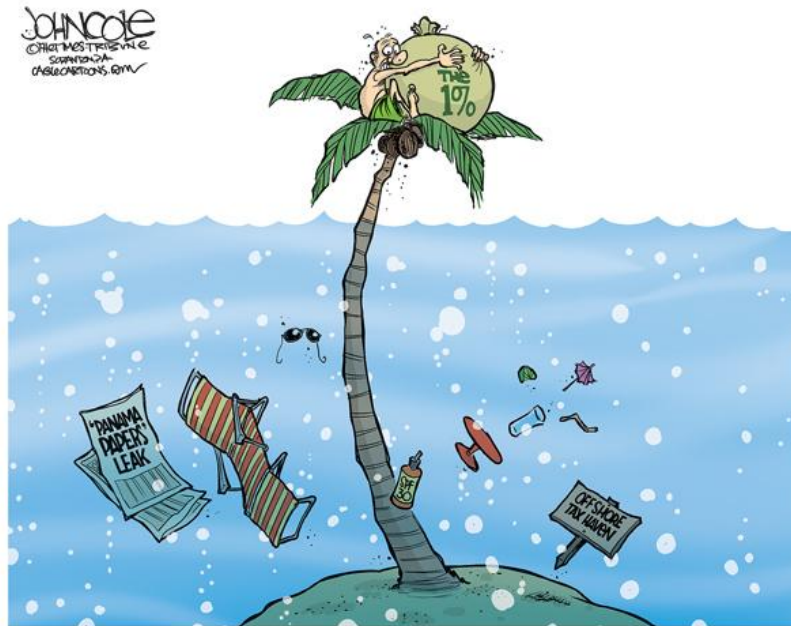


## Military Resistance 14D4



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "The world's climate is changing."]

# **The Great Mosul Campaign Fiasco Rolls On: "Iraq Stumbles Early" "Troops Bugged Down By An Estimated 100-200 Islamic State Fighters" "Now, There Is Little Talk Among Military Officials Of An Imminent Push"**

April 6, 2016 By BEN KESLING, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

**MAKHMOUR, Iraq—Two weeks ago, the Iraqi army launched an operation seen as the first step in retaking Mosul from Islamic State. Troops logged multiple victories within hours.**

**Now, there is little talk among military officials of an imminent push on Iraq's second-largest city.**

Days after the offensive began, the army got bogged down just outside the northern town of Makhmour, held up by an estimated 100-200 Islamic State fighters in a village on high ground called al-Nasr, according to U.S. military officials.

**On Wednesday, it was still struggling to take the small village after more than a week of trying.**

The rapid start and stop on the road to Mosul—an Islamic State stronghold since June 2014—has raised questions among local leaders and military officials about whether the mission began prematurely and can succeed without a major boost from additional troops.

According to a general of the Kurdish military forces known as the Peshmerga and villagers from the area, at least two of the villages stormed that first day had been effectively cleared the month before by irregular Sunni militia forces, making them easy wins.

Part of the problem was the placement of an Iraqi army base that was set up in Makhmour a few months before the operation began.

**It was built too close to the front lines, making it a target for routine Islamic State rocket fire, some officers said, though officially Iraq's military disputes that assessment. ["U.S. Military" also deep in cover up: see third paragraph below. T]**

To help protect it and provide offensive firepower, the Pentagon deployed an artillery contingent of U.S. Marines who established their own base and quickly came under rocket fire, killing one Marine.

"There was a rush in starting the operation," said Sheikh Marwan al-Ziadane, a Mosul tribal leader who spoke to the Wall Street Journal in Makhmour last week. "The operation started in order to prevent potential Daesh (Islamic State) strikes here," he said, referring to the exposed bases.

**The U.S. military confirmed that the operation's start date had been moved forward in part because of persistent rocket strikes on both bases, but added that the bases hadn't been set up too close to the front.**

"The enemy got a vote" in the timeline of the campaign, said Maj. John-Paul Depreo, a U.S. Army operations officer in Baghdad.

**Since then, the Iraqi army has said that it is moving on Nasr. He also said the village hasn't been taken yet.**

“The forces now taking part in Mosul operations aren’t enough to control all of Nineveh because it is a huge province. Plus, Daesh has been in the city a long time,” he said.

U.S. officials are also in discussions to expand the capabilities of U.S. special forces troops in the country and to bring in more Americans for future fights. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford have recommended that President Barack Obama increase troop numbers.

The operation for Nineveh is playing out at an ethnic crossroads. The battle is on the edge of Kurdish-controlled territory and the Peshmerga have controlled the front line there since 2014, when Kurds pushed back against Islamic State in its whirlwind offensive that summer.

The Kurds have said they don’t want to push forward into primarily Arab territory for fear of engendering ethnic tensions, though their armed forces have had success against Islamic State in the past. The Peshmerga dislodged the extremist militants from the northern town of Sinjar late last year, with ample American airstrikes to soften the city.

The Kurds in Makhmour hold the line as the Iraqis move into Arab territory.

The short-lived offensive to retake Nineveh province also kicked off an exodus of thousands of civilians from Islamic State-controlled territory.

At a converted youth center here, more than 2,000 people have come through, walking more than a dozen miles as their villages are bombarded or taken by the Iraqi army forcing them out.

Harried camp administrators work to clean up trash and keep the crowded camp under control. Within days, parts of the camp facility reeked of human waste.

**There is no indication the Iraqi army prepared for this influx.**

Kurdish authorities, the United Nations and other multi-national groups run the camp, struggling to meet the rush of Sunni refugees who already distrust the Shiite-dominated government and army that have been criticized for dealing harshly with Sunni civilians both during and after battles.

In a football-field-size tent at the crowded camp, a 32-year-old teacher named Abu Nour from the nearby village of Kharbardan stood barefoot and sipped on a cup of tea.

**“The Iraqi army had no plan for us and we’re 2,000 people,” he said, as a crowd of men gathered around to nod in agreement.**

**“What will they do with Mosul? That’s two million!”**

**MORE:**

**At ISIS Iraq Front, U.S. Marine Artillerymen “Fire Every Day”**  
**“They Are Fully Engaged”**  
**“The Iraqis Units Have Suffered From Some Desertions And Some Forward-Deployed Infantry Troops Are Not Fighting Aggressively”**  
**“Officials Say There May Soon Be More Troops Setting Up Similar Outposts”**



U.S. Marines with Task Force Spartan, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), on Firebase Bell, Iraq, fire an M777A2 Howitzer at an ISIS infiltration route March 18, 2016. (Photo: Cpl. Andre Dakis/Marine Corps)

April 7, 2016 Andrew Tilghman, Military Times [Excerpts]

Day-to-day life in Iraq is busy for the 100-plus U.S. Marine artillerymen who are forward deployed at a firebase near the Islamic State group’s front lines southeast of Mosul.

“They fire every day in support of Iraqi maneuvers,” Army Col. Steve Warren said of the firebase near the Kurdish-controlled city of Makhmour.

“They fire anything from high explosives to suppress the enemy, to smoke to screen friendly movement, to illumination rounds to help patrol in the evenings. So they are fully engaged,” Warren, a Baghdad-based Defense Department spokesman, told reporters Thursday.

For now, the base, informally known as “Firebase Bell,” is a one-of-a-kind operation for U.S. troops in Iraq.

But top military officials say there may soon be more troops setting up similar outposts to provide advancing Iraqi combat units with offensive fire support for operations around the Islamic State stronghold of Mosul.

Last month fewer than 200 Marines set up the outpost, which has at least four M777A2 howitzer artillery guns.

It marked the first time since U.S. forces returned to Iraq in 2014 that Americans have set up a quasi-permanent presence on the ground outside the perimeter of a major Iraqi military installation. The firebase is about 15 miles from territory controlled by the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS or ISIL.

Pentagon officials say there may be more situations where the U.S. would either open a base or reopen one that was used in the earlier Iraq war.

Officially the firebase is known as the Karasoar Counterfire Complex.

**The Marines are supporting an Iraqi-led offensive that began on March 24 and has made slow and limited progress.**

**The Iraqi units have struggled to seize the small ISIS-controlled village of al Nasr.**

**“They’re in this kind of back-and-forth over Nasr. They’ve advanced. They’ve withdrawn. And now they’re in the process of advancing again,” Warren said.**

The Iraqis main goal for the current operation is to seize a patch of territory along the Tigris River south of Mosul, which would cut one of ISIS’s key supply lines between Mosul and its territory to the south and east.

A spate of local reports from the front near Makhmour and Nasr suggest the Iraqis units have suffered from some desertions and some forward-deployed infantry troops are not fighting aggressively.

Warren downplayed those reports and noted that these Iraqi units are seeing combat for the first time. “There’s always going to be some ‘getting your legs under you’ and that is what we’re seeing now,” he said.

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“U.S. Efforts To Rebuild  
Afghanistan Are In A Perilous  
State”**

**“Security So Shaky And Roads So  
Dangerous That Inspector General  
Staff Take Helicopters To The  
Airport”**

**“Buildings Crumble Months After  
They’re Built”**

**“For 2016, Survival Will Be An  
Achievement”**

April 7, 2016 By Nicole Gaouette, CNN

After 15 years, billions of dollars and thousands of American casualties, U.S. efforts to rebuild Afghanistan are in a perilous state, according to the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

John F. Sopko’s assessment has its doubters, but he paints a stark picture of security so shaky and roads so dangerous that inspector general staff take helicopters to the airport rather than drive. Contracting can be so shoddy, buildings crumble months after they’re built.

**More than 700 schools have been closed because of the ongoing insurgency.**

**Bribery, money laundering and other forms of corruption continue to sap revenues. And despite at least \$7 billion in counternarcotics spending, opium production hit 3,300 tons in 2015 -- exactly the same level it was in 2000, according to Sopko.**

Sopko, who has a background in international law and as a congressional investigator before being appointed by Obama in 2012, said the U.S. military drawdown has created

blind spots for the Pentagon, which isn't as able to collect reliable information on Afghan security capability and effectiveness.

**Sopko describes Taliban-related security concerns as "death of a thousand cuts."**

**They repeatedly carry out hit-and-run assaults on Afghan army and police checkpoints and small outposts, capturing weapons, inflicting casualties and eroding the credibility of the government in Kabul, he said.**

A March report by the U.N. said that "for 2016, survival will be an achievement" for the Afghan government, which faces a contracting economy, ongoing Taliban attacks, a stalled peace process, a divided political setting and an ongoing need for international support.

**Since 2002, Congress has appropriated more than \$113 billion to reconstruct Afghanistan, an amount that, when adjusted for inflation, exceeds total spending on the Marshall Plan that helped rebuild Western Europe after World War II.**

Despite all that money -- and sometimes because of it -- the problems have mounted.

**Contracts have been plagued by bribery and price-rigging and "holding high-ranking or politically connected individuals accountable continues to be a major challenge," Sopko said.**

Security, which accounts for about \$68 billion of U.S. spending since 2002, has also been undermined the purchase of planes that weren't suited to their task and shoddy or incomplete work.

Sopko detailed the case of the "melting building" in one province to bring that point home.

**The Pentagon contracted an Afghan firm to build a dry-fire range, which is used to train people on stance, aiming and weapons familiarization. Four months after the contractor finished the building and was paid in full, the buildings began to "melt" and crumble in the rain because the firm had used substandard materials.**

**The building was demolished at additional cost to the American taxpayer, Sopko said, but Pentagon officials failed to hold the contractor accountable.**

In another case, the Afghan contractor of a newly built hospital didn't fix failures pointed out by U.S. officials, which meant newborn babies were being washed with untreated water from a nearby river.

Older children are suffering as well, Sopko said, describing a March announcement by the Afghan Ministry of Education that more than 2.5 million children weren't able to attend school because of the war. This, he said, was one of many consequences of insecurity that "are less headline-grabbing, but are still evil omens for the future of a desperately poor and largely illiterate country."

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# **Taliban Demands Health Centers In Kandahar: “Residents Of Rural Areas, Meanwhile, Welcomed Taliban’s Suggestion” “They Hoped The People, Who Had Long Been Deprived Of Medical Facilities, Would Be Able To Gain Access To Health Services”**

05 April 2016 by Pajhwok

Local officials said the Taliban has demanded the opening of health centers in unstable districts of southern Kandahar province.

The Taliban’s demand comes as several districts of Kandahar are faced with a shortage of health care facilities due to insecurity.

Provincial Governor Hamayon Azizi told Pajhwok Afghan News the Taliban’s call for providing health services to the people was positive.

He said it was impossible in the past to open health clinics in restive areas due to security threats. The departments concerned should take advantage of the opportunity and open health centers in remote districts and border areas, the governor said.

Azizi asked the Ministry of Public health to set up at least 20 more healthcare centers in Kandahar province during this solar year.

"There are limited health services in the districts. Only one clinic is functional in each of big districts. At least two districts don't have even a single clinic," he explained.

He also referred to a shortage of female health workers in district healthcare centers, asking the Public Health Ministry to train at least five local women as midwives in each town. Azizi said female health workers from other areas were not interested in working in remote districts. The issue needed to be addressed as a priority, the governor stated.

Public Health Director Dr. Abdul Qayyum Pukhla confirmed the Taliban’s demand. "The Taliban have demanded the opening of health services in Shorabak, Registan, Mianshin, Ghorak and Shah Walikot districts."



Health services at the district level were limited or non-existent, admitted Pukhla, who said that the Ministry of Public Health should positively respond to the demand.

He said there were a total of 97 healthcare centers with 14 of them private in Kandahar province. Fifty of the centers are open in districts and the rest in Kandahar city, the capital of the province, he added.

Given Kandahar's huge population, current health services were insufficient as most of residents were without essential facilities, Pukhla acknowledged.

Public Health Minister Dr. Firozuddin Firoz said his ministry remained committed to extending health services to all people without any discrimination.

He verified 60 percent of Kandahar residents did not have access to health services, but pledged all-out efforts to augment medical coverage despite a shortage of funds.

He promised 30 sub-clinics would be built in Kandahar province and the process of constructing a 350-bed hospital accelerated this year.

Residents of rural areas, meanwhile, welcomed Taliban's suggestion.

They hoped the people, who had long been deprived of medical facilities, would be able to gain access to health services.

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## **POLICE WAR REPORTS**

**DC Police Raid Wrong Homes  
On Scant Evidence, Terrifying  
Innocents:  
“Police Handcuffed Three Of His  
Six Children, Including His 9-Year-  
Old Son”  
“Police Had The Wrong House”  
“Officers Acted On Incorrect Or  
Outdated Address Information,**

## Subjecting Such People As Taylor To The Fright Of Their Lives'



D.C. police officers return to their cars after searching for the source of a marijuana odor on Clay Terrace in Northeast Washington in April 2015. Some search warrants have been issued even when no criminal activity at the targeted location has been witnessed. (Photo by Jahi Chikwendiu/The Washington Post)



One morning in January, police raided Darrell Gilmore's house in Southeast Washington looking for evidence in an armed-robbery case. Gilmore said he did not know the suspect and that police had the wrong house. He said he was in the shower when more than 20 heavily armed officers arrived and that he was handcuffed naked during a half-hour search. Police also handcuffed three of his six children, including his 9-year-old son, he said. (Photos by Michael S. Williamson/The Washington Post)

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06 March 16 By John Sullivan, Derek Hawkins and Pietro Lombard, The Washington Post

Sallie Taylor was sitting in her apartment in Northeast Washington one evening in January 2015 watching “Bible Talk” when her clock fell off the wall and broke.

She turned and looked up. Nine D.C. police officers smashed through her door, a shotgun was pointed at her face and she was ordered to the floor.

“They came in like Rambo,” said Taylor, a soft-spoken 63-year-old grandmother who was dressed in a white nightgown and said she has never had even a speeding ticket.

The heavily armed squad thought they were searching the residence of a woman arrested two miles away the previous night for carrying a half-ounce vial of PCP.

Taylor, who did not know the woman, was terrified. Trembling, she told police that the woman did not live there. Officers spent 30 minutes searching the house anyway, going through her boxes and her underwear drawer.

They found no drugs and left without making an arrest.

**The search warrant executed at Taylor’s apartment cited no evidence of criminal activity there. Instead, in an affidavit to a judge, police argued that they should be able to search for drugs there based on their “training and experience” investigating the drug trade.**

They relied on an address they found in a court-records system for the woman arrested with PCP.

A Washington Post review of 2,000 warrants served by D.C. police between January 2013 and January 2015 found that 284 — about 14 percent — shared the characteristics of the one executed at Taylor’s apartment.

**In every case, after arresting someone on the street for possession of drugs or a weapon, police invoked their training and experience to justify a search of a residence without observing criminal activity there.**

The language of the warrants gave officers broad leeway to search for drugs and guns in areas saturated by them and to seize phones, computers and personal records.

**“Officers Acted On Incorrect Or Outdated Address Information, Subjecting Such People As Taylor To The Fright Of Their Lives”**

In about 60 percent of the 284 cases, police executing the warrants found illegal items, ranging from drug paraphernalia to guns, The Post found. The amounts of drugs recovered were usually small, ranging from residue to marijuana cigarettes to rocks of cocaine. About 40 percent of the time — in 115 cases — police left empty-handed.

In a dozen instances, The Post found, officers acted on incorrect or outdated address information, subjecting such people as Taylor to the fright of their lives.

**Almost all of the 284 raids occurred in black communities.**

In 276 warrants in which The Post could determine a suspect's race, just three originated with arrests of white suspects. The remaining 99 percent involved black suspects. In the District, 94 percent of people arrested in 2013 for gun or drug charges were black, according to FBI crime data.

**The 284 warrants reviewed by The Post differ from the usual pattern of police warrants.**

**D.C. police have said at public hearings that the typical raid happens only after undercover officers or confidential informants have purchased drugs or guns from inside a home or police have conducted surveillance there.**

The searches are occurring at a time when public attention is highly focused on interactions between police and blacks nationwide, with the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and concern about the aftereffects of the drug war. In Maryland this month, lawmakers proposed legislation that would require police to reimburse residents for damage to their property when police execute a warrant and find nothing.

In Philadelphia, police were criticized in October by the executive director of the city's citizen review board for harsh treatment of residents during raids.

The Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects citizens from "unreasonable searches," generally requiring government agents to obtain a warrant from a judge by showing they have probable cause to think that they will find a specific item at a specific location.

In recent decades, police have been given wide latitude by the courts to conduct searches aimed at removing drugs and guns from the streets.

**Attorney Alec Karakatsanis, of the nonprofit group D.C.-based Equal Justice Under Law, said warrants that rely on training and experience as justification for a search subject the black community to abusive police intrusion based on flimsy investigative work.**

In the past two years, he has filed seven civil rights lawsuits in federal court challenging D.C. police's practice of seeking search warrants based solely on an officer's training and experience.

**"They have turned any arrest anywhere in the city into an automatic search of a home, and that simply cannot be," said Karakatsanis, who spent three years studying the issue, starting when he worked at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia.**

"It would work a fundamental change in the balance of power in our society between government agents and individual rights."

D.C. police, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the D.C. Attorney General's Office defend the use of warrants based on police training and experience.

In a written statement to The Post, D.C. Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier did not distinguish between warrants based primarily on training and experience and those based on more-extensive investigation. She said that all of the warrants the department executed last year were constitutionally sound and that each warrant was reviewed by a police lieutenant as well as prosecutors and ultimately approved by a judge. "In the vast majority of those warrants, contraband and evidence was recovered in furtherance of criminal prosecutions, and gave MPD (the Metropolitan Police Department) the ability to bring closure to multiple victims of crimes in our city," she said. "During that same time frame, MPD received very few complaints regarding the execution of those warrants."

Lanier said residents who are dissatisfied with police should speak with a supervisor at the department or the Office of Police Complaints. "We remain committed to unbiased constitutional policing," she said.

The U.S. Attorney's Office said in a written statement that its prosecutors carefully review thousands of warrants each year to determine whether they meet the standards for probable cause. "Probable cause merely requires that the facts and circumstances available to the officer provide the basis for a reasonable person to conclude that evidence of a crime exists at a location," the statement said. "Although no system is perfect, the law and the multiple layers of review provide safeguards to minimize the potential for errors."

Lee F. Satterfield, chief judge of the D.C. Superior Court, declined to comment, citing pending cases.

Karakatsanis studied a year of warrants in which police searched for drugs based on training and experience and found that they recovered drugs one-third of the time. In response to Karakatsanis, then-D.C. Attorney General Irvin B. Nathan argued in 2014, "While Plaintiffs treat this success rate with contempt, finding drugs in one-third of similar police searches is strong evidence of probable cause."

Nathan also pointed out that the Supreme Court has held that probable cause cannot be reduced to a "precise definition or quantification."

In January, U.S. District Judge James Boasberg allowed the first of Karakatsanis's cases to go forward, saying that "a talismanic invocation" of "training and experience" does not automatically satisfy constitutional requirements.

The raids for which police do more investigative work appear to bring better results, The Post found. In February 2015, police searched a house in Southeast and seized an AK-47 assault rifle, two semiautomatic handguns and 100 grams of marijuana. In April 2014, police in Northwest found 25 grams of heroin, 330 grams of marijuana, a revolver and an assortment of ammunition. They also found \$60,000 in cash.

Perhaps the most successful raid among the 284 identified by The Post occurred after police made a traffic stop and found a revolver and four hollow-point bullets in the glove box. A search of the suspect's house turned up two shotguns, a semiautomatic handgun

and an assortment of ammunition. The suspect received a 10-month suspended sentence for firearm charges and served no time in jail.

Most of the time, police find much less.

### **“Harrison’s 11-Year-Old Daughter Was Taking A Shower When An Officer Pushed Aside The Curtain And Pointed A Gun At Her”**

Police told a judge that their training and experience investigating drug cases led them to think that they would find evidence of a PCP-trafficking operation when they raided the house of Margaret Brown in April 2014.

Brown’s son had overdosed on PCP at a building across the street from her apartment in Northwest Washington. A vial containing a small amount of the drug, an eighth of an ounce, was found in his clothes. Police arrested him for possession of PCP, a felony, and he was later sentenced to four months in jail.

The evening after his arrest, police in body armor burst through Brown’s front door.

“They slammed me to the ground,” said Brown, 47, who had just returned home from her job in billing at a hospital and has never been convicted of a crime. “They were fully armed — guns pointed in my face like there was a major drug deal going down.”

Brown said she sat handcuffed while police went through her belongings, knocking over furniture and even opening an urn containing her mother’s cremated remains.

**The search turned up a partially burnt marijuana cigarette. Brown told police that it belonged to her son, who she said has a marijuana card allowing him to legally possess the drug for medical reasons.**

**They arrested her for misdemeanor possession, and she spent five hours in jail.**

**Eight weeks later, prosecutors dropped the charge against her.**

The warrants The Post identified began with arrests made during traffic stops or street encounters where officers observed suspicious behavior. In all of those cases, suspects were caught with illegal guns or amounts of drugs sufficient for charges of possession with intent to distribute — usually an ounce or more of marijuana or several grams of cocaine.

During the arrests, police obtained suspects’ addresses by relying on the person’s word, a driver’s license or databases from law enforcement, schools, utilities or courts. After receiving the approval of the U.S. Attorney’s Office, usually within a day, police then secured warrants by going to a Superior Court judge with a sworn affidavit making their case that they had probable cause to think they would find drugs, guns or other criminal evidence at the residences.

The warrant gives police 10 days to conduct the search and details when and how the raid is to be carried out.

The responsible judge — the duty rotates among Superior Court judges — must decide whether the information would allow a person of “reasonable caution” to conclude that police are more likely than not to find evidence of a crime during the search.

“Police are going to push the limit,” said Eugene O’Donnell, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City who is also a former NYPD officer and prosecutor and has worked as a police academy instructor. “But police are not civil libertarians, and these types of warrants are counter to what the Fourth Amendment is all about.”

Such warrants, O’Donnell said, can easily be abused.

“It’s a mass-produced, search-and-recovery operation. It’s an assembly line. It’s not a progressive policy, and it imperils police and people alike,” he said.

Academic experts said the weight of such warrants falls disproportionately on minority communities. Andrew Crespo, a law professor at Harvard, recently studied D.C. warrants and found them almost exclusively executed in black communities.

One of Karakatsanis’s clients is Shandalyn Harrison.

On April 5, 2013, police pulled her ex-boyfriend over for having an obstructed license plate and found five ounces of marijuana, a misdemeanor. He had two prior misdemeanor convictions for selling marijuana. Police got an address for him in Northwest from his suspended D.C. driver’s license and a utility listing from December 2012, according to the affidavit.

But the house was rented to Harrison, and she said she had previously told police that he had never lived there.

Shortly after 10 p.m. on April 18, as Harrison watched a rerun of “Grey’s Anatomy” with two of her daughters, she glanced up from the television to see a line of 20 police officers assembled on the porch of her house. She opened the door.

“Everyone was running in. No one told me what was going on,” Harrison, 35, later told The Post.

Harrison’s 11-year-old daughter was taking a shower when an officer pushed aside the curtain and pointed a gun at her, according to the mother and daughter. Police also held Harrison’s 21-year-old brother, Sterling, at gunpoint, Harrison and Sterling said.

“What they did was not right,” Harrison said. “I work hard to take care of my daughters and to protect them and raise them right, but they treated us like we committed a crime.”

Harrison said it took the family days to clean up after the raid.

**At one point, an officer told the children that their father “did not care about them” and said the search was happening only because he was a “bad man,” according to the lawsuit.**

In November 2013, the ex-boyfriend pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of possession with intent to distribute marijuana. He was sentenced to serve 20 days in jail and paid a \$50 fine.

In August 2014, Harrison filed a federal lawsuit against D.C. police.

Attorneys for the District say the case should be dismissed because a judge approved the warrant.

Patrice Sulton, a lawyer who chairs the legislation committee for the D.C. Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, said that addresses in the D.C. court system can be unreliable. In a report in April, the department's Police Complaints Board expressed concern "about the lack of verification of address information in warrants executed by MPD officers."

Failure to properly verify an address led police to the home of Patricia Dandridge on Jan. 27, 2015. She returned from work to find her apartment in Southeast ransacked. The door was beaten in and her bed frame was broken, she said. Clothes and personal papers were strewn across the floor.

"I thought I'd been robbed, but my neighbor told me it was the police," said Dandridge, 45.

On the kitchen counter, she found a copy of a D.C. police search warrant. Three officers had forced their way in to look for firearms. They left empty-handed.

The warrant was based on a drug complaint at a housing complex in Southeast more than five miles from Dandridge's apartment, according to the affidavit police used to justify the search.

Police called to the complex had arrested a man, who fled when they arrived. After a brief struggle with the suspect, Christopher Palmer, police found a handgun nearby on the ground.

Officers told a judge that they needed to search Palmer's apartment for evidence proving that the gun was his. Palmer gave his address as Apartment 102 in a building in Anacostia, according to the police affidavit. Police said they confirmed the address with a probation supervisor, Warren Leggett, who said Community Supervision Officer Melissa Shelton had visited the apartment earlier in the month.

Shelton declined to comment, referring a reporter to the general counsel of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, who said that the agency is prohibited from releasing information to the public about people on probation.

Palmer lived down the hall with his parents in Apartment 103.

Dandridge lives in 102.

"103 does not look like 102," Dandridge said. The apartments are on opposite ends of the building.



After the raid, Dandridge was furious. She said she contacted Sgt. Jaron Hickman, one of the officers who conducted the search. He told her that they had arrested a man they thought was her son and received a warrant to search for guns and ammunition, she said.

Dandridge told him that it couldn't have been her son.

"My son is deceased," she said.

Hickman declined a request for an interview.

Dandridge said that for weeks, she pressed police for compensation for the damage. She said they owed her at least \$1,200.

She submitted a claim to the city's Office of Risk Management. She said she ultimately received a check for \$260.

D.C. prosecutors indicted Palmer on firearm charges and two counts of assault on a police officer. In December, a jury acquitted him of the firearm charges but found him guilty of the assault charges. He received a 180-day suspended sentence.

### **"A Police Officer Opened The Bathroom Door And Shot The Dog. Police Did Not Find Drugs Or Other Contraband"**

Among the few who succeeded in getting police to pay for damage done during an errant raid are David Cranor, a satellite engineer, and his lawyer wife.

Cranor wrote about the 2009 raid of his home on Kentucky Avenue in Southeast on his blog on the Greater Greater Washington website. He said police spent 45 minutes disassembling steel bars on his back door while trying to execute the search.

The warrant was based on a traffic stop of two suspects: a female driver and her son. The young man was charged with possession of an illegal firearm, according to the warrant, and told police that he lived at the Kentucky Avenue address. Police said his mother verified the address, which was also checked in a pretrial-services database intended to monitor court appearances.

The young man had been arrested in 2004, when his family lived at the house. Cranor and his wife bought the house in 2007.

The city initially refused to pay for the damage to Cranor's back door, which he said cost \$3,140. In March 2010, the couple, then in their 30s, sued police. When it became evident that the case would go to trial, Cranor emailed Lanier seeking a resolution. The next morning, Lanier wrote to say she was getting involved, he said, and the city agreed the following day to pay for the repairs.

"A slow, mysterious bureaucratic process is not a productive way to handle these kinds of situations," he wrote in his blog in 2011.

Marietta Robinson said that police relied on outdated information about her grandson to obtain a warrant in 2010 to search her house in Northwest. Police stopped her grandson after hearing him curse loudly while he was standing in the courtyard of a building down the street from her home.

They arrested him for disorderly conduct, a misdemeanor, and found 18 grams of marijuana in his pocket, a little more than half an ounce. He was charged with possession with intent to distribute.

Police said that he gave them Robinson's address, which appeared as the grandson's address in several other databases.

But Robinson, 62 at the time, said her grandson, then in his late 20s, had not lived with her since 1987.

When police arrived, Robinson put her 13-year-old shepherd-pit bull mix, Wrinkles, in a bathroom and allowed officers to conduct their search.

She said that a police officer opened the bathroom door and shot the dog, and as the animal ran into the living room, several more officers opened fire, hitting the dog 13 times, according to a lawsuit she filed. Blood splattered across her artwork and photographs. Robinson said the officers threw bedsheets and clothing on the floor to soak it up. Robinson said she was forced to wait outside for four hours during the officers' search.

Police did not find drugs or other contraband. Paperwork documenting the results of the search list only "drug paraphernalia (empty ziploc with residue)."

Last March, a federal judge dismissed Robinson's lawsuit against police, saying that the officers used reasonable force in killing an aggressive dog.

Robinson has appealed the ruling.

Outdated information also figured in the case of Rameka Waters, 24, who passed drug testing and a background check for her job as a licensed home-health aide. But a close friend has a long history of mostly misdemeanor arrests for drugs, dating back to the 1990s. Several years ago, he used her address in Northeast to receive mail from the courts.

### **"I Had Respect For The Police, But It Was Like They Didn't Have Any Rules"**

In April 2014, police pulled over a car, in which the friend was a passenger, on a seat-belt violation. Officers said they smelled marijuana and found an ounce of the drug in a plastic bag. The man admitted that he intended to sell the drugs, and he gave his address as Waters's apartment in Northeast, the warrant states.

After he was arrested, Waters saw police sitting outside her four-unit apartment building, where she lived in a unit on the second floor. She said she told detectives that he had used her address in the past but that he did not live there anymore.

A few days later, as she was leaving to take her daughter to school, she opened the front door to her apartment building and was met by a dozen police officers. Waters said she gave them her key to open her unit.

They found nothing.

“They told me I should be more careful about who I let use my address,” she said.

Prosecutors eventually dropped the charges against her friend. A month after the search, police arrested him again on drug charges.

They searched a home a block away from Waters’s apartment and found 29 grams of marijuana and five small plastic bags of crack cocaine. He pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor drug charges in that case and received a 60-day suspended sentence and six months of probation.

Sallie Taylor still can’t understand how police got it wrong.

The search of Taylor’s apartment in January 2015 on the second floor of a four-unit building on 36th Street in Northeast began with an arrest two miles away. Tia Jackson, 34, was charged with sexual solicitation. A search of her handbag turned up a half-ounce vial of PCP, according to the affidavit police filed to obtain the warrant.

Before the raid, police said they corroborated an address for Jackson at 36th Street in the pretrial services database and unspecified “law enforcement databases.”

In addition, Robert M. Van Dyke, the lead investigative officer in the case, stated that he had firsthand knowledge of the residence.

“Your affiant has been inside of 181 36th street, NE,” Van Dyke said. “This area is known for prolific narcotics use, trafficking, and is responsible for habitual narcotics complaints from the community.”

Van Dyke did not respond to requests for comment for this article.

The address had once belonged to Jackson’s ex-boyfriend, court records show. In 2013, Jackson was charged with attacking the man there with a knife. He obtained a court order prohibiting her from coming to the residence after the assault. The charge against Jackson was later dismissed.

Jackson ended up pleading guilty to a misdemeanor drug charge in her 2015 arrest.

No drugs were found in Taylor’s apartment, but her front door was smashed in during the police raid. Although it was patched by a repairman, Taylor wants officials to pay for a proper repair. “I had respect for the police,” she said. “It’s obvious they should have checked things out before they did this.”

Taylor had moved into the apartment in April 2014. Her sister remodeled it for Taylor, who was returning from taking care of her grandchildren in Colorado while her son was

in the military. The apartment seemed perfect. Her daughter and grandchildren lived in a unit on the first floor.

After the raid, a repairman used a thin piece of plywood and drywall screws to patch the door. Taylor and her daughters went to the 6th District police station, filed a complaint and requested that the door be repaired.

“It made me sad. I had respect for the police, but it was like they didn’t have any rules,” she said. “It’s obvious they should have checked things out before they did this.”

**When a search based on erroneous information occurs, police rules require the department to provide an explanation and “repair the damage as soon as possible.”**

**A year later, Sallie Taylor is still waiting to hear from them.**

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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

**The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.**

**-- Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"**

**Snowden Illegality Vs. Panama  
Papers Legality:  
“Western Democracies, Along With  
Overt Tyrannies, Are Typically  
Controlled By Societies’ Wealthiest,  
And Laws Are Enacted To Serve  
Their Interests”  
“Corrupted Political Systems, By  
Definition, Often Protect And Legalize  
Exactly The Behavior That Is Most  
Unjust”**



Director of National Intelligence James Clapper. (photo: Jim Watson/AFP/Getty Images)

05 April 16 by Glenn Greenwald, The Intercept

From the start of the reporting based on Edward Snowden's leaked document archive, government defenders insisted that no illegal behavior was revealed.

That was always false: Multiple courts have now found the domestic metadata spying program in violation of the Constitution and relevant statutes and have issued similar rulings for other mass surveillance programs; numerous articles on NSA and GCHQ documented the targeting of people and groups for blatantly political or legally impermissible purposes; and the leak revealed that President Obama's top national security official (still), James Clapper, blatantly lied when testifying before Congress about the NSA's activities — a felony.

But illegality was never the crux of the scandal triggered by those NSA revelations. Instead, what was most shocking was what had been legalized: the secret construction of the largest system of suspicionless spying in human history.

What was scandalous was not that most of this spying was against the law, but rather that the law — at least as applied and interpreted by the Justice Department and secret, one-sided FISA "courts" — now permitted the U.S. government and its partners to engage in mass surveillance of entire populations, including their own.

As the ACLU's Jameel Jaffer put it after the Washington Post's publication of documents showing NSA analysts engaged in illegal spying: "The 'non-compliance' angle is important, but don't get carried away. The deeper scandal is what's legal, not what's not."

Yesterday, dozens of newspapers around the world reported on what they are calling the Panama Papers: a gargantuan leak of documents from a Panama-based law firm that specializes in creating offshore shell companies.

The documents reveal billions of dollars being funneled to offshore tax havens by leading governmental and corporate officials in numerous countries (the U.S. was oddly missing from the initial reporting, though journalists vow that will change shortly).

Some of these documents undoubtedly reveal criminality: either monies that were illegally obtained (and are being hidden for that reason) or assets being concealed in order to criminally evade tax debts. But the crux of this activity — placing assets offshore in order to avoid incurring tax liability — has been legalized.

That's because Western democracies, along with overt tyrannies, are typically controlled by societies' wealthiest, and laws are enacted to serve their interests.

Vox's Matt Yglesias this morning published a very good explainer of various aspects of this leak and he makes that point clear:

**“Even as the world's wealthiest and most powerful nations have engaged in increasingly complex and intensive efforts at international cooperation to smooth the wheels of global commerce, they have willfully chosen to allow the wealthiest members of Western society to shield their financial assets from taxation (and in many cases divorce or bankruptcy settlement) by taking advantage of shell companies and tax havens.**

**“If Panama or the Cayman Islands were acting to undermine the integrity of the global pharmaceutical patent system, the United States would stop them.**

**“But the political elite of powerful Western nations have not acted to stop relatively puny Caribbean nations from undermining the integrity of the global tax system — largely because Western economic elites don’t want them to. ...**

“... But even though various criminal money-laundering schemes are the sexiest possible use of shell companies, the day-to-day tax dodging is what really pays the bills.

“As a manager of offshore bank accounts told me years ago, “People think of banking secrecy as all about terrorists and drug smugglers, but the truth is there are a lot of rich people who don’t want to pay taxes.”

“And the system persists because there are a lot of politicians in the West who don’t particularly want to make them. ...

“... Incorporating your hedge fund in a country with no corporate income tax even though all your fund’s employees and investors live in the United States is perfectly legal. So is, in most cases, setting up a Panamanian shell company to own and manage most of your family’s fortune.

**“Tax avoidance is an inevitable feature of any tax system, but the reason this particular form of avoidance grows and grows without bounds is that powerful politicians in powerful countries have chosen to let it happen.**

“As the global economy has become more and more deeply integrated, powerful countries have created economic “rules of the road” that foreign countries and multinational corporations must follow in order to gain lucrative market access.”

**Proving that certain behavior is “legal” does not prove that it is ethical or just.**

**That’s because corrupted political systems, by definition, often protect and legalize exactly the behavior that is most unjust.**

Vital journalism does not only expose law breaking.

**It also highlights how corrupted political and legal systems can be co-opted by the most powerful in order to legally sanction atrocious and destructive behavior that serves their interests, typically with little or no public awareness that it’s been done.**

**In such cases, as Jaffer put it, “The deeper scandal is what’s legal, not what’s not.”**

**The key revelation is not the illegality of the specific behavior in question but rather the light shined on how our political systems function and for whose benefit they work.**

**That was true of the Snowden leak, and it’s true of the Panama Papers as well.**

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**Venezuelan Reality:  
“A Dramatic Decline In  
Maduro’s Popularity, To Which  
The Government Is Responding  
With Authoritarian Measures”  
“There Is More Repression In Poor  
Neighborhoods, Always With The  
Pretext That The State Has To  
Fight Drugs And Crime”  
“With Maduro, It’s Always The  
Workers Who Suffer The Most”  
“Socialism In One Country Doesn’t  
Exist”**

April 6, 2016 César Romero interviewed by Eva Maria, Socialist Worker [Excerpts].  
César Romero is a member of the youth wing of the revolutionary socialist organization  
Marea Socialista (MS)

*Maria: What has changed with Maduro coming to power?*

Romeero: With Maduro, there was a political change in relation to Chávez’s regime that accelerated after the "peace talks" of 2014 (negotiations between the government and key business leaders in 2014 that Maduro convened in response to a wave of protests and violence led by middle- and upper-class youth demanding his resignation).

After Chávez’s death the year before, his political authority, which had assured an equitable distribution of oil revenue, also came to an end. With Chávez out of the way, all of the historical sectors that had always benefitted from oil wealth wanted more.

And now the new bureaucracy wanted more, too.



**This forced Maduro to make a decision: he either had to radicalize the process to preserve the support of its social base, or he had to make alliances with the dominant political and economic sectors to stay in power.**

**Unfortunately, he opted for the latter.**

**This resulted in a deepening crisis for the neediest, since the easiest way to maximize revenue is by cutting back on the social programs that had been achieved in prior years.**

New anti-popular measures were implemented: Tax cuts for leading businesses, easier access to dollars, and the establishment of new Special Economic Zones in strategic regions, where companies don't have to abide by labor laws or pay any taxes.

What's more, we've gone from having the highest salaries in Latin America to one of the lowest. Maduro is set on keeping up with payments on the national debt, which, as of next year, is going to reach the frightening number of \$12 billion, a completely unsustainable amount. Marea Socialista has also uncovered how capital flight has taken \$250 billion out of the country in the last few years.

And with plummeting oil prices, the government is accelerating the extraction of other natural resources, including mining, which seriously harms the enormous biodiversity of some of the oldest and richest lands in the country and the world, such as the well-known Angel Falls. The distribution of oil revenue is thus losing the character of being "for the people."

All of this led to a dramatic decline in Maduro's popularity, to which the government is responding with authoritarian measures.

This never happened with Chávez.

The state is restricting the democratic rights of parties like ours. We still haven't been recognized as a legal party.

There is also more repression in poor neighborhoods, always with the pretext that the state has to fight drugs and crime.

The crisis has been going on for years, but things are now worse than ever. The main difference between Chávez's government and Maduro's is that with Chávez, when there was a crisis, workers never paid the consequences. With Maduro, it's always the workers who suffer the most.

This is why I separate the two assessments. So far, the assessment of Maduro's time in government is a negative one.

*How would you describe a day in the life of an ordinary Venezuelan, compared to how it was in earlier years?*

It's unbearable.

Wages are deteriorating extremely rapidly. There is a lack of basic necessities, which is important because the government has reduced imports by as much as 30 percent from 2012 levels. Social conditions are very bad, and the sense of insecurity has increased dramatically. There are also signs of new diseases, the reappearance of extreme poverty.

You can certainly feel it in the streets.

All public services are eroding. And to top it off, we are experiencing a drought, and 70 percent of our energy comes from hydropower. It's possible that, unless it rains, we will not have electricity in three weeks. The discontent is very palpable.

***What are the main factors responsible for this crisis?***

**In short, the list includes: capital flight, giving away dollars to international companies, the Special Economic Zones, the government's zealous payment of the national debt, increases in the prices of basic products as subsidies are withdrawn, corruption, the rentier economic model, and plummeting oil prices.**

*The United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV): what kind of party is it, and how does it work? Maduro says it's a revolutionary party.*

**The first problem is that socialism in one country doesn't exist.**

**This was one of the worst mistakes that the leadership of this party has made since the beginning.**

Currently, the PSUV is identified with the minimal social base that receives a series of benefits from the government, and it's the political structure of a caste that has consolidated itself within the state.

**It is not socialist or revolutionary, because there is no room for popular participation.**

**It squashes criticism, it criminalizes everybody who disagrees with it, etc.**

**The PSUV is just an apparatus of the government. Everything that the government says, the PSUV supports with empty rhetoric.**

**It offers no proposals to overcome the crisis, and what's worse, its local, regional and national leaderships live in a bubble totally detached from the everyday lives of the Venezuelan people.**

**This caste doesn't experience the crisis. They live with ostentatious privileges that separate them entirely from the people, which explains why their speeches don't connect with what most people are actually going through. T**

**This is why the government suffered such a decisive defeat in the December 6 National Assembly elections.**

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## DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

### **Zionist Forces Raid, Wreck Al-Quds University: Punishment For Forbidden Publications**

April 5, 2016 Ma'an

JERUSALEM – Israeli forces stormed the campus of al-Quds University in the occupied West Bank village of Abu Dis east of Jerusalem's Old City early on Tuesday morning, damaging property, local sources told Ma'an.

Israeli troops raided the university campus at 3 a.m. and left at 5 a.m.

For two hours, the soldiers locked campus security guards in one room after breaking their walkie-talkies.



The soldiers then ransacked a building hosting the Dean of Students and destroyed property, including printers.

The sources added that Israeli forces damaged a Christmas tree that was standing in front of the Dean of Students office.

Israeli forces also stormed the Faculty of Islamic Studies, and broke into the students activity center, destroying material in an exhibition students were working on.

An Israeli army spokesperson told Ma'an that as part of "operational activity," Israeli forces seized material belonging to Hamas' educational arm al-Kutla al-Islamiyah, including propaganda for Hamas.

The spokesperson added that such propaganda was used for "incitement," and encouraged "terrorism against Israeli citizens and security forces."

Both Palestinian and Israeli leadership have accused each other of inciting and encouraging the current wave of upheaval in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel that began in October.

Israeli forces have stormed university campuses across the occupied Palestinian territory several times since the beginning of 2016, with al-Quds University in particular finding itself a focal point of violent clashes between Palestinian students and Israeli soldiers.

Hundreds of Israeli soldiers stormed al-Quds University in January, confiscating equipment and documents belonging to its student union. Earlier that month, Israeli forces also confiscated and damaged equipment at Birzeit University in a predawn raid.

In March, Israeli forces raided the Tulkarem-area al-Khadoori University twice in 18 hours. The Arab American University in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin was also raided by Israeli forces in March.



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## **Occupation Court Gives Palestinian Family 24 Hours To Evacuate Their House: House: Collective Punishment Didn't Die With The Third Reich**

April 4, 2016 Ma'an

JERUSALEM -- The Israeli supreme court gave the family of a Palestinian teen prisoner 24 hours to evacuate their house in occupied East Jerusalem on Sunday.

The mother of prisoner Abed Mahmoud Dawiyat told Ma'an that the Israeli supreme court approved a decision by the Israeli army's Home Front Command to confiscate and shutter their house in the neighborhood of Sur Bahir.

She added that the family's appeal had been rejected, and that five family members had evacuated the 120-meter house with the help of their neighbors.



The Israeli army decided in February to confiscate and shutter the homes of four Palestinian prisoners from Sur Bahir, who were identified as Muhammad Salah Abu Kiff, Muhammad Jihad al-Taweel, Walid Fares al-Atrash and Dawiyat.

The four youths, all between 16 and 19 years old, have been accused of killing an Israeli settler in September after throwing stones at his car. However, they have not been sentenced yet, and their case is still being discussed by the Israeli judiciary system.

In February, the youths' families denounced the move to confiscate their homes as amounting to collective punishment.

While it has become common practice during the past several months for Israeli forces to demolish homes of attackers as a method thought to deter attacks, it is unclear why Israeli authorities have ruled to confiscate the homes, instead of destroy them.

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## **Zionists Shoot Palestinian Child In Occupied Jerusalem: “He Was Heading To School” “Soldiers Hit Him By Rifle Butts” “He Had To Undergo A Surgery As A Result”**

4.3.2016 PIC

## OCCUPIED JERUSALEM –

Israeli forces shot and injured Hatem Abu Mayyaleh, a 12-year-old Palestinian child, by a rubber bullet on Saturday in clashes that erupted in Ras al-Amoud district in Silwan town east of Occupied Jerusalem.

Quds Press quoted a relative of the injured child as saying that he was heading to school in the morning when clashes broke out in the neighborhood. He was injured by Israeli rubber bullets directly in the head, he underlined.

The man also said that Israeli soldiers grabbed the Palestinian child and hit him by rifle butts. He had to undergo a surgery as a result, the man pointed out.

**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



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: “No aircraft carrier required.”]

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