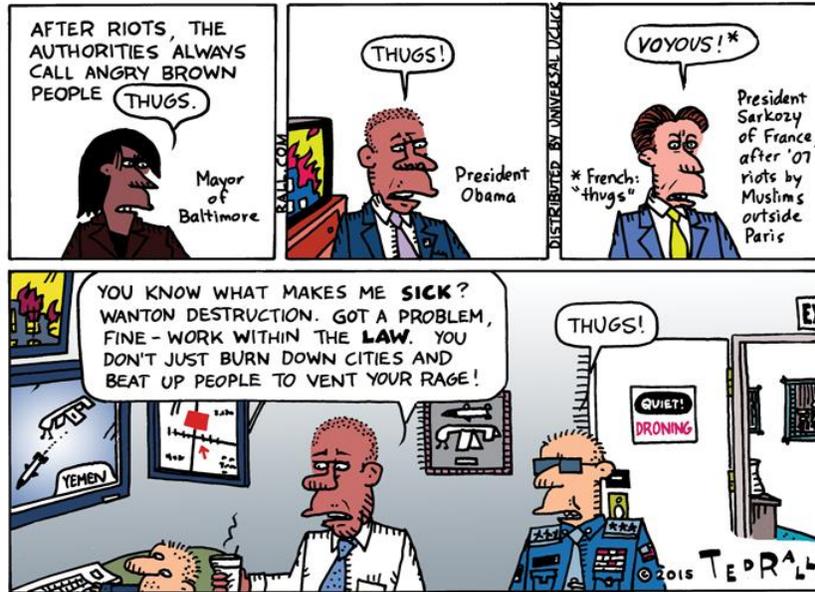


Military Resistance 13E7



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**Islamic State Fighters
Overrun Ramadi, Capital
Of Anbar Province:
Brain-Dead U.S. Officials "Said
Iraqi Forces Hadn't Been
Defeated"**

“The City’s Fallen. They’ve Taken It,” Said Senior Ramadi Police Official Maj. Omar Khamis Al-Dahl; “The National Government Has Not Sent Reinforcements To Ramadi Because There Is No Place It Can Afford To Spare Troops”
“The Downtown Compound That Houses The Anbar Provincial Government Fell At About 2 P.M.”



May 15 By Hugh Naylor and Mustafa Salim, Washington Post. [Excerpts] Missy Ryan and Brian Murphy in Washington contributed to this report.

BAGHDAD —Islamic State fighters on Friday seized control of key parts of Ramadi, the capital of Iraq’s largest province, in what appeared to be a significant blow to a U.S.-backed military campaign to retake territory from the insurgents.

The offensive began when Islamic State militants slipped into downtown Ramadi dressed in police uniforms, according to a militiaman fighting with the city police.

The attackers opened fire on police officers, launching an assault that grew to involve rocket-propelled grenades, artillery and car bombs, he said.

By Friday afternoon, the militants had hoisted the Islamic State's black flag over the provincial government compound and had surrounded an important military operations hub in the west of the city, residents said.

The heavy fighting touched off panicked attempts by civilians to escape the city.

"It was just like scenes of carnage in a World War II movie with bombing all around and dead people in the streets," said Ali Dulaimi, a 28-year-old student at Anbar University who fled central Ramadi with his three brothers and parents.

"There were dead people lying all over the street as we ran away," he said.

If Islamic State takes control of Ramadi, it would gain a foothold less than 70 miles west of Baghdad. The city's fall would be a serious setback for Iraq's government, which only last month announced a campaign to push Islamic State out of Anbar province.

While local officials and residents described a harrowing scene in Ramadi, the Iraqi government played down the significance of the fight.

In a televised address on Friday night, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi referred to the attack on Ramadi as a "setback that happens, like in any battle."

U.S. officials also said Iraqi forces hadn't been defeated.

[Lies like these indicate pure panic. More stupid U.S. command bullshit follows. T]

Brig. Gen. Thomas Weidley, chief of staff for the U.S.-led coalition battling the Islamic State, told reporters in Washington that the group's fighters had executed a "complex attack" on Iraqi security forces in Ramadi.

"We will see episodic temporary successes. But again, these typically don't materialize into long-term gains," he said.

But the governor of Anbar described the situation in Ramadi as "dire," and local officials appealed for help.

The militants mounted the operation in the city despite having been pounded for seven months by U.S. airstrikes in Anbar, showing their continued determination to gain territory.

"It's desperate now," said Omar Shehan, a tribal militiaman who fights alongside Ramadi police.

A senior Ramadi police official, Maj. Omar Khamis al-Dahl, said by telephone that Islamic State fighters had made key gains on Friday, and at least 60 police had been killed.

"The city's fallen. They've taken it," said Dahl.

Dozens of soldiers fled the city overnight Thursday during the initial stages of the Islamic State attack, which involved heavy artillery and multiple car bombings, said Dahl.

He said that hundreds of police and soldiers in the provincial military headquarters were surrounded by the attackers.

“We have not received reinforcements from the government,” said Dahl, adding that he feared “a massacre.”

Islamic State said in communiques Friday that it had used British, Syrian and Tunisian bombers in its “invasion” of Ramadi, according to a translation by the SITE Intelligence Group. The group said it had killed and captured many “apostates” in an army barracks and at a police station it blew up.

The national government has not sent reinforcements to Ramadi because there is no place it can afford to spare troops, said Muhannad Haimour, spokesman for the Anbar governor, who is based in Baghdad.

“There are many fronts that the Iraqi army is dealing with,” he said, adding that resources were stretched thin. “But we believe that with the help of the international coalition, the situation will improve in the next few days.”

Iraq’s military capacity has been limited by the weakness of the army, which suffered large-scale defections last year and has been plagued by poor coordination and corruption, analysts say.

The Islamic State assault began on Thursday evening with militants entering downtown Ramadi wearing uniforms, said Shehan, the tribal fighter.

“When they came to the front line last night, at first we thought they were policemen,” Shehan said, speaking by telephone from Ramadi. “Then they started killing us.”

The downtown compound that houses the Anbar provincial government fell at about 2 p.m., according to police and residents. .

The nearby police headquarters also was damaged in the fighting, although police had largely vacated the facility hours earlier, they said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Taliban Take Jawand District: Security Forces Surrounded;

Saigon Oops Kabul Regime Says Taking Control Of The District Is Not A Big Issue”

10 May 2015 by Ratib Noori, TOLONews

Jawand district of Badghis province has fallen into the hands of the Taliban, raising existing concerns about security trends around the country despite assurances from officials.

Based on figures reviewed by TOLONews, in the past month, 35 districts in 26 different provinces have faced terrorist attacks. Only districts in Paktika, Balkh, Panjshir, Daikundi, Ghor, Kandahar, Nimroz and Samangan have not faced major threats.

“The delay in announcement of Minister of Defense and governors, along with other challenges that the government is facing, all together result in increasing insecurity,” political analyst Zareef Naseri said.

“The enemy takes advantage of the opportunity and increases their attacks. This is how terrorists can put pressure on the security forces, and with an increase in battles, they want to be stronger in the peace talks,” he added.

According to Bahauddin Qadesi, the Chairman of the Badghis Provincial Council, the security forces in Jawand are surrounded and require relief by reinforcements. “We want the Afghan security forces and National Security Council to pay serious attention in this regard and save the surrounded forces from the enemy,” Qadesi said on Sunday.

However, Ministry of Interior (MoI) spokesman Sediq Sediqqi downplayed the severity of the situation and assured that steps were being taken to secure the district.

“Taking control of the district is not a big issue; this district was controlled by the police, and we are trying to prevent any harm to them,” Sediqqi said on Sunday. “Today, we have received the aid from the national army and this issue will be resolved.”

Commentators like Mirza Muhammad Yarmand, the former deputy minister of interior, has called for accountability and consequences for those responsible for Jawand’s fall.

“Now there is news that the district has fallen, and there are no reviews of the incident; this issue must be closely investigated, and anyone who has acted irresponsibly, whether they are a commander, district governor, MP or whoever, they must be investigated,” he told TOLONews.

Security officials have expressed optimism about the wave of counter-offensives that the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) have launched in various parts of the country.

“The operations that our forces have started at the moment are moving forward successfully,” Deputy Chief of Army Staff Murad Ali Murad said. “Our forces have had good achievements in all areas of the operations that they have started.”

Taliban Attack Concert For Occupation Personnel In Kabul: “Fourteen People, Most Of Them Foreigners, Killed” “The Taliban Know That The Government Coffers Are Empty” “Attacks Across The East And North — We Don’t Know What They Will Do From One Day To The Next”

May 14, 2015 By LYNNE O'DONNELL, AP & AFP & By ALI M. LATIFI AND SHASHANK BENGALI, Los Angeles Times & Pakistan Today Associated Press writer Amir Shah in Kabul, Afghanistan, contributed to this report. [Excerpts]

KABUL: Fourteen people, most of them foreigners, were killed in a Taliban attack on a Kabul guesthouse that trapped dozens attending a concert and triggered an hours-long standoff with Afghan forces, officials said on Thursday.

Four Indians, two Pakistanis, an American, an Italian and a British-Afghan dual national were among those killed in the overnight siege on the Park Palace, which was about to host a performance by a well-known Afghan singer.

The hourslong siege, which ended early Thursday, was the deadliest in Kabul since the insurgents launched their annual “spring offensive” against Ghani’s administration in late April, sparking fierce battles that have forced the government to concentrate resources on security at the expense of desperately needed reforms.

Five Afghans were also killed and seven were wounded, including a policeman

By targeting a guesthouse popular with international residents and visitors, the Taliban also stoked fears they were renewing their strategy of killing foreigners, which will further undermine Ghani’s credibility in his efforts to bring peace, stability and prosperity not only to Afghanistan but to the broader region.

“The attack shows that Kabul is very vulnerable. An increase in attacks on Kabul can paralyze life here, and if there is a cascade of attacks in Kabul, it can hurt the government,” said Haroun Mir, an independent political analyst.

In a convenience store across the street from the hotel, a member of the hotel’s security staff stopped by for an energy drink.

“I hope they shut (the hotel) down,” he said, requesting anonymity for safety’s sake. He added that his monthly salary of about \$130 “isn’t worth risking our lives.”

The insurgent stormed the Park Palace Hotel in downtown Kabul as guests gathered Wednesday evening for a concert by a popular Afghan musician attended by an audience that included diplomats, business people, charity workers, academics and others.

As gunfire echoed around the guesthouse in the Shar-i-Naw neighborhood — near United Nations compounds and a foreign-run hospital — the area was rapidly surrounded by heavily armed police and special forces in armored Humvees.

Some 60 people were held hostage until the early hours of Thursday morning. Sporadic gunfire and a series of muffled explosions were heard over about five hours, before Kabul police chief Gen. Abdul Rahman Rahimi announced the siege was over. Firefighters quickly moved in to clear the building, which was cordoned off as residents moved out.

The Taliban claimed responsibility in an emailed statement.

“The attack was planned carefully to target the party in which important people and Americans were attending,” the militants said in a statement.

The attack was a warning to nations that back the Afghan government, a Taliban spokesman said, adding that “occupying forces should realize that they are not safe from our attacks under any cover or in any location.”

Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said it was carried out by a lone attacker armed with a Kalashnikov rifle, an explosive vest and a pistol.

Many Afghans wondered how one man could make it through several rounds of security checks, hold dozens hostage and engage in a standoff with police for nearly seven hours. Some theorized that the attacker had previously been inside the building, and may even have been residing in the hotel.

Since taking office in September, public support for Ghani has rapidly evaporated, along with faith in his promises to bring reform and peace.

His cabinet still lacks a defense minister and plans to kick-start a moribund economy, creating much-needed jobs after the withdrawal late last year of foreign combat forces and many non-government organizations, have stalled.

The attack also shows how the Taliban have been able to adapt to the tightened security situation in the Afghan capital, where smuggling in large amounts of weaponry has become increasingly difficult.

At the same time, the Taliban has used the government's preoccupation with internal machinations, including disputes between Ghani and chief executive Abdullah Abdullah over cabinet appointees, to formulate a strategy aimed at crippling plans for reform, said Mir, the analyst.

That strategy "is now rolling out across the country, with attacks across the east and north — we don't know what they will do from one day to the next," Mir said.

"The Taliban know that the government coffers are empty.

"Any attack will force the government to spend on security. The government is not yet fine-tuned and it needs to be fine-tuned to function properly," he said. "This strategy of insurgency undermines its ability to fine-tune. Its focus has to be on security. It can't do anything else."

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

Insurgents Attack Second Government Employee Bus In Kabul In A Week

May 10, 2015 Reuters. Reporting by Hamid Shalizi; Writing by Kay Johnson; Editing by Kevin Liffey.

May 10 A bomber attacked a bus carrying Afghan government employees in Kabul on Sunday, killing three people, in the second bus attack in just a week to strike the same area of the capital, a police official said.

Taliban insurgents quickly claimed the attack near the Afghan attorney general's office in the west of the capital.

Sunday's bomber attacked a bus carrying workers from the attorney general's office home after work, witnesses and police said.

"As I was crossing the road, there was a huge blast and I saw 10 to 12 people were wounded," said bystander Mahboobullah, who, like many Afghans, uses only one name.

An official at the Ministry of Interior said initial reports indicated that three people had been killed and 10 wounded. He confirmed the bus had been carrying staff from the attorney general's office.

Last Monday, another car bomber targeted a bus in the same area, killing one civilian and wounding 15 people.

The Taliban claimed both attacks. On Sunday, spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the hardline Islamist movement had killed “18 high-ranking hirelings”.

MILITARY NEWS

Some Russian Soldiers Quit Over Ukraine: “That’s Not Our War” “I Did Not Understand Who Was Fighting And What For, And The Point Of It” “People From The Western Part (Of Russia) Didn’t Want To Go. Their Morale Has Fallen”

May 10, 2015 By Maria Tsvetkova, Thomson Reuters. Additional reporting by Thomas Grove; Edited by Richard Woods and Sara Ledwith. [Excerpts]

Some Russian soldiers are quitting the army because of the conflict in Ukraine, several soldiers and human rights activists have told Reuters.

Associates of Boris Nemtsov, a prominent Kremlin critic killed in February, will soon publish a report which they say will contain new evidence of the Russian military presence in Ukraine.

Until now, however, it has been extremely rare to find Russian soldiers who have fought there and are willing to talk. It is even rarer to find soldiers who have quit the army.

Five soldiers who recently quit, including two who said they left rather than serve in Ukraine, have told Reuters of their experiences.

One of the five, from Moscow, said he was sent on exercises in southern Russia last year but ended up going into Ukraine in an armored convoy.

“After we crossed the border, a lieutenant colonel said we could be sent to jail if we didn’t fulfil orders. Some soldiers refused to stay there,” said the soldier, who served with the elite Russian Kantemirovskaya tank division.

He gave Reuters his full name but spoke on condition of anonymity, saying he feared reprisals.

He said he knew two soldiers who refused to stay.

“They were taken somewhere. The lieutenant colonel said criminal cases were opened against them but in reality – we called them afterwards – they were at home. They just quit.”

Russia’s President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly denied that Moscow has sent any military forces to help rebels in eastern Ukraine, where clashes and casualties persist despite a ceasefire struck in February.

Officials say that any Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine are “volunteers,” helping the rebels of their own free will.

The former Russian soldiers who spoke to Reuters, as well as human rights activists, said some soldiers were fearful of being sent to Ukraine, were pressured into going, or disgruntled at the way they were treated after fighting there.

The former tank soldier from Moscow said he would not have gone to Ukraine voluntarily.

“No, what for? That’s not our war. If our troops were officially there it would be a different story.”

He said he had been sent to fight in Ukraine last summer and returned to Russia in September when the first peace talks took place. His crew operated a modernized Russian T-72B3 tank, he said.

“(Back in Russia) we were lined up and told that everyone would get a daily allowance, extras for fighting and medals,” he said.

But he said that they did not get the extras they expected. “We decided to quit. There were 14 of us.”

The names of nine soldiers who quit the Kantemirovskaya division are mentioned in an exchange of letters between Viktor Miskovets, the head of the human resources department of Russia’s Western Military District, and Valentina Melnikova, who runs the Alliance of Soldiers’ Mothers Committees, a group based in Moscow.

In the letters, seen by Reuters, human rights workers asked Miskovets to approve the soldiers’ resignations – which one soldier told Reuters the military had been unwilling to do. The letters do not mention service in Ukraine.

The soldiers left the service on Dec. 12, according to a letter signed by Miskovets. He and his deputy did not answer calls.

Three soldiers from the list, contacted by Reuters, confirmed they had quit the service recently but declined to discuss Ukraine.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence declined to comment on soldiers quitting the tank unit or being sent to Ukraine.

In Russia, all men aged between 18 and 27 have to serve 12 months in the military. By law, these conscripts cannot be sent abroad.

But according to human rights activists, military officials have been promising conscripts financial incentives to sign contracts that make them professional soldiers. The officials then push the soldiers into going to Ukraine.

Sergei Krivenko, head of a rights group called "Citizen. Army. Rights" and a member of a human rights council created by the Kremlin, has dealt with soldiers' rights since the early 2000s.

He said military commanders are trying to find more people who will go to Ukraine voluntarily, "but this is still 'volunteers' in quotation marks, because there is harsh pressure."

Krivenko said commanders take a carrot-and-stick approach:

They offer large financial rewards to contract soldiers willing to go to Ukraine. If soldiers refuse, they are told to resign, he said. "You can't criminally prosecute someone for not following the order, because the order itself doesn't exist on paper. It's only oral."

Since 2012, contract soldiers' pay has risen, said Krivenko, who traveled to Murmansk to meet soldiers, about 30 of whom told him they had been to Ukraine. "Now they receive 20, 30, 40,000 rubles a month depending on their rank. Some even get 60,000 a month."

The average wage in Russia is about 30,000 rubles (\$580).

Resignation is not an easy decision for the soldiers, Krivenko said: "Just like others in Russia, they're paying off apartments, foreign-made cars... The question becomes where do they find the money to pay off debts, to feed their families?"

Reuters could not independently verify Krivenko's account.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence declined to comment on Russian involvement in Ukraine, but Putin has made his position clear.

On April 16, the president said during a televised question and answer session: "I tell you directly and definitely: There are no Russian troops in Ukraine."

Another soldier who said he quit the army over the Ukraine conflict is a 21-year-old who was a member of a Grad missile unit.

The soldier, who asked that he and his unit not be identified, told Reuters that in the summer of 2014 his team took up position about 2 km (one mile) from the Ukrainian border in the Rostov region of southwest Russia. The operation appeared to be an exercise, though the men were ordered to prepare as if for real combat.

“We drove there without insignia. We took off all the buttonholes and stripes. We were told that we did not need them in field conditions.”

In early September the men were ordered to fire their rockets at a target “about 17 km” away, “maybe less.”

It was possible the target was in Ukraine, he said. “I was hoping I did not aim at any people. Or at least that I missed the target.”

He said his fellow soldiers told him another battery from his unit had crossed the border and spent 10 days in Ukraine.

“I did not understand who was fighting and what for, and the point of it,” he said.

While on leave in January, the soldier said, he was unexpectedly summoned back to his unit.

“We were moved to another (artillery) battery that was supposed to go to some exercises in Rostov region. They said they were really big exercises and very big forces were involved,” the soldier said.

Although he offered no proof, he said he had no doubt it was related to the conflict in Ukraine.

“Of course it was. Why else would we be called off from vacation?”

He and four others decided to quit the army rather than risk being sent to fight in Ukraine.

After completing the necessary procedures, they left in March, according to the soldier’s account and documents from human rights activists and military prosecutors.

Most Russian soldiers who fought in Ukraine last year – whether volunteers or not – came from Central Russia, the North Caucasus or the Volga region, according to soldiers’ accounts, relatives and Russian media. More recently, Reuters reporters in east Ukraine spotted fighters from Siberia, thousands of miles away.

Their appearance lends support to claims that Russian troops from regions closer to Ukraine have become reluctant to join the conflict.

Early this year Asian-looking fighters were seen maneuvering armored vehicles and manning checkpoints in Donbass, eastern Ukraine. The fighters turned out to be Buryats, a Mongolian ethnic group from Russian Siberia near Lake Baikal, about 4,500 km from Ukraine.

Dorjo Dugarov, a politician from Buryatiya, a region in southeast Siberia, said a Siberian soldier who had returned from Ukraine had told him that “people from the western part (of Russia) didn’t want to go. Their morale has fallen.”

Yevgeniy Romanenko, a 39-year-old rebel fighter in east Ukraine, told Reuters that during battles near Debaltseve in February he drove a truck in a convoy that was accompanied by two tanks with Buryat crews. The tank crews provided cover for the truck convoy.

“One of them drove in front of the convoy and the second one behind,” Romanenko said at a hospital in Yenakiyev, where he was recovering from shrapnel wounds to his leg.

Asked if they were servicemen from Russia, Romanenko said: “Yes, that’s for sure. The guys were from there. It was clear.”

In February, a Buryat soldier also appeared in an interview on a TV station in eastern Ukraine.

Popular singer Iosif Kobzon, who is a member of Russia’s State Duma, the lower house of parliament, was filmed visiting injured fighters in a hospital in Donetsk, eastern Ukraine’s biggest city.

Kobzon says he spoke to a soldier who said he was a member of a tank crew from Buryatiya. The Russian independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta later identified the soldier as Dorji Batomunkoyev from military unit 46108 based in Ulan-Ude, the capital of Buryatiya.

Rebels in Ukraine said the Buryat were not soldiers sent by Russia but volunteers. “We have volunteers from the Russian Federation,” Vladimir Kononov, the Ukrainian rebel defense minister, told Reuters in early March. “This tankman could have left the army before he came here.”

Reuters could not reach Batomunkoyev.

His mother Sesegma, contacted by telephone, confirmed that her son had served in the army and been injured in Ukraine. She visited him in a hospital after he was transferred back to Russia. She declined to say whether he had been ordered to go to Ukraine or had volunteered.

“He did not say he was going,” she said. “He called me on February 19 and shouted ‘Mum, I got burnt in a tank.’ And that’s it.”

MORE:

A Burial, But No Closure For Russian Soldier’s Family:

**“The Corpse’s Feet Were Three
Shoe Sizes Too Small, She Said”
“We Tried To Explain That If It Wasn’t
Our Boy, Who Would You Send Us
The Money For?”
“We Aren’t Rich People. But We Don’t
Want To Trade Our Child”**

May 10, 2015 By Maria Tsvetkova, Reuters

MOSCOW - In October, the Russian military delivered a headless corpse to relatives of Pavel Zhilin. Officials said Zhilin, a paratrooper from the 331st airborne regiment of the 98th division, had been killed during a training exercise in Russia.

The family was skeptical about the military’s account.

They first became suspicious last summer, when they saw on television paratroopers from Zhilin’s company who had been captured by Ukrainians. Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested the soldiers lost their way and entered Ukraine by accident.

But when the family opened the coffin and saw burned and mutilated remains, they were incredulous, said the soldier’s godmother.

Zhilin’s unit was based in Kostroma 300 km (190 miles) north-east of Moscow.

She said the family didn’t believe either the military’s story, or that the corpse was the body of Zhilin.

“I was there,” said godmother Elena Denisova. “It wasn’t him. I’m 100 percent sure. It’s not his body. Not his.”

The corpse’s feet were three shoe sizes too small, she said.

Zhilin’s parents declined to comment.

The military insisted that the headless body was the 22-year-old paratrooper, that he had died in Rostov province and that he had not been in Ukraine, family members said.

They said the military death certificate says he was killed by an exploding shell in Rostov.

“That’s not true,” Denisova said.

Families of Russians killed in Ukraine are usually awarded compensation of up to 5 million rubles (\$90,000), according to human rights workers. Most families desperately need the money.

According to Denisova, Zhilin’s family were asked by the military to fill in forms to claim compensation, but refused to do so.

“We tried to explain that if it wasn’t our boy, who would you send us the money for?” said Denisova. “We aren’t rich people. But we don’t want to trade our child.”

In November, the military buried the headless body in part of a graveyard in Kostroma reserved for war heroes.

Denisova said the body was buried without the permission of relatives, who still reject the military’s account.

The graveyard attendant, Lyudmila Kurochkina, said of the young soldiers laid to rest there: “Those boys were brought from Ukraine. Zhilin doesn’t have a name (on his grave) because the military buried him, not his parents. His parents don’t want to believe their child is there.”

Alexei Besfamilny, the officer in charge of the burial, declined to say how the young man had died. “The subject is closed,” he said. “It’s classified.”

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.

Assad Regimes Scorpions Stinging Each Other: The Head Of The Political Security Directorate Killed By Men Working

For General Rafiq Shehadeh, Head Of Military Intelligence; Head Of The Country's National Security Bureau Has Been Removed And Is Under House Arrest; "Battlefield Losses Setting Off Increasing Paranoia In Damascus"

11 May 2015 By Ruth Sherlock, and Carol Malouf in Beirut, Telegraph Media Group Limited

Ali Mamlouk, the head of the country's National Security Bureau, has been removed as the regime of Bashar al-Assad begins to show divisions over the role of Iran

The Assad regime has placed its intelligence chief under house arrest after suspecting he was plotting a coup, in a sign that battlefield losses are setting off increasing paranoia in Damascus.

Ali Mamlouk, the head of the country's National Security Bureau, and one of the few officials still to have access to President Bashar al-Assad, was accused of holding secret talks with countries backing rebel groups and exiled members of the Syrian regime.

Mr Assad is struggling to keep together the regime's "inner circle", who are increasingly turning on each other, sources inside the presidential palace have told The Telegraph.

Even before Mamlouk's arrest, the web of intelligence agencies with which the regime has enforced its authority for four decades was in turmoil, with two other leaders killed or removed.

Last month, Rustum Ghazaleh, the head of the Political Security Directorate, died in hospital after he was physically attacked by men loyal to General Rafiq Shehadeh, his opposite number in military intelligence, who was in turn sacked.

The role being played in the war by Iran, Syria's regional ally, is said to be at the heart of the arguments, with some of the "inner circle" afraid that Iranian officials now have more power than they do.

Iran's influence has been crucial in bolstering Syria's defences against the rebels, but even that has been crumbling in the face of recent rebel advances in the north.

It was as Syrian troops lost control of Idlib city and Jisr al-Shughour to an alliance of Islamist rebels including Jabhat al-Nusra, al-Qaeda's local branch, that Mamlouk reportedly began to make contact with hostile governments and former regime officials.

"Mamlouk had been communicating with Turkish intelligence through an intermediary," said a senior regime source with direct knowledge of the plan.

Mamlouk had also used a businessman from Aleppo as an intermediary to contact Rifaat al-Assad, Bashar's uncle, who has lived abroad in exile since he was accused of seeking to mount a coup in Syria in the 1980s.

Rifaat al-Assad declined to comment on the reports, but one informed source, who asked not to be named, said that "there is a big interest among the Syrian officers and military for Rifaat Assad to come back to Syria".

Iranian operatives in Syria are believed to have taken command of large areas of government, from the central bank to the battle strategy.

"Most of the advisers at the presidential palace are now Iranian," said a source close to the palace. "Mamlouk hated that Syria was giving her sovereignty up to Iran. He thought there needed to be a change."

Ghazaleh is believed to have shared this view of the Iranian influence.

Like Mamlouk, Ghazaleh was born to a Sunni Muslim family, and was opposed to the power being acquired in the country by Shia Iran's Revolutionary Guard and its Lebanese proxy Hizbollah.

Issam al-Reis, a spokesman for the Southern Front rebel groups, who are fighting close to Ghazaleh's home village in Deraa, said intelligence picked up from captives and others suggested Ghazaleh was fiercely hostile to Iran.

"He was complaining that he and his men were being treated like scum, whilst the Iranians and their militias were lords," he said.

"Shehadeh arrested two of Ghazaleh's nephews from his home town because they had refused to fight under Iranian command.

Ghazaleh went to the military intelligence headquarters to defend them and get them released, but there Shehadeh's men beat him."

Suffering from brain damage, Ghazaleh spent several weeks in hospital before the regime formally announced his death on 24th April.

Mr Reis's account was corroborated by two sources inside the regime, who asked to remain anonymous. The regime in Syria is of critical importance to Iran, who uses Syria as the primary route through which to arm Hizbollah.

With the fortunes of the two regimes so inextricably linked, Iran has bankrolled and provided the expertise and the weapons for President Assad's war.

Syria's ailing economy would likely have collapsed were it not for the credit facility provided by Tehran – more than \$15 billion to date, according to Damascus' finance minister.

Last month, when senior officials in Syria's regime made one of their regular visits to Tehran, the meetings were tense, and at sometimes fraught, a source close to the Iranian government told the Telegraph.

“Members of the regime said that they were losing control of Syria. At one point they even suggested considering cutting a deal with the opposition,” the source said. **“The Iranians were furious, after all they had done to help. They would not lose control.”**

Charles Lister, a Syria expert with the Brookings Institution said that recent events have left the regime facing its most critical situation in years.

“Iran appears to be calling the shots now,” said Mr Lister. **“This is partly from the fear that the regime might collapse from the inside out. Tehran is trying to create a brick wall around them.”**

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 Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy.

-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

The Unspeakable

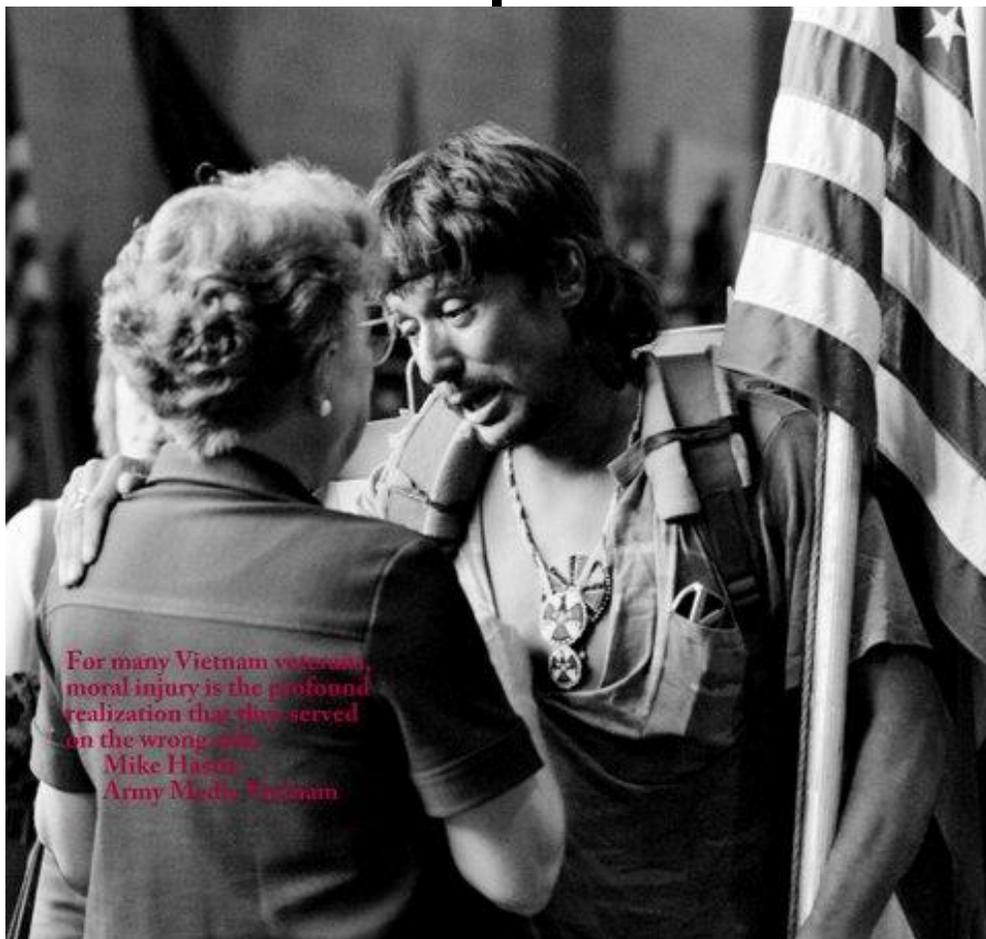


Photo by Mike Hastie. Taken in 1988 in Salem, Oregon

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: May 15, 2015

Subject: The Unspeakable

This Vietnam veteran who was at the battle of Khe Sanh in 1967-68, is being consoled after viewing the Moving Wall at the fair grounds.

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

CLASS WAR REPORTS



It's time
to give
class
warfare
a chance.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**This Is What “Lack Of
Evidence” Looks Like:
After Opening Fire On Unarmed
Palestinian Farmers On Their Own
Land And Wounding One, Nothing
At All Is Done About It;
“Two Were Armed With Rifles And
The Other With A Handgun”
“The Handgun’s Owner Also Sicced A
Dog On The Palestinians”**

May 3, 2015 by Yossi Gurvitz, blog.yesh-din.org/

We see how seriously the prosecution takes its role when we realize it closed a file for lack of evidence — without so much as noticing the evidence.

The location was Qusra, a village in the Shiloh Valley; the date, September 16, 2011.” Fathallah Mahmoud Muhammad Abu Rhoda went out with his three sons to pick figs. A short while after reaching their land, they noticed about 10 Israeli civilians standing around their water hole.”

The Palestinians demanded the Israelis leave the place; the interlopers refused. The residents of Qusra — a village that has already proven it can defend itself against marauders — began heading to the area.”

An argument ensued, and according to Abu Rhoda’s testimony to the police, three of the settlers (who were armed) opened fire on the Palestinians.”

One bullet hit Abu Rhoda in the thigh.

Of the three, two were armed with rifles and the other with a handgun. From the police testimony, we see that the handgun’s owner also sicced a dog on the Palestinians. The complainants managed to photograph some of their attackers, among them the handgun owner.

Four days after the incident, Abu Rhoda filed a complaint with the police.”

Almost three years later, on August 6, 2014, the prosecution informed us that it closed the case for lack of evidence.”

After a series of 14 phone calls, we managed to photocopy the case file on December 15 2014 — more than four months after the case was closed.”

However, it was immediately apparent some of the material was missing. We continued requesting it until February 2015.

From the evidence we finally received, it turns out that there is more than enough evidence to indict the handgun owner, E.”

As previously mentioned, E. was identified by the Palestinians victims, and they even supplied the police with photos of him at the scene, which clearly show him holding a handgun in one hand and the dog in the other.”

The police picked up cartridges from the scene, and a ballistic fingerprinting – which took place on September 27, 2011 – found that one of the cartridges came from a 9mm Glock pistol (the others were fired from rifles.)”

E. was summoned for an investigation, invoked his right to remain silent, but admitted he owned a Glock. The gun was duly turned over to the police, which sent it to a ballistic fingerprinting.”

In February 2012 the police expert reached the conclusion that there is a match between the cartridges fired from E.’s handgun and the those that were examined on September 27.

In total, the following evidence was marshalled against E.:

A. He was identified and photographed by the complainants.

B. His handgun was identified as a the one fired during the incident.

Despite the evidence, the police recommended that the case against E. be closed due to — get this — lack of evidence.”

The recommendation was accepted by the prosecution.”

Embarrassingly, the prosecution admitted this to us only in January 2015 — 10 months after it closed the case for lack of evidence.”

Only as a result of our request for more case files did the prosecution learn about the September 2011 memorandum, which identified the type of handgun owned by E. That is, when the prosecution decided to close the case for lack of evidence, it was lacking a major piece of evidence.

What about the two other shooters? I’m glad you asked.”

The police chased one of the suspects into the Esh Kodesh outpost, even so much as detaining him after he fled.”

However, despite the fact that the suspect fled arrest and refused to identify himself, there is no indication in the material we received from the police that any investigative action was taken against him.”

There is, for instance, no sign that he was even interrogated or gave testimony; he was detained, and immediately released.

The third suspect managed to flee in a vehicle and reach Esh Kodesh. The police identified the owner the vehicle as well as another person who was with him in the car during the chase. But, lo and behold, the police neither bothered to interrogate them nor attempt to identify the third shooter.

This is how the police and the prosecution treat a violent incident, in which three Israeli civilians open fire on Palestinians who are on their own land.”

In a case that contains such clear forensic evidence, they managed, with extraordinary negligence, not to notice it.”

And in the other cases?”

They simply do not investigate.

In the beginning of March, our attorney Anu Deuel Lusky (briskly aided by Moriyah Shlomot) appealed the decision, asking the prosecution to bring E. to trial and conduct further investigations that would lead to the capture of the other two suspects. To quote the appeal:

“This appeal, in both its parts, raises a harsh and heavy feeling that both the police and the prosecution betrayed their duties as bodies entrusted with maintaining law and order. The current situation – in which the lives, bodies and property of Palestinians, considered protected persons by international law, can be harmed with impunity, both as a result of settler violence and as a result of law enforcement entities standing aside, not making the minimal effort to bring lawbreakers to justice – is intolerable, and undermines the rule of law.”

One wonders what is left of the rule of law after it has been so brazenly undermined.

Israeli Occupiers Demand Palestinian Bedouin Villagers Pay \$500,000 For Destroying Their Village 83 Times: “This Is The First Case In Israel’s History Where An Entire Town Was Told It Must Pay For Its Destruction”

May 9, 2015 by Allison Deger, Mondoweiss

The unrecognized Bedouin village of al-Araqib was in court Wednesday, where the state of Israel argued the southern desert town must pay \$500,000 (2 million Israeli Shekels) to cover the cost of demolitions, and more than 1,000 police deployed to carry out the destruction.

Since 2010 al-Araqib has been razed to the ground 83 times, more than any other locality in Israel.

In Israel around half of the Bedouin population, 90,000 Arab-Palestinians herders, live in towns the state does not view as legitimate.

Without “recognition,” these villages are pre-approved for demolition. In al-Araqib’s case additional legal battles over land ownership prompted Israel to issue the entire desert hamlet the mass eviction order.



Israeli authorities enter al-Araqib village and its cemetery. (Photo: Rabbis for Human Rights)

The state claims it legally expropriated the territory using Ottoman code still on the books during the 1950s.

Al-Araqib’s residents still have copies of their old deeds and say they are valid and up to date.

While individual owners have been charged with the cost of demolishing a home in the past, this is the first case in Israel’s history where an entire town was told it must pay for its destruction.

In instances when Israel demolished settlements, outposts the state viewed as illegally construction in the West Bank, those Jewish-Israeli towns were never later given a bill.

“[Jewish] Israelis were never sued before for the cost of these demolitions,” Khaled Sawalhi, an attorney representing al-Araqib, told me. Sawalhi has tried dozens of demolitions cases throughout his career.

He underscored al-Araqib is unique in that could set a costly precedent for 45 other unrecognized villages facing demolition where land ownership is contested.

Israel has demolished more than 27,000 homes in the occupied Palestinian territory since its occupation began in 1967.

When the state demanded Palestinians pay for the razing of the structures, the Civil Administration or the city of Jerusalem set the fees. In al-Araqib’s case, the fee is being demanded by the Israeli Lands Administration, a government agency that oversees state owned plots, and that is the plaintiff in a petition filed by the village.

“There is no justice in the way the state is handling it. We have proof that this land is theirs and that it is private property,” Sawalhi said.

After more demolitions than any other village in Israel, and rebuilding their homes just as many times, al-Araqib’s residents are now cramped in tents between gravestones.

Since the demolitions began more than a decade ago, residents have moved into the town’s cemetery. Villagers do not see resting next to a headstone as morbid; camping is regarded as a creative measure to pose a challenge to Israel’s frequent demolitions.

“I hope that Ayman Odeh (a leading politician and head of the Joint Arab List) will do something,” al-Araqib resident Aziz Abu Madegam, 41, told Mondoweiss, lamenting, “I don’t believe that in this government he can change Israel’s politics.”

Abu Madegam was born and raised in al-Araqib and is one of the town’s most prominent activists against the demolitions.

He lives in a small tent in the graveyard with his wife and six children. They own a car, and sometimes Abu Madegam sleeps there when the weather turns cold and rainy.

His youngest son, age three, is named al-Araqib after the village. “He was born at the same time, the same minute that they (Israel) demolished al-Araqib,” Abu Madegam said.

Aside from the demolitions Abu Madegam’s family is constantly entangled in legal woes. The state dropped criminal charges against Abu Madegam’s father for “forcibly taking control” of al-Araqib’s land “failing to obey orders to leave the land,” last February.

In a separate case pressed by the Israeli Lands Administration, Abu Madegam is one of ten al-Araqib residents charged with a combined \$1,300 (5,000 NIS) in daily fines.

Those damages are for “arona,” or back rental fees in which the state has demanded payment even though the question of who owns the land has been locked up in court for years.

Al-Araqib’s residents see these battles as attempts by Israel to drive them off of their land permanently.

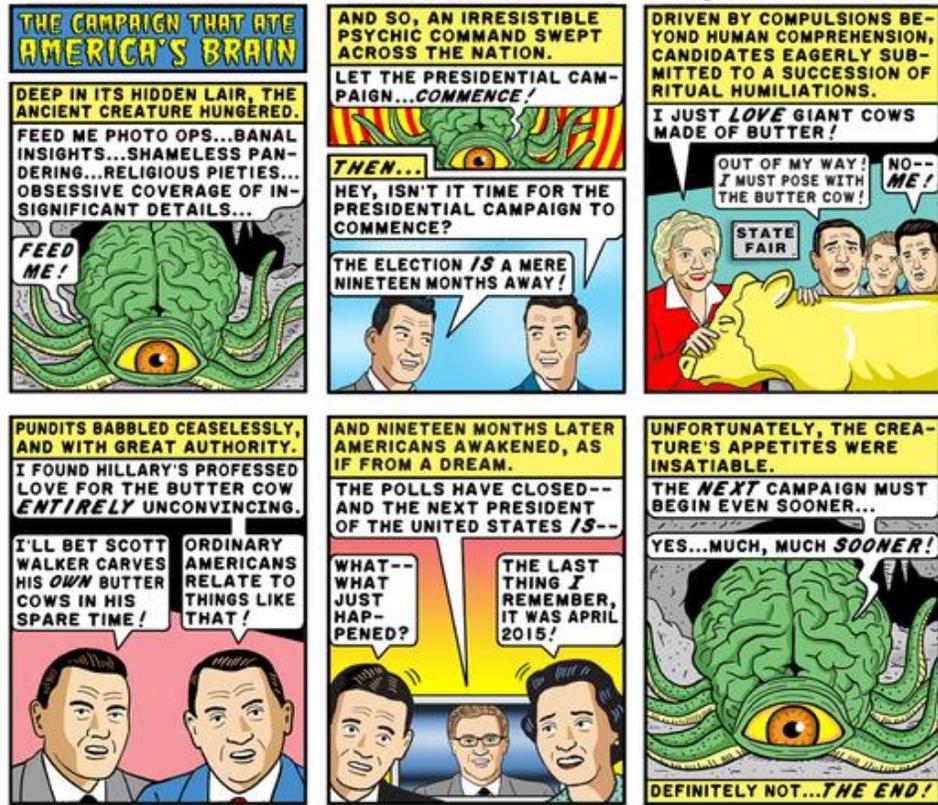
Abu Madegam will be back in court this fall in late September– when the \$500,000 penalty trial opens.

**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

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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.

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.