

## Military Resistance 14C8



**“The U.S. Already Has Combat Troops In Iraq, While All The While Claiming There Are No ‘Boots On The Ground’”**

**‘Iraqi Soldiers Had Come Under Sustained Attack From IS And Had Fled Into The Mountains, Abandoning Their Base’**

**“At This Point, The U.S. Military Took An Important Decision To Send**

# **Troops To Prop Up The Iraqi Forces In And Around Makhmou” “Without Any Public Admission, They Sent 200 Marines To The Abandoned Base”**

March 28, 2016 By Patrick Cockburn, The Independent

It was suddenly announced last week that the Iraqi army was taking territory from Islamic State forces in what was presented as the first steps in an offensive to recapture the city of Mosul.

It sounded as if the self-declared Caliphate was crumbling and was particularly welcome news since it coincided with the Isis suicide bombings in Brussels. The message was that Isis might be able to slaughter civilians in Europe, but was being defeated on its home turf in Iraq and Syria.

I was particularly interested in the attack because two months ago I had been with the Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga in Makhmour, the town in the front line between Mosul and the Kurdish capital Erbil, where the offensive by the 15th Division of the Iraqi Army was said to have taken place.

At that time, local Kurdish commanders said that there was little fighting and they did not expect an offensive to recapture Mosul, which Isis had captured in June 2014, to happen any time soon.

Several weeks later in February, I was travelling on the main road between Baghdad and Kirkuk when I was held up by a large convoy of military vehicles moving north.

I asked what was happening and was told that this was the 15th Division heading for Makhmour with the long term intention of joining an Iraqi army-Kurdish Peshmerga assault on Mosul. It did not appear that this was imminent since I did not see any tanks and most of the divisions vehicles were soft-skinned or lightly armored Humvees.

Back in Baghdad, I asked several senior officials about recapturing Mosul and they all downplayed the idea that this would take place before the end of 2016.

It may have been that they knew more than they were saying about what had happened to the 15th Division, said to be 4,500-strong and to be one of the better units in the Iraqi army, in the days immediately after I had seen it on the road.

What had really occurred at Makhmour is significant because it shows the continuing weakness of the Iraqi military as well as the extent to which U.S. military troops are returning to the battlefield in Iraq in far greater numbers than the U.S. administration has been willing to admit.

The 15th Division had indeed established a base near Makhmour where its arrival was greeted by the Iraqi Defense Minister Khalid al-Obaidi.

**But Nancy Youssef writing in The Daily Beast cites three U.S. defense officials as saying that the Iraqi soldiers had then come under sustained attack from IS fighters and had fled into the mountains, largely abandoning their base. One of the officials is quoted as saying that “they dispersed into the mountains out of an abundance of caution.”**

**Only a few headquarters units stayed behind dug in at the base.**

**At this point, the U.S. military took an important decision to send its own troops to prop up the Iraqi forces in and around Makhmour.**

**Without any public admission or even telling the families of the U.S. soldiers involved, they sent 200 Marines from the Marine Expeditionary Unit with four artillery units to the by now largely abandoned base.**

**Their arrival was wholly contrary to the impression the Pentagon had previously given that U.S. soldiers in Iraq are limited in number and not engaged in front line combat duties.**

Though the Marines were within rocket range of Isis ten miles away, they were not added to the official U.S. roster of 3,870 troops in Iraq because they were supposedly there on a temporary assignment.

**The U.S. public may not have known that their soldiers were back in Iraq defending a fire base, but Isis certainly had observed the arrival of the Marines and the artillery. They began firing rockets at the base, one of which hit a bunker on 19 March, killing Master Sergeant Louis Cardin, a 27-year-old Marine from California, and injuring eight other Marines, three of them seriously.**

Two days later they made a ground attack in which two Isis fighters were killed. At this point, the Pentagon was forced to become more open about where Sergeant Cardin had been when he died and admit that Marines were not just acting in support of the Iraqi Army and Peshmerga.

The purpose of sending the Marine unit into such a dangerous place was to revive the morale of the 15th Division and to some extent this was successful. Though U.S. defense officials spoke of the Iraqi troops fleeing into the mountains, they may mean the ridge of steep hills behind Makhmour and not the mountains further north. Last Thursday Iraqi troops supported by the Marine artillery and airstrikes by the U.S.-led coalition captured three abandoned villages in the front line after an advance of less than a mile.

**The episode does not bode well for a successful attack to retake Mosul this year.**

**The Iraqi army has never really come together again since its defeat by Isis in northern and western Iraq in 2014.**

Though it recaptured Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, which it lost last May the city is largely in ruins with 5,700 buildings destroyed or damaged by airstrikes. The Iraqi ground forces involved were limited in number and largely acted as a mopping up force.

This is an ominous sign for any future attack on Mosul, since Isis is likely to fight for it to the last man and could only be defeated if all the buildings in the city were systematically destroyed by U.S. airpower as happened a year ago in Kobani.

The story of the 200 U.S. Marines at Makhmour and the flight of the 15th Division illustrates more than just the fragility of the Iraqi armed forces.

**It underlines the degree to which the U.S. already has combat troops in Iraq, while all the while claiming that there are no “boots on the ground”.**

**Sergeant Cardin was not officially even in Iraq when he died because he was one of 1,470 U.S. service personnel only temporarily in the country.**

Taken together with the 3,870 officially there and 1,100 contractors working for the Pentagon in Iraq who are U.S. citizens this brings the total to over 6,400.

The U.S. military have been crowing over how their special forces killed the Isis finance director Haji Iman last week and there is no doubt Isis is under extreme pressure in Iraq. In Syria, the Syrian army backed by Russian airstrikes is close to recapturing Palmyra, while the Syrian Kurds have been pushing south in Hasakah province in the north east of the country.

All this looks more impressive on a small scale map than when one travels for hours skirting the Isis front line in Iraq and Syria which one Peshmerga general put at 3,700 kilometres long.

**Claims of Isis losing control of important roads and supply routes are less significant than appears because Middle East truckers are adept at using makeshift tracks to bypass obstacles.**

**The speed with which Isis responded to the arrival of the 15th Iraqi Division and the U.S. Marines at Makhmour shows that they are by no means a spent force, their enemies are weaker than they look and the Caliphate is still far from final defeat.**

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE  
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE  
WAR**

## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **In Southern Uruzgan Province “District Police Chief Wali Dad Said Around A Dozen Police Checkpoints Had Been Attacked By Taliban Gunmen”**

### **“If We Don’t Get Support And Reinforcements Soon We Might Lose The Whole District”**

March 28, 2016 by Rahim Faiez, The Associated Press

An Afghan official said overnight attacks by the Taliban on two police checkpoints in the volatile southern Helmand province killed at least eight police.

Col. Almas Kahn, deputy police chief in Helmand, said the attack happened in the Gereshk district around midnight.

Though Kahn blamed the Taliban, the group did not immediately claim responsibility for the attack. Afghan forces have been trying to reduce the number of checkpoints as they are vulnerable to insurgent attacks.

In the southern Uruzgan province, an official said that two days of fighting between police and insurgents in the Charchino district had left 12 police and 20 Taliban dead.

District police chief Wali Dad said around a dozen police checkpoints had been attacked by Taliban gunmen, wounding another 27 police.

“If we don’t get support and reinforcements soon we might lose the whole district,” he said.

Taliban spokesman Qari Yousaf Ahmadi claimed responsibility for Uruzgan attacks.

Separately, the Taliban claimed responsibility for firing a series of rockets at Kabul’s new parliament building early Monday. No casualties were reported.

Rockets are occasionally fired at government and diplomatic areas in Kabul, but casualties are rare and the capital has seen few deadly attacks in recent months.

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

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# **The Fight For Fallujah: Why Can't The Iraqi Army Win In Anbar's Extremist Capital? "The IS Has Supporters Among The Locals Here"**

**"Some Of These Sunni Muslim  
Groups Don't Like The IS Group"  
"However These Groups Like The Iraqi  
Government Even Less"**



(الشعبي ل لاحتشد الرسمي الموقع: الشعبي)

For several months now, soldiers from the Iraqi army's First Division have been deployed in the Subaihat area on the outskirts of the city of Fallujah, most of which is controlled by the extremist group known as the Islamic State.

But despite this, the forces fighting the extremists here have not been able to make much headway re-taking Fallujah. The extremist group has already been expelled from other nearby cities and areas, such as Tikrit, Baiji and Ramadi.

"This battle for Fallujah is different from all the other battles that the Iraqi army is waging against the Islamic State," Qassim al-Tamimi, a captain in the army stationed there, told NIQASH. "There are a number of factors that advantage the extremists," he explained. "These are demographic, political and geographic. And as a result we suffer."

Also based around Fallujah are other Iraqi military divisions – the 10th, 8th and 17th as well as a brigade related to the Baghdad Operations Command, the military unit dedicated to the capital's security, and of course, units belonging to Iraq's controversial volunteer Shiite Muslim militias.

Still, as the captain points out, nobody has been able to liberate Fallujah from the Islamic State, or IS, group, yet.

"Our intelligence suggests that there are around 2,000 IS fighters in Fallujah, and about half of them are foreigners," al-Tamimi says. "We believe they have about 500 military vehicles, most of which were stolen from the army after the fall of Mosul. The IS group is now filling these vehicles with explosives and they detonate them if we try to advance."

Fallujah was the first major city to come under the control of the IS group in January of 2014, around six months earlier than the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. The fact that Fallujah is so close to the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, is a major security problem for the Iraqi government. Members of the government and senior commanders in the Iraqi army have said that Fallujah is blocked off from the capital and that Baghdad is safe. Yet in late February a group of IS fighters was able to attack the Baghdad suburb of Abu Ghraib, break into a grain silo and then return to their bases in Fallujah with the badly needed grain.

The Iraqi army has managed to expel the IS group from other cities in and around this area. But Fallujah presents a unique set of factors that are making the task particularly difficult here.

Firstly there is Fallujah's geography. It's location on the border of three provinces and its role as a link between Baghdad and other provinces, including a road to Jordan, means that it's a very important base for the IS group, one that will be fiercely defended.

It is also a city in the middle of a rural area with densely planted agricultural roads all going to Baghdad that are hard to control.

"There are dozens of farming villages that have their own direct connections to Baghdad," says Abdullah al-Halbusi, a tribal leader originally from Fallujah who now lives in Baghdad. "So the IS group has turned these villages into battle fields and they use the villages to infiltrate Baghdad whenever they want to."

There is an agricultural road going from the villages north of Fallujah - Ibrahim bin Ali, Saba al-Bour and Subaihat – directly to the Taji suburb of Baghdad and another one going from Zaidan and Zoba villages, east of the city, into Abu Ghraib, al-Halbusi told NIQASH. There's also another road heading into Baghdad's Yusufiya district.

One of the most pivotal towns around Fallujah is Karamah. And in April 2015, the Iraqi army launched an operation – the so-called Karamah Dawn – to take back the town. It was unsuccessful.

One of the biggest problems was the lack of proper roads. Military vehicles couldn't get down the muddy thoroughfares around the town and foot patrols are too dangerous thanks to IS snipers and improvised explosive devices.

There are thousands of soldiers and militia members deployed around these villages but they still cannot stop IS fighters from making their way through the small towns. Most of the militia members come from the south of Iraq and don't know the area at all, especially the back roads. Additionally the IS group has supporters among the locals here who help them get through the towns; the militias and army don't have that insider knowledge or support, al-Halbusi points out.

Whereas in Anbar's other major city, Ramadi, which was freed of the IS group in early 2016, the Iraqi military had contacts with local tribes, here they have none.

**Fallujah's tribes are wary of the Iraqi army and government and have refused to enter into any kind of alliance. Some of these Sunni Muslim groups don't like the IS group either and they have refused to submit to them or work with them.**

**However these groups – which include factions like the 1920s Revolution Brigades and the Mujahideen Army, or Jaysh al-Mujahideen – like the Iraqi government even less.**

“There are ongoing negotiations about an alliance between the Iraqi government and a number of the armed factions inside Fallujah,” says a senior Anbar official, who spoke to NIQASH on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the information. “Any such alliance would help the Iraqi army enter the Karamah area. The deal is that the army would not arrest members of the armed factions or their families. But given the levels of mistrust, these are very difficult negotiations.”

International politics is also preventing an easy campaign in Fallujah. The US government, an important ally of the Iraqi government in the fight against the IS group, does not want the volunteer Shiite Muslim militias to participate in the campaign in the mostly-Sunni-populated area.

And the Shiite Muslim militias feel the same antipathy toward the US.

The US is not opposed to the idea of the volunteer militias on principle, local analysts agree, but they are concerned as to what the less disciplined fighters will do after they have fought the IS group in Sunni-majority areas – they don't want a repeat of acts of revenge that were seen in Tikrit last year - and they also worry about the militias who appear to prefer to take orders from Iranian sponsors rather than from the Iraqi government.



When Ramadi, Anbar's other major city, was liberated, this was not as much of a problem because there the volunteer militias were not in the area. This is not the case with Fallujah where thousands of members of these militias are fighting or present on the outskirts of the city.

**“The volunteer militias could liberate Fallujah but we are worried that the US air force would attack us,” Abu Jafar al-Lami, one of the militia members on the outskirts of Fallujah, told NIQASH during a telephone interview.**

**“American planes killed a number of soldiers a few weeks ago as they tried to advance into Fallujah,” he points out.**

**The US Secretary of Defence conceded a US plane mistakenly carried out a raid that killed nine Iraqi soldiers near Fallujah.**

And then of course there are the feelings of the people of Fallujah to consider.

**Fighting in 2004 between US forces and locals resulted in almost half the city in ruins. Many locals have not forgotten this, nor have they forgotten what they see as their persecution by the Iraqi government more recently.**

“The fight for Fallujah is going to take a long time and it's going to require a lot more preparation than the battle for other cities (like Ramadi and Tikrit),” Faleh al-Issawi, deputy head of Anbar's provincial council, told NIQASH.

“That's part of the reason that the army decided to try and liberate Heet (near Ramadi) first. The army should complete their work in areas east of Ramadi first before heading to Fallujah. Everyone knows Fallujah will be different – that the IS group is going to fight hard to defend its position there and that there are thousands of unarmed civilians inside the city too.”

Nonetheless the sooner Fallujah is liberated the better, adds local political analyst Ahmad al-Alousi. The fact that the IS group controls it represents a great threat to Baghdad and also to the city of Karbala, home to some of Shiite Muslims' most sacred sites. “If Fallujah is safe then there will be an end to suicide bombings and exploding cars in Baghdad,” al-Alousi notes optimistically. “The IS group would lose its last stronghold in the east of the province and would be forced to withdraw toward the Iraqi-Syrian borders.

**Anyway,” al-Alousi concludes, “whatever operations the army succeeds with in Anbar won't be at all useful if Fallujah is not liberated, because the rear flank will remain open and vulnerable to IS attacks.”**

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## **Iraq Is Broke:**

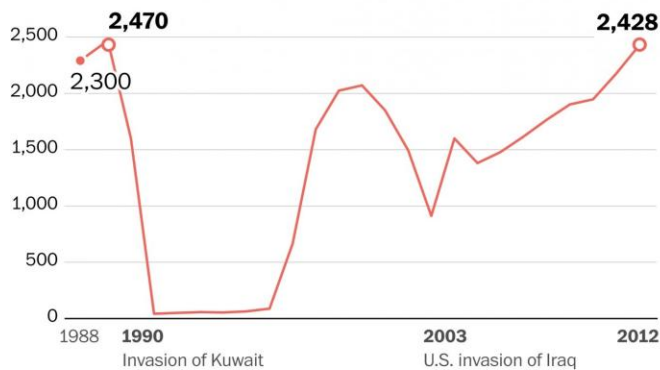
**“Now The Corrupted Government  
Is Asking The People For  
Austerity, And Because Of It The  
Fate Of Trillions Is Unknown”**

**“Hospitals, Which Have Long Treated  
Iraqis Free Of Charge, Have  
Introduced Nominal Fees, Even For  
Those Visiting Sick Relatives”**

**“Iraqis Complain That Their Leaders  
Steal From The Country With Impunity”**

**Iraq continues mass exports of oil, prices plummet**

**Iraqi exports of crude oil** (Thousand barrels a day, by year)



**Monthly standard crude oil** (Brent spot prices)



Note: Jan. 1988 and Jan. 2016 data points are monthly averages.

March 5 By Loveday Morris, Washington Post

BAGHDAD —

Some Iraqi officials refer to it as “the gap,” and it is becoming as pressing a concern as the fight against the Islamic State.

Each month, Iraq’s government pays out nearly \$4 billion in salaries and pensions to the military and a bloated array of public-sector workers.

But with more than 90 percent of government revenue coming from oil, it is bringing in only about half that as crude prices plunge.

The United States is stepping in to try to make sure the country can continue military spending while it seeks international loans and embarks on an austerity plan. Still, some Iraqi officials and analysts say the government might struggle later this year to pay the 7 million people on the public payroll, which could trigger mass unrest.

With oil prices hovering around \$30 a barrel, the entire region is being forced to cut budgets, reduce state handouts and make other painful adjustments.

But for Iraq, the decline comes in the midst of an already destabilizing war. There are bills for reconstructing flattened cities and assistance for 3.3 million Iraqis who have been internally displaced over the past two years, with more expected to come.

With the state facing the prospect of bankruptcy, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi is trying to address corruption and boost government income in sometimes unpopular ways.

“We have to fill the gap,” said Mudher Salih, an economic adviser to the prime minister. “It’s really severe now, the cash flow is very low and the old cash cow has no milk.”

In recent weeks, Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr has mobilized tens of thousands of protesters in central Baghdad to demand reform, putting pressure on Abadi.

It echoes protests in the summer, when thousands of Iraqis took to the streets to protest government corruption and a lack of electricity and other services.

This year, they are being asked to pay more for those services, while government salaries have been trimmed 3 percent.

“Now the corrupted government is asking the people for austerity, and because of it the fate of trillions is unknown,” Sadr told the crowds on Friday, adding that the demonstrations were an effort to “save Iraq from thieves.”

**Iraqis are facing more nominal charges every day. Hospitals, which have long treated Iraqis free of charge, have introduced nominal fees, even for those visiting sick relatives. There are plans for increased electricity charges.**

**In the southern city of Basra, traders have protested new customs charges.**

**“In a time of war, not the kind of thing you want to be doing,” Sajad Jiyad, a research fellow at the Baghdad-based Iraqi Institute for Economic Reform, said of increased charges. “It’s not great for morale.”**

But Abadi says the government has to make money where it can.

Iraq has predicted a budget deficit of about \$25 billion this year, but that was based on an oil price of \$45 a barrel. The shortfall could be double that, Salih said.

To cope in the short term, Iraq is dipping into its foreign reserves, saying it expects them to fall to about \$43 billion this year from \$59 billion in October.

Abadi has expressed confidence that the government can overcome the crisis, but some are more pessimistic.

“They are burning through their reserves faster than anticipated now, which could lead to a point where it would be difficult to continue imports and run a modern state economy,” a Western official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment publicly about the issue.

Iraq is seeking more financing from the International Monetary Fund after receiving a \$1.24 billion emergency loan last year. The United States is offering a \$2.7 billion loan for military spending, and Germany has lent the country just over 500 million euros (\$550 million) for reconstruction.

**The government is also trying to issue bonds and treasury bills. But a bond issue last year was halted because of the high yields demanded by investors.**

Meanwhile, Iraqis complain that their leaders steal from the country with impunity.

**Mishaan Jabouri, a member of parliament’s integrity committee, which is tasked with monitoring corruption, caused a stir last month when he admitted that he took millions of dollars in bribes.**

**“Each one of us has a role in the corruption,” he told al-Etijah television.**

“Did you take a bribe?” the interviewer asked. “I swear on my honor I did,” he replied, adding that at least he continued his investigative work.

Abadi is trying to move against the graft. Four Iraqi officials were referred to court on corruption charges last month, but with powerful figures set to lose out and graft present at every level of government, the challenge is huge.

“It’s not easy to change 12 years of waste and corruption overnight,” Salih said about the prime minister. “He’s trying.”

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# **Thousands Of Iraqis Gather In Baghdad's Streets To Protest Corruption And Call For An Independent Cabinet: "Al-Sadr Had Warned The Prime Minister That If He Fails To Come Up With A New Government, He Would Send His Followers To The Heavily Fortified 'Green Zone'"**



File photo: Iraqis gathered for a third week in a row to protest corruption as they called for a government overhaul [Ahmed Saad/Reuters]

12 Mar 2016 Al Jazeera

Tens of thousands of Iraqis have taken to the streets of Baghdad for the third week in a row to demand a political overhaul.

Gathering on Friday in the capital, protesters heeded a call to gather by powerful Shia cleric Muqtada al- Sadr, who is pressuring the Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to push on with a plan to form a cabinet of independent ministers.

In a pre-recorded speech aired during the demonstration, al-Sadr said: "I urge Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abbadi to press on with plans to form an independent cabinet of technocrats, to fight graft despite political pressure to desist.

“I want the prime minister to continue his reform plan with no fear of political pressure.”

The cleric has given the prime minister 45 days to appoint a cabinet, which he hopes will tackle corruption. If al-Abadi fails, he says he will bring a vote of no confidence in parliament.

Those attending the demonstration held up banners calling for a clean sweep of the government, and chanted that they would defend Iraq with their “blood and souls”.

Al Jazeera’s Jane Arraf, reporting from Baghdad, said that while there were few banners with al-Sadr’s photograph, “it was clearly his rally”.

“There have been protests before. This one is an indication of ongoing rifts between some political parties backing the prime minister.”

Our correspondent said that al-Sadr had urged the government in the past to give land previously granted to corrupt officials to those in need, and called for senior government officials to donate half of their salaries to the poor and those fighting against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group.

She added that al-Sadr had warned the prime minister that if he fails to come up with a new government, he would send his followers to the heavily fortified “Green Zone”, which houses government buildings and foreign embassies, including that of the United States.

“He’s told that embassies and missions that they shouldn’t be afraid of an attack, but it is still very clearly a threat,” our correspondent said.

A day ahead of Friday’s protests, al-Abadi delivered a televised speech to the Iraqi public where he said he had submitted reforms to implement the promised ministerial reshuffle.

The leader first announced his plan to reshuffle the cabinet in February.

The current Iraqi political structure is a quota-based system in which each ethnic and religious group - such as Shia, Sunni, Christians Arabs, Kurds and others - is assigned its own specific representation in the parliament, government and military.

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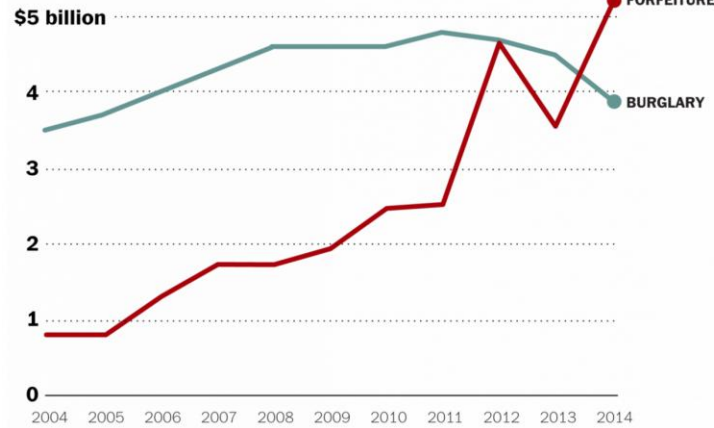
## **POLICE WAR REPORTS**

# **Justice Department Restarts Program That Lets Thieving Scumbag Local**

# Cops Grab Cash And Goods From People Guilty Of Nothing At All: They Are Stealing More Than Burglars

## Asset forfeitures surpass burglaries

Total annual dollar value of assets seized by federal law enforcement and burglary losses



WAP0.ST/WONKBLOG

Source: Institute for Justice, FBI Crime Reports

29 March 16 By Cristopher Ingraham, The Washington Post

The Justice Department has announced that it is resuming a controversial practice that allows local police departments to funnel a large portion of assets seized from citizens into their own coffers under federal law.

The “Equitable Sharing Program” gives police the option of prosecuting asset forfeiture cases under federal instead of state law.

The Justice Department had suspended payments under this program in December, due to budget cuts included in last year’s spending bill.

“In the months since we made the difficult decision to defer equitable sharing payments because of the \$1.2 billion rescinded from the Asset Forfeiture Fund, the financial solvency of the fund has improved to the point where it is no longer necessary to continue deferring equitable sharing payments,” spokesman Peter J. Carr said Monday.

**Asset forfeiture is a contentious practice that lets police seize and keep cash and property from people who are never convicted of wrongdoing — and in many cases, never charged.**

Studies have found that use of the practice has exploded in recent years, prompting concern that, in some cases, police are motivated more by profit and less by justice.

The Justice Department's Equitable Sharing Program allowed state and local authorities to pursue asset forfeiture under federal, rather than state law.

Federal forfeiture policies are more permissive than many state policies, allowing police to keep up to 80 percent of assets they seize.

**Asset forfeiture is fast growing -- in 2014, for instance, federal authorities seized more than \$5 billion in assets.**

**That's more than the amount of money lost in every single burglary that year.**

Reformers had hoped that the suspension of the program in December was a signal that the Justice Department was looking for ways to rein in the practice. But that no longer appears to be the case.

"This really was about funding, not a genuine concern about the abuses rampant in the equitable sharing system," said Scott Bullock, president of the Institute for Justice, in an interview. The institute is a civil liberties law firm that researches asset forfeiture and advocates on behalf of forfeiture defendants.

**It has reported extensively on what it calls the "profit motive" created by the Equitable Sharing Program: because police get to keep a share of the items they seize, they have an incentive to take more stuff.**

Bullock said the suspension and return of equitable sharing demonstrate the need for Congress to act on the issue. "Changes to forfeiture policy can be swept away by the stroke of a pen," he said.

But the suspension of the program had outraged law enforcement groups. In a statement last December, the heads of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National District Attorneys Association and other groups said in a joint statement that the changes would have "a significant and immediate impact on the ability of law enforcement agencies throughout the nation to protect their communities."

"We are seeing a lot more pushback from law enforcement," Bullock said. "Even to the point where they are ... making budgetary appeals saying, 'we need this for our bottom line.'"

**"And that's something that's been unusual to see, and it goes to our point about what this is really about -- raising the revenue," he added.**

Law enforcement groups appear to have had some successes in rallying members of Congress to their side. In January, New Hampshire Sens. Kelly Ayotte (R) and Jeanne Shaheen (D) called on the Justice Department to restore the payments.

**Military Resistance In PDF Format?**

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## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

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

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

**It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent, and revolutionary struggle for democracy.”**

**-- V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, 4th English Edition; Vol. 22**

# Air Force Reveals Artist Rendering Of \$5 Trillion Stealth Money Pit



March 28, 2016 by Paul Sharpe, Duffle Blog

WASHINGTON —

Air Force officials have revealed the first artist renderings of the service's next-generation stealth money pit, which Congress has already earmarked roughly \$5 trillion toward for research and development.

The highly advanced B-36S money pit will be outfitted with radar-evading stealth technology and is highly classified, giving the service the added benefit of evading larger public scrutiny of wasteful spending.

News of the pit comes just one month after the Air Force unveiled its first images of the B-21 stealth bomber, an aircraft that looks similar to the B-2 bomber.

The B-21 will be designed to avoid advances in enemy radar technology for at least two to three months, until Chinese hackers steal engineering blueprints from an idiotic defense contractor clicking suspicious links in his email.

Officials have not yet said what types of missions the pit will be used for, but some are speculating it could be used in sophisticated targeting operations against wide-ranging government budget line items, such as the GI Bill and infrastructure spending.

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## “The Capitalist Seeks By All Means To Press Down The

**Living Standard Of The Worker,  
To Expand To The Maximum  
The Unpaid Labor, Surplus  
Value”**

**“Capitalist Production Cannot  
Take A Single Step Forward  
Without Reducing The Share Of  
The Workers In The Social  
Product”**

**“Relative Wages Steadily Fall Lower  
And Lower, Without Pause Or  
Interruption”**

**“Surplus Value, I.E. The Unpaid Wealth  
Of The Capitalists Squeezed Out Of The  
Worker, Grows Just As Steadily And  
Constantly Higher And Higher”**

From: Rosa Luxemburg; Introduction To Political Economy; Ms. 1909-1910 [Excerpt]

We assumed in our earlier example that the worker had to work the first six hours out of an eleven-hour working day in order to cover his wage, i.e. his means of subsistence, and then spend five hours creating surplus value for the capitalist for free.

We assumed in this example, therefore, that the production of means of subsistence for the worker cost six hours' labor.

We also saw how the capitalist seeks by all means to press down the living standard of the worker, to expand to the maximum the unpaid labor, surplus value.

But let us assume that the worker's living standard does not change, i.e. that he is still in the position to obtain the same quantities of food, clothing, linen, furniture, etc. We assume, therefore, that there is no reduction in wages in absolute terms.

If however the production of all these means of subsistence becomes cheaper, as a result of advances in production, and requires therefore less time, then the worker will spend a shorter time covering his wage.

Let us assume that the quantity of food, clothing, furniture, etc. that the worker needs per day no longer demands six hours' labor but only five. Then the worker will not spend six hours out of his eleven-hour day replacing his wage, but only five hours, and he will have six hours remaining for unpaid labor, for the creation of surplus value for the capitalist.

The share of the worker in his produce has been reduced by one-sixth, while the share of the capitalist has grown by one-fifth.

There has however been no reduction in the absolute wage. It may even come about that the living standard of the workers is increased, i.e. that absolute wages rise, let us say by 10 percent, and indeed not just in money terms, but also the actual means of subsistence of the workers.

But if the productivity of labor has risen in the same time by some 15 percent, then the share of the workers in the product, i.e. their relative wage, has actually fallen, despite the rise in absolute wages.

The share of the worker in the product thus depends on the productivity of labor.

The less labor it takes to produce his means of subsistence, the smaller his relative wage. If the shirts that he wears, his boots and his caps, are produced with less labor than before, due to advances in manufacture, then he may obtain with his wage the same quantity of shirts, boots and caps with his wage, but at the same time he now receives a smaller share of the social wealth, the total social product.

The daily consumption of the worker, however, is made up of the same quantities of all the different products and raw materials. Not only do (advances in) shirt manufacture cheapen the worker's maintenance, but likewise in the cotton manufacture that supplies material for his shirts, the machine industry that supplies sewing machines, and the yarn industry that supplies yarn.

Similarly, the worker's provisions are made cheaper not only by advances in baking, but also by American agriculture that supplies grain on a massive scale, by advances in railways and steam shipping that bring this American grain to Europe, and so on.

**Every advance in industry, every increase in the productivity of human labor, makes the maintenance of the workers cost ever less labor.**

**The worker need therefore spend an ever smaller part of his working day on replacing his wage, and the part in which he creates unpaid labor, surplus value for the capitalist, becomes every greater.**

But the constant and ceaseless progress of technology is a necessity for capitalism, a condition of its very existence.

Competition between individual entrepreneurs forces each of them to produce their product as cheaply as possible, i.e. with the greatest possible saving on human labor.

And if anyone capitalist introduces a new and improved process into his own factory, this competition forces all other entrepreneurs in the same branch of production to improve their technology in the same way, so as not to be driven from the field, i.e. the commodity market.

The visible outward form of this is the general introduction of machine power in place of manual, and the ever more rapid introduction of new and improved machines in place of old.

Technical inventions in all areas of production have become a daily occurrence.

The technical transformation of all industry, not only in production itself but also in means of communication, is an incessant phenomenon, a vital law of capitalist commodity production.

And every advance in labor productivity is expressed in a reduction in the amount of labor needed to maintain the worker.

**In other words, capitalist production cannot take a single step forward without reducing the share of the workers in the social product.**

**With each new technological invention, each improvement of machinery, each new application of steam and electricity to production and communications, the share of the worker in the product grows smaller and the share of the capitalist larger.**

Relative wages steadily fall lower and lower, without pause or interruption, while surplus value, i.e. the unpaid wealth of the capitalists squeezed out of the worker, grows just as steadily and constantly higher and higher.

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

# **Execution Of Palestinian By Zionist Soldier: “Although This Occurs In The Plain View Of Other Soldiers And Officers**

# **They Do Not Seem To Take Any Notice”**

## **“No One Around The Soldier Who Fired The Shot Seemed To Treat The Incident As Unusual”**



(Image: YouTube/B'Tselem/Screenshot)

March 25, 2016 by Jon Queally, staff writer; Common Dreams

The release of video footage showing the extrajudicial killing of a wounded Palestinian man on Thursday has led to the arrest of the Israeli Defense Force soldier who pulled the trigger, but rights groups say the documented incident only confirms their warnings regarding how the Israeli military routinely behaves in the Occupied Palestinian Territories when cameras are not rolling.

The Palestinian man who was shot and killed, identified as Abed al-Fatah al-Sharif, was one of two Palestinians reported as being involved in the stabbing of an Israeli soldier, who was slightly wounded in an attack.

In the video, released by the Israeli human rights groups B'Tselem, al-Sharif is seen wounded and unconscious in the middle of the street in the city of Hebron.

While al-Sharif lies nearly motionless—though clearly still alive—numerous soldiers, police officers and medical personnel make no effort to administer aid, and largely ignore he's there at all.

After approximately two minutes, a soldier is seen stepping forward, aiming his weapon at a-Sharif and shooting Al-Sharif in the head from close range, killing him. “Although

this occurs in the plain view of other soldiers and officers,” B’Tselem noted, “they do not seem to take any notice.”

As the footage continues, blood can be seen pouring from al-Sharif’s head and flowing in streams down the street.

**As journalist Robert Mackey of The Intercept reports, “Several Palestinian and Israeli observers were struck by the fact that no one around the soldier who fired the shot seemed to treat the incident as unusual — suggesting that such extrajudicial killings of suspected attackers have now become ‘routine,’ as critics have charged.”**

Speaking with the Guardian, B’Tselem spokesperson Sarit Michaeli said, “In this case it seems crystal clear a soldier executed a wounded Palestinian assailant while he was on the ground. You can see he is alive (but) injured. It is also clear from the video that an Israeli soldier has been injured. But this kind of conduct is shocking, especially considering the blasé response of the other soldiers and security forces who are also seen. It raises quite serious questions about why these appear so unsurprising to these other soldiers and that needs to be seriously investigated.”

UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nickolay Mladenov condemned the apparent “extrajudicial execution” of al-Sharif. “This was a gruesome, immoral, and unjust act that can only fuel more violence and escalate an already volatile situation,” Mladenov said, according to the Maan News Agency.

B’Tselem called the incident beyond troubling. “The law is clear,” the group said in a statement: “Shooting to kill is only permitted when the person is endangering the lives of others. Once the danger is over, he or she must not be harmed.”

Philip Luther, Director of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at Amnesty International, agreed. “The shooting of a wounded and incapacitated person, even if they have been involved in an attack, has absolutely no justification and must be prosecuted as a potential war crime,” Luther said.

**According to Haaretz, a lawyer representing the soldier says he readily admits to killing the already wounded and motionless man, but defended his actions “because he felt that his life was in danger.” [Must be following news of US Police executions for that lame lying bullshit. T]**

**But Amos Harel, who covers the media and military matters for Haaretz, described the killing as nothing less than a ‘cold-blooded execution’—one, however, that will surprise very few people who understand how the Occupation works.**

“The public atmosphere in Israel being what it is, a cold-blooded execution should come as no surprise,” Harel wrote on Friday. “Politicians and rabbis are repeatedly calling on soldiers to kill terrorists without thinking too much about it.”

Though the IDF soldier was detained and faces possible criminal charges, Luther said the implications of this case go far beyond the fate of one individual, citing how groups including Amnesty and B’Tselem have documented similar incidents since the uptick of Israeli-Palestinian violence in recent months.

**Earlier this month, though the video evidence was less clear, groups charged that another Palestinian man accused of being involved in a knife attack was shot in the head and killed by an Israeli police officer as he lay on the ground wounded.**

“Israeli forces have a long history of carrying out unlawful killings – including extrajudicial executions – in the Occupied Palestinian Territories with impunity,” Luther said.

“While it is encouraging that the soldier in the video has reportedly been suspended and placed under investigation, previous Israeli investigations have failed to hold members of the Israeli forces accountable even when there has been clear evidence of criminal wrongdoing. The Israeli authorities must use this opportunity to end the culture of impunity that has made such killings increasingly commonplace.”

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## **1/3 Of Palestinian Village Left Homeless By Occupation Regime In 2016:**

### **“87 Of The Village’s 250 Residents, Including 35 Children, Have Lost Their Homes In Three Separate Demolitions”**

March 26, 2016 by IMEMC News & Agencies

Mass Israeli demolitions, in the Jordan Valley village of Khirbet Tana, have left more than a third of its Palestinian residents homeless since the beginning of the year, the UN said Friday.

**The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said 87 of the village’s 250 residents, including 35 children, had lost their homes in three separate demolitions since January.**

**The demolitions are, according to Ma’an, part of one of the most extensive demolition campaigns in the occupied West Bank over the last seven years, which has left a total of more than 650 Palestinians homeless in less than three months, more than half of whom were children, OCHA said.**

“These demolitions generate a coercive environment, exacerbating residents’ risk of forcible transfer, prohibited by international humanitarian law,” the body said.

In Khirbet Tana, 53 structures have been destroyed, including 22 homes, 19 animal shelters, six latrine units, five traditional ovens, and a water reservoir.



**The UN body said 18 of these structures had been donated as humanitarian aid by the international community, the majority after demolitions were carried out earlier this year.**

Half of all Israeli demolitions across the occupied West Bank, this year, have taken place in areas declared by Israel as “firing zones,” or restricted military areas, which OCHA said constitute nearly 20 percent of the occupied West Bank.

Khirbet Tana is located in “Firing Zone 904A,” in a part of the Jordan Valley which rights groups say Israel intends to fully annex.

**Thousands of Bedouins, who have lived there for decades, face the threat of forced displacement, a threat that rights groups say has become more acute in recent years, particularly with large numbers of resident forced to flee during Israeli military training exercises.**

Israel’s Civil Administration demolished all structures in Khirbet Tana in 2012, leaving 152 Palestinian residents homeless, including 64 children, according to Israeli rights groups B’Tselem.

That was the fifth wave of demolitions the village had faced since 2005.

Israel’s Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories previously said that the demolitions were carried out in the village because they were built illegally, and were endangered, due to their situation inside the firing zone.

**However, OCHA noted two illegal Israeli settlement outposts -- recently established and built in the same firing zone -- where the Israeli authorities have not carried out any demolitions, despite issuing demolition orders.**

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## **Zionist Occupiers Open Fire On Unarmed Protesters Inside Free Palestine, As Usual: Unarmed Civilians Wounded, As Usual**

March 26, 2016 Ma’an

GAZA CITY -- Israeli forces shot and injured four Palestinians with live fire when clashes erupted near the border in the Gaza Strip on Friday, the Ministry of Health said. Spokesman for Gaza’s Ministry of Health Ashraf al-Qidra told Ma’an two young men were shot east of Beit Hanoun near the border with Israel in the north of the coastal enclave.

Two others were shot near the borderline east of Gaza City, al-Qidra said, adding that two men suffered from severe tear gas inhalation east of al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip.

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip crowd near the borders with Israel every Friday to show solidarity with what Palestinians in besieged coastal enclave have termed the “Jerusalem Intifada” taking place in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

**Nearly 30 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip since the unrest spread in October, the majority shot dead during clashes on the Gaza-Israel border.**

More than 1,300 Palestinians have been injured by Israeli forces since the start of this year, the majority during clashes that broke out with the Israeli military during protests in the occupied West Bank, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

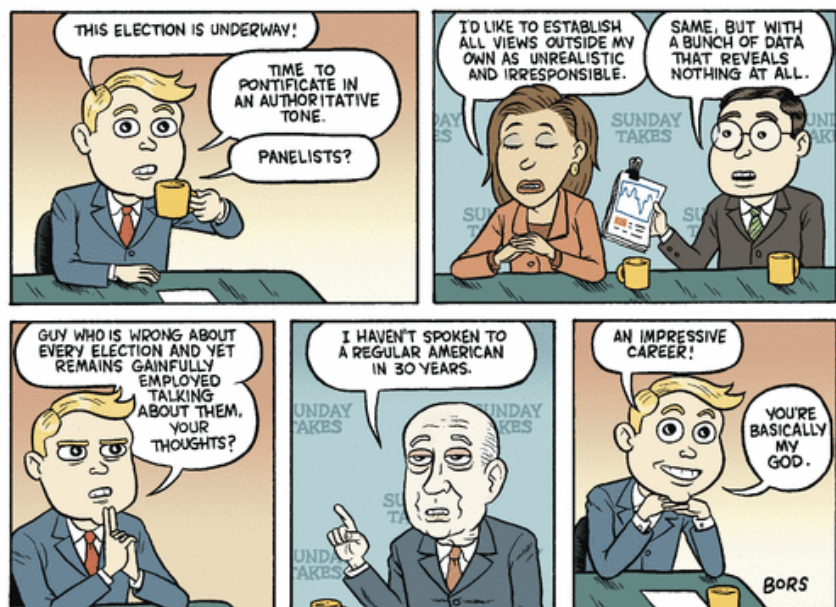
UN rights monitor to the occupied Palestinian territory Makarim Wibisono earlier this week condemned excessive use of force used by Israeli military forces in the context of protests and urged the Israeli authorities to comply with international law regarding the use of force and firearms.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/Default.aspx> and  
<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/list.php?id=ej898ra7yff0ukmf16>

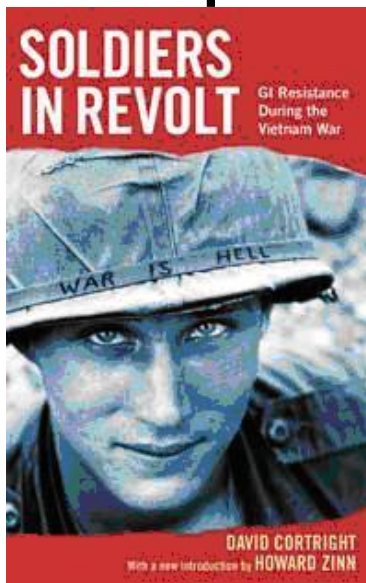
The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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



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