

Military Resistance 13G5



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[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Effin warmonger."]

**Afghan Town Bathed In
Blood Once More At
Taliban's Mercy:
"Musa Qala Looks Like It Will
Fall To The Taliban Soon"
"There Aren't More Than Fifty
Taliban Fighters In Musa Qala"**

“Afghan Forces Do Not Really Try To Secure The District”

“They Are Under-Fed, Under-Armed And Under-Paid”

17 Jul 2015 By Zubair Babakarkhail in Kabul, Colin Freeman and Ben Farmer;
Telegraph Media Group Limited [Excerpts]

For a town that more than 20 British soldiers died to protect, Musa Qala has not much to offer. A shabby, sunbaked place in Afghanistan's Helmand Province, its people still live as they did generations ago: growing poppies, and quietly trading in opium.

Yet less than a year on from the withdrawal of British soldiers from Helmand, the one aspect of life in Musa Qala that they fought to banish looks like returning. The Taliban - for whom the town's opium riches have long made it a key prize - are back.

In a night-time assault last month, heavily-armed militants swept in from the surrounding hills, killing 17 Afghan officers in an outlying police station and ransacking the town centre.

Not only are they back: with the war showing no sign of fading away, the Taliban look set to be rewarded with peace talks and a share in government.

On Wednesday, Mullah Omar, their one-eyed leader, backed the imminent negotiations. “Concurrently with armed jihad, political endeavours and peaceful pathways for achieving these sacred goals are a legitimate Islamic principle,” he said in a statement.

All over Afghanistan, the Taliban are assaulting strongholds once made secure at the expense of the lives and limbs of thousands of British, American and other soldiers from NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Nowhere is that truer than in Musa Qala, scene of some of the fiercest fighting during the nine-year British stint in Helmand from 2005-2014.

When the town was wrested from Taliban control in December 2007, after a major operation involving 4,000 British, American and Afghan soldiers, the then prime minister Gordon Brown hailed it as a major breakthrough.

It heralded an end to the days when locals who defied their Taliban rulers were strung up on makeshift gibbets.

“If we can succeed there, then we can move forward in Afghanistan in favour of a more peaceful future for this country,” he told troops during a visit to Camp Bastion, Britain's main Helmand base.

Seven years on, in a mirror image, the assault on Musa Qala is a symptom of a resurgent Taliban.

In Helmand, gunmen have seized the northern Baghran district, and are menacing Kajaki and Sangin, two other areas British troops fought tooth and nail to defend. They have also gained turf outside of their traditional southern strongholds, seizing two districts in Kunduz in the north-east.

“Musa Qala looks like it will fall to the Taliban soon,” warned Haji Mira Jan, 60, a Musa Qala tribal leader, who laments the days of the Western presence.

“Everybody lives in fear here now, and government officials keep their fingers on their triggers, even if they walk in the central town of the district. There aren’t more than fifty Taliban fighters in Musa Qala - the problem is that Afghan forces do not really try to secure the district.”

With religiously conservative tribes and a lucrative position in the opium trade, Musa Qala has always been hostile to outsiders. Even so, British Paras were still taken aback by the ferocity they encountered when they first set up an outpost in 2006.

A 52-day Taliban siege ensued, and while British troops held out, the outpost dubbed “The Alamo” was eventually abandoned as too exposed.

In the following years, Musa Qala became a petri dish for every kind of counter-insurgency strategy, from brute force and hearts-and-minds through to complex tribal diplomacy.

In 2007, a deal handing security to local tribes on condition they kept the Taliban out fell apart when 2,000 militants swarmed in. Following a major battle to retake the town that December, the British launched a charm offensive, building schools, roads and water wells, even running an anti-Taliban radio station that broadcast popular Bollywood songs.

But despite more than a decade of Western training, the Afghan security forces that took over from ISAF have struggled to hold their own.

Not only does the Afghan army lack air power - an option that gave their Western counterparts the upper hand - it still suffers from corruption, logistical problems and low morale.

Its troops are as steeped in their country’s warrior culture as any other Afghans, but they are under-fed, under-armed and under-paid.

British soldiers and diplomats who served in Afghanistan see comparisons with Iraq, where the Western-trained army melted away before last year’s onslaught by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

“The parallel is always the moment the foreign troops leave,” said William Patey, who served as Britain’s ambassador to both Baghdad and Kabul.

“When we go, the dynamic changes because we are no longer the biggest tribe in town.”

Dan Jarvis, an ex-Parachute Regiment officer who is now a Labour MP, visited as a soldier in 2005 to help plan Britain's deployment, and again in 2006 and 2007.

"Musa Qala had strategic importance because it represented the crux of our battle with the Taliban," he said.

"There are very real concerns about the ability of the Afghan security forces to check the advances of the Taliban and that's something we should really be worried about, although I don't think all is lost yet."

Nicholas Heysom, the UN's envoy to Afghanistan, recently insisted Afghan forces were "demonstrating resilience", yet other studies presented to the UN tell a different story. In February, it said 2014 was the deadliest year for civilians since 2009, with nearly 3,700 people killed.

Michael Keating, associate director at Chatham House and a former UN official in Afghanistan, said the question was whether the current violence marked the start of a descent into chaos, or a Taliban power play ahead of coming to the negotiating table.

"This is the first year that the Taliban have had a chance to properly test out the Afghan security forces now that they are operating on their own," he said.

Either way, Musa Qala will remain a weather-vane for the country's future, while for the families of soldiers who died defending it, there will be little cheer that the "biggest tribe in town" might once again be the Taliban.

MORE AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Taliban Militants Have Blocked The Main Road To The Kajaki District Of Southern Helmand For The Last Two Months”

2015-07-06 Pajhwok

LASHKARGAH: Taliban militants have blocked the main road to the Kajaki district of southern Helmand for the last two months, creating problems for local residents.

Abdul Majid Akhundzada, a member of the provincial council, told Pajhwok Afghan News the security situation had worsened in the district.

He said the Taliban militants had blocked the main road for the last two months, making it problematic for local residents to shift their patients to hospital besides causing severe shortage of food items.

A 50kg bag of flour was sold for 6000 afghanis, Akhunzada said, adding that people taking flour bags home were administered oath by the Taliban not to give the bags to police.

The security situation remained deteriorated for the last few months and there had been clashes between security forces and militants, with civilians bearing the brunt, he added.

“Taliban have captured all areas and hundreds of foreign militants can be seen roaming the area, which has deteriorated the security situation.”

The district could fall to Taliban if a military operation was not launched forthwith, the public representative feared.

Omar Zwak, the governor’s spokesperson, said security forces had launched efforts to improve the situation in the district.

He said security forces had planned an extensive military operation in the area and would be implemented soon, but stopped short of going into details.

The governor and several other officials had visited Kajaki district and had assured local residents of addressing their concerns about the security situation.

More Resistance Action

Jul 17 2015 By Khaama Press,

At least six policemen lost their lives in an explosion in western Herat province of Afghanistan in the first day of Eid al-Fitr.

According to the local government officials, the incident took place in Gozara district after a vehicle of the Afghan police forces struck an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

The provincial governor spokesman Ehsanullah Hayat said the policemen were returning from a mission when their vehicle was targeted in the blast.

He said the incident took place in Zeyarat Jahi village leaving at least six policemen dead.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Somali Militants Attack Base, Kill At Least Four Soldiers

Jul 13, 2015 Reuters

MOGADISHU - Insurgents from Somali militant group al Shabaab on Monday attacked a military base in central Somalia, killing at least four soldiers, officials and militants said.

Al Shabaab, which wants to topple a Western-backed government in Mogadishu, has in the past stepped up the number of raids during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which began in mid-June and ends this week.

Captain Nur Olow, a military officer from Rage Ceele, in Middle Shabelle region in central Somalia, said two al Shabaab fighters were killed during the raid.

“Al Shabaab attacked us early in the morning – we lost four soldiers but repulsed them,” Olow said.

Al Shabaab’s military operations spokesman, Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, told Reuters his fighters had killed a dozen soldiers in the raid.

“We briefly seized the base and killed 12 soldiers and took their guns. We also took all the weapons and ammunition in the base,” he said.

Shabaab Militants Target Kenyan Police In IED Attack

July 13, 2015 By AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

KENYA, Jul 13 – Suspected militants from the Somali-led Shabaab Islamist group carried out a bomb attack against Kenyan police on Monday, but the officers escaped unharmed, a Kenyan official said.

The attack took place in the coastal county of Lamu, which borders Somalia and has been hit by a wave of attacks by the Al-Qaeda linked group.

Northeastern regional commissioner Mohamud Saleh said a police four-wheel drive vehicle hit an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) while officers were travelling to Lamu from a neighbouring county to buy supplies.

He said the vehicle was badly damaged but that the officers had been evacuated to the nearby town of Hindi.

Shabaab militants have recently been blamed for a string of security incidents in the Lamu area, including attacks on passenger buses and a failed raid on a military base last month.

Insurgents Attack Somalia Hotels



Somali security forces and civilians gather outside the Weheliye hotel after it was stormed by militants in Mogadishu, Somalia, July 10, 2015.

July 12, 2015 VOA News

The United States says it strongly condemns the recent al-Shabab attack on two hotels and an African Union force position in the Somali capital, Mogadishu.

At least 16 people were killed in the attacks on the Weheliye and Siyad hotels on Friday.

Mortar rounds were also fired Friday at Mogadishu's former football stadium, which now serves as a key AU base. No casualties were reported in that attack.

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MILITARY NEWS



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "The truth runs deep here."]

Islamic State Squeezes Iraq's Food Supply: Militants Control Area That Produces About A Third Of Country's Wheat; "Agriculture In Iraq Is A Real Failure," Declared Mr. Sayed. "It Will Be Almost Finished Soon"

July 12, 2015 By Matt Bradley, Wall Street Journal

AL HAFRIYA, Iraq— Mahmoud al-Sayed's wheat farm just south of Baghdad is hundreds of miles from the nearest front line with Islamic State, but has become a crucial part of the war effort.

The government hopes the farm and others like it in the country's south can fill a gaping food deficit created by Islamic State's takeover of three northern provinces that produce about one-third of Iraq's grain.

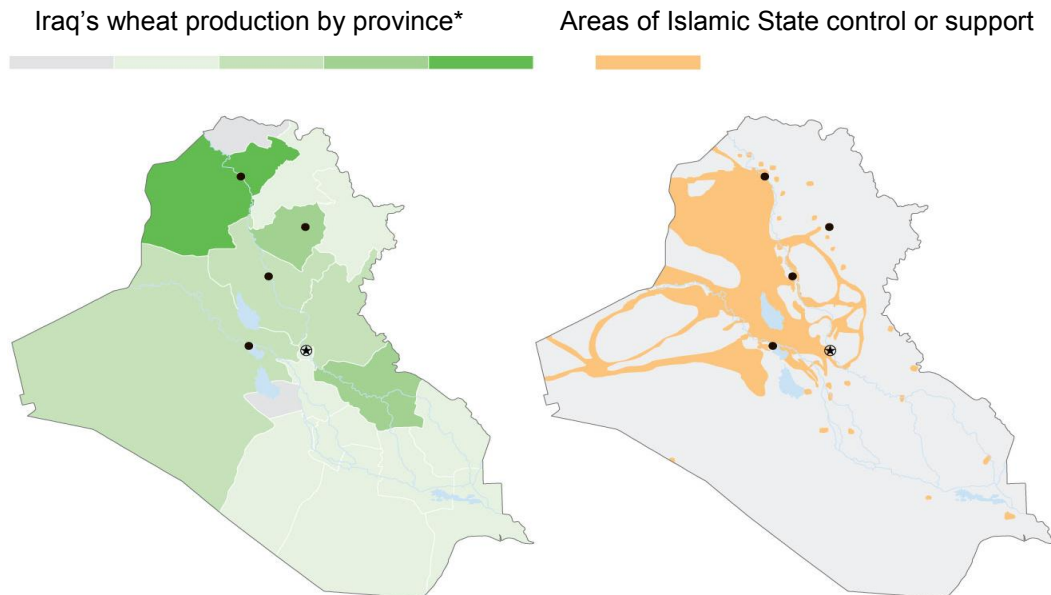
So when Mr. Sayed told local officials last year that he planned to plant only 80% of his fields—largely because of water shortages and difficulties procuring seeds—officials begged him to harvest at full capacity.

“This is really a serious crisis that we’re facing right now,” the barrel-chested farmer with an expansive mustache said after he harvested his annual crop in May and sold it to the government.

His farm, about 30 miles south of Baghdad in eastern Wasit province, is emblematic of a new security challenge. Iraq’s food supply is squeezed by Islamic State’s advance on one side and the government’s shrinking budget on the other. It is an example of how the extremist group’s hold on about a quarter of Iraqi territory has an impact well beyond the borders of its self-declared caliphate.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said last month that Iraq faces serious food-security concerns because of labor shortages and disruptions in transportation and marketing, which are expected to significantly impact harvests, domestic production and supply.

The agency warned that lack of security is making food access more difficult for the poor and displaced—a problem that will only grow with food prices likely to rise.



*2012 data (most recent available) Sources: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (wheat); Institute for the Study of War (Islamic State areas)

In past years, the decline in wheat stocks might not have been a problem. Iraq could bulk up on imported wheat paid for by its huge oil resources. But with plummeting oil prices, government revenues are expected to fall by 40% this year, leaving a budget deficit in excess of \$20 billion—about a fifth of the budget outlay.

The other side of the balance sheet is driven up by the costs of war.

As a result, farmers are under pressure.

More than a month after the harvest season ended in May, Mr. Sayed and other southern farmers said they still hadn't been paid for their crops.

All Iraqi wheat farmers sell their crops to the government at subsidized prices, which are about double the international market rate. They didn't expect to see their money soon.

Thanks to government subsidies, retail flour prices have remained stable throughout the peaceful parts of Iraq.

But industry experts say rapid food inflation is inevitable.

In the conflict zones, food prices are soaring. This is a particular problem in the three northern provinces dominated by Islamic State—Anbar, Salahudeen and Nineveh.

Food already costs 58% more in Anbar than in Baghdad, according to a separate report last month by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

"In the end, you're going to have prices going up," said Forat al-Tamimi, the head of the Agriculture Committee in Iraq's Parliament.

"People will suffer because of this."

Many already are.

Some 4.4 million Iraqis now require U.N. assistance and about 30% of the population of 35 million people live below the poverty line.

An estimated 3.6 million are displaced within the country. That number is expected to rise as forces prepare to launch a counteroffensive in Anbar province.

Islamic State shows no sign of relaxing its hold over the country's primary farming region. And in a cruel twist for Iraqis, the northern provinces the group occupies enjoyed a bumper harvest this year thanks to a wet winter, while agricultural regions in the country's south didn't because of water shortages and their dependence on irrigation.

In total, Iraq grew 4 million metric tons of wheat this season compared with 3.5 million last year.

Hadi Fathallah, an economist and policy adviser who has studied the Iraqi food market, said he believes Islamic State transported at least some of the wheat from areas under its control to Syria. But even before Islamic State's takeover of parts of the country, an antiquated irrigation system and the government's poor distribution of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides weighed on the agricultural sector, according to Kadhim Ma'an al-Zamili, the head of Taj al-Din City Council in Wasit Province.

“The government never started new projects to improve production or irrigation systems,” said Mr. Zamili, who added that much of the irrigation system dates to the British colonial era. “All of the focus and resources are going toward the war. That’s the first priority.”

Government officials insist they had made efforts to modernize irrigation in southern Iraq to reverse output declines before Islamic State began its campaign last summer.

“Iraq had a plan in 2014 to reach self-sufficiency in producing grain, mainly wheat,” said Mahdi Thamad al-Qaisi, the deputy minister of agriculture for technical affairs. “But that destiny had a second opinion when Islamic State gangs took over.”

Water problems also predate the past year’s fighting. Over the past few decades, Turkey has built dams that restricted water flow by some 80% on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers—the waterways whose bounty once gave ancient Iraq and Syria the moniker “Fertile Crescent.”

The water situation became worse after Islamic State’s blitz through northwestern Iraq last June. The militants reduced the flow of water through a dam near Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, on the Euphrates River. In April, the group opened a dam near the city of Fallujah also in Anbar to flood the surrounding desert in an effort to halt the advance of Iraqi security forces.

The subsequent shortages forced Wasit province officials to restrict water use for wheat fields.

Whereas Mr. Sayed once enjoyed unlimited access to water, he’s now allowed to sluice his fields for a few days a week. If he doesn’t comply, he can face a fine as much as 1 million Iraqi dinars (\$860).

Last year, the state took seven months to pay Mr. Sayed and still owes him more than 3 billion Iraqi dinars (\$2.5 million) for the 4,000 tons of grain he gave the government in May. This year, he expects payment to be delayed even longer.

He said he and other farmers are considering leaving agriculture altogether, given the lack of payments and water restrictions around southern Iraq. If farmers abandon their plots en masse, some warn the ranks of Iraq’s poor, displaced and hungry will swell even more dramatically.

“Agriculture in Iraq is a real failure,” declared Mr. Sayed. “It will be almost finished soon.”

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL

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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

Neither of us (myself or Engels) cares a straw for popularity. A proof of this is, for example, that, because of aversion to any personality cult, I have never permitted the numerous expressions of appreciation from various countries with which I was pestered during the existence of the International to reach the realm of publicity, and have never answered them, except occasionally by a rebuke.

When Engels and I first joined the secret Communist Society we made it a condition that everything tending to encourage superstitious beliefs in authority was to be removed from the statutes.

-- Karl Marx

**“Perhaps The Greeks Should Have Gone To Brussels And Said They Were Rebranding Greece, So It’s No Longer A Country, But A Bank”
“They’d Have Been Bailed Out By Lunch And Given A Free Set Of Steak Knives As An Extra Gift”
“Tsipras Thought That When The Majority Of Greeks Voted Against, It Was Because They Felt Those Demands Weren’t Harsh Enough, And They Deserved To Be Punished Much More Severely”**

17 July 2015 by Mark Steel, The Independent

What a relief that the Greeks have finally seen sense, and agreed to Angela Merkel’s demand that their Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras must scrub Berlin with a dishcloth, and crawl along the banks of the Rhine in a thong barking like a dog.

The week before he’d agreed to dress as a fairy and sing “The Good Ship Lollipop” while German children poked him with stinging nettles, but now that isn’t enough.

So he has to accept even more measures essential to stabilising the Greek economy, such as being hosed down with kebab fat while naming the German squad that won the 1954 World Cup.

Otherwise, as EU leaders made clear, there would be no way Greece could stay inside the solar system; they’d have to orbit a different star in a faraway galaxy, which could be extremely damaging to the Greek tourist industry.

Instead of inviting further chaos by leaving Greece in the hands of the Greeks, their finances have been handed over entirely to the only people we can trust to behave responsibly at all times: the banks.

Thank the Lord we've got at least one institution that has never behaved irresponsibly or recklessly in any way.

Perhaps the Greeks should have gone to Brussels and said they were rebranding Greece, so it's no longer a country, but a bank.

They'd have been bailed out by lunch and given a free set of steak knives as an extra gift.

Instead they've got to sell off their entire country.

By Christmas you'll be able to buy a family ticket for 300 quid to visit the Domino's Parthenon, where you can watch a parade of philosophers dressed as your favourite pizzas, with Pythagoras pepperoni proving a particular favourite, then scream your way down the Acropolis on a log flume.

One of the main demands in the final deal is that the Greek state must sell off €50bn-worth of its assets, which amounts to everything it has.

This is part of the drive to make the economy stable and efficient.

This works as long as you assume privatisation unarguably makes an industry more efficient.

Obviously there are examples such as the railways in Britain, where privatisation has resulted in cheap reliable trains on which you can always get a seat, it's easy to buy tickets across different rail networks, and customers are even offered delightful unscheduled 40-minute stops outside London Bridge station to give you the opportunity to paint the view of a gasworks in Bermondsey.

The demands placed on Greece are so extreme that even the International Monetary Fund has declared them "unsustainable".

The IMF is the body that has spent 50 years forcing countries such as Tanzania and Haiti to cut wages and sell off its possessions, in return for loans it needs so it can pay off the interest on the last lot of money it borrowed (from the IMF).

So when it says the demands on Greece are too harsh, it's like making the leader of ISIS say, "Steady on, that's a bit too Islamic".

Still, someone has to tell the Greeks they can't expect to carry on getting something for nothing.

And the European Central Bank and national central banks – who, according to the Jubilee Debt Campaign, "stand to make between €10bn and €22bn out of Greek repayments" – are exactly the right people to deliver that stern but fair message.

Christine Lagarde, managing director of the IMF, is paid a salary of €550,000 a year, and by special arrangement pays no tax on that whatsoever.

So she's certainly the right person to lecture the Greeks, because she's never been behind on her tax payments once.

Every month she dutifully pays her nothing bang on time; she understands the importance of behaving responsibly with public money.

The most perplexing part of this story is that, a few days ago, it seemed as if Alexis Tsipras and his party, Syriza, were set to resist the orders being thrown at them, especially as they'd gone to the trouble of winning a referendum on whether to accept the EU demands.

I suppose Tsipras thought that when the majority of Greeks voted against, it was because they felt those demands weren't harsh enough, and they deserved to be punished much more severely as they'd all been very naughty.

Because Tsipras went into negotiations making it clear he was desperate to keep Greece in the eurozone, the EU could demand whatever it liked, knowing he'd accept anything rather than abandon the euro.

That sounds like going into a car showroom and saying, "I desperately need a car right now and I'll have anything rather than leave without one".

A salesman could say, "We've only got this one, it's got no engine and the windscreen's made of wood and it pongs as a family of weasels live on the back seat and the bonnet's on fire, it's £10,000", and you'd have no choice but to take it.

But maybe he did have a choice, to tell the banks they've made plenty out of Greece as it is and so, on balance, the elected government had decided to go along with what the Greeks voted for twice in a few months – wasting their money on schools and old people in villages, rather than do the sensible thing and hand over every coin as interest payments to institutions such as Goldman Sachs.

They'd have been kicked out of the eurozone, and probably out of UEFA and the Eurovision Song Contest, and scratched off the Inter-rail map too.

But they'd have been a little beacon for everyone across Europe who feels the banks aren't acting entirely in our interests, probably enough people to worry Angela Merkel just a bit.

**“Of All Persons, Therefore, The
Productive Worker Has Least Command
Over The Services Of Unproductive
Workers, Although He Has Most To Pay**

For The Involuntary Services (The State And Taxes)”

**“The Artisan Or Peasant Who Produces With
His Own Means Of Production Will Either
Gradually Be Transformed Into A Small
Capitalist Who Also Exploits The Labour Of
Others, Or He Will Suffer The Loss Of His
Means Of Production And Be Transformed
Into A Wage Worker”**

**“It Can Therefore Be Assumed That The Whole
World Of Commodities, All Spheres Of Material
Production — The Production Of Material Wealth
— Are Subordinated To The Capitalist Mode Of
Production”**

From Karl Marx, Theories Of Surplus Value; International Publishers; New York, 1952

The performance of certain services, or the use values resulting from certain activities or labours, are embodied in commodities; others on the contrary leave no tangible results separate from the persons themselves; or, their result is not a vendible commodity.

For example, the service rendered to me by a singer satisfies my aesthetic need; but what I enjoy exists only in an action inseparable from the singer himself; and as soon as his labour, the singing, comes to an end my enjoyment is also over; I enjoy the activity itself — its reverberation on my ear.

These services themselves, like the commodities which I buy, may be necessary or may only seem necessary — for example the service of a soldier, a doctor or a lawyer; or they may be services which only yield enjoyment.

But this makes no difference to their economic character.

If I am in good health and do not need a doctor, or have the good luck not to be involved in a lawsuit, I avoid paying out money for medical or legal services as I do the plague.

The services may also be forced on me: the services of officials, etc.

If I buy the service of a teacher not to develop my faculties but to acquire skills with which I can earn money — or when others buy this teacher for me — and if I really learn something, which in itself is quite independent of the payment for the service — these

costs of education, like the costs of my maintenance, belong to the costs of production of my labour power.

But the special usefulness of this service does not alter the economic relation; it is not a relation in which I transform money into capital, or whereby the supplier of the service, the teacher, transforms me into his capitalist, his master.

Consequently it also does not affect the economic character of this relation whether the doctor cures me or the teacher makes a success of teaching me or the lawyer wins my lawsuit.

What is paid for is the performance of the service as such, and by its very nature the result cannot be guaranteed by those who render the service.

A great part of services belongs to the costs of consumption of commodities, such as those of a cook, maid, etc.

It is characteristic of all unproductive labours that they are at my disposal — as is the case in the purchase of all other commodities for consumption — in the same proportion as that in which I exploit productive workers.

Of all persons, therefore, the productive worker has least command over the services of unproductive workers, although he has most to pay for the involuntary services (the State and taxes).

Vice versa, however, my power to employ productive workers does not at all increase in proportion to the extent that I employ unproductive workers, but on the contrary falls in the same proportion.

Productive workers may, in relation to me, be unproductive workers.

For example, if I have my house re-papered, and the paper-hangers are wage workers of an employer who sells me the job, it is just the same for me as if I had bought a house already papered: I would have expended money for a commodity for my consumption; but for the employer who gets these workers to hang the paper they are productive workers, for they produce surplus value for him.

What then is the position of independent handicraftsmen or peasants who employ no workers and therefore do not produce as capitalists?

Either, as always in the case of the peasant (but not for example of a gardener whom I get to come to my house), they are commodity producers and I buy the commodity from them — in which case it makes no difference for example that the handicraftsman supplies it to order or the peasant brings to market what he can.

In this relationship they meet me as sellers of commodities, not as sellers of labour, and this relation has therefore nothing at all to do with the exchange of capital, and therefore also nothing to do with the distinction between productive and unproductive labour, which is based purely on whether the labour is exchanged with money as money or with money as capital.

They therefore belong neither to the category of productive nor to that of unproductive workers, although they are producers of commodities. But their production does not fall under the capitalist mode of production.

It is possible that these producers working with their own means of production not only reproduce their labour power but create surplus value, since their position makes it possible for them to appropriate their own surplus labour or a part of it (as one part is taken from them in the form of taxes, etc.).

And here we come up against a peculiarity that is characteristic of a society in which one definite mode of production predominates, although all productive relations have not yet been subordinated to it.

In feudal society, for example, as we can best observe in England because here the system of feudalism was introduced ready made from Normandy and its form was impressed on what was in many respects a different social foundation — even productive relations which were far removed from the nature of feudalism were given a feudal form; for example, simple money relations in which there was no trace of mutual personal service as between suzerain and vassal, for instance the fiction that the small peasant held his property as a fief.

In just the same way in the capitalist mode of production the independent peasant or handicraftsman is sundered into two persons.

As owner of the means of production he is capitalist, as worker he is his own wage worker.

As capitalist, he therefore pays himself his wages and draws his profit from his capital; that is to say, he exploits himself as wage worker and pays himself with the surplus value, the tribute that labour owes to capital.

Perhaps he also pays himself a third part as landowner (rent), in the same way, as we shall see later, that the industrial capitalist who works with his own capital pays himself interest and regards this as something which he owes to himself not as an industrial capitalist, but *qua* capitalist pure and simple.

The social character of the means of production in capitalist production — the fact that they express a definite productive relation — has so grown together with, and in the mode of thought of bourgeois society is so inseparable from, the material existence of these means of production as means of production, that the same definition (definite category) is applied even where the relation is the very opposite.

The means of production become capital only in so far as they have become an independent power confronting labour.

In the case mentioned the producer — the worker — is the possessor, owner, of his means of production.

They are therefore not capital, any more than in relation to them he is a wage worker.

Nevertheless they are thought of as capital, and he himself is split in two, so that as capitalist he employs himself as wage worker

In fact this way of presenting it, however irrational it may seem at first sight, is nevertheless correct in so far as the producer in such a case actually creates his own surplus value (assuming that he sells his commodity at its value), or the whole product materialises only his own labour.

That he is able to appropriate to himself the whole product of his own labour, and that the excess of the value of his product over the average price of his day's labour is not appropriated by someone else, he owes however not to his labour — which does not distinguish him from other workers — but to his ownership of the means of production.

It is therefore only through his ownership of these that he takes possession of his own surplus labour, and thus arises his relation, as his own capitalist, to himself as wage worker.

The separation between the two is the normal relation in this society.

Where therefore it does not in fact exist, it is presumed, and, as shown above, up to a point with justice; for (as distinct for example from conditions in Ancient Rome or Norway or in the North-West of the United States) in this society the unity appears as accidental, the separation as normal, and consequently the separation is maintained as the relation, even when one person unites the different functions.

Here emerges in a very striking way the fact that the capitalist as such is only a function of capital, the worker a function of labour power.

For it is also a law that economic development divides out functions among different persons, and the artisan or peasant who produces with his own means of production will either gradually be transformed into a small capitalist who also exploits the labour of others, or he will suffer the loss of his means of production (this may happen to begin with although he remains their nominal owner, as in a mortgage) and be transformed into a wage worker.

This is the tendency in the form of society in which the capitalist mode of production predominates.

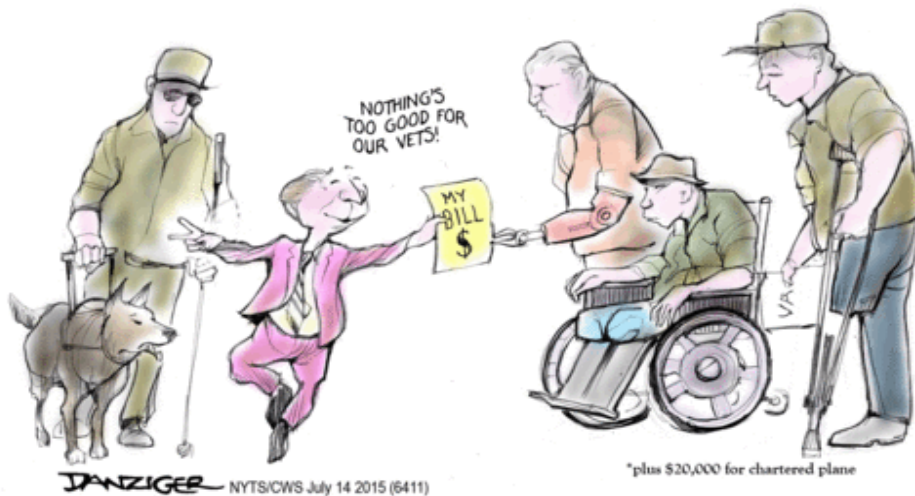
In examining the essential relations of capitalist production it can therefore be assumed that the whole world of commodities, all spheres of material production — the production of material wealth — are subordinated (formally or really) to the capitalist mode of production (since this is being continuously approximated to, is in principle the goal of capitalist production, and only if this is realised will the productive power of labour be developed to its highest point).

On this premise, which expresses the goal (limit), and which therefore is constantly coming closer to exact truth, all workers engaged in the production of commodities are wage workers, and the means of production in all these spheres confront them as capital.

It can then be said to be a characteristic of productive workers, that is, of capital-producing workers, that their labour is realised in commodities, in material wealth.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

George W Bush Charges Wounded Veterans \$100,000 to Give Speech*



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Nuthin's too good for our troops and that's just what they get."]

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Palestinian Man Marvels At How Much Childhood Refugee Camp Has Changed

“Abu-Dhubah Says The Main Street Of His Childhood Refugee Camp ‘Looks Completely Different Now’ With All Its New Missile Craters”



Abu-Dhubah says the main street of his childhood refugee camp “looks completely different now” with all its new missile craters.

July 14, 2015 The Onion

AL-SHATI, GAZA STRIP—

Saying he hardly recognized some of the makeshift buildings and piles of rubble he played in as a child, Gaza native Ramzy Abu-Dhubah told reporters Tuesday he was struck by how much the refugee camp he grew up in has changed over the years.

As he walked through his “old stomping grounds” in Al-Shati, a 0.3-square-mile camp currently home to 87,000 displaced Palestinians, the 36-year-old remarked how the whole area seemed more bustling and crowded to him now than it did when he was a boy.

“So many of the spots where I used to hang out are gone, and they’ve all been replaced by new homes—I guess this place has really been growing,” Abu-Dhubah said as he pointed out a demolished concrete structure filled with improvised mud-brick shelters that had not been there when he left Gaza in 1999.

“This used to be an empty lot where I’d play soccer, but there’s got to be a few dozen families that have moved in here now. They put in one of those big ration-distribution centers, too. My buddy Ibrahim was telling me that’s where pretty much everyone goes to eat these days.”

“Oh, man, it looks like they even knocked down the old U.N. health clinic I used to go to as a kid,” he continued. “That’s really too bad.”

Reminiscing about the camp where he spent the first 21 years of his life, Abu-Dhubah observed that, while many of the cramped, narrow alleyways and contaminated water wells were just as he remembered them, there were a lot more Red Cross and Red Crescent triage stations than he recalled.

At one point, he acknowledged getting lost amid the wreckage-strewn streets, saying he couldn’t get over how many people had put up new tents in the past few years.

“My old school is still here, but I almost didn’t recognize it with the north wall completely caved in like that,” Abu-Dhubah said.

“It’s so surreal to think about these young kids today still being crammed into the same little rooms, doing all the things my classmates and I did way back when: sitting in the dark through power outages, playing in the open sewer at recess, dodging artillery shells and mortar blasts, burning trash.”

He added, “I guess some things never do change, you know?”

Abu-Dhubah paused a moment before he continued, admitting that the flood of memories from his youth had made him a bit emotional.

Later, he showed reporters the 144-square-foot concrete room where he grew up, noting that his once quiet and unassuming side street was now cluttered with new residents and shrapnel.

“I’ve seen a lot of familiar faces since I’ve been back—it’s amazing how many of the same families are still around after all these years,” Abu-Dhubah said.

“My friends always used to talk about how they’d get out of here, but most of them never did. Sure, Bashir’s in an Israeli prison these days, and I heard Ahmad and his kids have been gone since that IDF attack in 2014, but pretty much all the rest are still in the camp, and they’ve got families of their own now.”

“My grandma has been here, what, 67 years now?” he continued. “She’s not going anywhere.”

Abu-Dhubah says the main street of his childhood refugee camp “looks completely different now” with all its new missile craters.

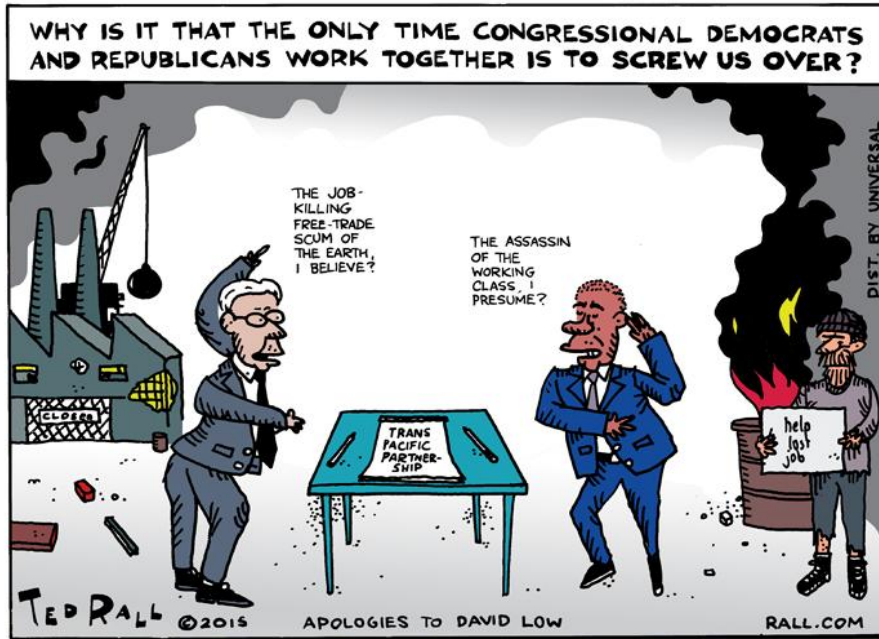
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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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VIETNAM GI: REPRINTS AVAILABLE

Vietnam GI

January, 1969

Free to Servicemen

"... he threw his rifle at his Commanding Officer..."



WHEN HAWKS RETIRE

All of us who've had our "free" trips to Sunny Nam and South Korea shouldn't feel guilty about accepting such "gifts" from the Government. Lots of hawk politicians are taking Government trips too. Of course, their trips are a little bit different.

Take Senator Edward V. Long (D-La.), the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman whose retirement in January was accepted by graft scandal. The good Senator decided last as a last sacrifice to his country he would give himself TDY to Europe. The reason was to "get firsthand information on foreign and military assistance programs." Doubtless, that's why he took his wife along.

Of special interest was his visit to

Switzerland, which neither gets US aid nor wants any. It doesn't really make any difference, since as soon as Senator Long returned from his "fact-finding mission" he retired from the Senate, thus depriving our Congress of all his "facts" (mostly on nightclubs and ritz hotels).

Going to and from Europe Long traveled on Senate funds, but while on TDY there, he was accompanied by using US military aircraft, cars and chauffeurs to get around. The Pentagon ordered the red carpet rolled out around the world. Nothing too good for a retiring hawk politician. As the saying goes, in America we're all equal... only some are more equal than others!

As we go to press we learn that the government has finally agreed on the shape of the table and seating arrangements for the Paris talks. How that everything is pleasant and comfortable, maybe we can expect further "breakthroughs."

The grim fact is that while the government hawks are jiving in Paris, thousands of our buddies are still dying in Nam. In fact, since they began talking last May, 1,000 GIs have been killed in action.

Talks or no talks, the only solution is to get the hell out of Nam, immediately. Stop talking and start dropping us home.

The next issue of VGI will discuss the Paris talks in greater detail. By that

Below is an interview with a Marine who didn't like the war and figured out why. This guy is a Platoon SGT with five years in the Green Machine, and over a year in Nam, mostly in low range recon with Charlie Company, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, VGI speaks to him while he was on leave awaiting his second Nam tour. Since he doesn't ETS until 1972 we've left out his name.

VGI: How did you feel about the war when you went over there. Did your feelings change?

A. When I first went over there, I thought it would be a great thing to go, and a great new experience of being in war. I really thought it was going to be something different. But when I got put on some of those patrols and I got to see the people and got to talk to the people. This was the big thing that finally changed me. I finally saw that it wasn't worth while, and that they actually don't want our help because it actually isn't help.

VGI: Did you have any contact with the Vietnamese, with the people?

A. There was a place called Ben Son and for a while I was stationed down at the bridge there. This is where I lived, ate, slept, drank, everything. The white houses right next to my bunker, we had an address for ours and we gave everybody else addresses. We explained to the people what the addresses were and they got all shook up about the whole thing, wow, they got addresses now.

VGI: What was it like living there?

A. We lived with them, we shared our food with them. They used to really go for the little treats in the ration packs, the gum and the occasion cigarettes and everything, and in turn they'd bring back bananas. There was this one girl, her name was—I can't think of her name now—I had her picture but I lost it. This one girl, she really showed out in my mind because she used to come over and bring us beer every day and in turn, all she expected from us was the empty boxes of coffees, that's all she wanted, the empty boxes. But then we started putting little things in the empty boxes and told her we wanted her to have them.

VGI: What would she want with the empty boxes?

A. I don't know, the Vietnamese people, they could take an empty can of nothing and make something out of it. She made me a soapbox which she had made out of a cation tin. She had pounded it out with a nail and a hammer, so had a little bedline on it and I wore it all the time. I actually got to feel naked after I lost it.

Not yet, later on, during the Tet holidays, the Viet Cong came in and burned out half of the village, and the manner naturally went in parallel. In order to stop them, the VC took this girl and they cut off her breasts. She was brought up to the hospital and later she died.

VGI: Did the brass give you any advice about living with the Vietnamese?

A. The accident when I almost got into trouble was, there was a convoy of about 12 to 14 trucks. I think it was. We had a whole bunch of plywood on it and we took this plywood over to a

the altar. We dropped off something like 14 sheets of plywood. Naturally, when we got back, there was one truckload of plywood missing, and they asked where it was. They later found out that I had given it to this village chief, not for my own good relations with him, but because there was some women we didn't get recuperated at our observation point, and they brought us food. So we gave them something else in return.

interview

VGI: What are some of the things you saw and did that led you into thinking in the middle of Nam not to fight anymore?

A. Well, I saw first when COL Bill Fisher, when he would tell his men to dismantle their personal-owning flame-throwers, take them out on a company sleep and put them back together once they got out. We went into a village and told them, "Are there any Viet Cong here?" The village chief naturally said "No" because he knew that if he said yes, he didn't know what'd happen to him. Then COL Fisher said, "Well, if there are any Viet Cong in this village, we'll show you what's going to happen." He took one of his finest men up to the house, he didn't check to see if there was anybody in it or not. Later we found out there was a woman in there who was real sick, she couldn't move or anything. She was burned to death. It was terrible, and seeing guys being carried in in ponchos, a full-grown man weighed about two pounds after he was brought in at a sack of raw flesh or something like that.

VGI: Did you see any other incidents like that?

A. There was this little village just out of Ben Son where we bought our rice and got our rice. It's not pretty, it's really true. It was just this small village, maybe 16 or 17 houses. It was a "gray to white" village, old and on there'd be Viet Cong waiting the area. No headlines at all, they'd just go in there to be resupplied. Yet one day, they found out that VC were coming into that village and they called "Puff!" "Puff!" came over and leveled the whole village down. I think maybe three people lived out of the whole thing. One was a little baby about two years old whose mother and father was gone.

One of the guys sort of accepted this kid, the little two year old. He took care of him. When we went on R and R we brought him back toys and trunks and things like that. It was really something, because they don't get too many trucks over there. We'd round up a few dump trucks and stuff like that from Hong Kong. They were really surprised to see the new toys. I mean, the toys they play with, old occasion cars and stuff like that are their toys. They're a fascinating people. If you just have an opportunity to see them, to get to know them. They're really great.

VGI: How do you think they feel about us?

A. This one incident—I know of the little one near Vietnam who was down south wrote to his brother up north who was intent on coming down

Continued on page 8

Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command.

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