

Military Resistance 13G9



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

350 Fresh U.S. Troops Deployed To Afghanistan

26 July 2015 TOLONews

Three hundred and fifty airmen from the Ellsworth Air Force Base in the U.S. were deployed Friday to Afghanistan to provide support to local forces.

A portion of the 28th Bomb Wing's B-1 bomber fleet shipped out from the base in western South Dakota on Friday.

U.S Air Force officials say the airmen are going to be providing air support and presence over Afghanistan. They say they'll also be conducting a variety of tasks to provide critical battlefield support and long-range strike capabilities.

However, Dawlat Waziri, Ministry of Defense spokesman, said the ministry was not aware of such a deployment.

“So far we don't know anything about this but you (TOLONews) need to ask the president's spokesman about this,” he said.

President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman Sayed Zafar Hashimi was also not aware of the move.

The deployment meanwhile is expected to last six months.

The Commander of the 37th Bomb Squadron deployed with the airmen, told a US news agency that crews will provide multi-role combat airpower in support of U.S. and coalition forces.

Commander Joseph of the 37th Bomb Squadron said, "We're going to be providing air support over Afghanistan as well as an operation, providing air presence, combat strike, intelligence, surveillance, and doing whatever missions the combat commanders ask us to do while we're deployed."

This is the first deployment for many of the airmen.

Commander Joseph, who only gave his first name for security reasons, says the airmen have gone through 12 months of intensive training, and he is very confident in their capabilities.

Checkpoint At U.S. Base Attacked: Six Regime Soldiers Killed; "Camp Chapman Houses Some United States Special Forces"

July 2015 Patricia Gossman, Senior Researcher, Afghanistan, Human Rights Watch

Yesterday's deadly attack at a police checkpoint outside a military base in Khost, in eastern Afghanistan, is a grim reminder that Afghan civilians bear much of the cost of the country's armed conflict. The checkpoint adjoined an outdoor market, and many of the at least 27 civilians – including 12 children – killed in the attack were in vehicles waiting to pass the checkpoint on their way home.

Six members of the Afghan National Security Forces were also killed. No one as yet has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The base that was attacked, Camp Chapman, houses some United States Special Forces. The Khost Protection Force, a US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-trained militia responsible for counter-insurgency operations along the Pakistan border, controls the checkpoint.

Taliban Take Afghan Police Base After Mass Surrender: “100 Police And Border Guards Join Insurgents” “No Reinforcements Were Sent To Help The Police At The Base”

Jul 26, 2015 By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press & TOLONews

The Taliban took control of a large police base in a remote part of northeastern Afghanistan after some 100 police and border guards surrendered and joined the insurgents following three days of fighting, security officials said Sunday.

This comes after Taliban insurgents attacked the military base on Friday night and started clashing with security forces. Insurgents seized the base on Saturday, a spokesman for Badakhshan Police Chief, Lal Mohammad Ahmadzai said.

The insurgents opened fire on the base from four different angles, Ahmadzai said.

Ahmadzai believes that the military base fell into the hands of the insurgents after border police and local forces made a deal with the Taliban insurgents and “let them seize the military base.”

The police base, in the province's Wardoj district, had been cut off as heavy rains swamped roads into the area, said Gen. Baba Jan, Badakhshan province's police chief.

It wasn't clear why reinforcements hadn't been flown into the area, though the province's steep valleys make aircraft landings difficult.

“No reinforcements were sent to help the police at the base for the past three days when they were under the attack and finally they had no option: They had to join the Taliban,” said Abdullah Naji Nazari, the head of Badakhshan's provincial council.

Jan said the local police commander also joined the Taliban and handed over the base's weapons and ammunition.

The Taliban issued a statement saying they captured the base along with 110 police officers, their local commander and the head of the local border police.

Jan later said the Taliban had released all the policemen and allowed them to return to their homes.

He said it was unclear why the forces surrendered, insisting they has enough ammunition and supplies to hold out for weeks.

Last month hundreds of insurgents attacked security checkpoints in the province's Yamgan district, forcing police to abandon them.

MORE:

Taliban Statement On Capture Of Wardoj District Base: “Seizing 10 PKM Machine Guns, 10 RPG Launchers, 90 Rifles, 3 DSHK Heavy Machine Guns, 2 Mortar Tubes, An Artillery Piece”



[Graphic: flickr.com/photos]

July 25, 2015 Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

BADAKHSHAN – Reports arriving from Warduj district of northern Badakhshan province say that the heroic Mujahideen of Islamic Emirate managed to overrun a strategically important enemy outpost named 'Qala' located in Terigran area late afternoon hours today.

Mujahideen managed to kill and wound 25 gunmen before taking over the outpost, detaining 110 hireling ANA, police and Arbaki militiamen as well as seizing 10 PKM machine guns, 10 RPG launchers, 90 rifles, 3 DSHK heavy machine guns, 2 mortar tubes, an artillery piece as well as a large amount of ammunition and other military gear.

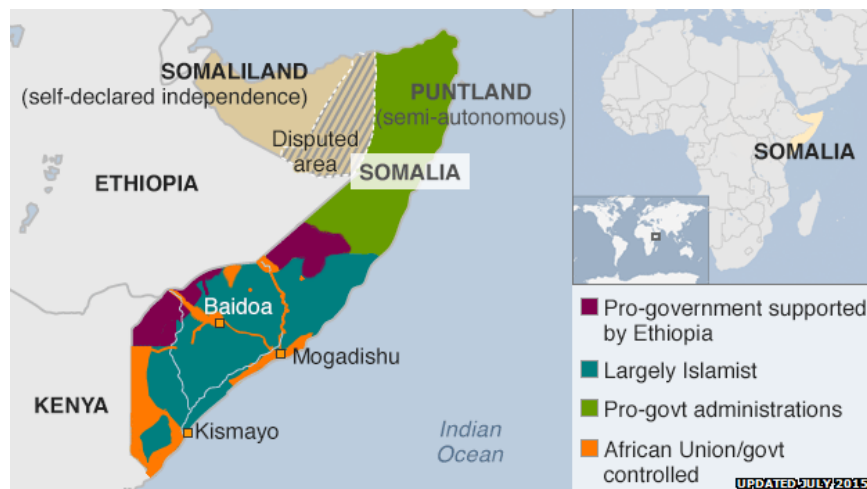
Officials say that Mujahideen also took control of 6 check posts near the base as well as clearing the enemy from 12 large outlying villages, adding that only 1 Mujahid was martyred in this operation (may Allah accept him) and 9 others injured.

The enemy now only controls small pockets around the district center while the entire district is currently under the control of Islamic Emirate.

It must be mentioned that this siege of the outpost has been ongoing for the past 2 days during which 12 police were previously killed and 15 other fully armed gunmen detained earlier this morning.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

At Least 13 Dead As Insurgents Attack Diplomats Hotel In Somalia: “It Is A Response To Attacks And Helicopter Bombing Against Al Shabaab”



26 July 2015 BBC

The Somali militant Islamist group al Shabaab attacked a Mogadishu hotel on Sunday, driving a car packed with explosives through the hotel gate and killing at least 13 people, a first responder and the rebel group said.

A Reuters witness said blood and pieces of flesh were spattered around the site of the blast targeting the Jazeera hotel. Nearby was the wreckage of four cars.

“We have carried 13 dead people and 40 others who were injured, some seriously,” an ambulance worker Abdikadir Abdirahman told Reuters.

A police officer, Major Nur Osoble, told Reuters a huge car bomb had rammed the gates of the hotel, damaging the facade.

A BBC correspondent in the city says a lorry was used to attack the Jazeera Palace Hotel near the airport.

He said it was one of the worst scenes of destruction he has witnessed in Mogadishu.

The blast on Sunday sent a plume of smoke rising above the coastal capital.

Sporadic gunfire was heard shortly after the attack.

Al Shabaab, which said it was behind the blast, frequently stages bomb and gun attacks in the capital in its bid to topple Somalia's Western-backed government.

“It is a response to attacks and helicopter bombing against al Shabaab by AMISOM [foreign occupation troops] and the Somali government,” Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, al Shabaab's military operations spokesman, told Reuters.

International diplomats often stay at Jazeera Palace Hotel, which has been targeted in the past. It also accommodates several embassies including those of China, Qatar and Egypt.

A Chinese embassy worker was among the dead as well as three members of the hotel staff, the BBC's Mohamed Moalimu reports.

On Saturday, a member of the Somali parliament and an official from the prime minister's office were killed in separate attacks in the capital claimed by al-Shabab.

MILITARY NEWS

Syrian Dictator Gives Incoherent, Babbling Speech To Nation:

**“We Are Not Collapsing” “There
Is A Shortage Of Manpower”**

**“We Have To Abandon Some Areas
In Order To Transfer Forces To The
Area That We Want To Hold”**

**“He Added That The Loss Of Some
Areas To Rebels Has Led To ‘Frustration’
Among Syrians”**

“There is a shortage of manpower,” Assad said. “I don't want to give a dark image that hostile media will use to say that the president is saying that people are not joining the army.”

July 26, 2015 The Associated Press & Reuters

In his first public address in a year, embattled Syrian President Bashar al-Assad vowed Sunday to win his country's long-running civil war while acknowledging his troops have lost territory because of a manpower shortage.

“We must define the important regions that the armed forces hold onto so it doesn't allow the collapse of the rest of the areas.”

Assad's speech, televised Sunday morning, given to local dignitaries in the Syrian capital, Damascus, was his first public address since he was sworn in for a third, seven-year term in July last year. Assad has given interviews to several Arab and international media outlets in the meantime.

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Assad acknowledged that his generals have had to move forces from one front to another in order to protect areas that are militarily, politically or economically important.

Assad said increased support from states backing the rebels -- including Turkey -- was the reason for recent setbacks that had created “a state of despair” among Syrians.

Military reversals for Assad have ever more reduced his control beyond the main population centers of western Syria that comprise the cities of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and the coastal region forming the heartland of his Alawite sect.

Syrian forces have suffered several setbacks since March, including the loss of the northwestern city of Idlib, the capital of a province that borders Turkey. In May the government lost the historic central town of Palmyra to ISIL fighters, who also captured parts of the northeastern city of Hassakeh.

“We are not collapsing. We are steadfast and will achieve victory,” said Assad, who was interrupted several times by applause. “Defeat does not exist in the dictionary of the Syrian Arab army.”

He tried to justify the loss of some areas, including Idlib. Government-allied forces, including fighters from the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah and Iranian advisers, control a little less than half of Syria's 71,400 square miles.

“It was necessary to specify critical areas for our armed forces to hang on to,” Assad said. “Concern for our soldiers forces us to let go of some areas.”

“When we concentrate our forces in an important area, what happens is that we bring reinforcements, but this is usually at the expense of other areas,” he said. “Sometimes we have to abandon some areas in order to transfer these forces to the area that we want to hold.”

He said that in recent months, mostly in April and May, the number of people joining the army has increased. He added, “Every inch of Syria is precious.”

The government announced a general amnesty for army deserters and draft dodgers Saturday.

There are thousands of army deserters in and outside Syria, many of whom have gone on to fight with rebels.

Many young men have fled the country to avoid military conscription.

Assad has issued similar amnesties for criminals but has not released any of the thousands of political prisoners believed to be in Syria's prisons.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights recently reported that at least 49,100 troops and 32,500 pro-government gunmen have been killed since the uprising began in March 2011.

The group, which gathers information from activists in Syria, says there are some 70,000 draft dodgers in government-controlled areas alone.

Last month Syria's prime minister called on young men to fulfill their mandatory military service obligation, promising better pay for troops on the front lines as well as one hot meal a day.

Assad said his government did not want war “but when it was imposed on us, the Syrian Arab army repelled the terrorists everywhere.”

He refers to all those fighting his rule as terrorists.

Speaking about political dialogue, Assad said any initiative that is not based on fighting “terrorism” would be “hollow” and “meaningless.”

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

The British War On Afghanistan 1842:

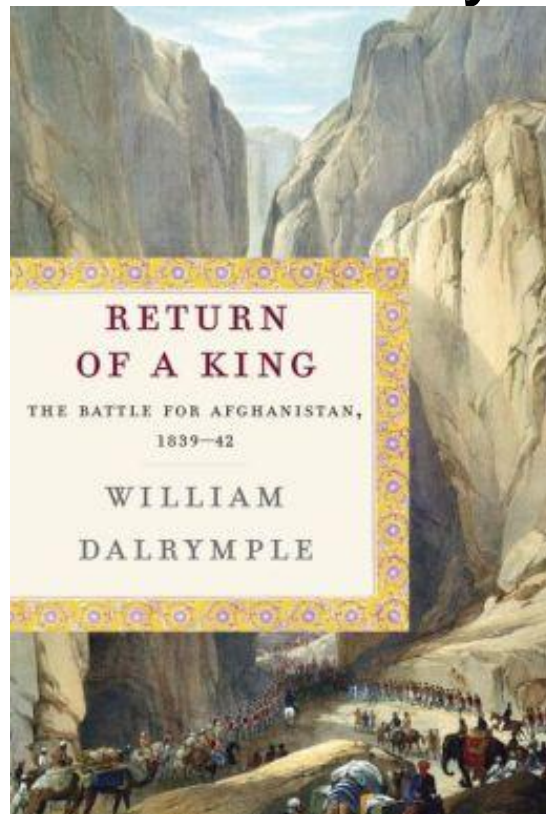
**“Not One Benefit, Political Or
Military, Has Been Acquired
With This War”**

**“A War Carried On With A Strange
Mixture Of Rashness And Timidity;
Brought To A Close After
Suffering And Disaster”**

**“Our Eventual Evacuation Of The
Country Resembled The Retreat Of
An Army Defeated”**

**“The Closer I Looked, The More The
West’s First Disastrous Entanglement In
Afghanistan Seemed To Contain Distinct**

Echoes Of The Neocolonial Adventures Of Our Own Day”



The parallels between the two invasions I came to realise were not just anecdotal, they were substantive.

The same tribal rivalries and the same battles were continuing to be fought out in the same places 170 years later under the guise of new flags, new ideologies and new political puppeteers. The same cities were garrisoned by foreign troops speaking the same languages, and were being attacked from the same rings of hills and the same high passes.

Excerpts from a magnificent book;
RETURN of a KING
The Battle for Afghanistan, 1839—42

By William Dalrymple,
ALFRED A. KNOPF;
NEW YORK 2013

In 1843, shortly after his return from the slaughterhouse of the First Anglo-Afghan War, the army chaplain in Jalalabad, the Rev. G. R. Gleig, wrote a memoir about the disastrous expedition of which he was one of the lucky survivors.

It was, he wrote, “a war begun for no wise purpose, carried on with a strange mixture of rashness and timidity; brought to a close after suffering and disaster, without much glory attached either to the government which directed, or the great body of troops which waged it. Not one benefit, political or military, has been acquired with this war. Our eventual evacuation of the country resembled the retreat of an army defeated.”

William Barnes Wollen’s celebrated painting of the Last Stand of the 44th Foot—a group of ragged but doggedly determined soldiers on the hilltop of Gandamak standing encircled behind a thin line of bayonets, as the Pashtun tribesmen close in — became one of the era’s most famous images, along with Remnants of an Army, Lady Butler’s oil of the alleged last survivor, Dr. Brydon, arriving before the walls of Jalalabad on his collapsing nag.

It was just as the latest western invasion of Afghanistan was beginning to turn sour in the winter of 2006 that I had the idea of writing a new history of Britain’s first failed attempt at controlling Afghanistan.

After an easy conquest and the successful installation of a pro- western puppet ruler, the regime was facing increasingly widespread resistance.

History was beginning to repeat itself.

In the course of the initial research I visited many of the places associated with the war.



The Last Stand of the 44th Regiment at Gundamuck, 1842. William Barnes Wollen

On my first day in Afghanistan I drove through the Shomali Plain to see the remains of Eldred Pottinger’s barracks at Charikar, which now lie a short distance from the U.S. Air Force base at Bagram.

In Herat I paid my respects at the grave of Dost Mohammad Khan, at the Sufi shrine of Gazur Gah. In Jalalabad I sat by the Kabul River and ate the same delicious shir maheh river fish, grilled on charcoal, which 170 years earlier had sustained the British troops besieged there and which had been particularly popular with “Fighting Bob” Sale.

On my arrival in Kandahar, the car sent to pick me up from the airport received a sniper shot through its back window as it neared the perimeter; later I stood at one of Henry Rawlinson’s favourite spots, the shrine of Baba Wali on the edge of town, and saw an IED blow up a U.S. patrol as it crossed the Arghandab River, then as now the frontier between the occupied zone and the area controlled by the Afghan resistance.

In Kabul I managed to get permission to visit the Bala Hisar, once Shah Shuja’s citadel, now the headquarters of the Afghan Army’s intelligence corps, where reports from the front line are evaluated amid a litter of spiked British cannon from 1842 and upturned Soviet T-72 tanks from the 1980s.

“The Same Tribal Rivalries And The Same Battles Were Continuing To Be Fought Out In The Same Places 170 Years Later Under The Guise Of New Flags, New Ideologies And New Political Puppeteers”

The closer I looked, the more the west’s first disastrous entanglement in Afghanistan seemed to contain distinct echoes of the neocolonial adventures of our own day.

For the war of 1839 was waged on the basis of doctored intelligence about a virtually non-existent threat: information about a single Russian envoy to Kabul was exaggerated and manipulated by a group of ambitious and ideologically driven hawks to create a scare—in this case, about a phantom Russian invasion.

As John MacNeill, the Russophobe British ambassador, wrote from Teheran in 1838: “we should declare that he who is not with us is against us . . . We must secure Afghanistan.” Thus was brought about an unnecessary, expensive and entirely avoidable war.

The parallels between the two invasions I came to realise were not just anecdotal, they were substantive.

The same tribal rivalries and the same battles were continuing to be fought out in the same places 170 years later under the guise of new flags, new ideologies and new political puppeteers.

The same cities were garrisoned by foreign troops speaking the same languages, and were being attacked from the same rings of hills and the same high passes.

In both cases, the invaders thought they could walk in, perform regime change, and be out in a couple of years.

In both cases they were unable to prevent themselves getting sucked into a much wider conflict.



The Remnants of an Army. Elizabeth Lady Butler

Just as the British inability to cope with the rising of 1841 was a product not just of the leadership failures within the British camp, but also of the breakdown of the strategic relationship between Macnaughton and Shah Shuja, so the uneasy relationship of the ISAF leadership with President Karzai has been a crucial factor in the failure of the latest imbroglio.

Here the U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke to some extent played the role of Macnaughton.

When I visited Kabul in 2010, the then British Special Representative, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, described Holbrooke as “a bull who brought his own china shop wherever he went”— a description that would have served perfectly to sum up Macnaughton’s style 174 years previously.

Sherard’s analysis of the failure of the current occupation in his memoirs, *Cables from Kabul*, reads astonishingly like an analysis of that of Auckland and Macnaghten: “Getting in without having any real idea of how to get out; almost *wilful misdiagnosis of the nature of the challenges; continually changing objectives, and no coherent or consistent plan; mission creep on a heroic scale; disunity of political and military command, also on a heroic scale; diversion of attention and resources (to Iraq in the current case, to the Opium Wars then) at a critical stage of the adventure; poor choice of local allies; weak political leadership.”

Then as now, the poverty of Afghanistan has meant that it has been impossible to tax the Afghans into financing their own occupation.

Instead, the cost of policing such inaccessible territory has exhausted the occupier’s resources.

Today the U.S. is spending more than \$100 billion a year in Afghanistan: it costs more to keep Marine battalions in two districts of Helmand than the U.S. is providing to the entire nation of Egypt in military and development assistance.

In both cases the decision to withdraw troops has turned on factors with little relevance to Afghanistan, namely the state of the economy and the vagaries of politics back home.

As I pursued my research, it was fascinating to see how the same moral issues that are chewed over in the editorial columns today were discussed at equal length in the correspondence of the First Afghan War: what are the ethical responsibilities of an occupying power?

Should you try to “promote the interests of humanity,” as one British official put it in 1840, and champion social and gender reform, banning traditions like the stoning to death of adulterous women; or should you just concentrate on ruling the country without rocking the boat?

Do you intervene if your allies start boiling or roasting their enemies alive?

Do you attempt to introduce western political systems?

As the spymaster Sir Claude Wade warned on the eve of the 1839 invasion, “There is nothing more to be dreaded or guarded against, I think, than the overweening confidence with which we are too often accustomed to regard the excellence of our own institutions, and the anxiety that we display to introduce them in new and untried soils. Such interference will always lead to acrimonious disputes, if not to a violent reaction.”

For the westerners in Afghanistan today, the disaster of the First Afghan War provides an uneasy precedent: it is no accident that the favourite watering hole of foreign correspondents in Kabul is called the Gandamak Lodge, or that one of the principal British bases in southern Afghanistan is named Camp Souter after the only survivor of the last stand of the 44th Foot.

For the Afghans themselves, in contrast, the British defeat of 1842 has become a symbol of liberation from foreign invasion, and of the determination of Afghans to refuse to be ruled ever again by any foreign power.

The diplomatic quarter of Kabul is after all still named after Wazir Akbar Khan, who in nationalist Barakzai propaganda is now remembered as the leading Afghan freedom fighter of 1841—2.

“We In The West May Have Forgotten The Details Of This History That Did So Much To Mould The Afghans’ Hatred Of Foreign Rule, But The Afghans Have Not”

We in the west may have forgotten the details of this history that did so much to mould the Afghans’ hatred of foreign rule, but the Afghans have not.

In particular Shah Shuja remains a symbol of quisling treachery in Afghanistan: in 2001 the Taliban asked their young men, “Do you want to be remembered as a son of Shah Shuja or as a son of Dost Mohammad?”

As he rose to power, Mullah Omar deliberately modelled himself on Dost Mohammad, and like him removed the Holy Cloak of the Prophet Mohammad from its shrine in Kandahar and wrapped himself in it, declaring himself like his model Amir al-Muminin, the Leader of the Faithful, a deliberate and direct re-enactment of the events of the First Afghan War, whose resonance was immediately understood by all Afghans.

History never repeats itself exactly, and it is true that there are some important differences between what is taking place in Afghanistan today and what took place during the 1840s.

There is no unifying figure at the centre of the resistance, recognised by all Afghans as a symbol of legitimacy and justice: Mullah Omar is no Dost Mohammad or Wazir Akbar Khan, and the tribes have not united behind him as they did in 1842.

Nevertheless, due to the continuities of the region’s topography, economy, religious aspirations and social fabric, the failures of 170 years ago do still hold important warnings for us today.

As George Lawrence wrote to the London Times just before Britain blundered into the Second Anglo-Afghan War thirty years later, “a new generation has arisen which, instead of profiting from the solemn lessons of the past, is willing and eager to embroil us in the affairs of that turbulent and unhappy country. . . Although military disasters may be avoided, an advance now, however successful in a military point of view, would not fail to turn out to be as politically useless. . .

“The disaster of the Retreat from Kabul should stand forever as a warning to the Statesmen of the future not to repeat the policies that bore such bitter fruit in 1839—42.”

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.

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

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

Bertolt Brecht On Mr. Tsipras And His Friends



Bertolt Brecht

Thanks to James Creegan for posting.

Bertolt Brecht; Poems 1913 – 1956; edited by John Willet and Ralph Manheim with the cooperation of Erich Fried; Theatre Arts Books, Routledge, N.Y. 1976, 1987 revised edition.

The Buddha's Parable of the Burning House

By Bertolt Brecht

Gautama the Buddha taught
The doctrine of greed's wheel to which we are bound, and
advised
That we should shed all craving and thus
Undesiring enter the nothingness that he called Nirvana.
Then one day his pupils asked him:
What is it like, this nothingness, Master? Every one of us
would
Shed all craving, as you advise, but tell us
Whether this nothingness which then we shall enter
Is perhaps like being at one with all creation
When you lie in the water, your body weightless, at noon
Unthinking almost, lazily lie in the water, or drowse
Hardly knowing now that you straighten the blanket
Going down fast – whether this nothingness, then
Is a happy one of this kind, a pleasant nothingness, or
Whether this nothing of yours is mere nothing, cold, senseless

And void.

Long Buddha silent, then said nonchalantly:
There is no answer to your question.
But in the evening, when they had gone
The Buddha still sat under the bread-fruit tree, and to the
others
To those who had not asked, addressed this parable:

Lately I saw a house. It was burning. The flame
Licked at its roof. I went up close and observed
That there were people still inside. I opened the door and
called
Out to them that the roof was ablaze, so exhorting them
To leave at once. But those people
Seemed in no hurry. One of them
When the heat was already scorching his eyebrows
Asked me what it was like outside, whether it wasn't raining
Whether the wind wasn't blowing perhaps, whether there
was
Another house for them, and more of this kind. Without answering
I went out again. These people here, I thought
Need to burn to death before they stop asking questions.

Truly, friends
Unless a man feels the ground so hot underfoot that he'd
gladly
Exchange it for any other, sooner than stay, to him
I have nothing to say. Thus Gautama the Buddha.

But we too, no longer concerned with the art of submission
Rather with that of not submitting, and putting forward
Various proposals of an earthly nature, and beseeching men
to shake off
Their human tormentors, we too believe that to those
Who in face of the approaching bomber squadrons of Capital
Go on asking too long
How we propose to do this, and how we envisage that
And what will become of their savings and Sunday trousers
After the revolution
We have nothing much to say.

Why The Islamic State Wins Popular Support:

“What Do They Have To Lose Living Under, Or Joining, The Rule Of The Caliphniks”

**“They Had Lived Their Lives In
Unstable States Whose Leaders
Relied On Coercion, Terror And
Violence To Rule”**

**“Daesh Simply Filled The Vacuum
Created By All The Injustices And
Humiliations That Had Been Heaped On
The People”**

[Daesh Is The Arabic Acronym For “ISIS”]

July 24, 2015 By Fawaz Turki, Special to Gulf News

Khalid, an Afghan immigrant now in his 50s — he said he did not know exactly how old he was — had arrived in the US just under two decades ago and opened a little printing shop off Dupont Circle in Washington.

Around that time, the Taliban had already come to control a large chunk of territory in northern and western Afghanistan, where they established the so-called Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and where systematic massacres, graphic brutality and rough justice became the norm.

They made it clear that women, denied access to education, will know their place in society. They blew up a sixth century Buddha carved in a mountain cliff in the Bamiyan Valley in 2001 (against near universal pleas by religious and political leaders in the Arab world and Islamic countries) and used terror to elicit obedience to their edicts — not altogether your garden variety type of government responsive to the challenges of modernity.

Also around that time — before the advent of hard drives and discs — I patronised Khalid’s shop to print various chapters of a book manuscript I was working on. I got to know Khalid well, as he got to trust me equally well.

I asked him if he thought the Taliban was bad news, medieval, barbaric and cruel.

He agreed they were but, he added, he would remain an ardent supporter of the group regardless.

But why?

“The Taliban brought stability to the country”, he said simply, “and eliminated corruption.” He used the Arabic word “fassad”, which refers to the notion of unchecked corruption combined with brazen theft by bureaucrats unanswerable to no one.

“The Taliban does not rob”, he said, as an afterthought. Effectively, Khalid was willing to barter his political freedom for social stability.

I thought of Khalid the other day as the America-led military campaign against Daesh (the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) approaches its first anniversary on August 8 — a campaign that has managed neither to “degrade” nor to “destroy” it.

Why has Daesh endured? Why is it, one wonders, that this group, rummaging through the attic of our history, resurrected the putative ethics of the ‘Caliphate’ and yet was not laughed off the stage?

Earlier last week, the New York Times, in two long front-page articles published on two consecutive days, datelined Washington and Istanbul, addressed the phenomenon of Daesh’s implacable durability and seeming appeal. NYT can ruminate all it wants. So can we.

How do certain Arabs, including this columnist, see that phenomenon?

Modesty aside, in simple terms.

Arabs in the Levant, where Daesh controls large swaths of territory inhabited by 11 million people (as many people as there are in the whole of Greece), have for generations been broken in back and spirit, unable to find a way out of, around or through their spiritual malaise, their defeatist frame of mind and their dependence on the West to solve their problems, especially in Palestine.

They gasped for air.

They had lived their lives in unstable states whose leaders relied on coercion, terror and violence to rule.

They grew up socialised on an ethic of fear, inured to oppression.

Over the last four years alone, their leaders in Syria have killed well over 230,000 innocent civilians in cold blood. In Iraq, they had lived under the thuggish Baath regime and today live under the openly sectarian regime.

What do they have to lose living under, or joining, the rule of the Caliphniks of Daesh, who have established, as my Afghan friend Khalid would have put it when he spoke about the Taliban, a seemingly stable system of government free of corruption?

And like Khalid, you trade personal liberty for peace of mind. Daesh simply filled the vacuum created by all the injustices and humiliations that had been heaped on the people in that region.

The final point is the most difficult to make, for it may give rise to misunderstanding, however cautiously I put it.

But it is this: Daesh is asking young, alienated Muslims, not just in the Levant but elsewhere as well, eager to recapture the assabiyah of the old Caliphate — that lost Eden of yore — if they are too selfish to die, too helpless to fight, too scared to utter their name.

Not since the 1936-1939 civil war in Spain has there been such a seductive clarion call to a trans-national, trans-cultural and trans-linguistic fraternity of arms.

In effect, Caliphniks are being asked to effect a dissociation from personal identity, to accept a diminished range of validity to the self and to entrust their centre of reality to the workings of their history.

That was a history to have gloried in, when Muslims did not have to go to a foreign capital, with hat in hand, to ask its leaders there to mediate their dispute, say, with the Crusader Kingdom in Jerusalem in 1188, but instead stormed the Holy City's walls and dealt a knock-out punch to the occupiers there.

It is all there, Daesh claims, in the 'Caliphate', the 'Caliphate' they aim to resurrect. It is there where individual existence anchors its meaning.

This is what distinguishes Daesh autocracy from other species of theological totalitarianism.

It all seems unabashed, muscular: Reclaim your history, for only through it is one's identity most truly challenged and guarded.

We can dismiss Daesh as a brutal group and move on, disregarding the fact that, like Dylan Thomas, it is calling on Muslims in the Levant and beyond to "rage, rage against the dying of the light".

And no one can write (or drink) like Dylan Thomas. Let Arabs have their day again, with the lights turned back on — of justice, freedom and equity as Muslims had known them, yes, in the Caliphate — and Daesh will have its eclipse.

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CLASS WAR REPORTS

**“Increase The Salary Of Workers, Lower
Down The Prices Of Goods.”**



Protesters hit riot police with sticks as they try to march towards Batasang Pambansa, where Philippines President Benigno Aquino will address the joint session of Congress and deliver his last State of the Nation address, in Quezon city, Metro Manila, Philippines July 27, 2015.

The placard (C) reads, “Increase the salary of workers, lower down the prices of goods.” (REUTERS/Erik De Castro)

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Heroic Zionist Forces Attack
Palestinian Second Hand Goods
Store:
Also Seize Garbage Cans**

July 21, 2015 Ma'an

HEBRON -- Israeli forces demolished three stores in the town of Idhna in western Hebron Tuesday morning, the local municipality told Ma'an.

Israeli military vehicles escorted three bulldozers into the town in a dawn raid, crossing through the Israeli separation wall west of Idhna.

The bulldozers demolished a used goods store belonging to Said Fayiz Isleimiyeh in the western area of the town, and a garage belonging to Marwan Hilmi Tmeizeh in Idhna's east, the municipality said.



Israeli forces also confiscated garbage containers in the demolition site and demolished another store belonging to Hussan Sharawi, claiming it was not licensed.

While Idhna's built-up areas are predominantly classified as Area B under the Oslo Accords, the majority of its surrounding land is classified Area C.

Under the Oslo Accord, building permits must be approved by the Israeli Civil Administration for construction to take place in Area C.

As a result of rarely-approved permits, however, Palestinian residents are often forced to build structures without permits, which are liable to be torn down later by Israeli forces.

Last year Israel demolished 601 Palestinian-owned structures, displacing 1,215 people.

The UN said it was the highest annual number of people affected by the policy since it began keeping records in 2008.

Occupation Forces Release Captured Palestinian Fishermen:

July 8, 2015 Ma'an

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Israeli forces on Wednesday released six Palestinian fishermen one day after they were detained in the Gaza Strip, the head of the fishermen's union said.

Amjad al-Sharafi told Ma'an that the six men had been detained by Israeli forces on Tuesday while working in the al-Sudaniya area in northern Gaza Strip, adding that the forces kept two of the boats seized from the fishermen at the time.

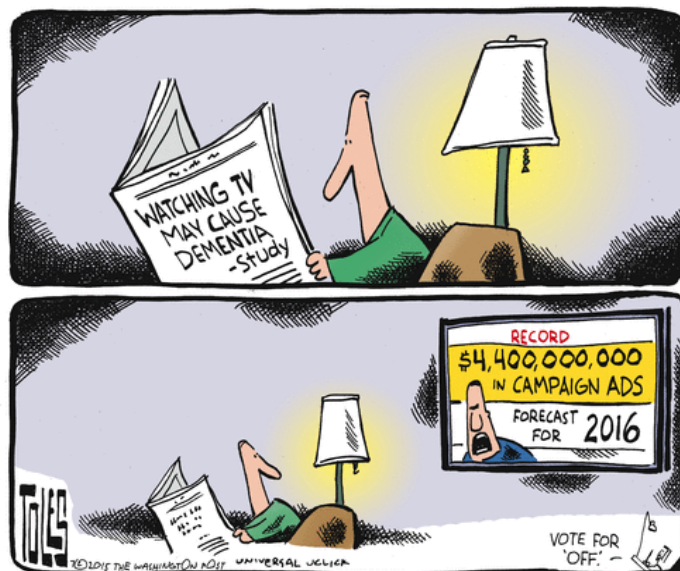
As of April, the Israeli navy was holding at least 60 Palestinian fishing boats after routine confiscations from fishermen off the coast of the Gaza Strip.

In addition to the seizure of fishing boats and materials, Palestinian fishermen face near daily fire, ongoing harassment, and interference with their work from Israeli naval forces. The attacks come despite Israeli promises at the end of last summer's ceasefire to ease restrictions on Palestinian access to both the sea and the border region near the "security buffer zone."

Earlier this week, Israeli naval forces opened fire on Palestinian fishermen in several locations off the coast of the Gaza Strip with no injuries reported, witnesses said. An Israeli army spokesperson said at the time that Israeli forces fired warning shots into the air after the boats had "deviated from the designated fishing zone," but was unable to elaborate on how far from shore the vessels were at the time of the incident.

Throughout the past week, four fishermen, including a child were wounded by Israeli naval forces, 14 fishermen, including two children, were detained, and three fishing boats were confiscated, according to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



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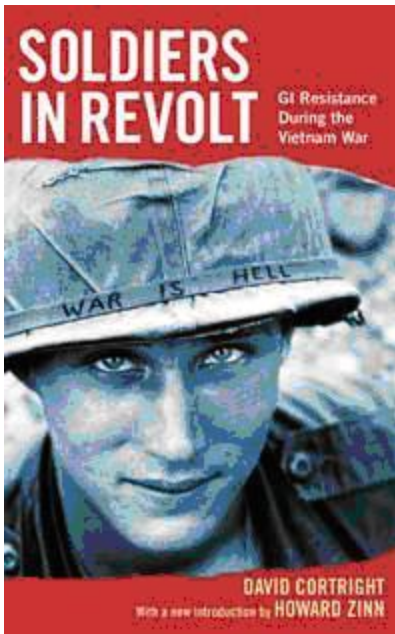
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