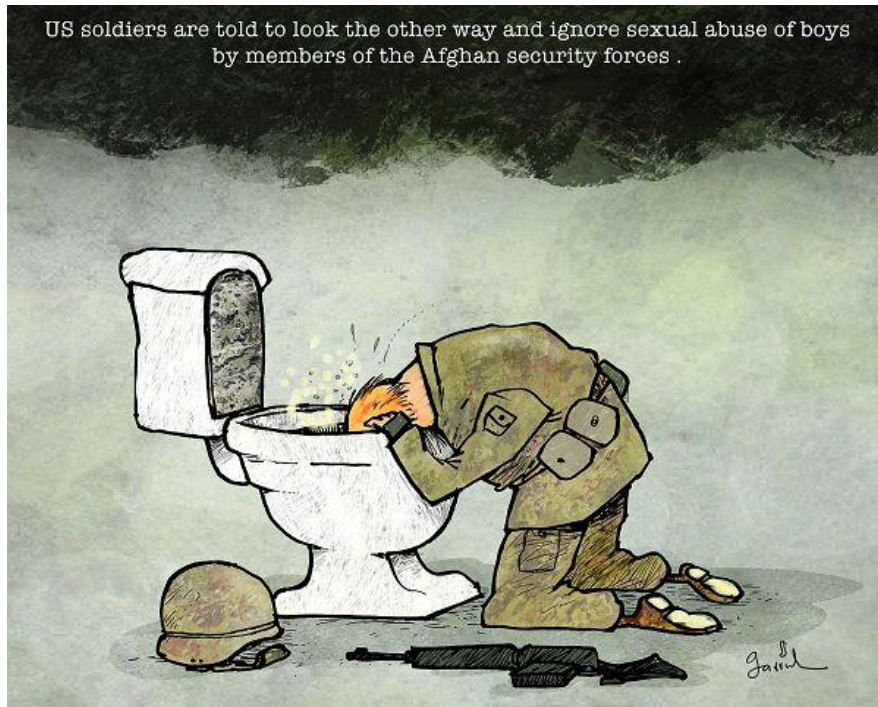


Military Resistance 13110



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Worshiping at the throne of war."]

**U.S. Army Hiding Rape
Of Afghan Boys By
Regime Commanders:
"My Son Said That His Officers
Told Him To Look The Other
Way Because It's Their Culture"**

**“American Soldiers And Marines
Have Been Instructed Not To
Intervene”**

**“Instead Of Weeding Out Pedophiles,
The American Military Was Placing
Them As The Commanders Of
Villages”**

**“We Were Putting People Into Power
Who Would Do Things That Were Worse
Than The Taliban Did”**



Dan Quinn was relieved of his Special Forces command after a fight with a U.S.-backed militia leader who had a boy as a sex slave chained to his bed. Credit Kirsten Luce for The New York Times

SEPT. 20, 2015 By JOSEPH GOLDSTEINSEPT, New York Times [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — In his last phone call home, Lance Cpl. Gregory Buckley Jr. told his father what was troubling him:

From his bunk in southern Afghanistan, he could hear Afghan police officers sexually abusing boys they had brought to the base.

“At night we can hear them screaming, but we’re not allowed to do anything about it,” the Marine’s father, Gregory Buckley Sr., recalled his son telling him before he was shot to death at the base in 2012.

He urged his son to tell his superiors. “My son said that his officers told him to look the other way because it’s their culture.”

Rampant sexual abuse of children has long been a problem in Afghanistan, particularly among armed commanders who dominate much of the rural landscape and can bully the population.

The practice is called bacha bazi, literally “boy play,” and American soldiers and Marines have been instructed not to intervene — in some cases, not even when their Afghan allies have abused boys on military bases, according to interviews and court records.

The policy has endured as American forces have recruited and organized Afghan militias to help hold territory against the Taliban.

But soldiers and Marines have been increasingly troubled that instead of weeding out pedophiles, the American military was arming them in some cases and placing them as the commanders of villages — and doing little when they began abusing children.

“The reason we were here is because we heard the terrible things the Taliban were doing to people, how they were taking away human rights,” said Dan Quinn, a former Special Forces captain who beat up an American-backed militia commander for keeping a boy chained to his bed as a sex slave.

“But we were putting people into power who would do things that were worse than the Taliban did — that was something village elders voiced to me.”

The policy of instructing soldiers to ignore child sexual abuse by their Afghan allies is coming under new scrutiny, particularly as it emerges that service members like Captain Quinn have faced discipline, even career ruin, for disobeying it.

After the beating, the Army relieved Captain Quinn of his command and pulled him from Afghanistan. He has since left the military.

Four years later, the Army is also trying to forcibly retire Sgt. First Class Charles Martland, a Special Forces member who joined Captain Quinn in beating up the commander.

“The Army contends that Martland and others should have looked the other way (a contention that I believe is nonsense),” Representative Duncan Hunter, a California Republican who hopes to save Sergeant Martland’s career, wrote last week to the Pentagon’s inspector general.

In Sergeant Martland's case, the Army said it could not comment because of the Privacy Act. **[A really stupid lie. Martland can waive his privacy act protection to order the release of information about himself! The act merely forbids the release of information about him without his consent. Duh. T]**

When asked about American military policy, the spokesman for the American command in Afghanistan, Col. Brian Tribus, wrote in an email: "Generally, allegations of child sexual abuse by Afghan military or police personnel would be a matter of domestic Afghan criminal law." He added that "there would be no express requirement that U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan report it." An exception, he said, is when rape is being used as a weapon of war.

"The American Policy Of Treating Child Sexual Abuse As A Cultural Issue Has Often Alienated The Villages Whose Children Are Being Preyed Upon"

The American policy of nonintervention is intended to maintain good relations with the Afghan police and militia units the United States has trained to fight the Taliban.

It also reflects a reluctance to impose cultural values in a country where pederasty is rife, particularly among powerful men, for whom being surrounded by young teenagers can be a mark of social status.

Still, the former lance corporal, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to avoid offending fellow Marines, recalled feeling sickened the day he entered a room on a base and saw three or four men lying on the floor with children between them. "I'm not a hundred percent sure what was happening under the sheet, but I have a pretty good idea of what was going on," he said.

But the American policy of treating child sexual abuse as a cultural issue has often alienated the villages whose children are being preyed upon.

The pitfalls of the policy emerged clearly as American Special Forces soldiers began to form Afghan Local Police militias to hold villages that American forces had retaken from the Taliban in 2010 and 2011.

By the summer of 2011, Captain Quinn and Sergeant Martland, both Green Berets on their second tour in northern Kunduz Province, began to receive dire complaints about the Afghan Local Police units they were training and supporting.

First, they were told, one of the militia commanders raped a 14- or 15-year-old girl whom he had spotted working in the fields. Captain Quinn informed the provincial police chief, who soon levied punishment. "He got one day in jail, and then she was forced to marry him," Mr. Quinn said.

When he asked a superior officer what more he could do, he was told that he had done well to bring it up with local officials but that there was nothing else to be done.

"We're being praised for doing the right thing, and a guy just got away with raping a 14-year-old girl," Mr. Quinn said.

Village elders grew more upset at the predatory behavior of American-backed commanders.

After each case, Captain Quinn would gather the Afghan commanders and lecture them on human rights.

Soon another commander absconded with his men's wages. Mr. Quinn said he later heard that the commander had spent the money on dancing boys.

Another commander murdered his 12-year-old daughter in a so-called honor killing for having kissed a boy.

"There were no repercussions," Mr. Quinn recalled.

In September 2011, an Afghan woman, visibly bruised, showed up at an American base with her son, who was limping.

One of the Afghan police commanders in the area, Abdul Rahman, had abducted the boy and forced him to become a sex slave, chained to his bed, the woman explained.

When she sought her son's return, she herself was beaten. Her son had eventually been released, but she was afraid it would happen again, she told the Americans on the base.

She explained that because "her son was such a good-looking kid, he was a status symbol" coveted by local commanders, recalled Mr. Quinn, who did not speak to the woman directly but was told about her visit when he returned to the base from a mission later that day.

So Captain Quinn summoned Abdul Rahman and confronted him about what he had done. The police commander acknowledged that it was true, but brushed it off.

When the American officer began to lecture about "how you are held to a higher standard if you are working with U.S. forces, and people expect more of you," the commander began to laugh.

"I picked him up and threw him onto the ground," Mr. Quinn said. Sergeant Martland joined in, he said. "I did this to make sure the message was understood that if he went back to the boy, that it was not going to be tolerated," Mr. Quinn recalled.

There is disagreement over the extent of the commander's injuries. Mr. Quinn said they were not serious, which was corroborated by an Afghan official who saw the commander afterward.

Sergeant Martland, who received a Bronze Star for valor for his actions during a Taliban ambush, wrote in a letter to the Army this year that he and Mr. Quinn "felt that morally we could no longer stand by and allow our A.L.P. to commit atrocities," referring to the Afghan Local Police.

“Sexual Abuse Was A Factor In His Son’s Death, And He Has Filed A Lawsuit To Press The Marine Corps For More Information About It”

The father of Lance Corporal Buckley believes the policy of looking away from sexual abuse was a factor in his son’s death, and he has filed a lawsuit to press the Marine Corps for more information about it.

Lance Corporal Buckley and two other Marines were killed in 2012 by one of a large entourage of boys living at their base with an Afghan police commander named Sarwar Jan.

Mr. Jan had long had a bad reputation; in 2010, two Marine officers managed to persuade the Afghan authorities to arrest him following a litany of abuses, including corruption, support for the Taliban and child abduction.

But just two years later, the police commander was back with a different unit, working at Lance Corporal Buckley’s post, Forward Operating Base Delhi, in Helmand Province.

Lance Corporal Buckley had noticed that a large entourage of “tea boys” — domestic servants who are sometimes pressed into sexual slavery — had arrived with Mr. Jan and moved into the same barracks, one floor below the Marines.

He told his father about it during his final call home.

Word of Mr. Jan’s new position also reached the Marine officers who had gotten him arrested in 2010. One of them, Maj. Jason Brezler, dashed out an email to Marine officers at F.O.B. Delhi, warning them about Mr. Jan and attaching a dossier about him.

The warning was never heeded. About two weeks later, one of the older boys with Mr. Jan — around 17 years old — grabbed a rifle and killed Lance Corporal Buckley and the other Marines.

Lance Corporal Buckley’s father still agonizes about whether the killing occurred because of the sexual abuse by an American ally. “As far as the young boys are concerned, the Marines are allowing it to happen and so they’re guilty by association,” Mr. Buckley said. “They don’t know our Marines are sick to their stomachs.”

The one American service member who was punished in the investigation that followed was Major Brezler, who had sent the email warning about Mr. Jan, his lawyers said. In one of Major Brezler’s hearings, Marine Corps lawyers warned that information about the police commander’s penchant for abusing boys might be classified.

The Marine Corps has initiated proceedings to discharge Major Brezler.

Mr. Jan appears to have moved on, to a higher-ranking police command in the same province.

In an interview, he denied keeping boys as sex slaves or having any relationship with the boy who killed the three Marines. “No, it’s all untrue,” Mr. Jan said.

But people who know him say he still suffers from “a toothache problem,” a euphemism here for child sexual abuse.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**Oops -- Surprise!
Taliban Use U.S. Humvees For
Disguised Attacks:
“Dozens Of Armed U.S. Vehicles
Have Been Captured By
Insurgents From Afghan Forces
This Year”**

**“They Frequently Use Them Against
Us On The Frontline, Especially The
Heavy Machine Guns Mounted On
Them”**

**“30-35 Humvees Were Captured By The
Taliban In A Recent Battle”**

Sep 22, 2015 By Hamid Shalizi, Reuters [Excerpts]

KABUL, - When two U.S.-made Humvees approached a checkpoint in Afghanistan's Helmand province last month, the police assumed them to be friendly local or coalition forces.

In fact, Taliban militants were behind the wheel of the sand-coloured vehicles. Caught by surprise, police stood no chance against the Humvees' mounted machine guns.

Fourteen security personnel were killed and at least seven wounded in the attack in the Musa Qala district of the southern province, said Omar Zwak, spokesman for the provincial governor.

The Humvees are among dozens of armed U.S. vehicles that officials say have been captured by insurgents from Afghan forces this year.

The stolen equipment is dwarfed by the thousands of vehicles the Afghan army and police have at their disposal, and incidents like the one in Helmand have been relatively rare.

But the thefts and threat of Western weapons being turned on them worry Afghan commanders, as they struggle to counter a 14-year insurgency to topple the government and reinstate the Taliban's hardline Islamist regime in Kabul.

"They frequently use them (Humvees) against us on the frontline, especially the heavy machine guns mounted on them," said Abdullah Danishy, deputy governor of Kunduz province in the north, scene of fierce fighting this year.

The United States spent more than \$5.5 billion on military equipment, including Humvees, for Afghan forces between 2002 and April 2013, according to a U.S. government report.

In 2011 alone, U.S. manufacturer AM General was due to supply more than 7,100 Humvees to Afghan forces.

There is disagreement over the number of Humvees captured by the Taliban.

A senior Afghan official said "dozens" had been lost, and that the seized vehicles posed "a big threat to our forces and they must be destroyed or recaptured."

An Afghan lawmaker from Helmand said 30-35 Humvees were captured by the Taliban in a recent battle in that province alone, while Mirdad Nejrabi, chairman of the Afghan parliament's security committee, said seizures had increased this year.

Coalition forces in Afghanistan referred questions on the matter to the defence and interior ministries.

The Interior Ministry said it had "lost" nine Humvees in the battlefield since the start of 2015, either destroyed or captured. The Defence Ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

According to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, the group has seized many vehicles, although he declined to give a number.

"These vehicles are important for us in the battlefield and we have no problem using them everywhere," Mujahid said.

Adding to the embarrassment of the losses, the Taliban has used the seizures in propaganda videos featuring Humvees spray painted with the movement's logo and manned by insurgents.

One was filmed in Kunduz's Chardara district, which the Taliban briefly took control of earlier this year, threatening the provincial capital. While not dated, the video was issued in August and is believed to be recent.

Other military hardware has fallen in the hands of opposing forces in Afghanistan, a common phenomenon in any conflict, but some Afghan officials said Humvees posed a particular threat because they could be used for a variety of roles by the Taliban, including sneak attacks.

Abdullah, the head of Afghan special operations in Kunduz who goes by one name, said the Taliban can use captured vehicles only for a few weeks, because they did not have the spare parts to keep them running.

"Humvees require professional use. The Taliban can only enjoy driving them for a few weeks," Abdullah said.

But Mujahid countered that the group had been able to glean tips on how to use and maintain the vehicles from the Internet, as well as from captured Afghan soldiers. He said fighters also stripped older Humvees down for spare parts.

“A Fellow Soldier Smuggled Insurgents Inside A Checkpoint” “Killed At Least 15 Afghan Troops”

September 23, 2015 Associated Press

KABUL: an attack in northern Afghanistan on Tuesday killed 10 Afghan troops who died in an “insider attack” when a fellow soldier smuggled insurgents inside a checkpoint to kill his colleagues, officials said.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the assaults. The so-called insider attacks — incidents when an Afghan soldier or policeman turns his gun on fellow troops — have been a serious problem in recent years.

In Tuesday’s assault, deputy provincial police chief in northern Zawzjan province, Abdul Hafiz Khashi, said that before dawn a “traitor” allowed an unspecified number of insurgents into the compound at the checkpoint in Qush Tepa district, where they killed 10 soldiers.

Khashi identified the soldier who enabled the attack as Mohammad Alim, saying he had obviously joined insurgents in the area. The attackers and Alim fled the scene and security forces were pursuing them, he added.

More Resistance Action



[Graphic: flickr.com/photos]

September 23, 2015 Associated Press

Tuesday a roadside bombing in northern Balkh province killed five police officers, including a district police chief, according to Sher Jan Durani, spokesman for the provincial police chief in Balkh.

The five were on patrol in a vehicle in Dawlat Abad district when their car struck the bomb. Three officers were wounded in the explosion.

20th September 2015 By AP

KABUL, Afghanistan:

An Afghan official says two police officers were wounded in an attack in Afghanistan.

Zia Durani, spokesman for the police chief in southern Kandahar province, said on Sunday that the car bomber targeted a police checkpoint in the Daman district.

Elsewhere, 16 civilians were wounded after a bomb hidden near an electric station exploded in eastern Kunar province, said Gen. Abdul Habib Sayedkhaili, the provincial police chief.

MILITARY NEWS

Is Iraq Too Broke To Fight ISIS? “Inability To Pay Salaries On Time To The Soldiers And Militiamen Has Hurt

Morale And Hindered Progress In Operations”

“Little Chance Of Yanking The Country Back From The Brink Anytime Soon”

September 4, 2015 By Hannah Allam, mcclatchydc.com. [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON —

Iraq’s ability to fight Islamic State extremists who control roughly a third of the country is hampered by a financial crisis that’s left the Baghdad government operating “hand to mouth,” Iraqi Ambassador Lukman Faily warned this week.

The inability to pay salaries on time to the soldiers and militiamen fighting the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, has hurt morale and hindered progress in operations to retake key hubs that were captured by the jihadists, Faily said in an interview Thursday.

Faily, who belongs to the ruling Dawa Party, blamed the crisis chiefly on the plummeting price of oil – the government relies on exports for some 85 percent of revenue – though economists and foreign policy analysts say that decades of mismanagement and corruption also have contributed.

Faily acknowledged government fault, citing an overdependence on oil revenues and the slow pace of addressing graft such as the use of “ghost employees,” workers who exist only on paper so that supervisors can pocket the salaries.

Ben Van Heuvelen, managing editor of Iraq Oil Report, which closely monitors the Iraqi oil sector, said a major cause of the crisis is that the previous administration of Nouri al Maliki “left zero financial buffer for the inevitable down cycle in commodity price.”

He said that Maliki’s successor, Prime Minister Haider Abadi, has “made some good moves,” including painful spending cuts and exploring revenues outside of oil, but that he stands little chance of yanking the country back from the brink anytime soon.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because it involves sensitive diplomatic and defense matters, said the Obama administration has increased its military assistance to Iraq in recognition of the twin crises of the Islamic State presence and the severe financial strain due to collapsing oil prices.

The official acknowledged that “it is an increasing challenge” for the Iraqis to fight the Islamic State, “and that’s why we’ve put so many of our own financial resources” into the campaign.

Foreign military financing, which uses U.S. funds to procure weapons, included \$300 million for Iraq for fiscal year 2014 and \$150 million for 2015 before jumping again to \$250 million in the current pending request for 2016.

In addition, the official said, the U.S. military donated some surplus American equipment, including 300 MRAPs, mine-resistant armored vehicles.

“They need a bunch of things across the board, everything from anti-tank weapons to MRAPs to Humvees to arms and equipment,” the official said.

As of Aug. 15, the official said, the total cost of U.S. operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria is \$3.7 billion, with an average cost of \$9.9 million a day.

Faily acknowledged the U.S. help and said that the Germans and Dutch, too, have contributed light weapons, equipment and anti-tank systems. But most battle-related costs, he said, are Iraq’s responsibility. That goes not just for the regular army and security forces, he said, but also for some of the Shiite Muslim militias known as the Popular Mobilization Forces.

“The actual fighting on the ground we’re financing ourselves,” Faily said. “Salaries, weapons, uniforms, equipment.”

But the budget crisis means that paychecks are late – “three months behind, four months behind,” Faily said – which, in turn, deals a blow to the morale of a fighting force that’s already much maligned for its evaporation during the Islamic State offensive that took Mosul, the second-largest city in the country.

There’s also the risk, Faily said, of losing recruits to paramilitary groups, particularly the Iranian-funded militias that the U.S. government designates as dangerous “special groups.” Though just 35,000 special groups militiamen are part of the 120,000-person Shiite paramilitary structure, he said, the loss of manpower to them is a blow to the government’s effort to assert authority over all armed factions in the fight against the Islamic State.

“If you believe, as I do, that deep political problems in Iraq created an environment that was ripe for ISIS to take over a third of the country, then you also believe that there needs to be some kind of political foundation to any long-term solution to the problem,” said Van Heuvelen, of Iraq Oil Report.

“But if the way you’re used to finding political solutions is by throwing money at the problem and bringing constituents into the fold by promising them a slice of this very lucrative oil pie, then if that pie shrinks, your ability to create political solutions evaporates.”

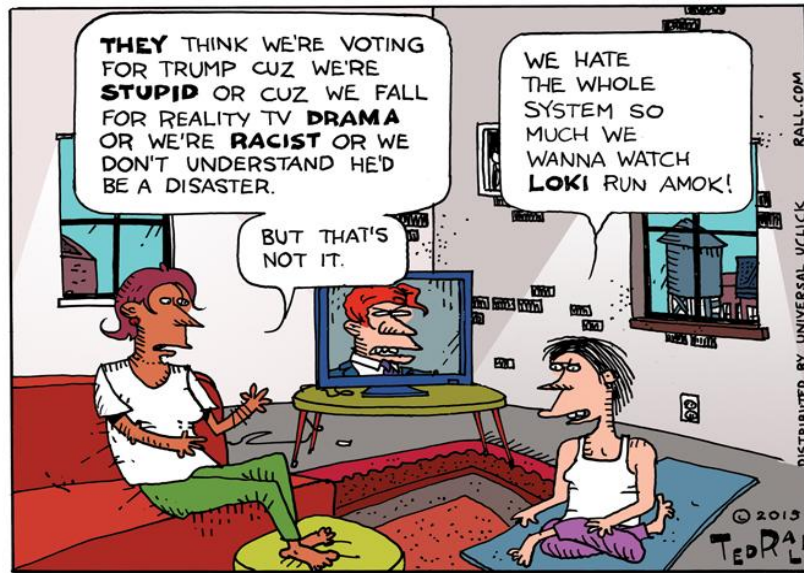
YOUR INVITATION:

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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Shahrokh Zamani, A Brave And Tireless Fighter For The Iranian Workers Movement, Has Died In Gohar Dasht Prison”

“Shahrokh Zamani Had Committed No Crime, Other Than Defending The Rights Of His Fellow Workers”

“The Responsibility For His Death Lies Completely With Those Who Have Imposed Conditions Of Slavery On The Workers Of Iran And Taken Away Their Rights To Organise And Struggle For A Better Life”



Shahrokh Zamani. Photo from Iranwire

September 20th, 2015 Posted at People And Nature. Translation by Revolutionary Socialism

This statement was put out by workers' organisations in Iran after the suspicious death on 12 September of Shahrokh Zamani, a trade union activist who was in the fifth year of a prison sentence. Iranian friends are asking that it be circulated as widely as possible.

Shahrokh Zamani, a brave and tireless fighter for the Iranian workers movement, has died in Gohar Dasht prison.

The news was received by all with total disbelief and utter shock.

In our view, whatever reasons the authorities may give, the responsibility for his death lies completely with those who have imposed conditions of slavery on the workers of Iran and have taken away their rights to organise and struggle for a better life, and with those who throw honourable and valiant human beings such as Shahrokh Zamani into dungeons.

The shocking news of Shahrokh's death in jail, without any prior history of illness, is not the first news of such a loss of life of a prisoner – and, given the current conditions in the country's jails, will not be the last.

This untimely death will naturally appear suspicious to any unbiased person.

But even without any such suspicions, the conditions in prisons – especially for worker activists and political prisoners – are already murderous enough, for a thousand and one reasons, from microwave torture to unsuitable food, from inadequate sanitation to absence of medical care, from unhealthy living quarters to every kind of mental and psychological pressure.

Shahrokh Zamani had committed no crime, other than defending the rights of his fellow workers. He had no official position, he had not defrauded any one, he had not harmed anybody and he was not a partner to any thief or highway robber.

He was a building worker and a member of the Committee for the Establishment of Independent Trade Unions, a member of the co-ordinating committee for restarting the Paint Workers Syndicate.

He was an honorary member of Paint Workers Syndicate of Alborz and the Central Province, and its founding mentor.

Shahrokh was thrown into jail in 2011 for defending workers rights, but for such a brave fighter, prison did not mean an end to struggles.

In his almost five years of imprisonment, from his two-man cell at Gohar Dasht prison, he never stopped until his last breath to struggle and fight for just causes.

Jails, courts, repression, and pressure from the security forces and jailers could not silence Shahrokh.

With his unrivalled braveness and steadfastness, and without an iota of self promotion, Shahrokh was a real symbol of Iranian workers resistance and struggle for liberation from oppression and exploitation.

The death of Shahrokh is an irreplaceable loss for his family and friends and for the workers' movement as a whole.

We are sincerely sorrow for this great loss and declare our sympathies with his family, friends, his fellow prisoners and workers all over the country.

But despite this unbearable pain, we will not retreat into our sorrow and we will turn his death into the banner of workers solidarity and unity.

Long live workers unity and solidarity!

We salute you Shahrokh Zamani!

Signed by:

Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Workers' Syndicate;

Paint Workers' syndicate of Alborz Province;

The Centre for the Defence of Workers Rights;

The Committee for the Establishment of Independent Trade Unions;

The Co-ordinating Committee for Establishing Independent Workers' Organisations;

The Co-ordinating Committee for Restarting the Tehran Paint Workers Syndicate;

The Free Trade Union of Workers in Iran.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



CHANGE WE CAN BEREAVE IN

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

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

Cost Of Drug To Treat Deadly Parasitic Infection Goes From \$13.50 A Tablet To \$750, Overnight:

“The Price Increase Could Force Hospitals To Use ‘Alternative Therapies That May Not Have The Same Efficacy’”

“A Business Strategy Of Buying Old Neglected Drugs And Turning Them Into High-Priced ‘Specialty Drugs’”

“Doxycycline, An Antibiotic, Went From \$20 A Bottle In October 2013 To \$1,849 By April 2014”

SEPT. 20, 2015 By ANDREW POLLACK, The New York Times Company

Specialists in infectious disease are protesting a gigantic overnight increase in the price of a 62-year-old drug that is the standard of care for treating a life-threatening parasitic infection.

The drug, called Daraprim, was acquired in August by Turing Pharmaceuticals, a start-up run by a former hedge fund manager.

Turing immediately raised the price to \$750 a tablet from \$13.50, bringing the annual cost of treatment for some patients to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“What is it that they are doing differently that has led to this dramatic increase?” said Dr. Judith Aberg, the chief of the division of infectious diseases at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

She said the price increase could force hospitals to use “alternative therapies that may not have the same efficacy.”

Turing’s price increase is not an isolated example.

While most of the attention on pharmaceutical prices has been on new drugs for diseases like cancer, hepatitis C and high cholesterol, there is also growing concern about huge price increases on older drugs, some of them generic, that have long been mainstays of treatment.

Although some price increases have been caused by shortages, others have resulted from a business strategy of buying old neglected drugs and turning them into high-priced “specialty drugs.”

Cycloserine, a drug used to treat dangerous multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, was just increased in price to \$10,800 for 30 pills from \$500 after its acquisition by Rodelis Therapeutics.

Scott Spencer, general manager of Rodelis, said the company needed to invest to make sure the supply of the drug remained reliable. He said the company provided the drug free to certain needy patients.

In August, two members of Congress investigating generic drug price increases wrote to Valeant Pharmaceuticals after that company acquired two heart drugs, Isuprel and Nitropress, from Marathon Pharmaceuticals and promptly raised their prices by 525 percent and 212 percent respectively.

Marathon had acquired the drugs from another company in 2013 and had quintupled their prices, according to the lawmakers, Senator Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent who is seeking the Democratic nomination for president, and Representative Elijah E. Cummings, Democrat of Maryland.

Doxycycline, an antibiotic, went from \$20 a bottle in October 2013 to \$1,849 by April 2014, according to the two lawmakers.

The Infectious Diseases Society of America and the HIV Medicine Association sent a joint letter to Turing earlier this month calling the price increase for Daraprim “unjustifiable for the medically vulnerable patient population” and “unsustainable for the health care system.”

An organization representing the directors of state AIDS programs has also been looking into the price increase, according to doctors and patient advocates.

Daraprim, known generically as pyrimethamine, is used mainly to treat toxoplasmosis, a parasite infection that can cause serious or even life-threatening problems for babies born to women who become infected during pregnancy, and also for people with compromised immune systems, like AIDS patients and certain cancer patients.

Martin Shkreli, the founder and chief executive of Turing, said that the drug is so rarely used that the impact on the health system would be minuscule and that Turing would

use the money it earns to develop better treatments for toxoplasmosis, with fewer side effects.

“This isn’t the greedy drug company trying to gouge patients, it is us trying to stay in business,” Mr. Shkreli said. He said that many patients use the drug for far less than a year and that the price was now more in line with those of other drugs for rare diseases.

“This is still one of the smallest pharmaceutical products in the world,” he said. “It really doesn’t make sense to get any criticism for this.”

This is not the first time the 32-year-old Mr. Shkreli, who has a reputation for both brilliance and brashness, has been the center of controversy.

He started MSMB Capital, a hedge fund company, in his 20s and drew attention for urging the Food and Drug Administration not to approve certain drugs made by companies whose stock he was shorting.

In 2011, Mr. Shkreli started Retrophin, which also acquired old neglected drugs and sharply raised their prices. Retrophin’s board fired Mr. Shkreli a year ago. Last month, it filed a complaint in Federal District Court in Manhattan, accusing him of using Retrophin as a personal piggy bank to pay back angry investors in his hedge fund.

Mr. Shkreli has denied the accusations. He has filed for arbitration against his old company, which he says owes him at least \$25 million in severance. “They are sort of concocting this wild and crazy and unlikely story to swindle me out of the money,” he said.

Daraprim, which is also used to treat malaria, was approved by the F.D.A. in 1953 and has long been made by GlaxoSmithKline. Glaxo sold United States marketing rights to CorePharma in 2010. Last year, Impax Laboratories agreed to buy Core and affiliated companies for \$700 million.

In August, Impax sold Daraprim to Turing for \$55 million, a deal announced the same day Turing said it had raised \$90 million from Mr. Shkreli and other investors in its first round of financing.

Daraprim cost only about \$1 a tablet several years ago, but the drug’s price rose sharply after CorePharma acquired it.

According to IMS Health, which tracks prescriptions, sales of the drug jumped to \$6.3 million in 2011 from \$667,000 in 2010, even as prescriptions held steady at about 12,700. In 2014, after further price increases, sales were \$9.9 million, as the number of prescriptions shrank to 8,821.

The figures do not include inpatient use in hospitals.

Turing’s price increase could bring sales to tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars a year if use remains constant.

Medicaid and certain hospitals will be able to get the drug inexpensively under federal rules for discounts and rebates. But private insurers, Medicare and hospitalized patients would have to pay an amount closer to the list price.

Some doctors questioned Turing's claim that there was a need for better drugs, saying the side effects, while potentially serious, could be managed.

"I certainly don't think this is one of those diseases where we have been clamoring for better therapies," said Dr. Wendy Armstrong, professor of infectious diseases at Emory University in Atlanta.

With the price now high, other companies could conceivably make generic copies, since patents have long expired. One factor that could discourage that option is that Daraprim's distribution is now tightly controlled, making it harder for generic companies to get the samples they need for the required testing.

The switch from drugstores to controlled distribution was made in June by Impax, not by Turing. Still, controlled distribution was a strategy Mr. Shkreli talked about at his previous company as a way to thwart generics.

Some hospitals say they now have trouble getting the drug.

"We've not had access to the drug for a few months," said Dr. Armstrong, who also works at Grady Memorial Hospital, a huge public treatment center in Atlanta that serves many low-income patients.

But Dr. Rima McLeod, medical director of the toxoplasmosis center at the University of Chicago, said that Turing had been good about delivering drugs quickly to patients, sometimes without charge.

"They have jumped every time I've called," she said. The situation, she added, "seems workable" despite the price increase.

Daraprim is the standard first treatment for toxoplasmosis, in combination with an antibiotic called sulfadiazine. There are alternative treatments, but there is less data supporting their efficacy.

Dr. Aberg of Mount Sinai said some hospitals will now find Daraprim too expensive to keep in stock, possibly resulting in treatment delays. She said that Mount Sinai was continuing to use the drug, but each use now required a special review.

"This seems to be all profit-driven for somebody," Dr. Aberg said, "and I just think it's a very dangerous process."

Former Russian Rebels Trade War In Ukraine For Comfortable Lives In Moscow:

“Wrapped In A Tight Armani Exchange T-Shirt And Sporting A Week’s Stubble, Borodai Said That He Has Not Been In Donetsk Since October”

“His Focus Now Is On Reviving His Consulting Company”



GENE THORP/THE WASHINGTON POST

September 16 By Andrew Roth, Washington Post

MOSCOW — There was a time when the arrival of Alexander Borodai and his posse of camouflaged gunmen could clear out a restaurant in just minutes.

But that was in Donetsk, Ukraine, in 2014, where Borodai was prime minister of a -pro-Russian separatist government.

Now, he is back in his native Moscow and, as he tells it, back to his old day job as a public relations consultant.

“When you are not on television, people start to forget what you look like,” he said, sinking into a cream-colored sofa in a tony Moscow restaurant for an interview.

“And thank God for that. It was hard to go out on the street at first.”

It is an unlikely, perhaps unbelievable, transformation for the most prominent Russian citizen in the war in Ukraine and the possible target of a Dutch investigation into the missile attack on a Malaysian airliner in July last year that killed 298 people.

Borodai is not the only one of Russia’s self-proclaimed volunteer fighters to reappear here.

As the conflict in east Ukraine has reached a stalemate, hundreds of volunteers have returned to Russia, and the early rebel leaders, many of them native Russians, have resumed comfortable, increasingly public lives in Moscow.

Wrapped in a tight Armani Exchange T-shirt and sporting a week’s stubble, Borodai said that he has not been in Donetsk since October and that his focus now is on reviving his consulting company.

Business is bad. Several international companies, which he declined to name, severed their contracts when he was subjected to sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union.

Consulting “is an intimate business that requires a personal touch,” Borodai said, which was lacking while he was out of town.

“People go to war, fulfill their duty, and then go back to peaceful, productive lives,” he said. “I don’t think this is especially interesting.”

In the meantime, the gang’s all here.

You could have bumped into Marat Bashirov, the former prime minister of the separatist Luhansk People’s Republic, at the Moscow Economic Forum in March, where he gave a lecture titled “Risks, sanctions, lobbying.”

Bashirov, a Moscow government relations consultant once employed by the oligarch Viktor Vekselberg's holding company, was subjected to sanctions by the European Union in July 2014 along with Borodai.

A snappy dresser, he remarked on a government airstrike on his headquarters in July last year in a dry post on Facebook: "It seems my Tom Ford suit has been killed. Now I will hold government sessions in camouflage."

Bashirov did not reply to requests for comment.

In Moscow, he runs several government relations firms and chairs a committee on government relations at the Russia Managers Association, a spokesman there said.

Last month, dressed in a navy blue suit, he gave a presentation to young entrepreneurs, one of whom tweeted: "Government is the regulator between producer and consumer. Marat Bashirov."

There is also Igor Girkin, the battle commander who once bragged that if not for his attacks on police stations in April last year, there would be no war in Ukraine.

He now appears at lectures with far-right nationalists and has gone spectacularly off message, accusing Russia of abandoning the separatist republics in Ukraine that it helped to create.

"The village crazy," Borodai said with a smile.

Borodai and Girkin are veterans of the ethnic conflicts that emerged with the fall of the Soviet Union. Borodai fought alongside ethnic Russians in Transnistria, Chechnya and Tajikistan during the 1990s. After each conflict, he returned to Moscow.

"For them, this is just another war," said Alexei Makarkin, a commentator on politics who studied alongside Girkin at a university in Moscow in the 1990s. "It isn't something that feels extraordinary; they fought in the '90s, after all."

Skeptics, and there are many, say that Borodai is either paid by Russia or is an employee of Russia's security services.

He denies both charges but said he passed information from -Donetsk to Vladislav Surkov, the Kremlin apparatchik said to be overseeing Russian policy on Ukraine.

Some events point to Russian control, such as the surprise arrivals of Borodai and Bashirov at a time of political chaos for the separatists. Others suggest miscommunication:

When the rebels in May last year held referendums seen as a prelude to annexation, the Kremlin ignored them.

It was an awkward moment for both sides.

"I believe he acted carefully and competently," Borodai said of President Vladimir Putin's policy in Ukraine. "I can't criticize his actions because in the end he has far more information than I do."

Russians returning from the war have diverse political views, and a small number are even openly hostile to Putin. Many more say they support Putin but believe he should have supported the volunteers more.

"The government has hindered us more than anything," said Vladimir Yefimov, a volunteer leader with a flowing beard who led 50 volunteers to war. "But I can say that because I am from here and allowed to criticize the government."

Some believe that Russia's support for volunteers fighting in Ukraine could provoke instability or blowback. There have been worrying incidents: A former separatist sniper will soon stand trial in Moscow for the killing of two police officers last autumn. And the Federal Security Service has built a 100-kilometer trench on the Ukrainian border because of concerns about weapons smugglers bringing automatic rifles and grenades from Ukraine.

But there have not been clear signs yet that returned volunteers pose an urgent threat to Russia as either criminals or politicians.

"First, there just are not that many of them," Mark Galeotti, a security expert who visited Moscow this summer, said of returning volunteers.

"I think that the Russians should be more concerned about the soldiers who are coming back."

The soldiers are Russian servicemen, some of whom have died under mysterious circumstances and are believed to have been fighting in Ukraine. Putin has shrugged off the accusations.

Those who fought openly, calling themselves volunteers, are a more eccentric lot: nationalists or far-leftists, war veterans, thrill seekers and a few would-be philosophers.

Sergei Kavtaradze, an aide to Borodai in Donetsk who was once labeled "the hipster with a machine gun," returned to Russia last year and is now finishing a film adaptation of his doctoral dissertation.

Titled "MilkForMadness," it investigates "the archetypes of war," Kavtaradze said, and the effects of war on its participants.

"It makes people go crazy," he said.

In a trailer for the film, which Kavtaradze said was produced over the past five years, scenes of combat, torture and sex are cut together in quick succession under a heroic soundtrack.

He said that he also filmed "a little bit" in Donetsk, when there was time.

"Hopefully, it may be in some Western festivals next year," Kavtaradze said of the film.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Why Do They Throw Stones?
“Jerusalem Is Burning, The Old
City Is At War, Palestinians Are
Being Attacked There On A Daily
Basis, And Al-Aqsa Has Turned
Into A Battlefield”**

**“In Case You Forgot Or Didn’t Know,
I Am Here To Remind You: You Are
Living On Land That Was Stolen
From Palestinians By Force”**

**“A Place Where Palestinians Are Still
Being Murdered And Imprisoned To This
Very Day”**

September 18, 2015 By Samah Salaime, +972 Magazine. This article was first published in Hebrew on Local Call.

Nearly every discussion on Jerusalem in the Israeli media revolves strictly around stone throwing and Islamic extremism.

Yet not a single word is said about the occupation.

Only in Israel can one speak about an intifada without mentioning the occupation.

Only here can one change the IDF’s open-fire regulations without addressing what soldiers are doing on Palestinian land, with who sent them to walk around neighborhoods and cities, and for what purpose.



Palestinian women protest as Israeli police forces block Palestinians at an entrance of the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem's old city, after Israeli police and authorities limited access to one of Islam's holiest sites, July 26, 2015, following clashes inside the compound. (photo: Oren Ziv / Activestills.org)

Stone throwing has made headlines once again this week, and the entire establishment went into a craze over the question of "how do we deal with this?"

Facebook was filled with creative answers, such as punishing judges who refrain from sentencing teenager stone-throwers to life.

Any judge who shows mercy will not be promoted. The only thing lacking from this proposal was how to forcefully deal with these kinds of judges who also happen to be Arab.

I suggest establishing a new investigative committee to look into how on earth these judges were appointed in the first place.

On the first day of the Jewish New Year, the cabinet held an emergency session following the death of a man who crashed his car after Palestinians threw stones at it. This, of course, is a tragic story, and far be it from me to diminish its severity.

But before someone repeats the mantra that you were taught by politicians — "You Arabs must condemn, decry, and swear that you are against this despicable act of violence..." — I will say that I refuse to give you even that moment of ease, just so I can talk about the issue. You will need to suck it up and wait until we properly discuss it.

I commend the Israeli media for covering the story with great sensitivity, without mentioning the occupation or actually showing what is happening inside Al-Aqsa Mosque.

I listened for hours to the news broadcasts and interviews on the topic of stone throwing.

Not a single journalist mentioned the ongoing attacks or what Jews are doing to Palestinians.

Not a single word on the settlements in occupied territory.

In fact, they didn't even use the word settlements: "We are five minutes from Pisgat Ze'ev, that is, Jerusalem," said one of the interviewees on Israel Radio, "why do they throw stones?"

Yes, you are broadcasting from a settlement that is near a checkpoint or the separation wall.

In case you forgot or didn't know, I am here to remind you: you are living on land that was stolen from Palestinians by force.

A place where Palestinians are still being murdered and imprisoned to this very day.

You are living in a place that does not belong to you — where you will never, ever feel safe.

This is the price of the occupation.

Your secured homes and armored vehicles — at the expense of the tax payer — will not increase your feeling of security.

And even if all the stone, egg, and tomato throwers rot in prison, this will not end until the occupation ends and you reach some kind of an agreement with your neighbors.

And as for all those who pride themselves on their closeness to Jerusalem as a reason to not be hit by stones: do you not live with us on this planet?

Jerusalem is burning, the Old City is at war, Palestinians are being attacked there on a daily basis, and Al-Aqsa has turned into a battlefield.

Israeli security forces accompany "a handful of extremists," who have somehow become convinced that this mosque is the new nuclear threat that puts the Jewish state at risk.

They enter the compound forcefully, accompanied by armed policemen and the full backing of this or that minister, who dreams of gaining the same fame as Ariel Sharon did just 15 years prior when he entered Al-Aqsa compound and sparked the Second Intifada.

The Jews who enter the mosque and wander around its gates are often those who start the violence. Not a single Palestinian has entered the Western Wall compound.

Not a single member of the Murabitat or Murabitun (more on them later) has started violence for the sake of provocation, at least according to the videos and reports that do not make it to your television screens.

Do you remember the woman who yelled “Muhammad is a pig” at a group of Muslim women?

She was detained for a few hours before being released. The following morning she was on one of Israel’s most popular morning talk shows, showing no signs of remorse. There are currently dozens of versions of that same woman — men and women alike — who were trained to harass, provoke, and hide behind policemen.

Fanning the flames in Jerusalem will lead to a particularly gruesome bloodbath, perhaps another Baruch Goldstein. The Israeli government is waiting for it to happen so that it can propose a partition of the compound, just like in Hebron.

The Palestinians — who can do little to protect their presence in Jerusalem aside from using their bodies and the Holy Quran — physically remain in the mosque to prevent it from being bombarded or burned.

This is the definition of the word “Murabat” — someone who ties himself to the place. In Islam, remaining steadfast on one’s land is considered a decree. It is the minimum required to protect one’s home.

Those who are experienced in these clashes have learned that if they leave a place, it will be taken by the Jews. Therefore they have decided to remain, at least until a new extremist comes and starts another inevitable round of clashes.

Al-Murabitun and Al-Murabitat are groups of Palestinian men and women — citizens of Israel and Jerusalemites — who volunteer to be present at Al-Aqsa Mosque, to pray, and guard the mosque from extremist Jews at all hours of the day.

The Israeli government, which does an excellent job at outlawing anything and anyone when it starts losing control, decided last week to ban the two groups.

Still unidentified extremists who burn down churches and homes with sleeping babies do not bother anyone in the government.

On the other hand, the government continues to abuse hundreds of worshippers at Al-Aqsa.

This is how a diabetic, 50-year-old woman from Lydd who goes to Jerusalem on weekly basis to pray describes it:

“Every time they want something else. They change the hours of entry, or they limit the age of entry.

“Sometimes they let my son in, other times I go alone.

“Lately they started taking our IDs. We gave them to the soldiers, who is going to argue with them? In the end they took the IDs to the Russian Compound jail, telling all the women to walk there in order to retrieve them. For no reason.

“We waited for three hours and then went home.

“They want to teach us a lesson so that we do not come back here.”

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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