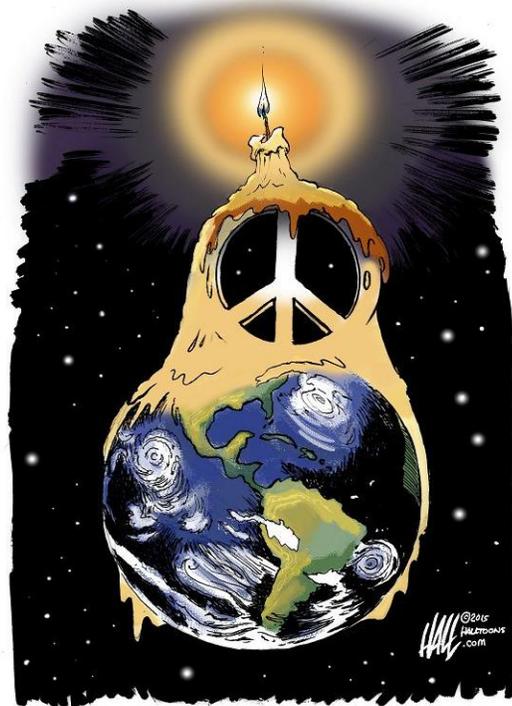


Military Resistance 13L9



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Peace on Earth, Please."]

Mass Layoffs In China's Coal Country Bringing "Flashes Of Discontent"

**"The Rich Are Too Rich, And The
Poor Are Too Poor"**

**"Strikes And Worker Protests Hit A
Record High Of 301 Incidents Last
Month"**

“If Any Of The Leaders Would Do Their Job Properly, The Situation Would Not Be Like This”



Two workers at the Xingshan mine, affiliated with Longmay Group, in Hegang in Heilongjiang Province. In September, Longmay, the biggest coal company in northeastern China, announced that it planned to lay off 100,000. Credit Li Qiang for The New York Times

DEC. 16, 2015 By JANE PERLEZ and YUFAN HUANGDEC, New York Times

HEGANG, China — In the dank shower room where the miners soak, the coal dust from their bodies staining the water chocolate, a lone worker sat smoking a cigarette, staring at the floor.

He lingered, he said, because since his pay had been cut in half, he had been eating dinner at his parents' apartment, and he dreaded the humiliation of going there again.

“If any of the leaders would do their job properly, the situation would not be like this,” said the worker, Mr. Guo, 39. “If they want to sack me, they should just do it. Can it get any worse?”

It probably will.

The mine's owner, the Longmay Group, the biggest coal company in northeastern China, announced in September that it planned to lay off 100,000 workers. The elimination of about 40 percent of the work force at 42 mines in four cities is the biggest

reduction in jobs that anyone could recall in this steadily declining rust belt near the Russian border.

China has managed mass layoffs at creaky, state-owned businesses like Longmay before, averting the threat of strikes and unrest by suppressing protests and offering payouts and job training.

But that was when the economy was booming and could readily absorb displaced workers. The test the government now faces in this depressed coal town and in other hard-hit areas across the country is whether it can head off labor discontent in a slowing economy.

Longmay has delayed the bulk of the layoffs, cutting only several hundred older workers who held nonessential jobs. Last month, the government of Heilongjiang Province, which owns Longmay, announced a \$600 million bailout that would help the company repay its bonds. But analysts see the infusion as short-term relief that will not prevent a reckoning.

The coal industry is hurting nationwide, as coal prices have fallen nearly 60 percent since 2011, said Deng Shun, an analyst at ICIS C1 Energy, a consultancy based in Shanghai. And Longmay, he said, produces far less coal with extra workers than newer, more efficient companies.

“They are quite worried about social unrest, so they delay,” he said. “These layoffs should have happened two years ago.”

“There Have Already Been Flashes Of Discontent”

Still, there have already been flashes of discontent.

In April, even before the layoffs were announced, thousands marched on the streets of Hegang, a city of about one million, to protest delayed salaries. The organizers were arrested and jailed.

In October, company management stifled a protest by locking workers in the mines. The police patrolled the streets outside the company headquarters on the day the rally was planned.

A few weeks later, Internet regulators exposed a group of workers discussing a demonstration on an online bulletin board. They were hauled to a police station, fingerprinted and warned that jail sentences would follow if they dared do it again.

“We are all on edge, the company is on edge,” Mr. Chen, 27, an organizer of that abortive protest, said over breakfast at a nearly empty restaurant, washing it down with a couple of beers at the end of his night shift. “We don’t know what is going to happen. It all depends on how the company takes care of the laid-off workers.”

Like other miners here, he spoke to a foreign reporter on the condition that he be identified only by his surname for fear of reprisal.

Of greater concern to the government, Hegang is not the only place where tensions with workers are increasing.

The number of strikes and labor protests nationwide nearly doubled in the first 11 months of this year, to 2,354, compared with 1,207 in the same period last year, according to China Labor Bulletin, a monitoring group based in Hong Kong.

The organization said strikes and worker protests hit a record high of 301 incidents last month.

The reaction of the demoralized workers is being watched closely because the staying power of the Communist Party has been immutably linked to its ability to deliver continued economic progress. The unwritten social compact here is that the party delivers growth, jobs and higher living standards, and in exchange, the workers acquiesce to its monopoly on power, surrendering the right to organize unions or protest.

That bargain could fall apart if workers no longer believe the government is living up to its end.

The signs of severe economic trouble are evident. For-sale signs hang on the facades of restaurants that draw few customers. Robberies are on the rise; manhole covers and cellphones are popular targets. Women say they have stopped wearing jewelry for fear of being assaulted.

Heilongjiang has been one of the most depressed provinces in China for years. Its economic output fell 2.2 percent in the first three quarters of this year compared with the same period last year, without adjusting for inflation, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

“What you have now is a very, very severe economic situation in one part of the country,” said Andrew Batson, China research director at Gavekal Dragonomics in Beijing. “It is very striking and very unusual.”

Still, the state-owned mines have been reluctant to cut production because there is little other work here. The first round of layoffs at Longmay, though relatively small, came soon after the September announcement.

Workers in their late 50s were called to an office on the second floor of a disused building. Two young clerks barked orders at men. They were told to sign two-page contracts that pledged a small monthly stipend and vague promises of retraining.

Mr. Hui, 55, was one of the first. “It was 7 o’clock in the morning,” he recalled. “Our captain came to our changing room after meeting with the leaders. He said, ‘Here is bad news for you guys.’ Then he said, ‘Hui, you are one of those who are above the age limit.’”

Mr. Hui said he was crushed. He had worked as a firefighter at the mine for 35 years and expected a pension. He had not been told how much severance pay he would receive, he said.

Although his wife, son and daughter-in-law had jobs, he could not make ends meet. “I have been paying the mortgage of my son and the day-to-day expenditures for our grandson,” he said. “I’m short of cash. I have to work. What else can I do? I want to give my grandson the best education so he can leave this place. There is no future in coal.”

The management of the Longmay Group declined to be interviewed. In response to a request to its headquarters in Harbin, the company said, “We are busy planning the reform of the company, and we are not ready to give information to the public.”

As the region’s population has dwindled in the last decade, the younger people who have stayed say they feel trapped. They have few skills to offer to factories in southern China, which in any case no longer hire the way they used to. And they are boxed in, expected to work in the mines, they say, by family traditions.

A 29-year-old mechanic who declined to be identified said he loved his job working with precision instruments in one of the mine’s workshops. He had tried to get a job in the port town of Dalian, but his parents forbade him to move, he said.

Blinking back tears, he said he depended on his fiancée, who earned a handsome salary as a video editor, and his father, who made more money than he did driving a truck.

“Most who are still here are like me, they don’t have a way out,” he said. “If the company would pay our salaries on time and in full, the workers would love to work.”

One employee, Mr. Cui, 40, a driver, said he had quit rather than wait to be laid off. He hopes to secure a taxi license to augment his severance of \$104 a month, which he says is not enough to get by on, much less pay back the \$6,000 he borrowed for his wife’s medical bills.

When the full brunt of the layoffs comes, the violence could be terrible, he predicted.

Since the last economic crisis, in the 1990s, a conspicuous new group had appeared: the owners of recently privatized small mines who drove around in Mercedes-Benzes.

“In the 90s, everyone was poor,” he said.

“Now the rich are too rich, and the poor are too poor. Because of the layoffs, everyone is worried. No one has a way to live outside the mines. With the New Year holidays coming, there will be chaos in Hegang.”

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY EMAIL

If you wish to receive Military Resistance immediately and directly, send request to contact@militaryproject.org. There is no subscription charge.

Same address to unsubscribe.

POLICE WAR REPORTS

Georgia Security Guard Diffuses Hostage Situation: He Is Killed By Late Arriving Cops; “Bobby Daniels, A Navy Veteran, ‘Would Never Ever Take A Gun And Point It At An Officer,’ His Grieving Wife, Cynthia, Insisted” Louisiana Enemy Combatants Kill Unarmed Man “With Handcuff Around One Wrist”

December 24, 2015 By Wesley Lowery, The Washington Post & By William N. Grigg / The Free Thought Project

Douglas County sheriff's deputies got the call around 8:20 p.m. Monday.

The security guard for a mobile home park in Douglasville, Ga., said he had just been held at gunpoint for 45 minutes as he made his evening rounds.

That was around the same time that Bobby Daniels, 48, got the frantic calls from loved ones — his 25-year-old son Bias was having an emotional breakdown, he had a gun and had just been holding a hostage.

Bobby Daniels beat the deputies there, and according to family members talked his despondent son into putting the weapon down on the hood of a car. Moments later, the father of five was shot twice — not by his son, but by a Douglas County sheriff's deputy.

Mr. Daniels' death is one of more than 960 fatal police shootings by on-duty police officers in 2015, according to a Washington Post database, and the 246th black person to be fatally shot by the police this year.

The news came as the mother of a 32-year-old mentally ill man said he was fatally shot by a sheriff's deputy after he resisted efforts to be taken into protective

custody, and police said a man shot last month by an off-duty officer at Washington, D.C.'s Union Station has died. Meanwhile, the investigation continued in the death of a Florida woman forcibly removed from a hospital.

As has often been the case in the aftermath of police shootings this year, police officials and the slain man's family tell contradictory stories of how Bobby Daniels ended up shot and dying on the asphalt.

'Bobby came for the purpose of calming his son down, he arrived before even the police,' said Chris Stewart, a civil rights attorney representing the Daniels family.

'His son pointed the weapon at Bobby, and forced him to sit back into the car, and that's when the police arrived with their weapons drawn.'

Bobby Daniels, a Navy veteran, "would never ever take a gun and point it at an officer," his grieving wife, Cynthia, insisted during a tearful press conference. "He would never do that."

"Bobby Daniels is a veteran of the U.S. military," attorney Stewart points out. "He is a father of five, married, a great man and the last person that would ever point a gun at an officer."

The family believes that Bias Daniels was going through a mental and emotional breakdown, which is a common precursor to police shootings this year. Roughly a quarter of all people shot and killed by the police this year have been in the midst of a mental health crisis, according to a Post analysis.

Mr. Stewart said that Bobby Daniels then continued to reason with his son, eventually convincing him to set the gun down on the hood of the car.

It was then, Mr. Stewart says, that deputies attempted to use a stun gun on Bias Daniels — but it was ineffective because he was wearing a heavy coat.

Bias Daniels then took a step toward the gun and, in what the family describes as an attempt to keep his son from getting the weapon, Bobby Daniels also went for the gun.

Initially, local police claimed that Bobby Daniels got the gun and pointed it at officers:

"I think that he could have been trying to help the situation instead of hurting it, but when he pointed the gun at the officers, he was shot," Douglas County Sheriff Phil Miller told reporters at the scene Monday night. "There's no doubt in my mind that my officer thought his life was in danger, and he did what he thought he had to do."

That claim has enraged family members, some of whom witnessed the shooting. They said Bobby Daniels was a Navy veteran who had for years been employed as a security guard at CNN's Atlanta headquarters and that he was an avid defender of law enforcement.

“My husband would never ever take a gun and point it at an officer,” Cynthia Daniels, the slain man’s wife, said through thick tears during a news conference on Wednesday afternoon. “He would never do that.”

They insist Mr. Daniels saw his son going for the gun and attempted to swat it away, hoping to prevent the police from having to use lethal force on his son.

“He tried to slap the gun off the car. They thought he was trying to grab the gun probably to shoot them, but no, he really wasn’t,” Garrett Daniels, a nephew of Bobby Daniels who witnessed the shooting, told Channel 2 Action News in Atlanta. “He was trying to protect him. That’s all he was trying to do.”

Speaking on behalf of the family, attorney Chris Stewart maintains that “At no point did (Bobby) touch the weapon, but for some reason the officer shot. What they should know is that they killed a victim. Bobby didn’t want anyone to be shot; he was trying to protect his son and the officers.”

According to a press release issued by Stewart, the round that killed Bobby was “fired at a distance from an AR-15.”

A statement released by the Georgia Bureau of Investigations offers a third version of events — stating that the father and son struggled over the gun, and that it was then that officers attempted to use a stun gun on the younger man.

“As the fight continued between Bias and Bobby, the handgun was pointed at the deputies, at which point one of the deputy fired, striking and killing Bobby,” the GBI said in the statement.

But Mr. Daniels’ family says the police still aren’t telling the truth. They insist that the father never had his hand on the weapon.

“At no point did he touch the weapon, but for some reason the officer shot,” Mr. Stewart said. “What they should know is that they killed a victim. Bobby didn’t want anyone to be shot, he was trying to help protect his son and the officers.”

After his father was shot, Bias Daniels grabbed the gun and ran away. He was later taken into custody and charged with aggravated assault, kidnapping and obstruction.

Mr. Daniels’ family says it will spend the holiday planning a funeral and preparing a lawsuit against the sheriff’s department.

“We want them to acknowledge the truth,” Mr. Stewart said. “Mistakes happen. They shot Bobby, and he shouldn’t have been shot. Acknowledge that. But don’t tell this family who is grieving that this man picked up a gun and pointed it at the officers. It’s just disrespectful.”

**Louisiana Enemy Combatants Kill Unarmed Man “With One Handcuff
Around One Wrist”**

Meanwhile, in Louisiana, Barbara Noel was quoted by The (Lafayette, La.) Advertiser as saying that she asked St. Martin Parish Sheriff's deputies to take her son Michael Noel into custody Monday after he exhibited signs of a mental breakdown. Mr. Noel had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and paranoid schizophrenia, she told the newspaper.

While executing the order, a deputy shot Mr. Noel in the chest after he resisted restraint and powered through two shocks from a stun gun, according to his mother and an aunt, Sable "Pat" Alex. Both women said they witnessed the shooting and that Mr. Noel was unarmed with one handcuff around one wrist when he died near the doorway.

Louisiana state police are investigating. Spokesman Master Trooper Brooks David said in an email Wednesday that he could not confirm details of the shooting.

Neighbors were shocked by what happened and agreed with Ms. Noel that her son was not dangerous.

"Everybody in the neighborhood knew Michael," said Daniel Wagner. "He's totally nonviolent."

"That's a good fellow. A real nice fellow," said Norris Celestine, another neighbor. "And I'm not saying that because of what happened. He was just a real nice person. Would not hurt anyone."

Mr. Noel was a father to three children under the age of 7.

Both deputies involved in the incident have been placed on customary administrative leave, said Maj. Ginny Higgins, St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Office spokeswoman.

In Louisiana, a coroner's office approves a protective custody order and dispatches law enforcement to take a severely unstable individual into custody for mental health treatment.

Ms. Noel said her son was afraid of hospitals, courthouses and police, but law enforcement had successfully intervened before to help control him during a breakdown.

She said her son requested a mental health professional to come Monday.

"I don't think they (police) know anything to do about that — how to deal with a mental patient," she said.

Maj. Higgins said deputies receive crisis intervention training and are trained to de-escalate a situation when an individual is suffering a mental crisis.

**Woman With Fatal Blood Clot Arrested And Thrown Out Of Hospital:
"Ms. Dawson Collapsed About 5 A.M. And Was Pronounced Dead At 6:24
A.M."**

Elsewhere, hospital officials said Wednesday that the type of blood clot revealed in the autopsy of a Florida woman who died after being forcibly removed from a

hospital is often “difficult to detect and can be impossible to treat,” while a lawyer representing the woman’s family insisted that both hospital staff and police were negligent.

Barbara Dawson, 57, collapsed Monday while being escorted in handcuffs from the hospital, where she went for treatment for breathing difficulties, Blountstown Police Chief Mark Mallory said.

She was arrested for disorderly conduct and trespassing when she refused multiple requests to leave, Chief Mallory said.

The medical examiner’s office in Panama City found that Ms. Dawson died from a blood clot due to being excessively overweight, Chief Mallory said in a statement Wednesday morning. Neither the autopsy report, nor the police report, nor the dashcam video of the incident has been released.

During a news conference later Wednesday, Calhoun Liberty Hospital CEO Ruth Attaway said the hospital would cooperate with state investigators who are looking into the matter and the circumstances of Ms. Dawson’s death would be fully reviewed.

Ms. Attaway refused to address why hospital staff called police to remove Ms. Dawson. She added that the only time hospital staff ask police to remove patients is when there is a concern about other patients’ safety.

He said Ms. Dawson collapsed about 5 a.m. and was pronounced dead at 6:24 a.m.

Mr. Parks said his firm is in the preliminary stages of their investigation on whether to file a lawsuit against the Blountstown Police Department, Calhoun Liberty Hospital or both.

“Both have culpability,” he said.

The incident comes amid increased scrutiny of police treatment of blacks in the wake of several high-profile police-involved deaths. Ms. Dawson was black, the family’s lawyer said. Chief Mallory said the officer who arrested her is a white man and is on his regularly scheduled days off.

Mr. Parks’ law firm, the Tallahassee, Fla.-based Mr. Parks and Crump, has represented black families in high-profile national cases, including the shooting deaths of black men Trayvon Martin in Florida and Michael Brown in Missouri. When asked to compare this case to others, Mr. Parks called this “a civil rights case of modern proportions.”

“You have a health side and a law enforcement side to it,” Mr. Parks said. “She is telling them that she is feeling a certain way and they decided that they need to get rid of her and use law enforcement to do just that. That deliberate indifference in this situation led to her death.”

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

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

ANNIVERSARIES

December 28, 1971

**“Members Of The Vietnam Veterans
Against The War Leaving The Statue
Of Liberty, Which They Had Occupied
For Two Days”**



(Source: Photograph Collection of the American Museum of Immigration, Liberty Island, U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS)

[This comes from the weblog maintained by James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace: imagineaworldof.blogspot.com] [From the history of the Statue Of Liberty, by the National Park Service, www.cr.nps.gov]

Tim MacCormick of New Jersey and fourteen other members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, on the afternoon of December 26, 1971, arrived on Liberty Island by the Circle Line boat along with other tourists.

But, when the last return ship to Manhattan sailed that evening, the veterans were not aboard. Instead, just before closing time, they hid among the exhibit partitions, building materials, and storage closets which were lying about the monument's base while work was being finished on the American Museum of Immigration.

When NPS personnel made their 7:30 evening check-up of the statue, they found that the veterans had seized control of the landmark and barricaded the three ground floor entrances.

The men inside refused to speak to or admit any Park Service people, but on the door they posted a typewritten statement addressed to President Richard M. Nixon:

"Each Vietnam veteran who has barricaded himself within this international symbol of liberty has for many years rationalized his attitude to war. . . . We can no longer tolerate the war in Southeast Asia. . . . Mr. Nixon, you set the date (for leaving Vietnam), we'll evacuate."

On December 27, twenty-one National Park police flew to Liberty Island from Washington where they were joined by New York City police and Coast Guardsmen. These security forces stood by while the government attempted to reach a peaceful compromise with the occupiers. They were told that they would be permitted to picket and protest on the island if they would simply vacate the statue, allowing it to reopen to visitors.

The veterans rejected the offer, flew the United States flag upside down from the statue's crown, and waited.

Law enforcement officers also waited. During that day thousands of disappointed tourists were told at the Battery that they could not go out to the statue. Congresswoman Bella Abzug (Democrat-New York) sent a telephone message of support to the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, United States Attorney Whitney North Seymour, Jr., went before District Court Judge Lawrence Pierce to request an injunction directing the veterans to open the doors, leave the statue except during regular visiting hours, and permit Park Service personnel and tourists to enter.

On the morning of December 28 Judge Pierce issued a temporary restraining order, instructing the protestors to leave the statue "forthwith."

Two hours later, after conferring with their lawyers, the veterans removed the barricades from the entrances and emerged with “clenched fists raised.”

They had cleaned up their debris and caused no significant damage to the property. The monument was reopened to the public, with the first ferry-load of visitors arriving at 2:15 that afternoon.

Tim MacCormick issued a statement to the press explaining why they had picked this particular target:

“The reason we chose the Statue of Liberty is that since we were children, the statue has been analogous in our minds with freedom and an America we love.

“Then we went to fight a war in the name of freedom. We saw that freedom is a selective expression allowed only to those who are white and maintain the status quo.

“Until this symbol again takes on the meaning it was intended to have, we must continue our demonstrations. . . . “

MORE:

A Vietnam Veteran Who Occupied The Statue Of Liberty Remembers; An Iraq Veteran Against The War Understands

December 24, 2006 By Tim Blangger of The Morning Call

Nestled in a corner of a tiny Carbon County hollow, between an unnamed hill and an unnamed stream, Paul Fichter’s home sits in quiet, exurban isolation. His lawn, a collection of lush ferns scattered among mature pine trees, is calming, meditative.

But climb the steps of Fichter’s simple wooden porch and the mood changes. Next to the door, a three-foot-long Air Force missile pierces the weather-worn trailer’s side at combat-ready angle, its fin end exposed.

Granted, Fichter’s eccentric outdoor inventory includes a miniature Arc de Triomphe model encased in a backyard terrarium, twin Buddha-like statues, an Allentown fire hydrant and one of the city’s discarded Call Box emergency telephones, the last two bought at auction.

But the missile ...

The ordnance helps Fichter disguise damage a falling tree did to his trailer several years ago. The outside of the trailer looks fine, but inside, the damage is more apparent. The roof still leaks.

For those who know Fichter, the missile also recalls the Vietnam War and the effect it had on him. He was one of 15 veterans who occupied the Statue of Liberty for three nights and two days over the Christmas holiday 35 years ago, starting on Christmas Eve.

Fichter looks good for a 61-year-old. He's stopped drinking but still smokes. He ties his long, silver-gray hair in a ponytail. When he thinks, he sometimes strokes his substantial gray beard. The war, that war, for good or bad, plays a big part in who he is.

A star football player at Emmaus High School — he was starting offensive end on the 1962 team that shared a league championship with football powerhouse Northampton that year — he was drafted after he failed to register for classes at Moravian College, which he attended for a year.

After a year in the Army, he decided to volunteer for duty in Vietnam, in part, he says, because he liked the anti-authoritarian air the veterans returning from the war displayed. He wasn't very political or even all that upset about being drafted, he remembers

But the year Fichter spent in Vietnam turned out to be a traumatic experience. When he talks about it today, his voice changes, takes on a once-removed quality. "You just didn't know who the enemy was," he says, haltingly.

Friends of Fichter's from Emmaus also served in Vietnam. But Bill Trotter, his football teammate, thinks the experience especially affected Fichter.

"He was always a very intelligent, very introspective guy. I think he had much more of a difficult time adjusting," says Trotter, now a partner in the Hotel Bethlehem. "He thought about a lot of things and I saw that intensified when he came back. He thought a lot about his experiences and it had a deep impact on him."

The decision to become part of the anti-war movement was a slow process for Fichter.

When he came home, he decided not to marry or have children. "I was in no condition to marry anyone. I knew of the problems, of what happened when guys tried," he says.

"I came to realize that, basically, I came home to a parade, which is to say Emmaus in 1968 was an environment that was still in favor of the war. I received slaps on the back and handshakes and 'Nice job; well done, lad' for what had been the most morally abominable thing I had ever done or ever hoped to do."

One night in the spring of 1971 — he remembers it was a Monday, for some reason — Fichter caught bits of a national news report from Washington, D.C., where an anti-war group, the Vietnam Veterans Against The War, was camping on The Ellipse and returning war medals.

The vets sardonically called their non-violent “assault on Congress,” as Fichter puts it, Dewey Canyon III, a reference to Dewey Canyon II, the military code name given to a secret operation in Laos, Vietnam’s neighbor, which began earlier that same year.

Fichter was moved by what he saw in the coverage of that event, especially images of Vietnam Vets and Gold Star mothers, women who lost sons in the war, being turned away from the iron gates of the Arlington National Cemetery, where they had wanted to hold a demonstration.

“I came to a rapid conclusion,” he recalls. “If I was going to be involved in any capacity beyond an individual effort, this would be the organization.”

The next day, he arranged for a leave of absence from his construction job and drove to Washington to join the Dewey Canyon vets.

That trip began his involvement with the group, which included attending dozens of gatherings, conventions and protests.

Almost by chance, he came to be among the veterans who occupied the Statue of Liberty.

He first learned of the planned action at a peace encampment at Valley Forge, outside of Philadelphia.

“I was quietly approached and told that if I wanted to take part, I should be at a certain time and place the next day,” Fichter recalls. Once they were there, the group still wasn’t told of its final destination, although Fichter says at least a few of the veterans knew the details.

He believes the secrecy had much to do with a widely held belief among the vets that the government had spies inside the anti-war movement.

“There was a general expectation that we were going to spend some significant time in prison for our actions,” Fichter says. The vets feared the Nixon administration would bring down the full weight of the federal government on them, he says.

The Statue of Liberty occupation coincided with other veteran actions around the country, including a protest in which several veterans chained themselves to the fence near the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia.

Fichter’s group stopped at a home in northern New Jersey — Fichter isn’t sure exactly where — and the group made sandwiches, which they stuffed into the pockets of their jungle fatigues. Then they drove to Manhattan and boarded the last ferry of the day to Bedloe’s Island.

The 15 men ascended the Statue of Liberty then hid in the arm, which was undergoing repairs, and waited until the staff of the National Park Service left the island.

“We wanted to stay in the statue until the war ended, but we knew that was fairly optimistic,” he says. One of the vets, armed with a roll of dimes, went to the pay

phone in the statue's lobby and began calling media outlets. Within hours, the occupation was national news.

The event itself was actually uneventful. The vets didn't want to damage the statue, just draw attention to their opposition to the war.

The vets ate sandwiches and drank instant coffee, which they found in the canteen area of the statue.

They held a news conference and discussed the occupation with officials from the National Park Service.

Bill Garvin, one of Fichter's best buddies, took an American flag from the lobby and climbed out onto the statue, hanging the flag upside down — an international symbol of distress. The image made many newspapers the following day.

"We tried to keep a focus," Fichter says. "We weren't against the American people or the people who worked for the National Park Service. We showed that we were some human beings who were trying to end the war."

The vets negotiated with park officials and, after three days, they left as a group, returning on a ferry to Manhattan. They had taken up a collection among themselves and left the money for the coffee they drank. They also left a note apologizing for any inconvenience they might have caused park workers.

No charges were filed.

In the end, says Fichter, there was no "mindless cheering and shouting." A few other vets met the occupiers as they returned and there was a press conference at a local restaurant. Mostly, the protestors were hungry.

"We hadn't won. The question was, did we do anything? We had tried. That was our perspective," says Fichter.

Fichter continued to work with Vietnam Veterans Against the War but eventually came to realize he had to stop.

"I began to burn out," he says. "I continued with local actions, but the torch was being passed. I was no longer able to function that well. I had encountered too much."

A few weeks after the occupation, Fichter says, the Allentown office of the FBI called, leaving a message with his mother, Muriel, an English teacher at Emmaus High School. They wanted to interview Fichter — "interview being an interesting euphemism," he says.

They didn't ask about the statue occupation, Fichter says, but wanted to know about his involvement in the veterans' peace group.

The interview "contributed to the hastening of my psychological decline," Fichter says.

Vietnam began his descent, but it wasn't until 40 years after his return that he took steps to arrest it.

Three years ago, at the start of direct U.S. involvement in Iraq, Fichter sought help from the Veterans Administration for the first time.

Fichter says the Iraqi war may have contributed to his mounting emotional problems. He can't say for sure. Doctors told him to stop following the news because doing so might upset him.

He was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress syndrome and began taking medication. He makes a point of praising his VA doctors and the help he's received.

He is now semi-retired from his landscaping and handyman jobs, collecting disability benefits.

Fichter's delayed reaction to his post-traumatic stress syndrome doesn't surprise veteran Michael Hoffman, also from Emmaus, who experienced a similar, if not quite so delayed, reaction from his Iraqi tour of duty.

"At first I was happy to be back, but slowly, I started having problems," says Hoffman, 26, who now lives outside of Philadelphia. "I started drinking continually and started having nightmares. I realized something was wrong. I was never for the war, but I had the usual soldier's mentality. I had orders. I followed the orders, and then I got to go home."

Reluctantly at first, Hoffman started speaking out against the war, then the 1997 Emmaus High School grad became one of the founding members of Iraqi Veterans Against The War.

Veterans from both Vietnam and the Iraq conflict have made strong connections, Hoffman says. "So many of the Vietnam Vets devoted their lives after Vietnam to making sure it didn't happen again. Now, they're watching my generation fight a war they swore they would never allow. It is literally killing them inside. I'm seeing Vietnam Vets who were clean and sober for years go back to drinking. Iraq is making them relive Vietnam."

Less than four years into the Iraq war, Iraqi veterans are speaking out against it, says Frank Corcoran, a Vietnam veteran who volunteers for Veterans for Peace, a Philadelphia-based group opposed to the Iraq war.

The Iraqi Veterans Against the War held national planning sessions last January in Philadelphia. A series of informational meetings, to get their word out, followed, says Corcoran.

"Most of our members are out of the service and actively speaking out," says Corcoran. "We're a lot of ex-Marines, ex-medics, folks who were deep into" the war.

That Iraqi vets are voicing their opposition to the war doesn't surprise Ted Morgan, a political science professor at Lehigh University, who teaches courses on the Vietnam war.

Opposition to the war among Vietnam vets was a “historically unprecedented movement in the military. It took an enormous breaking through of people’s consciousness. Before Vietnam, there was a very strong consensus in the country that the United States could do no wrong overseas.” Vietnam Veterans were part of changing public opinion, Morgan says.

“Vets in the (Vietnam) war, whether they were in the VVAW or not, were not viewed as anti-war people but as really important voices in the movement. They had super credibility for what they were saying because they had been there, engaged in combat and had seen it first hand.”

In a storage room in his trailer, Fichter keeps a box of booklets and flyers from his days in Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and he has been thinking about looking through it for the first time since he ended his involvement.

“Those were some good times,” he says. “I’d like to work on the differences between the VVAW in big cities and smaller towns. A lot of the vets from the bigger cities were socialists. Guys like me from the smaller towns, we worked at Bethlehem Steel. We didn’t want to end capitalism. We wanted to end the war.”

Fichter is also slowly working his way back. He’s happy in his home — “Hovel, Sweet Hovel,” a sign near his door reads — calmly talking about this being where he wants to settle for the rest of his life. A small stream runs behind the property and a series of landscaping lights flicker off the water at night.

He watches the stream from a window, sitting in a barber’s chair in his living room, between two bookcases. One holds books about Vietnam and a few war mementoes, including a helmet Fichter wore when he served as a military policeman. The other bookcase has a Civil War theme. “I guess I was looking for something, a war that had some meaning,” Fichter says of his interest in the 19th-century war between the states.

A third bookcase, the largest of the three, holds hundreds of dusty folk recordings, mostly on long-playing, 331/3 records. The large television near the chair is dark and silent. Folk music from a satellite radio station floats in the background.

At last, Paul Fichter may have found his peace.

RECEIVED FROM READERS

“In Puerto Rico, Things Are Coming To A Point Of Confronting Our Colonial Reality”

From: DR

Sent: December 25, 2015

Subject: RE: Military Resistance 13L8: The Good Old Story

Just want to express my appreciation for your hard work and dedication to this project. Maybe a few more people like you and Alan [Outreach Organizer, Military Initiative Organizing Committee] and we would be just around the corner from victory! It is a one thousand mile "race" so we just have to stick it out and do what we know is correct.

In Puerto Rico, things are coming to a point of confronting our colonial reality. This despite over one hundred years of USA terror and "carrot" treatment. But there is still much to do...

And in the USA a similar point of definition is apparently verrrrryyyy far off. But as you know, sooner than later social consciousness takes a leap and the system is in crisis.

You and I and a few hundred thousands in USA are working towards that moment. So: Felicidades. and may you enjoy much good health in the coming year.

DR

Reply: T

Your email is heartwarming.

May I please include it in the Newsletter so all of those who contribute material and do other work may see it?

You're right about material reality leading to sudden leaps which no one expects.

Here, most likely not as soon as we would wish, but sooner than anybody now expects.

See, for example, a hint of things to come:

<http://www.alternet.org/guess-what-pot-government-spending-americans-are-far-more-liberal-politicians-assume?akid=13171.218754.jpH8R4&rd=1&src=newsletter1037228&t=3>

Propsero ano Nuevo y Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0SaAJzm4oo>

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

“Obama Set The Cause Of Universal Health Care Back Many Years With His Surprise Endorsement Of A Republican Health Insurance Plan”

“Obama’s Bill Was Written By The Health Insurance And Pharmaceutical Corporations”

“More And More Companies And Jobs Are Tied Directly To The Cash Flow Of The Privatized System Obama Created”

12/22/2015 by Glen Ford, Executive Editor, Black Agenda Report

Boosters for the Obama administration claim that his Affordable Care Act is a legacy that qualifies Obama for permanent residence in the pantheon of progressive domestic policy presidents, like Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson.

Black Agenda Report takes the opposite position: that, in 2009, newly-elected President Obama set the cause of universal health care back many years with his surprise endorsement of a Republican health insurance plan, hatched in the bowels of the Heritage Foundation in the 1980s and championed by GOP presidential candidate Bob Dole in 1996 and Massachusetts Republican Governor Mitt Romney shortly thereafter.

Obama’s bill was written by the health insurance and pharmaceutical corporations, and brutally imposed on the Left wing of the Democratic Party, whose members were threatened with loss of party campaign support if they resisted.

Cleveland Congressman Dennis Kucinich was the last holdout for the so-called Public Option, a scaled down alternative to Obama’s corporate-based scheme that finally disappeared altogether – as did Rep. Kucinich’s seat in Congress, which was redistricted out from under him.

The White House justified its abandonment of Single Payer health care, claiming compromise was necessary in order to get Republican votes. But the Democrats controlled both Houses of Congress, and Obamacare passed without a single Republican vote.

As a consolation for the loss of the Public Option, Obama offered to create non-profit health insurance co-ops in the various states. However, more than half of these co-ops have gone out of business in an environment dominated by cut-throat health care capitalists.

Our biggest concern seven years ago was that Obama was setting in concrete the corporate role in health care, planting the insurance and drug companies right smack in the middle of a multi-trillion dollar river of federal money – and that it would take decades to pry their profiteering hands loose.

We still feel that way.

With every year, more and more companies and jobs are tied directly to the cash flow of the privatized system Obama created. As Bruce Dixon has warned, conservative judges are increasingly likely to rule that rolling back corporate pillaging of health care would constitute an illegal “taking” and seizure of reasonably expected profits. Under Obama’s Trans Pacific Partnership trade rules treaty, the corporations would win.

Therefore, it is encouraging that majorities of Americans still support Single Payer health care, in the form of Medicare for All.

A new Kaiser Poll shows 58 percent of the public are in favor of Medicare for All, including 81 percent of Democrats.

That’s only slightly below the high mark of Single Payer support in the months before new President Barack Obama announced that he wasn’t really talking about Single Payer when he used the term “universal coverage” – he meant universal payment to private corporations, under penalty of law.

His plan, Obamacare, remains less popular than Medicare for All. Obama’s legacy is that he has made it far more difficult to dislodge the corporations from their parasitic role in U.S. health care.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**West Bank Village Punished For
Resisting Israel’s Brutality:
“Seventeen Are Currently
Imprisoned”**

“We Have The Right To Express Our Rejection Of Occupation In All Of Its Forms”



Members of the Tamimi family prevent an Israeli soldier from arresting Muhammad Tamimi, 12, during the weekly protest against the occupation in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh on 28 August. Muhannad Saleem Active Stills

December 22, 2015 by Nancy Murray, The Electronic Intifada

The small West Bank village of Nabi Saleh is paying a steep price for a video of Israeli brutality.

Widely circulated in recent months, the video shows the mother and sister of 12-year-old Muhammad Tamimi wresting him away from a masked and armed Israeli soldier. [see Photo above from the video.]

The boy was throttled and jammed into boulders on 28 August, despite having a cast on his arm.

Israeli politicians not only defended the Israeli soldier's actions; some argued that he should have behaved in an even more cruel manner.

Miri Regev, Israel's culture minister, said that the soldier should have shot the boy's unarmed rescuers.

Since the incident, the Israeli army has detained scores of young men from the village and subjected them to lengthy periods of interrogation, during which abusive treatment occurred.

Seventeen are currently imprisoned, including Waed Tamimi, Muhammad's 19-year-old brother.



Palestinian youths from the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh during a hearing at Ofer military court on 21 December. Ore Ziv Active Stills

Waed was arrested, along with his 20-year-old cousin Anan, during a 19 October night raid on the home of Waed's parents, Nariman and Bassem Tamimi.

Four other young men were seized by the army that same night, including Louay Tamimi, whose brother Mustafa was killed in December 2011 when a soldier fired a high velocity tear gas canister at his head from a meter away.

Bassem Tamimi, who was on a lecture tour of the US when his son was arrested, has himself been detained a dozen times. He has also been tortured and spent three years in prison without a conviction.

Bassem and his cousin Naji, the father of Anan, have been recognized as human rights defenders by the European Union. In 2012, Bassem was declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.

The cousins have helped coordinate their village's unarmed resistance activities. Rather than submit mutely to the confiscation of their land and freshwater spring by Israeli settlers, the residents of Nabi Saleh have for the last six years held spirited weekly demonstrations demanding an end to the Israeli occupation.

In so doing, they have defied Israeli Military Order 101, which criminalizes participation in protests, assemblies and vigils, as well as waving flags and

distributing political material. Efforts to influence public opinion are prohibited as “political incitement.”

But to Nabi Saleh residents, such military orders are inherently unjust. During his June 2011 trial for organizing demonstrations, Bassem Tamimi told the court:

“Despite claiming to be the only democracy in the Middle East, you are trying me under military laws which lack any legitimacy; laws that are enacted by authorities that I have not elected and do not represent me. I am accused of organizing peaceful civil demonstrations that have no military aspects and are legal under international law.

“We have the right to express our rejection of occupation in all of its forms; to defend our freedom and dignity as a people and to seek justice and peace in our land in order to protect our children and secure their future.”

Israeli and international activists have frequently joined the weekly protests in Nabi Saleh, and face an army deploying stun grenades, tear gas, skunk water, rubber-coated steel bullets and live ammunition. Hundreds of demonstrators have been injured, some permanently, and two were killed.

Over the years, as many as 200 villagers have been detained out of a population of just over 500. All of them belong to Tamimi clan.

At the 28 August protest, the army arrested Bassem’s 19-year-old nephew, Mahmoud. Vittorio Fera, an Italian activist, was also detained.

Fera was swiftly acquitted by an Israeli civil court from the charge of throwing stones and other objects.

Mahmoud — who faces identical charges in the military court system — has spent months now in Ofer, an Israeli prison in the West Bank, without a hearing.

For Palestinians, including children, there is no presumption of innocence and little likelihood of acquittal, given the 99.74 percent conviction rate in military courts.

Most of these convictions are a result of plea bargains, agreed to after the coercive extraction of confessions from children as well as adults.

Some prisoners may be sentenced to administrative detention. Under that practice, detainees are held without charge or trial and without being told what evidence the authorities hold on them.

The 17 young men from Nabi Saleh may have been marooned in military prisons — where their families cannot visit them or even send them warm winter clothes — because someone from the village has been intimidated into saying who they saw throwing stones.

Two young men detained on 9 December have now been released, but Nabi Saleh families fear there will be more arrests. Israel appears bent on doing everything it can to

impose collective punishment on a village that serves as the symbol of resistance to a nearly half-century-long military occupation.

As the youth await trials and anticipate years in prison, US activists have set up a Facebook page to press for their release. Bassem Tamimi, meanwhile, wonders why the international community has not taken a determined stand against Israel's relentless repression.

"The silence of the world is worse than what the occupier is doing," he said. "We can't understand this silence, because our struggle is for humanity and the world is supposed to care about human rights."

**Hundreds In Hebron Demand
Return Of 21 Palestinian Dead
Bodies Held By Occupation
Regime:
"The 21 Hebron-Area Palestinians
Whose Bodies Are Still Being
Withheld Are Among Dozens Of
Others To Be Taken And Held Inside
Of Israel"
Zionist Ghouls Says Families Will Never
Get Bodies Of Family Members Back For
Burial**

Dec 18 2015 Ma'an

Hundreds of Palestinians from the Hebron district on Thursday marched in demand that the Israeli government immediately return the bodies of 21 Palestinians who were recently killed by Israeli forces.

Families of those killed, Hebron governor Kamel Hmeid, and a number of Palestinian officials were among crowds that gathered to protest Israel's policy of withholding the bodies of Palestinians who carried out attacks on Israelis, or who were suspected of doing so.

Participants condemned the use of collective punishment by Israeli authorities, raising photos of individuals whose bodies were being held and demanding their unconditional return.



The 21 Hebron-area Palestinians whose bodies are still being withheld are among dozens of others to be taken and held inside of Israel in recent months.

Israel's security cabinet announced in October that the bodies of Palestinians shot dead by Israeli forces after carrying out attacks on Israelis would no longer be returned to their families.

The decision — one among a series of stringent security measures — was reportedly taken in order to avoid mass funerals that Israeli leadership have termed “nationalistic” events that “incite” against Israel.

The move was initially pushed by Israeli Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan and approved by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel's refusal to hand over the bodies ignited protests in Hebron in October that eventually led to the return of the bodies of five Palestinians. A mass joint-funeral following their return drew thousands of mourners.

The policy has made waves among the Palestinian public as well as international rights organizations who argue that withholding bodies punishes family and community members who have not carried out crimes.

Families in the Hebron area — where over 30 Palestinians have been killed and where nearly a third of detentions have taken place since Oct. 1 — have been hit particularly hard by Israeli policies that target the relatives and communities of attackers.

Severe restrictions on movement, mass arrest campaigns, as well as punitive home demolitions are among measures implemented in Hebron by Israeli authorities since the recent escalation in violence in the occupied Palestinian territory.

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



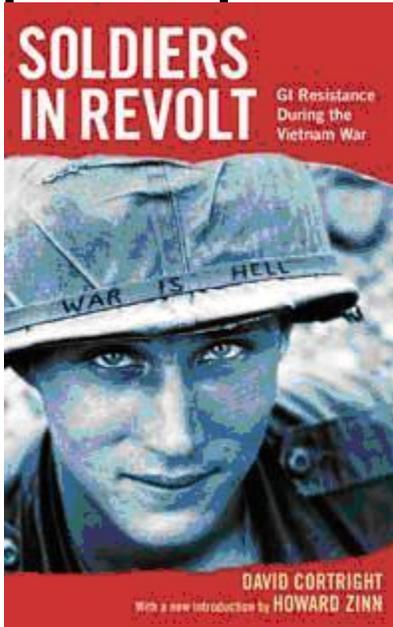
YOUR INVITATION:

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.

**FREE TO ACTIVE DUTY:
A Vietnam Veteran Describes The
Strategy And Tactics Used By Troops To
Stop An Imperial War**



SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT

**[CIVILIANS: \$16 INCLUDING POSTAGE]
BUY ONE FOR A FRIEND/RELATIVE IN THE SERVICE.
CHECKS, MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO: THE MILITARY
PROJECT]**

**Requests from active duty or
orders from civilians to:
Military Resistance
Box 126
2576 Broadway
New York, N.Y.
10025-5657**

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out
Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website
<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



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.

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.



Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org

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

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