objective to clear Sangin of insurgents, but made it possible for Dabs to reconnect the Kajaki plant to the power grid three days ago, said Baghi.

Before then, the provincial capital Lashkar Gah had been without power for 60 days, according to the deputy governor of Helmand, Jan Mohammad Rasolyan.

There has been a particular increase in violence in the country’s south, where the national security forces are strained in the absence of international troops.

Another purpose of investment in Shorandam Industrial Park was to create employment. Stimulating the economy would ideally encourage farmers away from growing opium and give birth to a business class with commercial ties and loyalty to the national government.

Original plans for the plant included accommodation for 48 businesses. During their visit last year, however, Sigar’s inspectors only found one active Afghan business on site: an ice cream packing facility.

When the inspectors returned this year, after the majority of US troops had left, there were still only four active businesses.

Shorandam and Kajaki aside, Kandahar is powered by a third main plant, Bagh-e Pul, which the US also helps power with diesel subsidies.

In early 2014, the Americans supplied 1.8 million liters of diesel to Shorandam and Bagh-e Pul plants, said Baghi, which was enough for the generators to run on almost full capacity.

For the past year, USAid has gradually decreased its supplies of fuel for the power plant, leaving it almost defunct.

Fuel has shrunk to 300,000 liters, divided between the two plants.

In a written statement, Ben Edwards, a USAid spokesman, described Shorandam Industrial Park as “fully operational”.

“Existing and future business tenants have access to electricity, water, roads and clear title to land in both parks. Equipment and infrastructure provided by USAid is already being utilised by business tenants. The Afghan government is taking active steps to ensure that the parks contribute to the economic development of the country,” Edwards said. **[Afghan hash is reported to be powerfully hallucinogenic. T]**

Baghi said the current situation leaves the electricity vulnerable when there is fighting, as was the case in the recent clashes in Sangin. He adds that the only way for the cash-strapped Afghan government to supply the required diesel is to move resources from other big city plants in the country.

“We don’t have any alternative to supply fuel for the plants,” Baghi said. “The key to solve this is with the US government.”

Resistance Action



[Graphic: flickr.com/photos]

Apr 24 2015 By Mirwais Adeel, Khaama Press

The Taliban militants launched rocket attacks on a number of government compounds in southeastern Ghazni province early on Friday morning as the group launched summer offensive.

According to local government officials, at least three rockets landed on Information & Culture Directorate, provincial municipality and Museum compounds.

Deputy provincial governor Mohammad Ali Ahmadi confirmed the incident and said sporadic gun fires are also heard in the vicinity of Ghazni city.

There are no reports regarding the casualties as a result of the rocket attack and sporadic clashes.

The Taliban militants group claimed responsibility behind the rocket attacks and claimed that heavy casualties were incurred as a result of the attack.

Ghazni is among the relatively volatile provinces in southeastern Afghanistan where anti-government armed militant groups are actively operating and frequently carry out insurgency activities.

Apr 23 2015 By Khaama Press

Unknown gunmen have torched a mobile tower only a day after burning two others in Maidan Wardak province .

Officials say two unidentified gunmen went to a mobile tower in Mangali area of Sayed Abad District and set it on fire last night.

The mobile tower belonged to Roshan Telecommunication Company.

Gunmen who were riding on a motorbike run away before security forces arrived at the crime scene.

Two mobile towers were torched in Ownkhi area of the same District on Wednesday night.

No group has claimed responsibility for burning the mobile towers. But in some remote areas telecommunication companies face trouble from militant groups including Taliban, asking them for money and turning off their operations during nights.

Apr 23 2015 by Farid Hussainkhail, TOLONews.com & RFE

Nine Afghan border police were killed on Wednesday night when a group of Taliban insurgents attacked a border post in Bala Murghab district of Badghis province. Three others were abducted by the Taliban, local officials said Thursday.

Mirwais Mirzakwal, spokesman for the provincial acting-governor's office, said that the incident occurred late Wednesday night when a group of Taliban insurgents attacked and seized the post in Mori Chaq village of Bala Murghab district.

According to Mirzakwal, seven border police soldiers were killed and three others were abducted.

Three soldiers were injured in the attack, Mirzakwal said.

MILITARY NEWS

Saudi Kings Military Attack On Yemen An Effort By Reactionary Dictatorships To Hold Back The Future:

“Operation Decisive Storm Has Nothing To Do With Supporting The Legitimacy Of A Political Process In Yemen”

“Its Goal Is Instead To Maintain The Continuity Of Authoritarian Governance In The Region”

March 30, 2015 by John M. Willis, Middle East Research and Information Project
[Excerpts]

On the night of March 25 one hundred Saudi warplanes bombed strategic targets inside Yemen under the control of the Houthi rebels. A number of countries—the other Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) members minus Oman, as well as Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Morocco and Pakistan—joined the effort either directly or in support capacities.

Although the Houthis have been in control of the Yemeni capital Sanaa and the central government since September 2014, it was the flight of president ‘Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi to Aden and the subsequent Houthi attack on the southern city that constituted the breaking point for Saudi Arabia and the GCC.

Thus began what Riyadh has dubbed Operation Decisive Storm (‘Asifat al-Hazm), a military assault that has already caused considerable destruction in Sanaa and elsewhere, and incurred dozens of casualties both military and civilian.

Saudi ambassador to the United States Adel al-Jubair described the air campaign as defending the legitimate Yemeni government led by Hadi, who replaced president 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih as part of GCC-brokered political arrangement in 2011. Hadi's government, Jubair contended, "has agreed to a process that is supported by the international community, that is enshrined in several United Nations Security Council resolutions that calls for all Yemeni parties to take a certain path that would lead them from where they were to a new state with a new constitution and elections and checks and balances and so forth."

He referred to the Houthis as "spoilers" of this process, who refused to "become legitimate players in Yemeni politics," and who will not be allowed to take over the country.

Jubair's remarks on the legitimacy of the government were remarkable for several reasons, not least of which was the absence of any mention of the Yemeni people.

The Houthis' refusal to negotiate a political settlement in Riyadh has indeed disrupted the kingdom's attempt to revive the original and problematic GCC initiative and National Dialogue Conference that was to resolve Yemen's deep political divisions.

As Stacey Philbrick Yadav and Sheila Carapico have argued, "given the GCC monarchies' interest in stability in the most restive quarter of the Arabian Peninsula, the agreement contained a number of provisions to undermine populist demands for a democratic transition."

It is no wonder then that the Houthis saw little possibility of addressing their concerns in a Saudi-sponsored conference that seemed to have as its goal the restoration of the political status quo.

Yet Operation Decisive Storm is not merely about Yemen's internal politics.

It is emblematic of a broader political transformation—one that both has historical parallels and is strikingly new.

A closer historical analogy might be the Iranian, Jordanian and British intervention in Oman against the rebellion of the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) in the 1960s and 1970s. In that case an alliance of conservative monarchies joined forces to support the Omani sultanate against popular forces that had threatened to spread into the greater Persian Gulf.

While the Houthis in no way resemble the leftist PFLO in ideology or revolutionary practice, the forces gathered against them have a great deal in common.

Namely, they are all part of a counter-revolutionary front that has expanded beyond the GCC to include other authoritarian regimes.

To these regimes, the Houthis represent one of many forces that threaten to undermine the regional order.

The coalition also shares a reliance on Saudi and GCC political and economic support. In Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE have supported the regime of 'Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi politically and financially since he formalized power in 2014.

Collectively, they provided Egypt with an estimated \$23 billion in grants, loans, petroleum products and investment in 2014 and a pledge for \$12 billion more in 2015.

Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, met with King Salman in October 2014 as part of a general rapprochement between the two countries that led to an unspecified aid package from Saudi Arabia.

Both Jordan and Morocco were briefly in discussions to enter the GCC as a part a post-Arab uprising defense strategy intended to ensure dynastic stability in the face of increasing domestic opposition.

Although they were ultimately not invited to join, the two monarchies still enjoy the financial support of GCC countries and share a similar commitment to combating the influence of ISIS.

Despite Saudi or even US assertions to the contrary, Operation Decisive Storm has nothing to do with supporting the legitimacy of a political process in Yemen.

Its goal is instead to maintain the continuity of authoritarian governance in the region by actively repressing the forces that threaten to undo the status quo.

That this coalition has indiscriminately lumped together ISIS, Iran and the popular democratic movements of the Arab uprisings of 2011 should indicate both its broader strategic goals and, equally, the dangers to positive political and social change it represents.

MORE

**“Yemenis Inside And Outside
The Country Saying #Kefayawar
– ‘Enough War’”**

**“I Do Not Support Any Of The
Sides, I See Them As All Equally
Guilty”**

“The Activists Are Equally Opposed To Foreign Intervention By A Saudi-Led Coalition”

“Yemenis Are Usually Depicted As Either Pro-Saudi Or Pro-Iran, Sunni Or Shia. People Forget That Yemenis Can Be Pro-Yemen As Well”

#KefayaWar We're scared! #Yemen



13 April 2015 BBC

As fighting continues across Yemen and the situation becomes increasingly desperate for civilians trapped near the front lines, a group of activists are pinning their hopes on a social media campaign.

It's a small but growing movement online - Yemenis inside and outside the country saying #KefayaWar - "Enough war".

The campaign began in late March as a Saudi-led coalition launched its airstrikes against Houthi rebel targets in Yemen, and since then the phrase has been used

by people sharing news reports, pictures and videos of the devastation of war, and photos of children sheltering from the fighting.

One of the first users of the hashtag was a civil servant and activist who tweeted on 31 March: "Big explosions. 3:58 am local time. We're growing sick of this with no end in sight. Enough! #KefayaWar"

Since then more than 20,000 people have used the hashtag - both inside the country and around the world - and a Facebook page set up by a group of activists has more than 4,000 likes.

"We were inspired by the daily lives of Yemenis, how they are working hard to maintain a normal life despite all the violence," says Sarah Jamal, a 27-year-old sociologist and member of the small group that created the campaign.

The group has tweeted against the Houthi rebels who are currently trying to build on recent military victories to take control of the country, but Jamal says the activists are equally opposed to foreign intervention by a Saudi-led coalition - and in favour of an end to all hostilities.

 **KefayaWar # OurYemen** shared a post. 16 hrs · Edited · 

"Asma, after today's two explosions, got dressed up and gathered all her dolls and lined them up in the hallway. She cares about her toys."
#KefayaWar #Sanaa



"I personally do not support any of the sides, I see them as all equally guilty," she told BBC Trending via phone from the capital, Sanaa. "We are trying to create a space for Yemenis who don't want to join the war, a safe space for those who want to reject both sides and we are trying to encourage those who haven't yet joined the battle not to join in."

The campaign is also directed outside the country - it's largely in English and includes contributions from Yemenis and others around the world.

"In the media Yemenis are usually depicted as either pro-Saudi or pro-Iran, Sunni or Shia. People forget that Yemenis can be pro-Yemen as well," says Sarah Jamal.

Jamal admits the campaign has had limited success so far, though. Although messages of support have come in from around the country and the world, few fighters have heeded their call.

"The majority of those holding weapons and fighting come from very poor areas - they lack basic services, some haven't seen electricity, much less the internet and social media. You can't prevent those people from going to war through Facebook," she says.

"But the thing about Yemen is that everyone has a family member in the city, in the rural areas, everywhere. ... If I can change someone's mind, they can have an influence on their relatives and so on."

"While I'm hiding from all the bullets, I might as try to find a way to build something, if not for now, than for the future. Because civil wars don't end in a few days."

Major VA Benefits Center Rotten With Mismanagement: "Months Or Years Of Delay In Processing Compensation Claims For Veterans With Service-Related Injuries Or Wounds" "Cheats Tens Of Thousands Of Former Service Members Out Of Timely And Accurate Payments"

“Extensive Evidence Of Records Being Altered To Misrepresent How Long Veterans Were Waiting To Receive The Money They Earned”

Auditors found 68 boxes full of finished compensation cases simply waiting to be scanned into the VA’s electronic system. Nearly 100 boxes containing 22,000 pieces mail were left unattended, some of them dating back three to five years. Another 37 boxes and bins full of nearly 15,000 pieces of mail containing documents or source materials necessary to supplement veterans’ pending cases were found unattended, some of them 5 years old.

April 27, 2015 By Gregg Zoroya, Army Times [Excerpts]. USA Today The Associated Press contributed to this story

A Veterans Affairs Department benefits office in Philadelphia that processes more than \$4 billion in veteran pension payments each year has been rife with mismanagement and data manipulation that potentially cheats tens of thousands of former service members out of timely and accurate payments.

An inspector general’s report called for immediate action to correct problems at the regional center complaining that not enough has been done since auditors first uncovered problems last year.

Months or years of delay in processing compensation claims for veterans with service-related injuries or wounds are one of two system- wide scandals plaguing the VA in recent years.

The other crisis involves veterans waiting too long for medical treatment and hospital staff manipulating appointment records to cover the delays.

The VA’s inspector general launched an investigation into the Philadelphia benefits processing office last June after receiving more than 100 complaints about mismanagement.

Auditors found extensive evidence of records being altered to misrepresent how long veterans were waiting to receive the money they earned.

The VA issued a statement after the IG’s report was released April 15 saying a new director arrived at the center three weeks after the inspector general investigation began last June and started correcting problems.

The inspector general found that in cases in which veterans appealed VA decisions about compensation, notices that were supposed to be processed in seven days were delayed an average of more than four months, the report said.

Queries or claims from more than 30,000 veterans were simply ignored for an average of 10 months, even though responses are required under VA rules within five days.

Even claims that were completed were left languishing, according to the report.

Auditors found 68 boxes full of finished compensation cases simply waiting to be scanned into the VA's electronic system. Nearly 100 boxes containing 22,000 pieces mail were left unattended, some of them dating back three to five years. Another 37 boxes and bins full of nearly 15,000 pieces of mail containing documents or source materials necessary to supplement veterans' pending cases were found unattended, some of them 5 years old.

Staffers complained of poor working conditions in a warehouse infested with mice and insects and containing few bathrooms.

Despite assertions by Allison Hickey, the VA under secretary for benefits, that most, if not all of the problems have been corrected, Assistant Inspector General Linda Halliday disagreed, noting that complaints continue.

There are recent allegations that mail problems at the center have gotten worse and that claims of new training for the staff are false, she said.

Zack Hearn, deputy director for claims at the American Legion, said he found the report "extremely concerning," raising questions regarding the extent of problems in the VA. "There seems to be a mass breakdown in the way this regional office operates, and the VA needs to better explain itself," he said.

The Philadelphia regional office oversees the administration of benefits to 825,000 veterans in eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware. The site also houses a Pension Management Center, one of three in the nation, servicing more than a dozen states and Puerto Rico.

The audit comes as the VA continues to grapple with fallout related to wait times and falsified records in its health care network, separate from claims processing.

An investigation by The Associated Press revealed that the number of patients facing long waits has not declined a year after Americans recoiled at revelations that sick veterans were getting sicker while languishing on waiting lists.

The inspector general's office said the problems it found in Philadelphia were emblematic of the various complaints it had reviewed at other VA offices.

Those trouble spots include Oakland, California; Los Angeles; Little Rock, Arkansas; Baltimore; Houston; and Honolulu, according to the IG.

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

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

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

**Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you-
Ye are many — they are few
-- Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819, on the occasion of a mass murder of British
workers by the Imperial government at Peterloo.**

“Thank You Ele”

Big Game Sport Hunter Becomes Prey: Crushed To Death By Elephant He Was Hunting; “Animals 1 - Humans 0. An Upset In Zimbabwe As The Underdogs Fought Back For A Deserved 1-0 Victory.”



Society for Conserving Planet and Life

[Thanks to Eddie Stinson for posting.]

April 18, 2015 Examiner.com/ & Daily Mail

Game hunter Ian Gibson was trampled to death by an elephant in Zimbabwe, and while Gibson's death, though tragic, is being recognized, the vast undercurrent of comments are coming from the camps of those who have a different message, namely – he deserved it.

The HuffPost on March 18 reported that Gibson, a 55-year-old professional game hunter, was leading a hunt with an American client in "Chewore North in the lower Zambezi Valley of Zimbabwe, when a young bull elephant began a full charge."

Gibson is one of southern Africa's best-known game hunters.

He and his companion had already shot and killed a leopard, and the pair were reportedly scouting for lion when they came across an elephant in a "musth period" – a mating time during a young bull's life when they are particularly combative.

The elephant charged Gibson, knocked him over and then knelt on him, crushing him to death.

"We don't yet know the full details of how 'Gibbo' as we called him, died, as the American client and the trackers are still too traumatized to give us full details," commented Paul Smith, the managing director of Chifuti Safari Classics which was overseeing and funding the hunt.

"We know 'Gibbo' shot it once, from about 10 yards away, with a 458 rifle," Smith said. It is unknown if the elephant was killed in the incident.

According to Smith, Gibson was hunting in an area that is known to be overpopulated with elephants.

A report by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, which is known as CITES and regulates wildlife trade, said poaching rates of elephants in areas that are being monitored still exceed their natural birth rates.

A statement posted to AfricaHunting.com from Safari Classics said: "Ian and (his tracker) Robert began shouting in order to stop the charge. At very close range, Ian was able to get off one shot before the bull killed him."

Comments on related news articles are replete with those who are expressing satisfaction at this hunter-turned-hunted story. For example, from the New York Daily News:

"You go elephant! You go to hell, scumbag!"

"With so much negativity reported in today's news, it's nice to read a story with a happy ending once in a while."

"It's nice when the tables are turned, chock one for mother nature."

And from The Independent:

"Animals 1 - Humans 0. An upset in Zimbabwe as the underdogs fought back for a deserved 1-0 victory."

Following Top Secret Leak, David Petraeus Reinstated As CIA Director, Given Backpay: New Legislation Decriminalizes Leak Of Top Secret Information, “If Done By People Who Have Deep Political Connections Or Fame”



Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

April 25, 2015 by Joe Zieja, The Duffle Blog

WASHINGTON — David Petraeus has been reinstated as CIA Director and given \$2.2 million in backpay following new legislation that decriminalizes the leak of top secret information, as long as it is done by people who have deep political connections or fame.

Congress unanimously passed legislation on Friday that takes into account a convicted person’s sociopolitical rank before passing sentence on a convicted criminal, particularly when it comes to matters of national security.

In this controversial bill, lawmakers standardized the long-standing practice of allowing high-ranking political and military figures to break the law without any fear of the consequences, which has inspired a collective sigh of relief from nearly everyone in authority anywhere.

The bill, which quickly passed in both the House and the Senate, establishes a complicated algorithm by which sentences for crimes are reduced based on a number of factors, such as net worth, political clout, number of active lobbyists making trips to their family pool, and degrees of separation from the Kennedy family.

The release of classified information — information, “the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security” — received its own amendment in the bill.

The amendment decriminalizes the release of highly-sensitive national security information by high-ranking military retirees or political leaders for the purposes of impressing friends at bars, delivering the punchline to a really good joke, or saying something ignorant during a press conference.

“People are making a big deal about this law,” President Obama said after signing the bill, “but we’re just putting on paper what we’ve been doing forever. If you look at it that way, it kind of looks like Congress is finally getting organized about something.”

The law comes just in time for the now-reinstated CIA Director David Petraeus, who was convicted of revealing classified information to solidify his chances at lovemaking — another caveat present in the bill’s amendment — but received no jail time for his actions.

“Come on,” Petraeus said in an interview, making a “honk-honk” groping gesture with both his hands. “Did you see that chick? Totally worth it. Definitely going to miss that \$200,000, though. That’s like, a couple weeks’ pay, right there.”

Former CIA officer John Kiriakou, who failed to lead the surge in Iraq or rise to director of the agency before he leaked classified information, was not available for comment.

“These high-level, connected guys, a lot of them have less life left to live, you know?” one senior official wrote, in a document leaked to Duffel Blog reporters. “They just can’t afford to spend their retirement in jail. It wouldn’t be fair.

“A private or low-level analyst, on the other hand ... well, someone has to be made an example of. And they’ll have plenty of life ahead of him after he serves his 30 years in prison for leaving an intel report in his backpack when he left post.”

In an unrelated story, an unnamed member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence was caught on a hot mic saying he wanted “(Edward Snowden’s) ass fried.”

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Our Challenge To Public Transportation Price Increases “Met With Repression. Our

**Wages, Pensions And
Scholarships Remain ‘Frozen’”
“Our Peaceful Movement Blocked
By Armed Paramilitary Groups
Serving The ‘New’ Odessa
Authorities”**

**“The Government Of Ukraine
Faithfully Protects The Interests Of
Business And The Major Oligarchic
Clans”**

“We Will Not Stop The Struggle!”



During this dangerous time, we call for all Ukrainians regardless of their ethnic background or political preferences, go stand up and fight for social justice and democratic values which are under threat of destruction and final installation of the outright dictatorship of oligarchs which have plundered for the last 23 years and continue to plunder our suffering people.

They brought us to misery and poverty, and now they try to limit us even in our right to protest outright lawlessness.

March 20, 2015 by ukrainesolidaritycampaign

The Ukraine Solidarity Campaign presents the following statement by the All-Ukraine Independent Trade Union Defence of Labour – (Zakhyst Pratsi).

We appeal to the labour movement to show solidarity with the trade unionists and community in Odessa whose efforts to challenge price increases have been met with repression.

We have also seen the harassment of Andriy Ischenko by the notorious security police the SBU.

Andriy the local union organiser of Zakhyst Pratsi, recently addressed a meeting of trade unionists in London on the current situation.

This use of a private militia against the community is ominous and demands global solidarity in response.

I must admit that at this tragic time for Ukrainian history we see blatant and brazen undermining the democratic gains of Maidan – those gains which were faithfully fought for in Kyiv and Odessa. Those gains for which heroically died on February 20th , 2014, our brother, a soldier of the “Heavenly Hundred” Serhey Kemsyy.

STATEMENT

BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENT TRADE UNION “ZAKHYST PRATSI” REGARDING EVENTS IN ODESSA, MARCH 17TH, 2015

On March 17, 2015 the All-Ukrainian Independent Trade Union “Zakhyst Pratsi” in cooperation with the civic movement “Autonomous Resistance” organised a protest rally on the main street of Odessa to protect the interests of ordinary citizens of Odessa who use public transport daily.

The public in Odessa is well acquainted with the fact that 2 years ago, under the former mayor of Odessa Kostusev, we together with residents of Odessa, following a series of street protests, were able to defend the common right of

territorial communities and forced the former corrupt city government to abandon plans to increase fares in the city “marshrutka” minibuses from 2.50 to 4 UAH.

And now, the “new” city authorities, without any consultation with the Odessa community, without giving absolutely no calculations and contradicting the legislation of Ukraine, without open public hearings decided to raise fares almost double – that is, from 3 to 5 UAH for marshrutka minibuses in Odessa.

In addition, our wages, pensions and scholarships remain “frozen” by the Government of Ukraine, which faithfully protects the interests not of ordinary Ukrainian citizens but those of business and the major oligarchic clans.

Our peaceful rally was organised for the benefit of workers and self-employed residents of Odessa – ordinary passengers of public transport.

These are people of different political views and preferences.

We are different and that’s our strength, this is why the agenda of the 17th March protest included purely economic demands on issues of non-transparent price formation in Odessa communal public transport.

We aimed to unite different people in defending their civil and social rights, and not in the interests of all the politicians or obsessive abstractions we are all tired of.

The demands of our protests were clear and understandable.

We demanded from Odessa city administration:

- To provide Odessa citizens with a written justification for increasing fares in marshrutka minibuses up to 5 UAH per trip;
- To hold public hearings regarding the justified fares for public minibuses;
- Introduce transparent and open accounting in all public transport companies and inform the public of the city of Odessa online on all the costs and profits of such enterprises;
- Put under financial control the advertising in every city bus and ensure the revenues from it are included in calculations of profit of the enterprises;
- Begin immediate negotiations with a network of gas stations located on the territory of Odessa, in order to provide assistance for their work in exchange for providing public transport companies with fuel at discounted wholesale prices.

On March 17th, 2015, according to official notice was submitted in advance by us to the city administration according to the legal requirements of Ukrainian legislation, we have also planned a peaceful democratic protest rally along Deribasovskaya street to Odessa City Hall in order to deliver the demands outlined above to municipal authorities.

However, our peaceful movement which was entirely legitimate was blocked by armed paramilitary groups which were previously seen actively serving the “new” Odessa authorities.

In particular, young people in black and camouflage uniforms in flak jackets with batons have blocked the peaceful protesters’ way to the mayor’s office, and then completely surrounded the protestors, trying to prevent the residents of Odessa who came to join the protest to unite.

The police, according to a predetermined scenario decided “not to interfere” and took the position of a mere side observer.

We also inform the public that the peaceful protest organiser, coordinator of Ukrainian independent trade union “Zakhyst Pratsi” Andriy Ishchenko underwent unprecedented pressure from the “law enforcement” agencies.

Just 40 minutes before the start of the action Odessa SBU officers tried to hand him a summons paper for interrogation as a witness in an unknown case and tried to bring him to the SBU building by force just before the protest.

However, the summons order was already overdue, and the actions of the SBU were therefore illegal.

Thus, by the joint efforts of “law enforcement” agencies and paramilitary illegal armed formations an entirely peaceful, democratic and legitimate protest rally to Odessa City Hall with purely economic demands was illegally disrupted.

Provocateurs from the authorities apparently expected a possible conflict during our attempt to break the encirclement, but we did not intend to yield to provocations of oligarchic mercenaries and puppets. The organising committee of the action in these circumstances took the only right decision – to abandon the march down the Deribasovskaya street and hold a protest the on-site where participants gathered initially.

We sincerely and loudly declare that March 17th, 2015 Odessa authorities brutally violated the fundamental right of Ukrainian citizens to peaceful assembly. We informed in advance the executive bodies of Odessa about this event, which is guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine. Restrictions on the exercise of this right may be established only by the court according to law.

This decision was not and could not be done.

Dear friends! Our right to peaceful assembly and to protest to protect our interests are legitimate rights of all citizens of Ukraine and it is guaranteed by all international conventions and treaties signed by the Ukrainian state.

Today, we see how the authorities in close cooperation with “law enforcement” and “paramilitary” oligarchic mercenaries trying to brutally crush this fundamental constitutional right.

We express our democratic protest against this blatant lawlessness.

We call for the democratic resistance to tyranny of “new” powers that greedily strive for power on the shoulders of resistance of hundreds of thousands and millions of workers, Ukrainian citizens who overthrew the criminal regime of Yanukovych and his camarilla.

We encourage Odessa, despite brutal pressure to continue the fight for transparency of government in any increase in urban rates.

The independent trade union “Zakhyst Pratsi” will continue at the forefront of this struggle with ordinary residents of Odessa in defending their legitimate interests.

We will not stop the struggle!

During this dangerous time, we call for all Ukrainians regardless of their ethnic background or political preferences, go stand up and fight for social justice and democratic values which are under threat of destruction and final installation of the outright dictatorship of oligarchs which have plundered for the last 23 years and continue to plunder our suffering people.

They brought us to misery and poverty, and now they try to limit us even in our right to protest outright lawlessness.

We urge our colleagues around the world, international and domestic human rights movement, international and national trade unions, to show solidarity with the struggle of Ukrainian trade unionists in defence of social justice and democracy in Ukraine.

We urge you to undertake appropriate actions of solidarity and address governments of the democratic countries to influence the leadership of Ukraine and at regional levels to ensure that all elements of power comply with basic democratic norms and stop immediately the suspension and obstruction of the Ukrainian independent trade union movement.

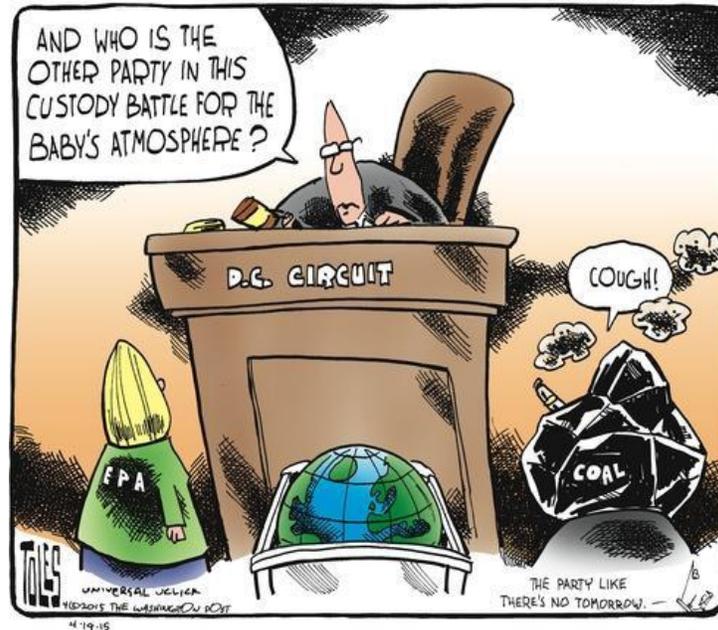
The Central Committee of the All-Ukrainian independent trade union “Zakhyst Pratsi”, Odessa, Ukraine

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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: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Soldiers Kill Palestinian Youth In Jerusalem “His Family Says Shooting Was Unprovoked”

25 Apr 2015 Reuters

Israeli soldiers have shot and killed a young Palestinian man after an incident near a checkpoint in the East Jerusalem area, police say.

Israeli police said the young man wielded two knives and had tried to attack the soldiers on Saturday, however the dead man's relatives have denied the claim.

The youth was aged 16, the Jerusalem Post reported.

The incident occurred around midnight near the A-Zayyim checkpoint at the outskirts of East Jerusalem in the occupied West Bank.

The dead man's cousin, Haitham Abu Ghanam told the Reuters news agency that his cousin was killed for no reason.

"We were shocked to hear the news of the death of our cousin, he is a martyr," Ghanam said.

"He arrived to A-Zayyim checkpoint when the soldiers shot him for no reason, without him attacking them. Witnesses told us that they saw them (the soldiers) shooting him and executing him," he said.

Occupation Troops Open Fire On Unarmed Palestinian Demonstrators: "One Shot By Live Round; Five Others Injured By Rubber-Coated Metal Bullets" Palestinian Loses Eye

April 25, 2015 IMEMC News

Israeli soldiers used excessive force, on Friday, against the weekly protest against the Wall and Settlements in Kufur Qaddoum, near the northern West Bank city of Qalqilia, causing a serious injury to a young man who lost his eye; one was shot by a live round, and five others were injured by rubber-coated metal bullets, and many suffered the effects of tear gas inhalation.

Medical sources said Rif'at Barham, 23 years of age, lost his right eye after the soldiers fired a rubber-coated metal bullet directly at him.

Resident Daoud 'Aqel, 17, was shot by a live round to his leg, and five others were shot by rubber-coated metal bullets.

The sources added that dozens of residents received treatment for the effects of tear gas inhalation.

Coordinator of the Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements in Kufur Qaddoum Morad Shteiwy said Barham was moved to the Rafidia Governmental Hospital, in Nablus, due to the severity of his injury.

He added that resident Nasser Shteiwiy, 44, was shot by three rubber-coated metal bullets in his legs, Anas Abdul-Razeq, 20, was shot by a rubber-coated metal bullet in the back, Mohammad Nidal, 19, rubber-coated metal bullet in the shoulder, Mohammad Fathi, 45, rubber-coated metal bullet in the arm, and Mahmoud Nasser, 15, was shot by a rubber-coated metal bullet in the thigh.

On Friday evening, Israeli soldiers invaded a Palestinian orchard in Zabbouba village, west of the northern West Bank city of Jenin, kidnapped Ramah Jamil Atatra, 18, while in his family's land, and took him to an unknown destination.

Hundreds Of Zionist Settlers Raid Palestinian Villages In Nablus District Thursday: Al-Sawiya Girls' School Gassed



IMEMC

April 24, 2015 IMEMC News & Agencies

Hundreds of Israeli settlers raided Palestinian villages in the Nablus district on Thursday, officials and witnesses said.

Several Palestinian students suffered tear-gas inhalation as Israeli forces raided a girls' school to the south of Nablus, on Thursday as well.

Ghassan Daghlis, who monitors settlement activity in the northern West Bank, told Ma'an News Agency that over 100 armed settlers entered Sebastia and an area between Aqraba and Beita villages.

Locals said that Israeli military vehicles deployed in Huwwara village near a checkpoint of the same name to protect the settlers.

It is unclear why the settlers were present in the area. An Israeli army spokeswoman told Ma'an she was not aware of the incident.

However, she added that Thursday is a holiday in Israel, "so it's possible that there are many more travelers in the area because the army opens up training grounds for tourists to travel on."

Thursday is Independence Day, which marks the establishment of the State of Israel following the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes in what became Israel.

The villages south of Nablus are a frequent site of settler violence and Palestinian clashes with Israeli forces as they are located beside the notoriously violent Israeli settlement of Yitzhar.

Settlers frequently attack locals and prevent farmers from reaching their lands, in addition to attacks on olive trees themselves.

Settler violence against Palestinians and their property in the occupied West Bank is systematic and ignored by Israeli authorities, who rarely intervene in the violent attacks or prosecute the perpetrators.

In 2014, there were 324 incidents of settler violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Over 500,000 Israeli settlers live in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in contravention of international law.

Palestinian security sources told Ma'an that several Israeli military vehicles raided the Al-Sawiya girls' school claiming rocks were thrown at settlers' vehicles on the main road of the village from the school.

Israeli soldiers fired tear-gas and stun grenades at students.

Sources added that 16-year-old student Fatima Suleiman was taken to the Salfit Governmental Hospital for treatment.

An Israeli army spokeswoman told Ma'an Israeli forces received reports of rocks thrown from the school onto passing vehicles driving on Route 60.

Israeli forces arrived at the scene and asked the suspects to stop, later using standard means of crowd dispersal to "stop further violence," she added.

Nablus has come under increasing military presence from both Israeli and Palestinian security forces in recent weeks, Israeli forces targeting Hamas affiliates during arrest raids last week and Palestinian security forces continuing to crack down on crime in a security campaign that began in February.

The Al-Sawiya girls' school has been subject to Israeli raids in the past, undergoing a raid recently in February 2015, according to local media.

Several schools in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem face constant military presence, while some students are forced to travel to school by foot through military firing zones, violating Palestinian students' right to education, according to rights group EAPPI.

No arrests or serious injuries were reported following the incident.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:
<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>
The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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