

## Military Resistance 14F6



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Terror is as terror does."]

**“Nine In 10 Americans Lack Confidence In The Country's Political System”**

**“There Are Few Partisan Differences In The Public's Lack Of Faith In The Political Parties, The Nominating Process, And The Branches Of Government”**

# “The Views Of Ordinary Voters Are Not Considered By Either Party, According To Most Americans”

June 9, 2016 The Associated Press and NORC [Excerpts]

Seventy percent of Americans say they feel frustrated about this year's presidential election, including roughly equal proportions of Democrats and Republicans, according to a recent national poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. More than half feel helpless and a similar percent are angry.

Nine in 10 Americans lack confidence in the country's political system, and among a normally polarized electorate, there are few partisan differences in the public's lack of faith in the political parties, the nominating process, and the branches of government.

Americans do not see either the Republicans or the Democrats as particularly receptive to new ideas or the views of the rank-and-file membership. However, the candidacy of Bernie Sanders for the Democratic nomination is more likely to be viewed as good for his party than Donald Trump's bid for the Republican Party.

The nationwide poll of 1,060 adults used the AmeriSpeak® Omnibus, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC at the University of Chicago's probability based panel. Interviews were conducted between May 12 and 15, 2016, online and using landlines and cellphones.

Neither party is seen as particularly receptive to fresh ideas. Only 17 percent of the public say the Democratic Party is open to new ideas about dealing with the country's problems; 10 percent say that about the Republican Party.

**The views of ordinary voters are not considered by either party, according to most Americans. Fourteen percent say the Democratic Party is responsive to the views of the rank-and-file; 8 percent report that about the Republican Party.**

Only 10 percent say the Democratic Party is open to candidates that are independent of the established order.

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

### **Taliban Seize A District In Uruzgan: “US, Dutch, And Australian Forces Committed Significant Resources To**

# Secure Uruzgan And Stand Up To The Police And Arbakis, Or Local Militias”

June 15, 2016 BY BILL ROGGIO AND CALEB WEISS, The Long War Journal.  
[Excerpts] Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of The Long War Journal. Caleb Weiss is an intern at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and a contributor to The Long War Journal.

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The Taliban took control of a district center in the central Afghan province of Uruzgan after several days of fighting Afghan forces who are reported to have been supported by US forces.

The Taliban said it overran the “police HQ (headquarters) and other installations” at Char Chino and “dismantled” the “district administration center and other buildings.” The jihadist group made the claim on its official propaganda website, Voice of Jihad.

According to the Taliban, it launched the attack yesterday morning and killed 35 “puppets,” or Afghan police and military personnel.

The Taliban claimed it destroyed two armored personnel carriers and 7 Ford Ranger pickup trucks. Four Taliban fighters were killed during the assault, the group claimed.

**The fall of Char Chino was confirmed by Stars & Stripes, which reported that “the international coalition was providing support to government forces” during the fighting.**

However, the spokesman for Uruzgan province claimed that the governor’s office was still under Afghan forces’ control and security forces withdrew from the police headquarters in a “tactical move,” Stars and Stripes reported.

The Taliban currently control 39 districts in Afghanistan and contest another 43, according to data compiled by The Long War Journal.

Districts under Taliban control are being administered by the group, or it controls the district center. Typically the Taliban controls all of the areas of a district except the administrative center in contested districts.

In Uruzgan, the Taliban contest four districts and control one more (Char Chino).

Fighting in the provinces has intensified over the past month.

Just prior to taking Char Chino, the Taliban killed 11 Afghan soldiers and captured 12 others in the district of Dehrawood on June 7. And on May 31, the Taliban overran 11 police checkposts in Gizab district.

**The Taliban considers Uruzgan to be a strategic district, and has previously said that it controls all areas of the province except for the district centers.**

**In a Voice of Jihad interview in April 2016 with Mullah Aminullah Yousuf, the Taliban's shadow governor for Uruzgan, he described the province as "the linking point for many provinces" and a traditional "strong fortress of mujahideen."**

"The enemy thinks that if the province fell into the mujahideen's hands, recapturing it back would be very hard," Yousef said.

Yousef explained that US, Dutch, and Australian forces committed significant resources to secure Uruzgan and stand up to the police and Arbakis, or local militias. But the Taliban continued to fight in the province and gained grounds after Coalition forces withdrew.

"[I]n the course of last year, with the exception of district headquarters, all villages, suburbs, and valleys slipped away from enemy hands," Yousef claimed in April.

**Yousef said the Taliban would continue to pursue gaining control of the district centers, and predicted that the loss of all five districts would be a serious problem for the Afghan government.**

**"If ... the mujahideen capture the headquarters of districts as we expect and have plans for, then provincial headquarters will not be able to resist. It would be a big blow to the enemy, and the enemy would leave the area," he stated.**

**Now one of Uruzgan's five district centers is controlled by the Taliban.**

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## **Taliban Say Obama Pissing In The Wind:**

**Broader Role For The US Forces In Afghanistan "Will Only Lead To The Waste Of U.S. Resources And More Battlefield Casualties"**

**"We Condemn The Occupation And Extension Of The War"**

Jun 12 2016 By Khaama Press

The Taliban militants group in Afghanistan has vowed to continue fight as the US President Barack Obama approved broader role for the US forces in Afghanistan.

Condemning the approval by Obama to grant wider role for the US forces in Afghanistan, a spokesman for the Taliban group, Zabiullah Mujahid has said the moves will not deter it or cause it to step back and give up the “armed resistance.”

Mujahid further added it will only lead to the waste of U.S. resources and more battlefield casualties.

“We condemn the occupation and extension of the war. We want to tell the Americans the Afghan nation firmly resisted with grace your use of any force in the past 15 years. We remain resilient and will carry forward our jihad against your occupation,” Mujahid said in a statement sent to VOA on Saturday.

Obama on Friday approved broader role for the US military to assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) to fight the Taliban-led insurgency.

**The broader role granted to the US military will allow them to accompany Afghan forces and assist them more proactively on the battlefield.**

**The US forces were earlier accompanying the Afghan special forces only when it was needed, according to the US officials said.**

The officials said under the new policy the US commander in Afghanistan, General John Nicholson, will be able to decide when it is appropriate for American troops to accompany conventional Afghan forces into the field.

**MORE PISSING IN THE WIND:**

**“America’s Longest War Is About To Include More Cash For Afghanistan’s Army And Police Force”**

**“Without Any New Conditions To Try To Ensure It Doesn’t Get Gobbled Up Before Making It To The Battlefield”**

# **“Billions Of Dollars Have Been Wasted Or Stolen Here Over The Past 15 Years”**

## **“It’s Clear You Cannot Kill Your Way Out Of This Conflict. And Guess What — We Don’t Have The Money For This”**

**Even Brig. Gen. Dawlat Waziri, chief spokesman for the Afghan Defense Ministry, was uncertain about what the long-term strategy is for ending the war.**

**Asked whether he thought the Afghan military could ever be self-sufficient, Waziri said that question is better asked in Washington.**

June 18 By Tim Craig, Washington Post [Excerpts]

KABUL — America’s longest war is about to include more cash for Afghanistan’s army and police force — without any new conditions to try to ensure it doesn’t get gobbled up before making it to the battlefield.

At a NATO summit in Warsaw that begins July 8, the United States and its allies will try to raise \$15 billion to fund Afghan security forces through 2020.

About \$10.5 billion of that is expected to come from the United States, a continuation of commitments to pay and clothe Afghan security forces while supplying them with fuel, weapons and ammunition to fight Taliban insurgents.

But even though billions of dollars have been wasted or stolen here over the past 15 years, NATO leaders will probably not link the money to new benchmarks or anti-corruption standards for the Afghan military, said Maj. Gen. Gordon “Skip” Davis Jr., commander of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, which oversees coalition support for Afghan security forces.

**The U.S.-led coalition, for example, will still seek to fund 352,000 Afghan soldiers and police, even though auditors have repeatedly questioned whether Afghanistan has that many security personnel.**

When NATO last met to consider Afghanistan funding in 2014, President Obama was still insisting that all but 1,000 U.S. troops would be withdrawn from the country by the end of this year.

At the time, Congress also appeared to be growing frustrated with reports that vast sums had been lost or stolen under former Afghan president Hamid Karzai.

**But Obama, who was elected in 2008 on a pledge that he would end the war, has since backtracked on his troop withdrawal plan, agreeing to keep 9,800 soldiers here this year.**

NATO leaders will most likely recommend keeping 9,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan into next year, although it's unclear how many of them will be American, Davis said.

Earlier this month, Obama gave troops more authority to take offensive action against the Taliban.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, American taxpayers have spent \$68 billion to support Afghanistan's army and police force. An additional \$45 billion has been spent on direct humanitarian assistance, according to the special inspector general for Afghan Reconstruction.

But the total cost of the Afghan war is far greater than that, said Neta Crawford, a professor of political science at Boston University and co-director of the Cost of War Project.

**Since 2001, Crawford estimates, the Pentagon and the U.S. State Department have spent a total of \$783 billion on Afghanistan, factoring in the costs of deploying troops and diplomats.**

**That figure balloons to \$1.8 trillion if future interest on the national debt, veterans' care and other long-term spending is considered, she estimates.**

In an interview, Crawford said it was "absurdity" to keep "throwing resources" into the conflict.

She noted that both Afghan civilian and military casualties are at record highs.

"It's clear you cannot kill your way out of this conflict," Crawford said. "And guess what — we don't have the money for this."

At a donor summit in 2012, NATO leaders agreed that Afghanistan would put up at least \$500 million toward its security needs by 2015, "with the aim that it can assume, no later than 2024, full financial responsibility for its own security forces." NATO reaffirmed that time frame at a summit two years ago.

But the Afghan government has yet to reach even the \$500 million target, and coalition commanders now say they operate under no illusion that the international support for the Afghan military will be scaled back anytime soon.

**According to the World Bank, Afghanistan's gross domestic product is projected to grow by 1.9 percent this year, suggesting that it could take decades for it to afford its own security.**

**John F. Sopko, special inspector general for Afghanistan Reconstruction, has noted that neither Afghan nor coalition leaders have been able to verify how many soldiers and police officers make up Afghan security forces.**

**Earlier this year, an Associated Press investigation found that official Afghan army enlistment numbers probably include thousands of “ghost soldiers” who do not regularly report for duty or who have retired, defected to the Taliban or been killed.**

Michael Kugelman, a South Asia expert at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, said NATO leaders “face a conundrum” because “they realize they need to keep money going to Afghanistan” but understand that “the war is not popular at home.”

**“Most Americans, and people in other countries, don’t want billions going to Afghanistan,” he said.**

**Even Brig. Gen. Dawlat Waziri, chief spokesman for the Afghan Defense Ministry, was uncertain about what the long-term strategy is for ending the war.**

**Asked whether he thought the Afghan military could ever be self-sufficient, Waziri said that question is better asked in Washington.**

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## **More Resistance Action: District Governor Killed In Bamyan Province**

Jun 16 2016 By Khaama Press

A district administrative chief in central Bamyan province has been killed apparently in a militants ambush late on Wednesday night.

Local officials in Bamyan confirmed that the district governor of Kohmard Mohammad Hadi was killed as he was on his way from the center of the city to Saighan and Kohmard district.

Provincial governor’s spokesman Abdul Rahman Ahmadi said Mohammad Hadi was killed in an attack in Chinar Sokhta area.

Kohmard is located around 100 kilometers away in north of the central city of Bamyan and is considered as one of the restive districts of Bamyan province.

Bamyan has been among the relatively peaceful provinces in central Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime but the anti-government armed militant groups often carry out insurgency activities.

This comes as the Taliban-led insurgency has been rampant during the past several months as the group has intensified attacks across the country as part of its spring offensive.



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Jun 16 2016 By Khaama Press

The Taliban militants carried out a deadly attack on the Afghan army posts in Dehrawood district, leaving at least 10 soldiers martyred and 12 others missing.

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June 15, 2016 BNA

Farah:

In a clash among security troops and Taliban in Shewan district, Farah province, four policemen were martyred and five others were injured.

Mohammad Iqbal Baher police spokesman of the province told BNA, the clash occurred while a group of insurgents attacked on security police checkpoints in Ghopak region, Shewan district, in which four policemen lost their lives and five others were wounded.

According to the source, the injured of the incident have been taken to civil hospital of Farah city and their health condition reported serious.

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## MILITARY NEWS

**Massive Protest On Okinawa  
Opposes U.S. Military After  
Killing:  
“About 65,000 Attended The Rally”  
“This Is Not How We Want The  
Country To Be” “We Want The Bases  
Gone”  
“These Protests Are Not Just Going To  
Go Away”**



(Photo: Uematsu Ryosuke/AP)

June 19, 2016 by Yuri Kageyama, The Associated Press. Associated Press videojournalists Koji Ueda and Kaori Hitomi contributed to this report.

TOKYO — Tens of thousands of people on the Japanese island of Okinawa protested Sunday against the presence of U.S. military bases there, many wearing black to mourn the rape and killing of a local woman in which an American contractor is a suspect.

The rally called for a review of the U.S.-Japanese security agreement, which burdens Okinawa with hosting the bulk of American troops in Japan. Also contentious is a plan to relocate a Marine Corps air station to a less-populated part of the southwestern island. The relocation plan developed after public anger erupted in 1995 over the rape of a girl by three American servicemen.

The killing of the local woman, who had been missing for several weeks when her body was found last month, set off outrage on Okinawa, where tensions periodically run high over crime linked to American troops. The U.S. contractor, a former Marine, was arrested on May 19 on suspicion of abandoning the woman's body, but has not yet been charged with killing her.

Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga told the crowd at the rally in Okinawa's capital, Naha, that he wanted to apologize to the woman for failing to protect her, even after what happened in 1995.

"We had pledged never to repeat such an incident," he said. "I couldn't change the political system to prevent that. That is my utmost regret as a politician and as governor of Okinawa."

About 65,000 people attended the rally, according to the Kyodo News agency. Many people held signs demanding the Marines leave and the overall military on Okinawa be scaled back.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government is behind the security agreement with the U.S., and wants Japan to take on a bigger military role on the international stage. But those at the rally said they wanted a more peace-oriented Japan.

"This is not how we want the country to be," said university student Jinshiro Motoyama. "We want the bases gone."

**A rally was also held in front of the prime minister's residence in Tokyo, drawing about 10,000 people, timed to coincide with and show support for the Okinawa rally.**

Earlier this month, the U.S. Navy imposed a drinking ban after an American sailor was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving on Okinawa, driving the wrong way on a freeway and crashing into two vehicles, injuring two people. The restriction was recently eased.

Last month, Lt. Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, the commanding general of Marine Forces Japan, stressed the importance of the bilateral alliance. "Please do not allow this terrible act of violence to drive a wedge between our two communities," he said on Okinawa, referring to the woman's death. "There may be issues we differ on. But we must continue to talk. Let's keep those lines of communication open."

But Jeff Kingston, a professor of Asian history at Temple University in Tokyo, said resentment about the bases will likely continue on Okinawa, adding that he believes the base relocation project may be delayed.

"I think they just feel so frustrated," he said of residents of Okinawa. "These protests are not just going to go away."

### **YOUR INVITATION:**

**Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2472 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025 or email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication.**

**Same address to unsubscribe.**

## 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**

**“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.” -- Thomas Paine**

# Brian Wilson And Stark Reality



War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Photo by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Sent: June 13, 2016  
Subject: Brian Wilson and Stark Reality

**Operation Ranch Hand, when American Agent Orange Cowboys came to Vietnam.**

**“The only good Indian is a dead Indian.”  
John Wayne**

**Photo by Mike Hastie  
War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
March 29, 2016**

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

**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

## ANNIVERSARIES

### **“The Solution” [In Memory Of The June 17 1953 East German Workers Rebellion]**

After the uprising of the 17th of June  
The Secretary of the Writers Union  
Had leaflets distributed in the Stalinallee  
Stating that the people  
Had forfeited the confidence of the government  
And could win it back only  
By redoubled efforts. Would it not be easier  
In that case for the government  
To dissolve the people  
And elect another?

Brecht

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## RECEIVED FROM READERS

**We Buried The Disgraceful  
Truth:  
“The Abuses, Stupidity, And  
Collateral Violence He Encounters  
In Iraq”**

**“Dark Corners Of The Iraqi  
Battlefield—Chaotic Prisons,  
Overheated Interrogation Booths,  
Tactical Intelligence Cells In Bunkers  
Where Few Other War Memoirs  
Enter”**

**“The Chair Forces You To Support All Of  
Your Weight With Your Thighs. Once  
They Give Out, You Basically Start To  
Suffocate”**



An Army National Guardsman at the armory in Jamaica, Queens, where he and other soldiers were gathered for deployment to Iraq, January 2004; photograph by Thomas Roma from his 2010 book *Dear Knights and Dark Horses*. It includes an introduction by Alec Wilkinson and is published by powerHouse.

[Thanks to Phil Gasper, who sent this in.]

JUNE 23, 2016 by Steve Coll, NYREV, Inc.

*Consequence: A Memoir*

by Eric Fair

Henry Holt, 240 pp., \$26.00

*The Mirror Test: America at War in Iraq and Afghanistan*

by J. Kael Weston

Knopf, 585 pp., \$28.95

Since 2001, at least 2.5 million members of the American armed services have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. Among returnees, between 11 and 20 percent are estimated to suffer in any given year from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to the Department of Veteran Affairs.

The PTSD label is loosely used, but under the clinical definition of the National Institute of Mental Health, an afflicted person may experience for at least one month a combination of symptoms including flashbacks, bad dreams, guilt, numbness, depression, sleeplessness, angry outbursts, and partial amnesia. The sheer size and diversity of this injured population are astounding.

Newspaper reporters including Dana Priest and Anne Hull of The Washington Post and David Phillips, now of The New York Times, have documented the military's shabby, at times cynical response to this social and medical crisis. The subject has also given rise to memorable written accounts of personal experience.

David Finkel, in his remarkable book *Thank You for Your Service*, chronicles returning veterans of brutal combat in Baghdad and presents nuanced accounts of dysfunction, suicide temptation, and redemption. Matthew Green, in his book *Aftershock*, introduced British readers to the same crisis and showed how that country's military health system has failed to reduce the stigma of PTSD. *Redeployment*, a collection of short stories by Phil Klay, a former Marine officer who fought in Iraq, which won the National Book Award in 2014, is one volume among several that suggest the emergence of raw, distinctive fiction by and for America's post-September 11 generation that sometimes touches on the PTSD crisis.

Eric Fair's *Consequence* is another important reckoning with more than a decade of continuous war. It is a memoir written in a spare, cadenced voice. It describes the author's self-aware, agonizing moral and psychological descent as he accepts an assignment as an interrogator in Abu Ghraib and other Iraqi detention facilities after 2003.

**The author's idealism, pain, and, eventually, expressive political dissent recall Siegfried Sassoon, the British poet and decorated military officer during World War I whose objections to that conflict led the authorities to hospitalize him for what was then called "shell shock."**



**Sassoon had read history at Cambridge and had charged off to war steeped in the mythologies of privileged Edwardians, only to discern in France how class blindness and jingoism shaped his war's mindless slaughter.**

Fair, too, associates his pain with the failures of the decision-makers who delivered him to the places in which he served. He grew up in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and aspired to become a Presbyterian minister before volunteering for the military.

**In *Consequence*, Fair searches for the validity of his country's moral purpose abroad and for the nobility of comradeship on the battlefield, but he is shattered when he cannot accommodate the abuses, stupidity, and collateral violence he encounters in Iraq.**

Fair's parents were schoolteachers in Bethlehem, whose eponymous steel corporation manufactured naval guns and Liberty ships for the two world wars before competition from postwar Germany and Japan devastated its prospects. In 1995, after enrolling in a Christian college and then graduating from Boston University, Fair enlisted in the army. He qualified for Arabic-language instruction and deployed to the Sinai Peninsula, where he mediated disputes between American troops and Egyptian civilians, including, for example, traffic accidents involving camels. He grew bored.

As his five-year enlistment contract neared its end, Fair's commander tried to persuade him to re-up by directing him toward more intriguing intelligence and interrogation work. To give him a taste, he sent Fair to the army's Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape program (sERE). The program was created to help soldiers at high risk of capture endure or at least anticipate interrogation and abuse:

**"It Draws The Reader Into Dark Corners Of The Iraqi Battlefield—Chaotic Prisons, Overheated Interrogation Booths, Tactical Intelligence Cells In Bunkers—Where Few Other War Memoirs Enter"**

"The trainers pretend to be enemy interrogators. They have our personnel files. They know everything about us. They threaten our families by name. At night, they play loud music. One of the guards brings in a recording of his infant son crying at night. He plays it over and over. He also plays the opening portion of Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train." We strip naked and stand out in the cold.... They tell us torture works. It always has. It always will. It just takes time."

After September 11, the CIA and the Pentagon converted SERE's curriculum for defense against torture into classified programs to carry out interrogations of suspected al-Qaeda, Afghan, and Iraqi militants. Because Fair's résumé included Arabic skills and SERE training, he soon ended up in the middle of this new regime. Initially, in 2000, he left the army and joined the Bethlehem police as a patrol officer, but he was diagnosed with a heart condition that would consign him to deskwork. Restless after the invasion of Iraq, he signed up at the National Security Agency as an intelligence analyst, and then moved quickly, for more money, to CACI International, a private contractor, to work as an interrogator. The corporation sent him to Iraq."

Fair's memoir never strays far from moral introspection, but his account of his travel is funny and sharp. It draws the reader into dark corners of the Iraqi battlefield—chaotic prisons, overheated interrogation booths, tactical intelligence cells in bunkers—where few other war memoirs enter.

The book is also damning about CACI International and the improvised, tragically hubristic use of private companies and contractors that were part of the Bush administration's early schemes for the occupation and stabilization of Iraq.

As they deployed, Fair writes, he and his fellow CACI employees received no body armor, no training, and no weapons. Once in Iraq, early in 2004, as they prepared to ride a violent road to Abu Ghraib prison, their team leader handed them assault rifles captured locally, explaining that while corporate rules required them to travel unarmed, "no one in their right mind drives to Abu Ghraib without a weapon."

At the prison, local insurgents were lobbing in mortars daily while enemy snipers just outside the walls threatened to pick off stray Americans. "My concerns are growing," Fair writes of his experience.

"As former soldiers and Marines, none of us were comfortable with the lack of planning.... No weapons, no communications equipment, no maps, and nothing for first aid. We all expect something to go wrong very soon.

"But the longer each of us stays, the more tolerant we become.... All of us talk about quitting, but no one wants to be the first to do it."

Fair gets to work in an Interrogation Control Element, a plywood booth near the "hard site" at Abu Ghraib where the army holds "high-value" prisoners. His efforts to reconcile his religious faith and his interrogation tasks leave him in a state of chronic self-loathing and physical stress. "In Scripture," he reflects, "God often works in prisons, but he is never on the side of the jailer. He is always on the side of the prisoner." Fair prays for guidance but realizes, "I'm not on God's path. I'm on my own."

The Priority Intelligence Requirements he receives from the army guide his daily interviews. The requirements set out the subjects about which US military intelligence officers want detainees to provide insight, such as the fact that Saddam Hussein's supposed chemical weapons arsenal, part of the Bush administration's *casus belli*, hasn't been found. Fair's Arabic has atrophied.

He relies on a Sudanese translator whose dialect the Iraqi prisoners cannot understand and whose English Fair can barely make out. The frightened ex-Baathist sergeants he questions for long hours try to explain that they don't understand what he wants from them. The scenes would be comical if it weren't obvious how many Iraqi families suffered from the abuses then spreading across Abu Ghraib.

Fair was initially instructed in the patient, nonviolent interrogation techniques of the Army Field Manual, which comply with international law, but he learned that "soldiers who rely on field manuals are called barracks lawyers. No one likes barracks lawyers." A sergeant teaching a refresher course to interrogators at the prison tells his class to "think outside the fucking manual." Soon Fair is invited to the hard site, a two-tiered building where

Iraqi prisoners are kept naked in cold temperatures, handcuffed to chairs, deprived of light, and subjected to blaring heavy metal rock music.

**“The Chair Forces You To Support All Of Your Weight With Your Thighs. Once They Give Out, You Basically Start To Suffocate”**

He begins to manhandle some of the prisoners he questions. “It feels good,” he writes.

Overall, Fair was more witness than participant in the crimes at Abu Ghraib and his exposure to the worst abuses there appears to have been limited. He worked for Steven Stephanowicz, a CACI contract interrogator who was named in an army report, written by Major General Antonio M. Taguba, concerning abuses of prisoners in Iraq. Taguba recommended that Stephanowitz be stripped of security clearances because he made a false statement to investigators and gave instructions that he “clearly knew...equated to physical abuse.” Yet because Stephanowitz was a private contractor, he was not subject to military justice. He was not prosecuted for any wrongdoing.

**In Fallujah, Fair encountered army interrogators who had built what they called a “Palestinian chair,” which they said Israelis taught them to construct during a joint training exercise. As Fair describes it, “The chair forces you to support all of your weight with your thighs. Once they give out, you basically start to suffocate. They say everyone breaks in the chair.”**

Fair later cooperated with a Justice Department investigation about this and other abuses, but nothing came of that inquiry. The Obama administration had little interest in bringing criminal cases against those involved in torture, in part because the policies had been authorized at the highest levels of the Bush administration and in part because it feared prosecutions of line officers would alienate intelligence agencies and the military while it pressed on with warfare in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Most of the soldiers around Fair accepted or joined in the violence toward Iraqi prisoners without compunction or apparent stress. Some seemed to enjoy participating, while others accepted the abuse as necessary in a dirty war. Fair was deeply affected by what he encountered, wracked by shame and guilt. He recognized that his emotional depression was also caused by independent factors—heavy drinking, feelings of alienation, and struggles over faith and identity. Some veterans of Iraq may dismiss Fair’s suffering as self-inflicted; he did not endure the worst violence or combat stress on offer in Iraq by any means.

Yet he did encounter scenes that would test any sentient soul. In one harrowing sequence, rockets kill two Iraqi boys on his base. Fair has to handle the fragmented remains and break the news to the boys’ fathers, speaking in his shaky Arabic. Yet he apparently managed the task with grace, as a minister might. The routine depravity of war shook Fair to the breaking point, yet the most extreme events he encountered apparently called forth a better self.

He returned to the NSA as an analyst covering Iraq and then redeployed to the country for the eavesdropping service. “Dozens of analysts, linguists, and intelligence professionals from around the world rely on me.... But, like most analysts in Iraq, I spend much of my day playing solitaire and Minesweeper.” The last part of his memoir contains

blacked-out pages that show where the US government forced Fair to remove material from his book concerning intelligence collection operations. Sentences deemed unclassified float like islands in seas of black: “There is to be no redemption for me in Iraq.... I no longer sleep well.... A package from Karin arrives. It has the two mouthwash bottles filled with liquor. I send an e-mail and ask for more.”

After leaving government, Fair published articles in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *The Washington Post* describing his involvement in prisoner abuse and the guilt it caused him. He was flooded with e-mails, some praising him for his honesty and courage, others denouncing him as a coward. He deleted the praise and obsessed about the criticism. He reconciled with his wife, fathered a son, and enrolled at Princeton Theological Seminary. Yet he thought regularly of suicide, apparently for years. For all of its considerable literary achievement, to its final page, *Consequence* reads as a tentative act of survival.

When J. Kael Weston took the Foreign Service exam in 2000 to become a diplomat, he answered questions about American history, the Constitution, and Jelly Roll Morton. Presumably, the exam writers had in mind a diplomat’s life during the cold war. As he chronicles in *The Mirror Test*, an ambitious, uneven, but closely observed and illuminating memoir, the State Department Weston served after September 11 required adaptation to the militarization of American foreign policy following the attacks. Between 2003 and 2010, Weston spent seven consecutive years in Iraq and Afghanistan, as a political adviser to US Marines during combat in Fallujah and Helmand, and on a reconstruction mission to Khost province, in eastern Afghanistan. Unlike Fair, Weston seems to have borne battlefield stress in good health, but the wars drew him into moral and political reflection, and finally, dissent.

One of Weston’s early assignments in Fallujah, during 2004, was to assess for the US embassy in Baghdad how well Marines were collecting and disposing of the remains of Iraqis killed in the city’s rising violence. Weston immersed himself for days in the Marines’ Mortuary Affairs unit, which processed Iraqi dead at a desolate place known as the Potato Factory. He traveled to an interment ceremony:

“The sun was setting, casting an orange glow across trenches. A Marine backhoe had graded perpendicular lines, several feet deep. The grid had a mathematical quality to it, the product of engineers laying out an impromptu cemetery for hundreds of dead.

“I watched as black body bags were lowered into the ground.... The operation had a brutal and methodical efficiency to it. It was essentially a mass grave.”

To prevent Fallujah’s alienated residents from digging through the pit to find missing relatives, Weston negotiated a deal with an influential imam, who said he would discourage insurgents from using the site to inflame residents. The embassy and its local allies persuaded themselves that Fallujah was improving that year, but Weston “knew the deeper truth.... I had seen dogs that had made their way north, following the scent of death, even if the people had not yet. Some of Fallujah’s families inevitably would.”

At its best, Weston’s reportage recalls the finest foreign correspondence of the Iraq and Afghan wars.

Yet his perspective is that of a government insider, one shaken by the human costs of the failures he participated in and especially by the strategic folly of the invasion of Iraq. He recounts his own guilt over having recommended forcefully, over the objections of some Marine officers, that the Marines provide extensive security around Fallujah for Iraq's election in 2005, even though many Sunnis in the area planned to boycott that election. During security preparations, a helicopter crashed and thirty-one Marines died.

To recover from this and other losses, and to organize his memoir project, Weston commits himself to preserving the memories of the deaths and injuries suffered by Marines, soldiers, and American diplomats with whom he served. Weston left government in 2010. His book's last chapters chronicle his journeys across America to visit the hometowns and graves of Marines who died on his tours. The memoir becomes a kind of scrapbook, not always satisfyingly so. Its final entry, however, is a stunning map of the United States with dots marking all the hometowns of US war dead in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001.

On his travels, talking with returned veterans, Weston often withheld the details and extent of his own experiences in the field. "I had my reasons," he writes. He felt he

"knew too much because of my job functions—the interagency debates often driven by egos, not wisdom, the officious memos full of preachy talking points to Iraqis and Afghans, and the self-serving excuses when we got it wrong. I also knew too much about how the politicians and White House war cabinets had failed them, how much I had failed thirty-one of them in particular."

Weston is too hard on himself, of course, but he is rightly skeptical about America's capacity for expeditionary war and governance in poor, nationalistic countries. He accepts the Obama administration's dichotomous view of the Afghan conflict as the "right" war and the Iraq conflict as inexcusable.

Like Fair, he seeks accountability but feels helpless about how this might be achieved, practically and fairly. As a junior diplomat, Weston was present at the United Nations Security Council debate in February 2003 when Secretary of State Colin Powell presented the Bush administration's case that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. Driving through Texas on his journey to the families of the dead, Weston reflects on the lives that might "have been saved if America's chief diplomat and former top military officer had chosen a different course." He recalls the Powell he watched at the UN as "a statesman who chose not to make the case against a voluntary war. A secretary of state, former four-star general, and Vietnam veteran who might have resigned in protest, but did not."

Among the industrialized democracies, the United States has shown a distinctive capacity since 2001 to absorb many thousands of casualties while committing its volunteer soldiers to seemingly endless wars. President Obama's presidency succeeded politically in part because he denounced the Iraq invasion along lines similar to Weston's criticism. Despite authorizing a "surge" of troops to Afghanistan, he promised strategic restraint when considering new commitments of ground troops to the Middle East.

Yet the United States remains at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, albeit at a reduced tempo.

Obama is escalating Special Forces deployments to Syria to fight the Islamic State, and his administration periodically conducts air strikes in Libya, Yemen, and Somalia. There are few public protests about these continuing commitments. The all-voluntary military fashioned by the Pentagon after the degradation of draft-era Vietnam partially explains this public acceptance, as does the enduring strength of American nationalism. Yet the emerging accounts of those who have returned from the Middle East and the Afghanistan war suggest another likelihood. The truth about American hubris and suffering on battlefields over the last fifteen years has often been buried, stigmatized, and sublimated into rage against political elites.

**It is not only Wall Street bailouts that explain the emergence of Bernie Sanders. It is not only offshore factories and white anxiety about immigration that have given rise to Donald Trump.**

**Two and a half million American families, spread widely across the country, understand truths about the price of badly conceived wars that their political leaders and foreign policy theorists will not confront.**

Among our public intellectuals, we may have replaced bishops with television pundits, but not so much has changed since Siegfried Sassoon wrote “They” in 1916:

*The Bishop tells us: “When the boys come back  
They will not be the same; for they’ll have fought  
In a just cause: they lead the last attack  
On Anti-Christ; their comrades’ blood has bought  
New right to breed an honourable race,  
They have challenged Death and dared him face to face.”*

*“We’re none of us the same!” the boys reply.  
“For George lost both his legs; and Bill’s stone blind;  
Poor Jim’s shot through the lungs and like to die;  
And Bert’s gone syphilitic: you’ll not find  
A chap who’s served that hasn’t found some change.”  
And the Bishop said: “The ways of God are strange!”*

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## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

**“Ne Davimo Beograd!”  
20,000 Swarm Streets Of Serbia’s Capital  
“Demanding Resignations For The City  
Officials”**



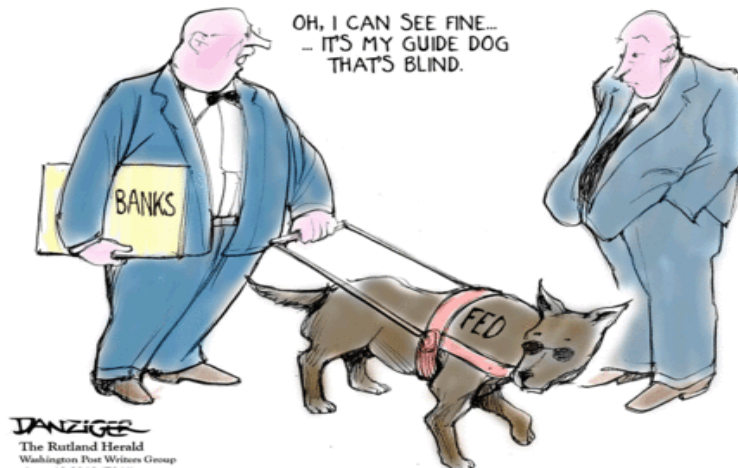
6.11.16 Author: Natalia Zaba. Source: BIRN

Location: Belgrade

An estimated 20,000 protesters took part in the latest mass demonstration organised by growing social movement Ne Davimo Beograd (Let's not drown Belgrade) on Saturday, demanding resignations for the city officials responsible for the nocturnal demolitions in the Serbian capital's Savamala district, where the controversial Belgrade Waterfront project is to be built.

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## DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Zionists Cut Off Water Supply To Occupied Palestinian West Bank:  
“In Some Areas People Had Not Received Water For More Than 40 Days”**



Palestinian children fill bottles with water from a public tap in Khan Younis due to water shortages. (photo: Getty)

15 June 16 By Peter Yeung, The Independent [Excerpts]

Israel has cut off the water supply to large areas of the West Bank.



Tens of thousands of Palestinians have reportedly been left without access to safe drinking water during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, a period of fasting, at a time when temperatures can exceed 35C.

The northern city of Jenin, which has a population of more than 40,000, said its water supplies had been cut in half by Mekorot, Israel's national water company. Jenin is home to a refugee camp, established in 1953, which contains 16,000 registered refugees.

Ayman Rabi, the executive director of the Palestinian Hydrology Group, told Al Jazeera that in some areas people had not received water for more than 40 days.

He said: "People are relying on purchasing water from water trucks or finding it from alternative sources such as springs and other filling points in their vicinity.

"Families are having to live on two, three or 10 litres per capita per day."

Saleh Hijazi, Amnesty International's Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories researcher, said the reports were "alarming".

He told The Independent: "Israel already allows Palestinians access to only a fraction of the shared water resources in the occupied West Bank, with unlawful Israeli settlements getting almost unlimited water supplies which enable settlers to maintain lush gardens and even fill up numerous private swimming pools.

"Water is a basic need and a right. Mekorot should restore any water supplies to Palestinians it has cut off and the Israel authorities should end their discriminatory water policies, lifting all arbitrary restrictions it currently imposes on Palestinians' access to this vital resource."

According to UN guidelines, 7.5 litres per person per day is the minimum requirement under normal conditions but in some areas of the Palestinian territories the minimum requirement is much higher.

The municipality of Jenin, several villages in Nablus and the city of Salfit and its surrounding villages claimed to have suffered cuts to their water supply.

Almost 200,000 Palestinians in the West Bank do not have access to running water, and require permission before collecting it themselves, according to a report by Amnesty International.

Since 1967, Israel has limited the water available to Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since its forces occupied the territories.

**MORE**

## **Occupation Regime Cuts Off West Bank Water Supplies:**

# **“Israeli Settlements Enjoy Uninterrupted Water Service” “It Is Not Enough For Israel To Systematically Appropriate Palestinian Land And Usurp Palestine’s Natural Resources “They Also Refuse The Palestinians The Right To Water”**

June 16, 2016 Ma'an

BETHLEHEM -- The Palestinian Prime Minister's office on Thursday slammed Israel's decision to cut off water supplies for tens of thousands of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank this week as "inhumane and outrageous."

Rami Hamdallah issued a statement in response to the move by Israel's national water company Mekorot, which saw water supplies suspended in the municipality of Jenin, several villages in Nablus, as well as the city of Salfit and its surrounding villages.

"Israel wants to prevent Palestinians from leading a dignified life and uses its control over our water resources to this end; while illegal Israeli settlements enjoy uninterrupted water service," Hamdallah said.

"Palestinians are forced to spend great sums of money to buy water that is theirs in the first place."

**Israelis, including settlers, have access to 300 liters of water per day, according to EWASH, while the West Bank average is around 70 liters, below the World Health Organization's recommended minimum of 100 liters per day for basic sanitation, hygiene and drinking.**

Director of Communications at the Prime Minister's Office Jamal Dajani called Mekorot's decision "inhumane and outrageous."

The move to deprive the villages of access to safe drinking water was seen as especially outrageous, as Palestinian Muslims celebrated the holy month of Ramadan, which entered its second week on Tuesday.

Some areas reportedly had not received water for more than 40 days, according Al Jazeera.

In response to a request for comment, a spokesperson for Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) told Ma'an that due to increased rates of water consumption in the summer, water flow "is regulated."

**Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq estimated in a 2013 report that up to 50 percent of Palestinian water supplies are diverted by Mekorot over the summer months to meet the consumption needs of Israel's illegal settlements.**

COGAT added that a Civil Administration team repaired a burst pipe line on Thursday, which had disrupted the water supply to the villages of Marda and Biddya in Salfit, Salfit city, the Tapuach area in Salfit, as well as the village of Jamma'in in Nablus. "The water flow has been regulated and is currently up and running," they added.

COGAT also claimed that water supply had in fact been increased in the evenings to meet the needs of those observing Ramadan, who fast throughout the day.

The spokesperson added that "despite the difficulties," Israel, through its Joint Water Committee (JWC) works to improve water infrastructure in the occupied West Bank, while Palestinians "don't cooperate for the improvement of the water flow in the region."

According to Al-Haq, JWC holds complete decision-making power over the coordinated joint management and development of all water resources in the West Bank.

The establishment of JWC more than two decades ago "should have been a positive reform for Palestinians," Al-Haq wrote.

However, their report notes that the consensus system enables Israel to veto any proposal by Palestinians to maintain existing water infrastructure or build new projects.

Just half of Palestinian proposals for wells and improvement projects to the water network were approved by Israel between 1995 and 2008, compared to a 100 percent approval rate for Israeli projects, a study cited in the report found.

According to Amnesty international, nearly 200,000 Palestinians in the West Bank do not have access to running water.

"Israel is waging a water war against Palestinians," Dajani said.

"It is not enough for Israel to systematically appropriate Palestinian land and usurp Palestine's natural resources; they also refuse the Palestinians the right to water."

**To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists,  
go to:  
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The occupied nation is Palestine.  
The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."**

**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**



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