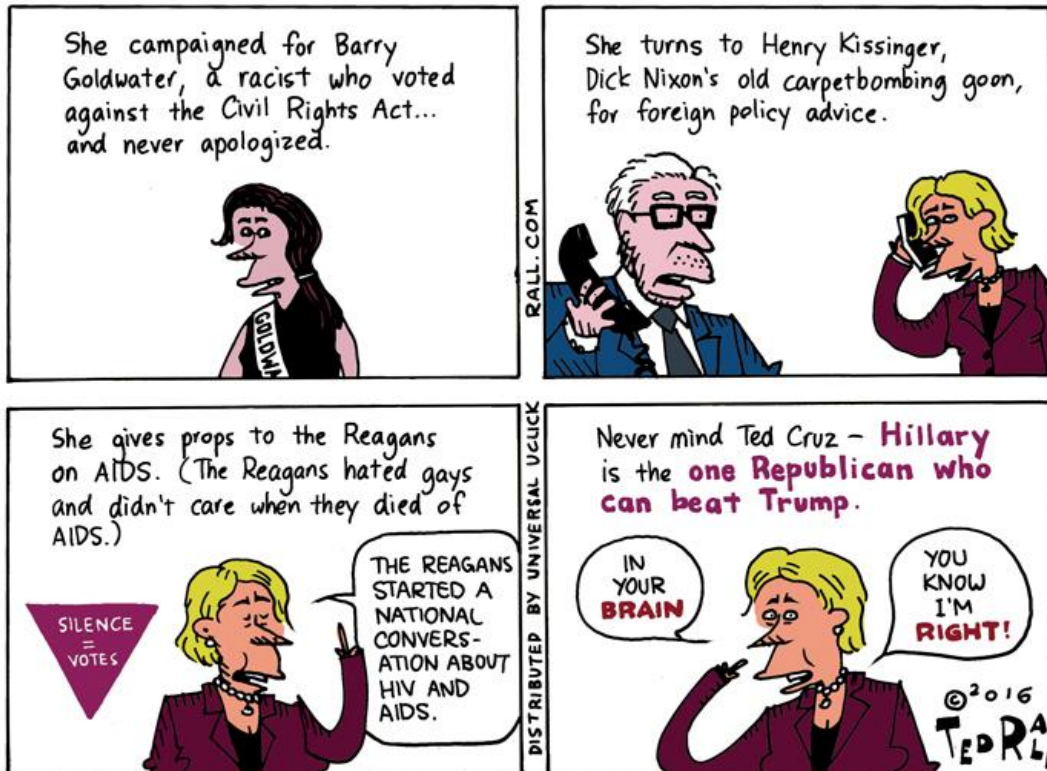


Military Resistance 14E6



**\$180 For Noodle Soup:
“Restaurant In Manhattan, Now
Serves What It Calls ‘The World’s
Most Expensive’ Ramen”
“Costly Ingredients Japanese-
Imported Wagyu Beef, Truffles And
Edible 24-Karat Gold Flakes”
“\$1,000 ‘Golden Opulence’ Ice-Cream
Sundae”**



Koa ramen



\$1,000 "Golden Opulence" ice-cream sundae at Serendipity 3

May 12, 2016 By CHARLES PASSY, Wall Street Journal

Ramen may be the quintessential budget meal. But there is now a version of the noodle soup that seems strictly aimed at the 1%.

Koa, a Japanese restaurant in Manhattan's Flatiron District, has introduced a \$180 bowl of ramen, billing it as "the world's most expensive" example of the dish.

The high price is merited because of the costly ingredients that go into Koa's version, said Charlie Garcia, the restaurant's general manager. Among them: Japanese-imported Wagyu beef, truffles and edible 24-karat gold flakes.

Diners must order the dish at least six hours in advance, giving the cooks time to prepare its chicken-and-pork broth, Mr. Garcia said. The ramen is served in a handcrafted bowl, imported from Japan, with a set of gold-colored chopsticks.

As a bonus, he said, "you get to take the chopsticks home."

To those who closely watch New York City's restaurant industry, a \$180 bowl of ramen may not be a surprise.

Big-ticket dishes aren't hard to find, from the \$1,000 "Golden Opulence" ice-cream sundae at Serendipity 3 to the \$10,000 martini, complete with diamond ring, served at the Algonquin Hotel.

On top of that, ramen has become something of a gourmet item in New York, with restaurants like Ippudo and Ivan Ramen drawing overflow crowds for their versions.

Still, Ivan Orkin, the owner of Ivan Ramen, said a \$180 bowl of ramen goes against the spirit of the dish, which is a favorite in Japan with businesspeople on the run. "Ramen is street food," he said.

The real factor driving all these high-price items may be the buzz they generate for the restaurants, said Daniel Curtis, founder of Robb Vices, a subscription program affiliated with the Robb Report luxury magazine.

In an age that could be defined by conspicuous consumption, he said, "I think we're going to see more and more of these offerings."

The team at Koa admits that they have had just two takers for the \$180 bowl of ramen since it was introduced earlier this month, but they still see the item as a fun way to spread the word about their nearly two-year-old establishment.

The restaurant, however, says it aims to give diners a choice: For those who can't afford the \$180 bowl, Koa offers ramen for as little as \$10 at lunch and \$14 at dinner.

MORE:

Many Of Today's Factory Workers On Welfare: "A Third Of Manufacturing Workers Rely On Safety-Net Programs Such

As Medicaid, Food Stamps, Or Household-Income Assistance” “Americans Who Work In Low-Wage Manufacturing Jobs Currently Receive \$10.2 Billion A Year In Federal And Local Public Assistance”

14 May 16 by Bourree Lam, The Atlantic

Since the peak of U.S. manufacturing in the late 1970s, over 7 million jobs in the sector have been lost. More specifically, employment in factories all but collapsed in the aughts, when the industry shed 5 million jobs.

Throughout these many years of decline, talk of the need for an industry revival was common the in Rust Belt cities where manufacturing had played a large economic role.

Now, on the national stage, the same argument has emerged as a political touchpoint, with presidential candidates proposing the cancellation of international trade agreements so that manufacturing jobs can make a comeback America. Though employment in the manufacturing sector has rebounded significantly in recent years, the election-year spotlight begs a question: Are these manufacturing jobs built to last?

A new report from Berkeley’s Center for Labor Research and Education takes aim at this question.

Analyzing the five largest means-tested public-benefit programs for which good data was available, the report found that over a third of manufacturing workers rely on safety-net programs such as Medicaid, food stamps, or household-income assistance.

The Center estimates that Americans who work in low-wage manufacturing jobs currently receive \$10.2 billion a year in federal and local public assistance.

“Manufacturing has long been thought of as providing high-paying, middle-class work, but the reality is the production jobs are increasingly coming to resemble fast-food or Walmart jobs, especially for those workers employed through temporary staffing agencies,” noted Ken Jacobs, the chair of Berkeley’s Labor Center and a co-author of the report, in a press release.

“While employment in manufacturing has started to grow again following the Great Recession, the new jobs created are less likely to be union and more likely to pay low wages.”

According to the report, the most common form of assistance among manufacturing workers is the Earned Income Tax Credit—a subsidy for low-income families, for which over a quarter of those with manufacturing jobs qualify.

One reason so many of these workers are on public assistance is the rise in low-paying temporary positions in the sector, which have increased nine-fold in the last 25 years.

The report questions whether these temporary manufacturing jobs can reasonably sustain a family's needs: 50 percent of temporary workers with families, for example, are enrolled in one or more assistance programs.

In the post-recession U.S. economy, it's becoming increasingly difficult for anyone without a college degree to get a job, particularly one with a path toward long-term prosperity. Manufacturing jobs are likely not the answer, no matter how attached Americans are to the values they represent. "Historically, blue collar jobs in manufacturing provided opportunities for workers without a college education to earn a decent living," the Labor Center concludes. "For many manufacturing jobs, this is no longer true.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Green Beret Blasts Afghanistan Command Over 'Moral Cowardice,' 'Profound Lack Of Strategy' "A Decrepit State That Grows Out Of The Expansion Of Moral Cowardice, Careerism And Compromise Devoid Of Principle, Exchanged For Cheap Personal Gain"

[Thanks to Don Bacon, who sent this in.]

May 10, 2016 By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times [Excerpts]

A combat-hardened Green Beret has unleashed a barrage of indictments against the command in Afghanistan and policymakers in Washington, saying the 14-year-old war effort suffers from a "profound lack of strategy" and that special operations overseers show "moral cowardice."

“The enemy operates with impunity throughout the country due to our relentless commitment to avoid principled strategy and decision-making processes,” the Special Forces soldier says in a sworn statement he headed, “Profound Lack of Strategy.”

He bemoans the fact that the current battle plan calls for most American troops to stay in forward operating bases as fledgling Afghan troops fight the Taliban alone. It is not working, he said. “There is a fine line between not conducting operations to keep people out of harm’s way and not conducting operations in such a fashion that it actually increases overall risk to force and risk to mission,” the Green Beret said.

He filed his statement in the fall investigation into the mistaken U.S. airstrike on a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, north of Kabul. A relatively small invasion force of Taliban took control of the city. It was up to this soldier’s Operational Detachment Alpha to organize an Afghan force to infiltrate the city and take back buildings.

A special operations AC-130U “Spooky” gunship opened a 30-minute volley of gun and cannon fire, killing 42 staff and patients. The crew received the order to fire from a Green Beret officer on the ground and his Joint Terminal Attack Controller.

The Green Beret who filed the critical statement was not that officer but was a member of the Operational Detachment Alpha holed up in a police station while the Afghan force moved on what was supposed to be the real target — a Taliban-held security building.

It is this specific Sept. 29-Oct. 3 operation for which the soldier delivers his most biting remarks. He said the special operations command centers basically abandoned the men in Kunduz as they fought for over 70 hours. He accused the center commanders of “moral cowardice.”

“When an ODA’s mission runs headlong into national strategy, and the detachment asks for guidance on the level of commitment and receives nothing back over a 96-hour period, that’s an abject failure of leadership,” the Green Beret says.”

He accuses the people running the command centers of playing it safe to prevent harm to their careers.

“Inaction or indecision does, however, enable convenient political expedience, where one can reap the rewards of success without facing the responsibility and consequence of failure,” the soldier said.

“Without commitment to a particular course of action or strategy chosen by a subordinate, a leader can smile for the camera while handing out an award or sidestep the bailiff when the gavel drops on the judge’s bench.”

The Green Beret then lays out specifics.

He said an Operational Detachment Alpha member (redacted) called the operations center three times and asked for “a level of commitment from (special operations task force).” He said this center then called the joint operations center, which then called the overall command, known as Resolute Support.

He said the one reply the team received from headquarters was, “How far do you want to go?”

“It’s not a strategy, and in fact it’s a recipe for disaster in that kinetic of an environment. How have we, as a force, as a group of officers, become so lost from the good lessons that our mentors taught us? I will tell you how. It is a decrepit state that grows out of the expansion of moral cowardice, careerism and compromise devoid of principle, exchanged for cheap personal gain.

“We owe the man on the ground more than that, because for him, the decision that he makes hopefully lands him somewhere between the judge’s gavel and the enemy bullet.”

This soldier’s criticism of the special operations command centers was backed up by the final U.S. Central Command investigation released last week.

It said the various centers failed at the “art of command.” They did little to help the Green Berets or the inexperienced crew of the AC-130, with which it was in communication, to make sure they found the correct target.

The investigation listed a number of failures by these special operations centers:

“The Kunduz planning process was one-dimensional with minimal staff effort” from special operations headquarters.

They did not identify risks to the Americans. “Failure to follow proper procedures contributed to the lack of situational understanding and ultimately the strike on the trauma center.”

They exhibited an “ineffective, hands-off approach of leaders and staff throughout the operations process, as personnel did not properly assess the mission.”

They “permitted an inexperienced flight crew with marginal training performance to support a highly delicate ODA/Afghan partner force mission.”

The Obama administration has said the combat mission is over for American troops. But the Kunduz operation showed otherwise.

One soldier told investigators it was a miracle no one was killed given the amount of fire they took over four days.

MORE:

Green Berets Didn’t Have Proper Maps During Afghan Fighting:

“‘Technological Issues’ Prevented The Production Of Further ‘Graphics’ Prior To The Start Of The Operation”

May 9, 2016 Thomas Gibbons-Neff, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

The Army Special Forces unit that fought its way into the Afghan city of Kunduz after it was seized by the Taliban in October initially did so without proper maps, according to recently declassified documents.

The documents, released last month, were part of a heavily redacted report on the Oct. 3, 2015 bombing of a Doctors Without Borders hospital that killed between 30 and 42 civilians.

On Sept. 28, the Taliban, after a series of concerted attacks, seized Kunduz from Afghan security forces. Roughly a day later, and with just 12 hours of planning, a dozen-man Army Special Forces team, known as an Operational Detachment-Alpha or ODA, began pushing into the city alongside its Afghan allies.

According to the investigation documents, the team was using a “single” 1:50,000 scale map to “plan and conduct operations in the city.”

According to the report, “technological issues” prevented the production of further “graphics” prior to the start of the operation.

U.S. military doctrine holds that large scale military maps, such as the type used by the ODA team at the start of the Kunduz operation, do not have enough detail for a ground unit to accurately analyze urban areas. To remedy this, units often produce their own maps at much smaller scales -- often just labeling satellite imagery with roads and building numbers -- to help ground forces navigate. These smaller maps are likely the reference to “graphics.”

Although the unit did not have the right maps, it is likely they had additional capabilities to understand the situation on the battlefield, likely including mapping software known as FalconView, GPS receivers and video feeds broadcast from drones circling overhead.

It wasn't until Oct. 1 that the Green Berets “discovered a comprehensive 1:10,000” map that apparently had been left behind or given to the Special Forces soldiers by a unit responsible for public works projects.

Prior to the team stumbling upon the new map, it had seen heavy fighting and was responsible for calling in more than a dozen airstrikes over the course of the day.

The German military was responsible for the city and the surrounding area, known as Regional Command-North. The U.S. Army and Army National Guard also had a significant presence in the city from 2009 to 2012. Army Special Forces also maintained a small base just outside the city, and had done so continuously for some time.

According to Adrian Bonenberger, an Army company commander who was deployed in Kunduz in 2011, his unit had detailed maps and satellite imagery of the city. Bonenberger believes those maps weren't properly handed over to Army Special Forces when regular Army units pulled out in 2012.

"This is indicative of how the United States fights its wars," Bonenberger said. "It's a profound flaw in the 'deployment' system, that encourages unit compartmentalization and limits cross-communication."

In a witness statement, one Green Beret, whose name and rank were redacted, decried his command's ambivalence towards the situation on the ground, stating that the enemies of the operation were not the Taliban but "a profound lack of strategy."

POLICE WAR REPORTS

Paper Gun Leads to School Lockdown in Hartford



This paper gun led to a temporary lockdown at a school in Hartford on Monday morning.

May 10, 2016 NBC Connecticut

A student brought a fake gun made of rolled up paper to a school in Hartford this morning, which led to a lockdown.

Police said a temporary Code Yellow lockdown was issued at McDonough Expeditionary Learning School, a school for students in grades six through eight.

Everyone is safe and the lockdown has been lifted, according to police.

NBC Connecticut reached out to the schools, but there was no immediate response.

Striking Prisoners In Alabama “Are Protesting Severe Overcrowding, Poor Living Conditions, And Forced, Unpaid Prison Labor”

“State’s Department Of Corrections Has Been Sued Over Medical Neglect, Abuse, Dangerous Conditions, And An Extraordinary High Level Of Violence”

May 10 2016 by Alice Speri, The Intercept

Alabama prisoners who have been on strike for 10 days over unpaid labor and prison conditions are accusing officials of retaliating against their protest by starving them. The coordinated strike started on May 1, International Workers’ Day, when prisoners at the Holman and Elmore facilities refused to report to their prison jobs and has since expanded to Staton, St. Clair, and Donaldson’s facilities, according to organizers with the Free Alabama Movement, a network of prison activists.

Prison officials responded by putting the facilities on lockdown, partially to allow guards to perform jobs normally carried out by prisoners.

But prisoners told The Intercept that officials also punished them by serving meals that are significantly smaller than usual, a practice they have referred to as “bird feeding.”

The Alabama Department of Corrections did not respond to multiple requests for comment, though earlier this month they told local reporters that inmates had “not given any demands, or a reason for refusing to work.”

Prisoners told The Intercept they are protesting severe overcrowding, poor living conditions, and the Thirteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which bans slavery and servitude “except as a punishment for crime,” thus sanctioning the legality of forced, unpaid prison labor.

Prisoners said they have voiced their requests in meetings with prison officials but were told their demands were “too great.”

Last month, after riots broke out at Holman prison twice in four days, prisoners also circulated a list of demands, including federal assistance, the release of inmates who are eligible for parole, and compensation for “mental pain and physical abuse.” They are planning to circulate an updated list today.

A prisoner serving a life sentence at Holman prison shared photos of his meals in text messages over the last several days. One picture shows a meal made of two slices of white bread, cereal, a slice of yellow cheese, artificial sugar and a brown sauce the inmate said was prune stew.

Another meal was made up of two slices of white bread, an apple, and an unrecognizable white mixture wrapped in plastic.

The inmates said they were not complaining about the food itself, but about the very small quantities.

“It’s only an issue when the deprivation of any necessity becomes a weapon used against us to make us discouraged,” the man sharing the photos said, adding that officials are using the tactic to break prisoners’ resolve. Still, prisoners have refused to return to work.

“The food is a blatant violation and these violations are the reason that we even formed a strike from the start,” that prisoner said. “We r not supposed to be fed the way they r feeding us, it is not 2300 or 2200 calories that we r suppose to be getting that they have been serving us for ten days straight.”

“We r weak feeling nauseated and having headaches from the lack of balanced meals,” he wrote.

Alabama’s prisons — the most overcrowded prison system in the country — are operating at nearly 200 percent capacity. In recent years, the state’s department of corrections has been sued over medical neglect, abuse, dangerous conditions, and an extraordinary high level of violence. Stabbings are frequent, as are suicides.

State officials have acknowledged the problems plaguing Alabama’s prisons and recently proposed to shut down 14 prisons, swapping them for four massive, new “state-of-the-art” facilities — an \$800 million project they dubbed the “Alabama Prison Transformation Initiative Act.” A scaled-down version of that proposal is currently pending.

Prisoner rights advocates say building more prisons won’t solve the problem. “The crisis with the prisons has to do with culture and management,” Charlotte Morrison, a senior attorney at the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), which represents Alabama prisoners, told The Intercept last month. “It’s not something that can be solved by just building new prisons.”

Prison strikes have been on the rise in recent years, as prisoners organizing through a network of smuggled cell phones have established communication between prisons as well as with the outside.

Last month, prisoners in Texas refused to leave their cells to report to their unpaid jobs, listing a series of demands, including “good-time” credit toward sentence reduction, an end to \$100 medical co-pays, and a drastic downsizing of the state’s incarcerated population.

A nationwide strike is also planned for September 9, the 45th anniversary of the Attica prison riot by a group of prisoners coordinating efforts from Ohio, Alabama, Virginia, and Mississippi. As many as 870,000 prisoners are employed nationwide, some in manufacturing jobs for which they are paid a few cents an hour, if they are paid at all.

“We have made a vow to no longer cater to what we know to be inhumane and barbaric in its essence,” the Holman prisoners wrote, when announcing the strike. “We make this stand now and we will remain here.”

“We just refuse to be the components in the institution of slavery.”

Disabled Army Veteran Acting As A Process Server Gives Brutality Lawsuit Notice To Cop: Lying, Stupid Cops Arrest Him To Send Him To Prison For Assault; Video Shows Police Perjury; “Why Aren’t The Seven Witnesses To Dendinger’s Nonexistent Assault On Cassard Already Facing Felony Charges?”

February 27, 2015 By Radley Balko, Washington Post

The latest example of cellphone video vindicating someone from false charges is a doozy.

It comes from Washington Parish, La., and WWL TV.

One of the worst days of Douglas Dendinger’s life began with him handing an envelope to a police officer.

In order to help out his family and earn a quick \$50, Dendinger agreed to act as a process server, giving a brutality lawsuit filed by his nephew to Chad Cassard as the former Bogalusa police officer exited the Washington Parish Courthouse.

The handoff went smoothly, but Dendinger said the reaction from Cassard, and a group of officers and attorneys clustered around him, turned his life upside down.

“It was like sticking a stick in a bee’s nest.” Dendinger, 47, recalled. “They started cursing me. They threw the summons at me. Right at my face, but it fell short. Vulgarities. I just didn’t know what to think. I was a little shocked.”

Not knowing what to make of the blow-up, a puzzled Dendinger drove home. That’s where things went from bad to worse.

“Within about 20 minutes, there were these bright lights shining through my windows. It was like, ‘Oh my God.’ I mean I knew immediately, a police car.”

“And that’s when the nightmare started,” he said. “I was arrested.”

He was not only arrested, he was also charged with two felonies and a misdemeanor. A prior drug charge on his record meant he was potentially looking at decades in prison.

Seven witnesses backed up the police account that Dendinger had assaulted Cassard.

But Dendinger had asked his wife and nephew to record him serving the papers.

It was a last minute decision, but one that may have saved him his freedom.

From what can be seen on the clips, Dendinger never touches Cassard, who calmly takes the envelope and walks back into the courthouse, handing (prosecutor Leigh Anne) Wall the envelope.

“He’d still be in a world of trouble if he didn’t have that film,” said David Cressy, a friend of Dendinger who once served as a prosecutor under (former St. Tammany District Attorney Walter) Reed.

“It was him against all of them. They took advantage of that and said all sorts of fictitious things happened. And it didn’t happen. It would still be going like that had they not had the film.”

Dendinger spent nearly a year waiting for trial, racking up attorney’s fees. As a disabled Army veteran on a fixed income, Dendinger said the case stretched him financially, but in his eyes, he was fighting for his life.

After nearly a year passed, his attorneys forced Reed to recuse his office. The case was referred to the Louisiana Attorney General’s Office, which promptly dropped the charges.

Rafael Goyeneche, president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission and himself a former prosecutor, studied the videos. He did not hesitate in his assessment.

“I didn’t see a battery, certainly a battery committed that would warrant criminal charges,” Goyeneche said. “And more importantly, the attorney general’s office didn’t see a battery.”

That's all well and good.

And Dendinger has since filed a federal civil rights lawsuit. I hope he collects.

But here's my question:

Why aren't the seven witnesses to Dendinger's nonexistent assault on Cassard already facing felony charges?

Why are all but one of the cops who filed false reports still wearing badges and collecting paychecks?

Why aren't the attorneys who filed false reports facing disbarment?

Dendinger's prosecutors both filed false reports, then prosecuted Dendinger based on the reports they knew were false. They should be looking for new careers — after they get out of jail.

If a group of regular citizens had pulled this on someone, they'd all likely be facing criminal conspiracy charges on top of the perjury and other charges. So why aren't these cops and prosecutors?

I could be wrong, but my guess is that they'll all be let off due to "professional courtesy" or some sort of exercise of prosecutorial discretion.

And so the people who ought to be held to a higher standard than the rest of us will once again be held to a lower one.

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

Ask for work. If they do not give you work, ask for bread. If they do not give you work or bread, then take bread.”

– Emma Goldman

Agent Orange Children Vietnam 2016



Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter

Sent: May 12, 2016
Subject: Agent Orange Children Vietnam 2016

Full Disclosure

The spraying of 70 million liters of “Agent Orange” (a poisonous herbicide called Dixon), on the Vietnamese people by the United States Government, is one of the worst war crimes ever committed in modern warfare. It is the war crime that is born again with every new generation.

**Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam**

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Another Failed Attempt To
Reform Capitalism Ends In A
Sewer Of Corruption:
“The Same Kind Of Corruption
That Had Long Characterized The
Country’s Ruling Classes”**

“Billions Of Dollars In Bribes To Figures Across The Political Spectrum”

“The Workers’ Party Was A Party Of Hope, But Its Leaders Got Intoxicated By Power”

Brazil Workers’ Party, Leaders ‘Intoxicated by Power,’ Destroys Itself

MAY 12, 2016 by Andrew Jacobs, New York Times

BRASÍLIA — From its earliest days as a scrappy band of Marxists defying Brazil’s military rulers, the Workers’ Party grew to become one of world’s most enduring leftist movements — an electoral powerhouse that dominated the nation’s politics for more than a decade.

But Brazil’s Senate dealt it a crippling blow on Thursday, voting to suspend President Dilma Rousseff and tossing out the political organization that has governed Latin America’s largest nation for 13 years, the longest reign of a democratically elected party in Brazilian history.

“The Workers’ Party was a party of hope, but its leaders got intoxicated by power, and now that hope has been dashed,” said Hélio Bicudo, 93, an early member of the party and a former legislator who defected in 2005.

After a decade of soaring popularity, the fortunes of the Workers’ Party were pummeled by a raging economic crisis and a colossal corruption scandal that felled some of its top leaders.

While millions of Brazilians were slipping back into poverty, the party that had come to power vowing to represent the masses and drive out impunity was taking part in the same kind of corruption that had long characterized the country’s ruling classes.

Although Ms. Rousseff has not been accused of graft — her impeachment trial is based on a budgetary sleight of hand intended to enhance her re-election prospects — corruption scandals have tarnished the reputation of her mentor, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Workers’ Party standard-bearer who picked her to be his successor and had planned to run again in 2018.

Mr. da Silva has yet to be charged with a crime, but federal prosecutors are investigating his role in a scheme that involved funneling money from the national oil company into the Workers’ Party campaign coffers.

An array of top allies of Mr. da Silva, including senior members of the party, have been imprisoned or are under investigation for their involvement in the scheme, which distributed billions of dollars in bribes to figures across the political spectrum.

Even in a nation inured to systemic corruption, the fall of a party once devoted to transparency and clean government has deepened mistrust of politics.

It also threatens to upend some of the accomplishments of the party, a political juggernaut that even critics concede helped ease the crushing poverty and economic disparity that has long plagued this nation of 200 million.

“That the Workers’ Party sullied itself by getting involved in all this corruption, this is a tragedy, maybe the major tragedy of what is happening today,” said José Murilo de Carvalho, a historian.

In recent weeks, more than 130 mayors who won office on the Workers’ Party ticket have switched parties, and nearly 30 deputies in the lower house of Congress, roughly half of its caucus, have suggested they might do the same, according to tallies in the Brazilian news media.

Other parties took part in the graft scheme. But emboldened by Ms. Rousseff’s political demise, her opponents in the legislature are working to reverse some of her party’s hallmarks, including stringent environmental rules, protections for indigenous Brazilians in the Amazon and laws criminalizing abusive work conditions on cattle ranches.

Jan Rocha, an author of the book “Brazil Under the Workers’ Party,” said such efforts, if successful, could stoke class divisions and provoke a violent backlash from disenfranchised Brazilians who stand to lose the most from a rollback of the party’s policies.

“The Workers’ Party represented an attempt to change the political landscape in Brazil and give a voice to all the millions of Brazilians who never had a voice,” she said. “They lifted millions of people out of poverty, but Brazil still has an awfully long way to go before becoming an equitable society.”

“Workers’ Party Officials Were Secretly Engaged In A Huge Kickback Scheme With Executives At Petrobras”

Marked by greed, betrayal and the quest for ever-greater power, the party’s fall from grace has all the elements of a Shakespearean tragedy.

Its main protagonist is Mr. da Silva, 70, who worked as a shoeshine boy before landing a job at a screw factory. From there, he rose to the presidency and oversaw an economic boom.

Starting in the 1970s, he helped transform a ragtag collection of labor activists, liberal Roman Catholic clergy members and idealistic students into a formidable political movement that stood up to the country’s military leaders.

Formed in 1980, the Workers' Party eschewed strict Marxist dogma and embraced a democratic process for electing its leaders.

Mr. da Silva ran for office with the slogan "Land, labor and freedom."

By the late 1980s, the party's candidates were winning elections. In 1986, Mr. da Silva was elected to Congress and, two years later, a Workers' Party candidate won the mayoralty of São Paulo, the country's largest city. Mr. da Silva then set his sights on the presidency.

Universally referred to by the nickname Lula, he was an unlikely political figure whose unpolished syntax and leftist rhetoric rattled the Brazilian elite. But in 1998, after three unsuccessful bids for president, Mr. da Silva changed his strategy. He traded his T-shirts for tailored suits and jettisoned talk of revolutionary change, saying he would honor the \$250 billion in foreign debt that was then hobbling the Brazilian economy.

His new slogan: "Lula, Peace and Love."

In 2002, he harnessed popular anger over economic inequality and rampant graft to win the presidency by a landslide. The austerity measures he introduced and a growing demand for Brazilian commodities helped right the economy, but he quickly found it necessary to make deals with Brazil's fractious Congress to pass his ambitious legislative agenda.

For former party stalwarts like Idelber Avelar, the breaking point came when Mr. da Silva began to dole out patronage posts and form alliances with opposition party bosses who did not share the Workers' Party's ideals.

"It represented everything that the party had been fighting against," said Mr. Avelar, an academic who now lives in the United States. "There were a number of options, but the early choice was made for the politics of making deals behind closed doors."

The accommodation with rent-seeking allies nearly brought down Mr. da Silva's government in 2005, when a vote-buying scheme that paid opposition lawmakers for their loyalty was exposed by the Brazilian news media. Mr. da Silva weathered the scandal and was re-elected in 2006, but he was substantially weakened by the crisis and was forced to enter into even more alliances to maintain his support in Congress.

Apparently unchastened by their brush with scandal, Workers' Party officials were secretly engaged in a huge kickback scheme with executives at Petrobras, the state-owned energy giant. The arrangement involved skimming off billions of dollars from an oil boom and diverting the money to the Workers' Party and its coalition partners in Congress.

The scandal has shaken the country's political establishment, with dozens of business executives and party leaders imprisoned or under investigation.

Some of Mr. da Silva's closest aides are among the fallen, but he has insisted he was unaware of the arrangement.

“Our greatest achievements were to raise 36 million people out of poverty and elevate 40 million others into the middle class,” Mr. da Silva said in an email this week. “We remain a party that cares about the poor and about social justice.”

Unless he is charged with a crime, many political analysts still expect Mr. da Silva to run for president in two years.

“In Brazilian politics, you can never throw someone under the bus and think they won’t recover,” said Alfred P. Montero, the author of the book “Brazil: Reversal of Fortune” and a professor at Carleton College. “I’ve been watching these guys since the ‘80s, and they always seem to come back.”

Experts say that despite its current tribulations, the Workers’ Party, with its 500,000 active members, will remain a potent force in Brazilian politics for years to come. The impeachment crisis, some say, may spur a period of introspection that could help reinvigorate the party.

“The Workers’ Party is heading back to the opposition, which perhaps is just what the doctor ordered,” Mr. Montero said.

For now, the Workers’ Party faithful are engaged in soul-searching. Did the party abandon its ideals in the heady rush of power? Or were its leaders adapting to a flawed, entrenched system?

Lincoln Secco, a professor of contemporary history at the University of São Paulo and an early party member, said Mr. da Silva made a fateful error during his first months in power by not seeking to push through difficult political changes, including an overhaul of a campaign finance system that is heavily reliant on corporate donors.

“If the party doesn’t confront the political system, there is no other way to govern in Brazil than to enter into rotten alliances,” he said. “They chose the easier way.”

Despite the disillusionment, millions of Brazilians still hold great affection for the party, especially those who have benefited from the many social welfare programs put into place during the tenures of Mr. da Silva and Ms. Rousseff. They include a monthly stipend to the nation’s poorest residents and programs that allowed millions of people to attend college for the first time.

Milton Nunes Sobrinho, 53, a doorman in São Paulo, credits the party with helping him obtain steady work; buy a used car; and move his family out of a rat-infested shack, thanks to a federally subsidized loan program that produced 2.6 million new homeowners over the past decade.

“Everything they promised, they did,” Mr. Sobrinho said. “All the progress we’ve experienced in our lives is because of them.”

Asked about party’s troubles, he shook his head. “It’s all a political game,” he said. “And next time, I’ll definitely be voting for the candidate from the Workers’ Party.”

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Heroic Zionists Open Fire On Palestinian Ambulance Personnel; Two Wounded

May 7, 2016 IMEMC

Israeli soldiers invaded, Friday, the town of Abu Dis, southeast of occupied East Jerusalem, and clashed with dozens of youngsters, wounding at least thirty-three, including two medics.

The soldiers fired dozens of gas bombs and rubber-coated steel bullets, wounding nine Palestinians, who received the needed treatment by local Red Crescent medics.

The Red Crescent said the soldiers also targeted its medics, by firing gas bombs and rubber-coated steel bullets at them, and their ambulances, wounding two with rubber-coated steel bullets, as they were trying to provide the needed medical attention to injured Palestinians.

**Bragging Of Free Press,
Occupation Dictatorship
Imprisons 19 Palestinian
Journalists:
“Journalists Are Subject To
Administrative Detention,
Imprisonment Without Charge Or
Trial”**

“I Was Arrested For Expressing My Opinions, Practicing My Job As A Journalist, And For Defending Human Rights, And Particularly The Rights Of Journalists,’ Nazzal Wrote” Covering The Suffering And Oppression Palestinians Face On A Daily Basis Is Considered The Crime Of “Incitement”



Palestinian journalists hold a rally demanding that Israel release their jailed colleague Omar Nazzal, in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, on 30 April.

6 May 2016 by Budour Youssef Hassan, The Electronic Intifada

When Israeli police briefly detained William Booth, The Washington Post’s bureau chief in Jerusalem in February, the incident sparked considerable media attention.

Photographs of Booth and his colleague Sufian Taha being removed from the Damascus Gate, an entry to the Old City, were widely circulated.

The incident was, however, quickly dismissed as isolated and “regrettable” – in the words of an Israeli foreign ministry spokesperson.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, visiting Germany at the time, claimed that Israel does not arrest journalists and that the media in Israel is “lively and free.”

Netanyahu was lying: Israel frequently arrests and imprisons Palestinian journalists.

Nineteen Palestinian journalists are currently in Israeli detention, according to data issued by the Palestinian Prisoners Club.

The latest such detainee is 24-year-old photographer and reporter Hasan Safadi.

He was arrested on 30 April at the Allenby crossing, on his way back from a visit to Jordan. Israel controls that crossing, which connects Jordan to the occupied West Bank.

Safadi is a media officer with Addameer, a group campaigning for Palestinian prisoners.

He has also contributed to numerous publications, including Assafir, a newspaper published in Lebanon.

“After arresting him at the border, they also raided our home and confiscated several books and any papers that had Hasan’s name,” Ghazal Safadi, Hasan’s sister, told The Electronic Intifada. As she spoke, Israeli border police and special units were searching the family’s home in the Beit Hanina neighborhood of East Jerusalem.

“Hasan was arrested for doing his job, for writing, for documenting Israel’s violations.”

Hasan Safadi is scheduled to appear in court this Sunday.

Ghazal believes that her brother’s arrest is part of an escalating wave of attacks not just against journalists, but against all Palestinians trying to expose Israel’s oppression of the Palestinians.

“Some Journalists Are Subject To Administrative Detention, Imprisonment Without Charge Or Trial”

Another Jerusalem-based reporter arrested last month was 25-year-old Samah Dweik.

A reporter for both the newspaper Al-Quds and the online Quds News Network, Dweik was arrested at her home in Ras al-Amoud, also in East Jerusalem, on 10 April.

“The army and police raided our home at approximately 9:30 am and turned it upside down while searching for documents belonging to Samah,” Israa Dweik, Samah’s sister, told The Electronic Intifada.

“They confiscated my laptop, as well as Samah’s and my mother’s mobile phone,” Israa added. “They took many books and have not returned anything yet.”

Samah Dweik was recently transferred to Hasharon prison, an Israeli jail where Palestinian women political prisoners are traditionally held, and faces charges of incitement.

Dweik was one of the few journalists closely following the case of Palestinian schoolgirl Marah Bakir, imprisoned for allegedly stabbing an Israeli soldier.

Israa Dweik feels it is ironic that – after Samah had spent so much time with Marah’s family and writing about Marah’s plight – Samah and Marah are now in the same prison.

“For Israel, covering the human suffering in Jerusalem and the aggression that Palestinians face on a daily basis is considered incitement,” Israa added. “They want Palestinians to remain silent and they want to conceal the true face of the occupation by arresting and persecuting people like my sister.”

Samah Dweik had been especially busy since an uprising against Israel began in October last year. She has covered in detail the effects of Israel’s crackdown on the Palestinian community in Jerusalem.

Among the topics she has written about were the arrest of Palestinian minors, home demolitions, the placing of Palestinians under house arrests and incursions by Israeli settlers into al-Aqsa mosque.

“Writing about Jerusalem and covering what happens in all of its neighborhoods was Samah’s primary mission,” said Israa. “She is looking to improve as a journalist and develop her experience and make a name for herself. But Jerusalem will always be her main focal point.”

To try to excuse its persecution of Palestinian journalists, Israel has often pressed charges of incitement.

The charge has become so common that it appears Israel regards all Palestinian journalists who simply do their jobs as guilty of incitement – a vague and amorphous concept.

Sometimes, though, Israel does not even bother pressing charges.

Some journalists are subject to administrative detention, imprisonment without charge or trial.

The TV journalist Muhammad al-Qiq is among those who have been held under administrative detention.

He helped draw attention both to Israel’s use of this practice – condemned by human rights groups – and to its persecution of journalists by undertaking a hunger strike.

After al-Qiq refused food for 94 days, Israel agreed to end his detention in February.

Another Palestinian journalist held under administrative detention is 54-year-old Omar Nazzal.

Nazzal, a member of the general secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate and the director of a private media firm, was arrested in March.

While traveling to attend a conference by the European Federation of Journalists in Bosnia, he was arrested at the Allenby crossing. He has since been placed under administrative detention.

Nazzal is a father of three daughters, the youngest of whom is 15. He was previously arrested during the first intifada for his activism with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and had faced a travel ban for more than two years.

““I Was Arrested For Expressing My Opinions, For Practicing My Job As A Journalist, And For Defending Human Rights, And Particularly The Rights Of Journalists”

“The arrest of Omar demonstrates Israel’s plan to silence Palestinian voices and to intimidate the entire Palestinian society,” Marilyn Rabadi, Nazzal’s wife, told The Electronic Intifada. “Israel constantly brags about its so-called free press, and unfortunately it seems many in the West subscribe to this myth. But reality couldn’t be more different.”

Rabadi is aware that her husband’s case has received more attention than that of many other detained Palestinian journalists. Yet she argues that the coverage of Nazzal’s case is still far less than he would receive if he was from the West.

“We are tired of just hearing condemnations that lead to no actual pressure on Israel to release journalists,” she said. “Palestinian journalists are arrested, beaten and harassed. Unless practical and genuine pressure is employed – not just rhetoric – these attacks against journalists will continue.”

Rabadi believes that it’s not just the so-called international community that is to blame for the impunity with which Israel carries out its attacks against Palestinian journalists.

“We obviously appreciate the support we got from the Palestinian Journalists’ Syndicate but the Palestinian Authority has done nothing,” she said. “They (the PA) claim to have some sort of sovereignty in the West Bank, but Israel can easily arrest people in the heart of Ramallah or at the crossing and all you could hear from the PA is soft, almost shy, condemnation.”

On 3 May, World Press Freedom Day, Nazzal issued a letter from jail, reiterating his commitment to defending the right to expression in Palestine.

“I was arrested for expressing my opinions, for practicing my job as a journalist, and for defending human rights, and particularly the rights of journalists,” Nazzal wrote. “My arrest is a clear attack not just against the freedom of the press, but also against union organizing and the freedom to work in general. It is an attack against the entire Palestinian Journalists’ Syndicate.”

“And on behalf of all imprisoned journalists, I pledge to you that we will not put down our pens,” Nazzal added. “Our voices will remain loud and the lenses of our cameras will always be prepared to document the crimes of the Israeli occupation in order to reveal them to the world.”

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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