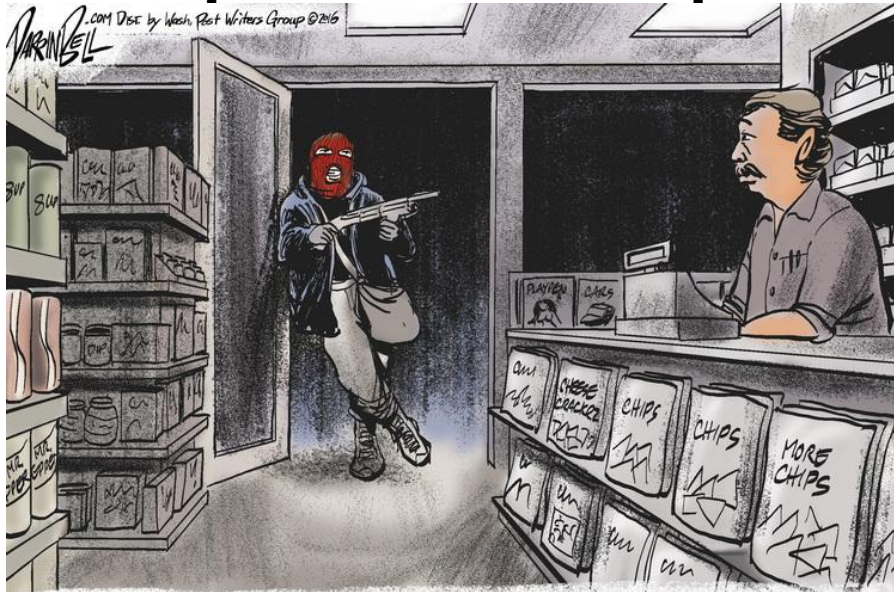


Military Resistance 14L4

**“Trump Offers Goldman Sachs President Top Economic Post”
[Common Dreams Headline]**



“Donald Trump just appointed me Security Guard.”

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: “Foxes and Hen Houses.”]

**The Electoral College --
Reform Or Revolution?
“Wyoming, The Least Populous
State In The Country, Has One
Elector Per Roughly 85,000
Votes Cast”**

“California, The Most Populous State, Has One Elector Per Roughly 249,000 Votes”
“Wyoming Voters Wield Almost Three Times As Much Influence As California Voters”
“According To Gallup, Most Americans Would Get Rid Of It, If They Could”

Comment: T

“If they could.”

But they can't, because Congress must approve any change, and the same states with minimal populations also each get two Senators, equal to states with huge numbers of voters living there.

More to the point, to get rid of the Electoral College, those same small states' legislatures, whose politicians can be bought relatively cheaply by the oligarchs who control most of them, would have to vote for a Constitutional Amendment to cut their own political throats. [See more about that below.]

So in this farce of fake democracy, winners lose and losers win. Now by about three million votes.

The popular disgust with the fact that Americans do not live in a democracy, or a republic, but a dictatorship imposed through this, yes, rigged system, will contribute to growing social rejection of the super-rich who control the government, the economy and the electoral system.

This year saw the American working class break with the elites of both the Republican and Democratic Parties, and come on stage, to be recognized, grudgingly by even the big media.

If you had a dollar for every time some CNN blowhard used the words “working class” this summer and fall, you could buy a Tesla.

That common consciousness means a new way of thinking, above all by the working class; a transformation from object to subject.

For us, to become conscious of our class as a class means, at the same time, to become ever more conscious there is a different, very small class that owns the wealth of society and uses the government to stay on top of us, and grind us down.

The temperature below is rising. The fire is class rage. Throw fuel on the fire.

Trump comes into the office the weakest President in modern history.

He lost the election by three millions votes, and everybody knows it.

He has immediately turned the government over to the same ruling class of billionaire oligarchs he pretend to oppose in the election campaign, a naked betrayal of all his working class voters.

That convergence will destroy him.

Not as soon as we may wish, but sooner than the blind, arrogant, rich filth can imagine.

*“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”*

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

“The rich are only defeated when running for their lives.”
---C.L.R. James

“They treasured up wrath for the time to come.”

Edward, Earl of Clarendon, 1702, on the growing discontent from below that led to the revolutionary overthrow and beheading of Charles I, tyrant King of England.

Dec. 2, 2016 By JO CRAVEN MCGINTY, Wall Street Journal

When the Electoral College meets on Dec. 19 to formally elect Donald J. Trump president, Mr. Trump will have won more states but fewer votes than Hillary Clinton.

Although he is ahead by 74 electoral votes, 306 to 232, he now trails Mrs. Clinton by 2.5 million popular votes, [12.9: 2.8 million and counting. T] the largest gap recorded when the same candidate didn't also win the Electoral College.

Politics aside, your opinion of that outcome may hinge on whether you believe each person's vote should count equally, as is the case with the popular vote, or whether you prefer the weighted system of the Electoral College, which gives greater heft to the votes of people who live in less populous states.

One group believes so strongly that the president should be popularly elected that it has launched an end run around the Constitution to make it happen—and 10 states plus the District of Columbia have signed on.

The plan, known as the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, is an agreement among a group of states to award all their electoral votes to the national popular vote winner no matter who wins in the state.

The compact would only take effect if enough states approved it to garner at least 270 electoral votes, the minimum needed to win the presidency.

So far, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington, Vermont and Washington, D.C., have approved the compact, accounting for 165 electoral votes.

All of those happen to be blue states where Democrats typically win, but they also are places that are largely ignored by presidential campaigns. Supporters of the compact hope other neglected states, both blue and red, will sign on.

Ditching the Electoral College isn't a new idea. Since it was established in 1787, legislators have attempted to reform or eliminate it hundreds of times, and, according to Gallup, most Americans would get rid of it, if they could.

But doing away with the Electoral College requires a constitutional amendment, which can only happen if two-thirds of those voting in both the U.S. House and Senate agree on a proposal and three-quarters of the states ratify it.

“The amendment process is extremely difficult,” said Alexander Keyssar, an American historian at Harvard University, who added that it nearly happened in 1969 when the House approved a proposal to reform the electoral process only to have it killed the next year by a Senate filibuster led by North Carolina Democrat Sam Ervin.

The Electoral College is modeled after the federal system, where House seats are apportioned based on population, but every state, regardless of size, gets two Senate seats. The system distributes power across all regions of the country and protects the voices of small states by giving them disproportionately more power.

The same is true in the Electoral College, where states receive one vote for each of their congressional seats. Wyoming, for example, the least populous state in the country, has one elector per roughly 85,000 votes cast in this year's presidential election, while California, the most populous state, has one elector per roughly 249,000 votes.

By that measure, Wyoming voters wielded almost three times as much influence as California voters.

Among other things, a national popular vote would eliminate conflicting popular- and electoral-vote results, which have occurred five times in history, including this year, and it would conform with the democratic ideal where each person's vote carries equal weight and the winning candidate receives the most votes.

MORE:

“Trump Repeatedly Singled Out Goldman Sachs Group Inc. As An Icon Of The Corrupt, Multinational Elite”

“Trump’s Preferred Candidate To Lead Economic Council Will Be Goldman President Gary Cohn, The Bank’s No. 2 Official”

“This Is The Third Goldman Sachs Alumnus To Join Administration”

“The Selection Indicated Diminishing Political Risks For The Biggest Banks In A Trump Administration”



Gary Cohn, Goldman Sachs. ABC13.com

Dec. 9, 2016 By NICK TIMIRAOS, PETER NICHOLAS and LIZ HOFFMAN; Wall Street Journal

Republican President-elect Donald Trump railed against a global power structure and promised to “drain the swamp” of corporate favor-seekers during his insurgent election bid. He repeatedly singled out Goldman Sachs Group Inc. as an icon of that corrupt, multinational elite.

Now, Mr. Trump is poised to fill the top posts on his economic team with Goldman bankers who also have supported Democratic candidates in the past.

In the latest example, Goldman President Gary Cohn, the bank’s No. 2 official, has emerged as the preferred candidate to serve as the director of the White House National Economic Council, transition advisers said Friday.

Mr. Trump last week said he would nominate as Treasury secretary former Goldman executive Steven Mnuchin, who became a partner at the bank in 1994, the same year as Mr. Cohn. And Steve Bannon, picked to be a top White House adviser soon after the election, also worked at Goldman Sachs.

Turning to three current or former Goldman Sachs executives could open Mr. Trump to criticism from some of his supporters after his campaign prominently attacked big banks. In the GOP primary, he said Goldman “owned” his rival Sen. Ted Cruz, whose wife had worked at the bank. “He will do anything they demand. Not much of a reformer!” Mr. Trump said in a January tweet.

Days before the November general election, Mr. Trump’s campaign produced a two-minute video alleging a global conspiracy to take wealth from American workers and consolidate it among certain businesses and politicians.

The ad, narrated by Mr. Trump, slammed a “global power structure...that puts money into the pockets of a handful of large corporations,” set against video images of Goldman Chief Executive Lloyd Blankfein delivering a speech.

Liberals said Mr. Cohn’s selection showed Mr. Trump’s populist campaign would ring hollow with his supporters. “It’s called a rigged economy, and this is how it works,” said Sen. Bernie Sanders (I., Vt.) in a tweet linking to a report of Mr. Cohn’s potential selection.

Mr. Trump’s selection of Goldman alums have also irked some supporters.

“Mr. Trump, this is bullshit. Can you hire someone who doesn’t work for Goldman Sachs? What about that swamp?” said former Rep. Joe Walsh (R., Ill.) on Twitter last week after Mr. Mnuchin’s nomination. “Oh look: another pick from Goldman Sachs,” he said on Twitter on Friday.

The NEC position, which doesn’t require Senate confirmation, has served in the past as a steppingstone to other top government posts, including at the Treasury or Federal Reserve.

Mr. Cohn’s selection would further solidify a marked tilt towards wealthy bankers and businesspeople—as well as former top military brass—at the top ranks of Mr. Trump’s cabinet and White House staff.

The appointment of Mr. Cohn, who declined to comment through a spokesman, would cap a remarkable rise for someone who was so severely dyslexic as a child that a teacher once told his parents he might aspire to drive a truck. The son of an electrician-turned-real estate developer in Ohio, Mr. Cohn's first job out of college was selling window panels and aluminum siding.

He later became an options dealer at the New York Mercantile Exchange and joined Goldman in 1990. His lack of polish on Goldman's trading floor raised early questions about his fitness to run the bank. But colleagues and clients say he has softened his rougher edges in the past year, which also saw him thrust into the spotlight as Mr. Blankfein battled lymphoma.

Mr. Cohn, a registered Democrat, isn't vocally political and has given money to candidates of both parties. Colleagues described him as a nonideological pragmatist, and analysts said the selection indicated diminishing political risks for the biggest banks in a Trump administration.

Mr. Cohn has traveled extensively abroad for Goldman, and his appointment would provide Mr. Trump's inner circle with an insider well connected to foreign economic ministers, technology executives and banking regulators.

"It does concern me that they would have a lot of swing from one company in major positions in our government," said Sen. Jon Tester (D., Mont.) in an interview. "That is not a good sign. It won't result in good government."

Mr. Trump dismissed criticism at a rally in Iowa on Thursday night that he was stocking his cabinet with wealthy businesspeople. "One newspaper criticized me, 'Why can't they have people of modest means?' Because I want people who made a fortune because now they're negotiating with you, OK?" he said.

MORE:

**Millions Rise Up To Force Overthrow Of
Oligarch President:
"Now Politicians And Corporations
Will Know That They Have To Fear
The People"
"Huge Demonstrations Swollen By
Farmers And Labor Unions"**



Police surrounded protesters during a rally urging the impeachment of South Korean President Park Geun-Hye outside the National Assembly in Seoul on Friday. PHOTO: AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Trade tension with the U.S. could potentially flare if Ms. Park is replaced by a left-leaning president. Huge demonstrations against Ms. Park have been swollen by farmers and labor unions seeking more protectionist trade policies and government subsidies for products such as rice.

Dec. 9, 2016 By JONATHAN CHENG, Wall Street Journal & by ALASTAIR GALE and JONATHAN CHENG, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

The resounding decision by the National Assembly to impeach President Park Geun-hye, by a 234-56 vote, is a fresh earthquake to hit the global political order after populist victories in British and Italian referendums, and Donald Trump's election as U.S. president.

The trickle of revelations about the alleged corruption has brought millions of South Koreans onto the streets of Seoul over the past six weeks in protest against Ms. Park, the 64-year-old daughter of South Korea's longest-serving president.

Lim Yong-soo, a 31-year-old salesman from Iksan, a city about 110 miles southwest of Seoul, brought his 4-year-old son to witness the vote outside the National Assembly. "The people's voice has been heard," he said.

"Now politicians and corporations will know that they have to fear the people."

An Mi-sun, a 47-year-old employee at a nonprofit organization who showed up in a wheelchair, said that she would attend Saturday night's candlelight vigil "with a lighter heart."

“This movement was brought by the strength of small voices, not big powers,” she said.

The impeachment brings the prospect of a new government for one of the U.S.’s closest allies that could have a skeptical stance toward Washington, a softer line on Pyongyang and a friendlier approach to China.

Ms. Park’s immediate removal from power over a corruption scandal marks a turning point after the country’s biggest political crisis in years.

Ms. Park has been accused by prosecutors of leaking confidential presidential documents and helping a close friend shake down companies for money.

If the Constitutional Court upholds the impeachment motion as expected in coming weeks, a presidential election would take place two months later, with most polls showing leftist challengers as the top contenders.

The left-of-center opposition parties have been more skeptical of South Korea’s alliance with the U.S., and could jeopardize policies Washington promotes, such as the enforcement of tough sanctions on Pyongyang or the deployment of a new missile defense system known as Thaad.

Strong resistance to Thaad from China, which opposes U.S. military hardware so close to its border, has also increased unease among opposition leaders about the deployment.

“President Park implemented or has begun to implement a number of policies that the U.S. really likes,” said Bruce Klingner, a former Central Intelligence Agency deputy division chief for Korea, now at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative Washington think tank.

“It’s more likely a progressive would win now...who would likely suspend the Thaad deployment and could undo everything else.”

Washington and Seoul enacted a bilateral free-trade agreement in 2012, a year before Ms. Park became president. Under a defense treaty, the U.S. bases around 28,500 troops in South Korea to ward off a North Korean attack and holds joint major military drills twice a year, as well as providing the threat of use of American nuclear weapons.

Pyongyang has remained largely silent as the scandal has unfolded. North Korea experts say the Kim Jong Un regime, which loathes Ms. Park’s hard-line policy, is reluctant to make any provocations that she could use as a rallying call.

A change of president to a left-of-center candidate could enable Pyongyang to break the pressure of sanctions and potentially make some progress in its primary goal of getting U.S. forces out of South Korea.

The opposition parties were already on the upswing after gaining a majority in the National Assembly earlier this year, which they used to press for Ms. Park’s removal and attempt to win back the presidency for the first time since 2008.

One of the opposition's leading candidates is Moon Jae-in, a former chief of staff to a previous president who pursued a "sunshine policy" of seeking to tame North Korean aggression through talks and economic integration. Mr. Moon narrowly lost to Ms. Park in the 2012 election.

"Should a more progressive politician be elected, we'll see something...of an engagement policy, more in line with the sunshine policy," said James Kim, a research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, a think tank in Seoul.

The Constitutional Court is expected to rule on the validity of the impeachment motion in as soon as a few weeks. If Ms. Park loses, she would be barred from running and would also lose her immunity from criminal prosecution.

If her impeachment is overturned, she would be reinstated and could serve out the remainder of her term through February 2018. Ms. Park said she would await the court's ruling with a "calm attitude."

[If the Constitutional Court overturns the impeachment, infuriating even more millions of Koreans, they will end up buried in the ground like so much Kimchi. T]

While the court deliberates, South Korea's acting head of state will be Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, a low-profile career bureaucrat who is unlikely to make any significant policy changes.

Public anger against Ms. Park, whose handling of a deadly ferry sinking in 2014 crystallized her image as an aloof leader, has had some of the flavor of populist uprisings in the U.S. and Europe against entrenched political and economic interests.

Ms. Park is the daughter of Park Chung-hee, the long-serving military ruler and president who built South Korea's economy around the conglomerates known as chaebol.

The allegations raised public ire against these conglomerates—family-run businesses such as Samsung and Hyundai that dominate business but hire fewer and fewer locals—which stood accused by lawmakers of trading cash for favors.

Trade tension with the U.S. could potentially flare if Ms. Park is replaced by a left-leaning president. Huge demonstrations against Ms. Park have been swollen by farmers and labor unions seeking more protectionist trade policies and government subsidies for products such as rice.

South Korea's Democratic Party strongly opposed the free-trade deal with the U.S., which lowered high tariffs on American imports.

Mr. Trump has in turn criticized the agreement as unfair for U.S. businesses.

MORE:

Historic Proposal For Punitive Tax On Corporations That Pay Their Chief Executives Vastly More Than They Pay An Average Worker Passes In Portland:

**“A Statement About Growing
Income Disparity In The United
States”**

**‘The Measure Could Gain Support
From Both Sides Of The Political
Spectrum”**

**“As Candidates, Donald Trump And
Bernie Both Pointed To The “Rigged
System” That Supported The Wealthiest
One Percent As A Problem”**

Comment: T

A commentator from the Portland Business Alliance said that "This is not something that can be dealt with at a local level."

True, but beside the point.

What this report illuminates, like that proverbial flash of lightning, is that working class rage from below is gathering force and intensity, and like magna under a volcano, pushing up towards the surface, pressuring politicians here, there, and everywhere.. At some point the explosion will come. Good news for our side.

Seelig said that workers were in some cases likely to go through “the stages of grief” upon finding out how much their CEOs are being paid. “Shock; then when they wake up the next day they’ll be angry, they’ll say how does this affect how much I am paid?”

December 8, 2016 by Mike Zacchino, The Oregonian & 5 December 2016 by Nicky Woolf, The Guardian [Excerpts] [Thanks to Eddie Stinson, AmeriConscience group, for posting.]

In a move that's drawn international headlines, Portland will launch a first-of-its-kind tax on public companies that pay their chief executives vastly more than they pay an average worker.

Portland City Council approved the controversial plan 3-1 Wednesday, making a statement about growing income disparity in the United States while giving Commissioner Steve Novick a legacy piece in his final weeks in City Hall.

The tax targets publicly traded companies whose chief executives report salaries at least 100 times higher than the salary of a median worker. Officials expect to raise \$2.5 million a year starting in January 2017, with Novick hoping the money will help pay for homeless services.

"This is as close as I've ever (come) to a tax on inequality itself," said Novick, the first incumbent tossed from city council in 24 years after an upset loss to housing activist Chloe Eudaly last month.

Novick said he also hopes the tax might discourage companies -- well beyond Portland - from paying disproportionate salaries to their CEOs. He cited French economist Thomas Piketty, who calls escalating pay for top executives a major cause of the consolidation of wealth among the world's top 1 percent of earners.

A similar measure, proposed by the California Senate in 2014, served as his inspiration, Novick said. The tax relies on compensation data the federal Securities and Exchange Commission will report beginning next year.

Mayor Charlie Hales thanked Novick before casting the decisive third vote, joining Commissioner Amanda Fritz in saying yes.

"It falls to cities to do creative, progressive policymaking," Hales said, "and this is exactly what this is."

Commissioner Dan Saltzman cast the lone vote against the proposal. Commissioner Nick Fish was absent, but his chief of staff, Sonia Schmanski, said he also would have voted no.

Saltzman said he didn't think this was the "right time" to pass this kind of tax increase. He should wait for a "true emergency." He pointed to 2003, when City Council hiked business license fees to raise \$20 million for Portland Public Schools. "I don't believe this is the right time, the right place or the right reason to address this," Saltzman said.

Under Novick's tax plan, a company with a CEO-to-worker ratio of at least 100-to-1 will pay a surcharge equal to 10 percent of the amount it pays for Portland's business tax. A company with a 250-to-1 ratio or greater would pay a 25 percent surcharge.

If a company ordinarily owes \$1 million in taxes to Portland, it would have to pay an additional \$100,000 or \$250,000.

Novick estimates there are more than 500 publicly traded companies in Portland that will be subject to the tax.

The Portland Business Alliance has opposed the measure since Novick first floated it last summer, while he was still battling Eudaly. Marion Haynes, the business group's lobbyist and vice president for economic development, said Novick's plan will fail at addressing income inequality.

Haynes would not say why the tax would be ineffective or how the numbers might be misused. "This is not something that can be dealt with at a local level," Haynes said.

The measure could gain support from both sides of the political spectrum. As candidates, Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders – diametrically opposed on many issues – both pointed to the “rigged system” that supported the wealthiest one percent as a problem, Novick said.

The disparity between workers’ and CEOs’ pay has been rising sharply since the 1960s, when the average ratio was around 20-1. It now stands at above 200-1.

“What I find quite interesting is that it seems the first tax that targets inequality as such,” said Branko Milanović, a former lead economist at the World Bank and a professor at New York University who specializes in income inequality.

For Milanović, the idea was novel because “it treats inequality as having a negative externality like taxing carbon emissions”.

Steve Seelig, a senior regulatory advisor for the corporate risk management advisory firm Willis Towers Watson, said that “this isn’t the first place and won’t be the last place” to try to impose such a scheme.

“Unlike current CEO pay disclosures that don’t really get a lot of attention from the rank-and-file, this one will,” Seelig said, referring to the new SEC disclosure rule. “It’ll be in the local newspapers, talked about at the water cooler, and companies need to be poised to deal with their workforce.”

Seelig said that workers were in some cases likely to go through “the stages of grief” upon finding out how much their CEOs are being paid. “Shock; then when they wake up the next day they’ll be angry, they’ll say how does this affect how much I am paid?”

“That’s going to present a lot of challenges to companies that don’t do a great job of explaining that proposition,” he added. Of Portland’s move, Seelig said it probably wouldn’t meaningfully affect companies’ bottom lines, but that it was “a matter of raising awareness”.

MILITARY NEWS

More Meat For The Hopeless Imperial War:

“Deploying To Afghanistan Are About 800 Soldiers From The 16th Combat Aviation Brigade And About 1,500 From The 1st Armored Division's 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team”

December 8, 2016 By: Charlsy Panzino; Army Times [Excerpts]

The 1st Armored Division's 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team will deploy about 1,500 soldiers to Afghanistan.

The soldiers, from Fort Bliss, Texas, will be deployed as part of the regular rotation of forces in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel, according to an Army news release.

"The Ready First Brigade is well-trained, well-led and fully prepared for the challenges this mission will bring," Maj. Gen. Pat White, commanding general of 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss, said in the release. "The brigade proved itself a disciplined and lethal force during a rigorous training program, and I am confident they will accomplish their mission in stellar fashion."

The unit's deployment comes just months after the brigade commander, Col. Earl Higgins Jr., was relieved of command after an investigation found "multiple violations of Army regulations and policies," officials said in September.

Higgins, who had commanded 1st BCT since July 2015, was succeeded by Col. Eric Strong.

Also deploying to Afghanistan are about 800 soldiers from the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

The soldiers, who are stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, also will deploy as part of the regular rotation of forces in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

"The soldiers of the Raptor Brigade have worked very hard to build readiness over the last year, and I am extremely confident in their ability to accomplish our upcoming mission," said Col. William Ryan, the commander of the 16th CAB, in a statement. "We employ some of the Army's most advanced aviation technology, but it is our tremendous team of Army professionals that will ensure mission success."

National Guard Members In Devils Lake Also More Meat For The Hopeless Imperial War

Dec 8, 2016 By April Baumgarten, Grand Forks Herald

DEVILS LAKE -- National Guard members in Devils Lake will be deployed to Afghanistan for a year.

A send-off ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. Sunday at the Devils Lake High School Sports Center for about 60 soldiers from the 136th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, according to a news release. The deployment will happen early next year, the National Guard said, adding the mission should last 12 months.

The battalion was put on alert status in March, though National Guard leaders told the Herald the soldiers likely wouldn't see combat.

"(This unit) has the flexibility to command and control other units as needed," Guard spokesman Bill Prokopyk previously said, with its primary responsibility being to arrange transportation, provide mechanical assistance and deliver supplies of varying nature to other units within their designated area.

The unit is led by Lt. Col. Brock Larson of Bismarck and Sgt. Maj. Cory Everson of Devils Lake, according to the news release. The unit has Guard members from 28 communities in North Dakota, Minnesota and Kentucky.

Gov. Jack Dalrymple and Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, the North Dakota National Guard adjutant general, are set to attend the send-off ceremony, which is open to the public.

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: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



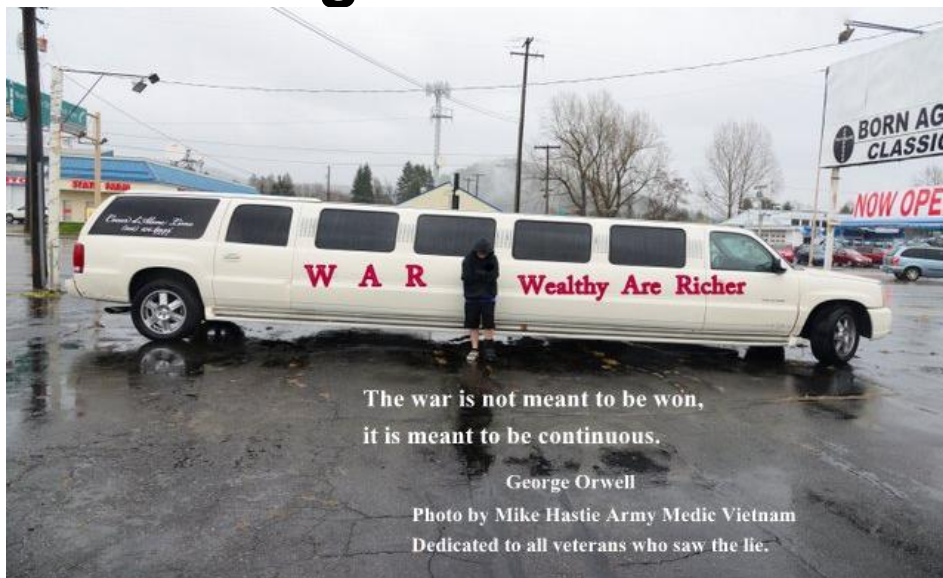
“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“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

George Orwell 2016



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: December 07, 2016 8:53 PM
Subject: George Orwell 2016

Please feel free to circulate this image. Donald Trump will enter the world stage on January 20, 2017 as the 45th President of the United States. If there is ever a time when all people with a moral conscience should be stepping on the world stage as antiwar activists, it is now.

**Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
December 7, 2016
hastiemike@earthlink.net**

**If we are to die, we die
defending our rights.
Sitting Bull**

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)

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**

“The Town (And 362 Other Placer County, California Precincts Not Unlike It) Voted For Donald Trump Over Hillary Clinton, 51.1% To 39.0%”

“But It’s Hard To Blame Sexism Or Racism For Clinton’s Loss”

“On Election Day, The People Of Placer County Also Voted For Kamala Harris, A Black Woman, To Be Their US Senator”

“Her Vote Share? 63%. And Her Vote Tally? 16,178 More Than Clinton’s”

December 7, 2016 by Adam Fisher, Jacobin

I grew up in what could be called the California Appalachians. My town’s population was around a thousand, with a median household income of \$37,000. The local public school consisted of a series of air-conditioned, double-wide trailers that served as classrooms for combined grades (first and second in one, third and fourth in another, and so on). The only permanent building was the administrative office.

The town had multiple saloons and churches, and a movie theater that doubled as the performance space for Christmas plays. There was one doctor, with an office and an x-ray machine. Main Street was two blocks long, with false fronts on every building, a train platform with one Amtrak departure per day, a community pool, and an active Lions Club that put on parades.

What had once been the main industries, mining and lumbering, had dissipated by the time my family arrived, and most of the populace seemed to be employed in some type of government or service sector job, owned a small business, or lived a subsistence life off of arts and crafts sold to holiday seekers heading further up the mountain to ski. A few gold prospectors still worked the river, but they didn’t appear to have much luck.

In this community, a shaved head was not a fashion statement, but a telltale sign of a louse infestation: only more affluent families could afford both the medicated shampoo and the spare time to comb all the nits out. While a girl with pretty locks might have been worth the effort, no one thought to waste such resources on a boy from a poorer home.

The official statistics claimed the town was over 90 percent white, but even that seemed low: other than a couple kids in the upper grades and a couple you might see down by the river or at the pool, knowing any child who was not identifiably white (or Christian, or even a native English speaker) was rare.

Even so, it would be hard to argue that life was set up in favor of all the children living there. Alcoholism was rampant, and so was food insecurity. Kids — well aware that

playing by the rules was unlikely to get them fed any quicker — were already stealing food by the first grade.

Poorer children might eat at the homes of their better-off friends, but no one seemed to think much about the parents' hunger. Perhaps they were blamed for their predicament — for not having finished high school, for not being able to find work, or for blowing the family's cash at the saloon.

Mine was the kind of town that a classless identity politics forgets. The kind of town where being male or white or Christian wasn't synonymous with having decent housing, proper medical care, or a steady job.

Politicians are remarkably adept at pitting the economically disenfranchised against the racially or sexually marginalized.

Fear of hitting a glass ceiling is set against the fear of having one's wages stolen. Fear of never being able to love the way one wants to love is set against the fear of losing one's job and being out on the street.

At times, liberal forms of identity politics can fall into this trap. The reactionary that blames the plight of workers on the breakdown of traditional marriage and porous borders has more in common with the liberal pundit who blames racism and homophobia on the ignorance of white workers than either would like to admit.

But it was not white working-class people who drafted the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act that Bill Clinton signed into law in 1994. It was not struggling rural workers who sold this bill to the public by labeling young black men "super predators."

The people in my small town did not own the private prisons that paid inmates \$0.23 to 1.15 an hour, nor did they own the companies (like Whole Foods) that exploited prison labor. They were, however, hurt by the downward pressure that such labor schemes placed on workers' wages.

Inevitably, the blind spots of classless identity politics benefit elites.

In one rarified area, the wage gap has apparently vanished: chief executive officers of America's richest companies. But this means very little to, say, women in traditionally feminized occupations like nursing and home health care work. A \$15 minimum wage would be a more significant win for feminism than gender parity for CEOs.

Similarly, in my childhood town, glass ceilings and the shattering of them didn't improve the lives of those just trying to pick themselves up off the floor." The Yahoo CEO's gender, or the US president's race, had very little impact on the average citizen's life. It wasn't of much consequence to them if a prominent CNN anchor was gay, or if a black woman was a media mogul, or if a past Olympian had gender reassignment surgery.

However, it did matter if their standard of living was simultaneously decreasing and the precarity of their job was endangering their children's future.

Classless identity politics is a failure because it ends up elevating elites instead of recognizing the commonality all working-class and poor people share. We all experience

oppression due to class, even if that oppression can be compounded by race, gender, or sexuality.

We must recognize, as a class, that working-class women have more in common with working-class men than they do with Marissa Mayer, and fight together to end exploitation of male and (particularly) female labor. We must recognize, as a class, that working-class LGBT people have more in common with working-class straight people than they do with Tim Cook, and fight to end all working-class oppression (particularly that based on sexuality).

Since I lived there, the population of my childhood town has nearly doubled, fueled in part by telecommuting and cash migrating from Silicon Valley. Median income has risen to \$47,000, but the median home price fell 43 percent between 2003 and 2013. The school has moved to more appropriate permanent buildings.

This November, the town (and 362 other Placer County, California precincts not unlike it) voted for Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton, 51.1 percent to 39.5 percent.

But it's hard to blame sexism or racism for Clinton's loss.

On Election Day, the people of Placer County also voted for Kamala Harris, a black woman, to be their US senator. Her vote share? 63 percent. And her vote tally? 16,178 more than Clinton's.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

**A Bigger Pie, “But For Half Of
Americans, Their Share Of The
Total Economic Pie Has Shrunk
Significantly”
This Group “Has Been Completely
Shut Off From Economic Growth
Since The 1970s”**

“Stagnant Wages Have Sliced The Share Of Income Collected By The Bottom Half Of The Population To 12.5 Percent In 2014, From 20 Percent Of The Total In 1980”

“Where Did That Money Go? Average Incomes Grew By 61 Percent. But Nearly \$7 Out Of Every Additional \$10 Went To Those In The Top Tenth Of The Income Scale”

Dec. 6 2016 By PATRICIA COHEN, NY Times

Even with all the setbacks from recessions, burst bubbles and vanishing industries, the United States has still pumped out breathtaking riches over the last three and half decades.

The real economy more than doubled in size; the government now uses a substantial share of that bounty to hand over as much as \$5 trillion to help working families, older people, disabled and unemployed people pay for a home, visit a doctor and put their children through school.

Yet for half of all Americans, their share of the total economic pie has shrunk significantly, new research has found.

This group — the approximately 117 million adults stuck on the lower half of the income ladder — “has been completely shut off from economic growth since the 1970s,” the team of economists found. “Even after taxes and transfers, there has been close to zero growth for working-age adults in the bottom 50 percent.”

The new findings, by the economists Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman, provide the most thoroughgoing analysis to date of how the income kitty — like paychecks, profit-sharing, fringe benefits and food stamps — is divided among the American population.

Stagnant wages have sliced the share of income collected by the bottom half of the population to 12.5 percent in 2014, from 20 percent of the total in 1980. Where did that money go? Essentially, to the top 1 percent, whose share of the nation’s income nearly doubled to more than 20 percent during that same 34-year period.

Average incomes grew by 61 percent. But nearly \$7 out of every additional \$10 went to those in the top tenth of the income scale.

Inequality has soared over that period. In 1980, the researchers found, someone in the top 1 percent earned on average \$428,200 a year — about 27 times more than the typical person in the bottom half, whose annual income equaled \$16,000.

Today, half of American adults are still pretty much earning that same \$16,000 on average — in 1980 dollars, adjusted for inflation — while members of the top 1 percent now bring home \$1,304,800 — 81 times as much.

That ratio, the authors point out, “is similar to the gap between the average income in the United States and the average income in the world’s poorest countries, the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic and Burundi.”

The growth of incomes has probably increased a bit since 2014, the latest year for which full data exists, said Mr. Zucman, who, like Mr. Saez, also teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. But it is “not enough to make any significant difference to our long-run finding, and in particular, to affect the long-run stagnation of bottom-50-percent incomes.”

Tax credits and programs like Medicare and disability payments have helped families at the lower half of the income scale. But they have just nipped at the heels of the underlying trend.

“It confirms the surge in income at the top,” said Raj Chetty, an economist at Stanford unaffiliated with the project, who called the work “terrific and very important. And it shows government redistribution doesn’t really change the picture.”

Lawrence Katz, an economist at Harvard who also independently reviewed the research, agreed that the data underscored the inadequacies of programs that try to redress inequities after the fact. “It suggests that if you don’t do something earlier in the market, before distribution, through better education or greater bargaining power, it’s really tough to offset completely,” Mr. Katz said. “Countries with less inequality do some of both.”

Mr. Katz and Claudia Goldin, a Harvard economist, have argued that advances in technology, while crucial to improving productivity and generating economic growth, also have exacerbated inequality by driving down wages of low-skilled workers. The rewards of education are greater than they have ever been, but advancement nationwide has slowed and the system confers many of its favors on the children of the affluent.

If there is a bright spot in the new comprehensive research, it is that after taxes and government spending, the middle class is in better shape than previous studies had shown. That earlier research had missed growth in nontaxable income like employee benefits. “The real income of the middle class is a bit better than we thought,” Mr. Katz said.

Mr. Piketty, Mr. Saez and Mr. Zucman concluded that the main driver of wealth in recent years has been investment income at the top.

That is a switch from the 1980s and 1990s, when gains in income were primarily generated by working.

That divergence can slow innovation and further entrench inequities, said Heather Boushey, an economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. When labor income provides the primary route to riches, it creates incentives for people to improve their education and work harder, Ms. Boushey explained. But if getting ahead requires already having a stockpile of cash or inheriting a windfall from your parents, then it is much harder to work your way up.

**“Trump Over Performed The
Most In Counties With The
Highest Drug, Alcohol And
Suicide Mortality Rates”**

**“The System Has Failed Them.
Trump Promised To Blow It Up;
Clinton Represented More Of The
Same”**

**“Many Supported Obama Because
They Were Desperate For Change.**

**“They’re Still Desperate, And Now
They’re Hopeful Trump Can Bring
The Change”**

**“In 1970, 92% Of American 30-Year-Olds
Earned More Than Their Parents Did At A
Similar Age. In 2014, That Number Was
Just 51%”**

December 9 by James Hohmann, Washington Post [Excerpts]

The president-elect performed better than Mitt Romney in many places, but he fared best compared to the Republican nominee four years ago in the counties with the highest drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rates.

Shannon M. Monnat, an assistant professor of rural sociology and demography, created a data set with numbers from 3,106 counties. She found this trend to be true nationally but especially so in two regions: In the industrial Midwest, which is how academics refer to the Rust Belt, Trump ran ahead of Romney by an average of 16.7 percent in the quarter of counties with the highest mortality, compared to 8.1 percent in the lowest quartile.

In New England, Trump did worse than Romney by an average of 3.1 percent in the lowest mortality counties but better than the former Massachusetts governor by an average of 10 percent in the highest mortality counties.

Overdoses, alcoholism and suicide are known by experts collectively as “the diseases of despair.”

It is intuitive that the least economically distressed counties also tend to have the lowest mortality rates, and vice versa. In this way, alcoholism, overdoses and suicide are symptoms of the deeper social decay that was caused by deindustrialization. This decay led to the fears and anxieties which Trump so effectively capitalized on.

But while the places with the biggest mortality problems are usually the places that have been hit hardest economically, Monnat points out in a footnote: “Even when using statistical models that include 14 demographic, economic, social, and health care factors, the drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rate remains a significant and positive predictor of Trump overperformance nationally.”

Many supported Barack Obama eight years ago because they were desperate for hope and change. They’re still desperate, and now they’re hopeful Trump can bring the change they’re looking for.

Washington has never been richer or further removed from the pain of everyday Americans, as Hillary Clinton called them in the video announcing her candidacy.

Trump’s solutions may not actually help the “the forgotten man” that he talked so much about on the stump. The tax cuts he wants will disproportionately benefit the most affluent people in the bluest states, for example.

But the system has failed them. Trump promised to blow it up; Clinton represented more of the same.

Three glaring illustrations from the Penn State report:

Scioto County, Ohio:

This is the setting for Sam Quinones’s book “Dreamland,” a blue-collar place with a once-thriving manufacturing base that became the pill-mill capital of America after the nation’s first large “pain clinic” opened.

The drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rate more than doubled from 32.9 (per 100,000 people) in 1999 to 74.8 in 2014, Monnat notes, and Trump received 33 percent more of the county's vote than Romney.

Mingo County, West Virginia:

The drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rate spiked from 53.6 in 1999 to 161.1 in 2014, making it the seventh highest in the U.S.

Trump's share of the vote was 19 percent higher than Romney's. "Mining and related industries employed nearly 40 percent of the county's workers in the 1980s and accounted for two-thirds of the county's earnings. Since then, mining has dropped to 20 percent of employment and a third of wages, and household income has declined by 10 percent. Mingo County now has an adult poverty rate of 23 percent and a disability rate of 32 percent," per Monnat.

Coos County, New Hampshire:

Has the highest drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rate in New England, swung from Obama to Trump: "The share of jobs in manufacturing there declined from 38 percent to 7 percent, and payroll wages from manufacturing dropped from 49 percent to 9 percent since the mid-1980s," Monnat explains.

Let this sink in: A federal government report released yesterday shows that life expectancy is now declining in America. Besides war, plague and famine, there have been few moments in all of human history when that has happened.

This is more troubling because it is not happening in other western countries.

The National Center for Health Statistics found that death rates rose for eight of the top 10 leading causes of death in 2015. Death rates rose for white men, white women and black men. This happened despite a drop in the death rate from cancer, thanks to fewer people smoking and better chemo.

"The overall death rate rose 1.2 percent in 2015, its first uptick since 1999," Lenny Bernstein reports.

All told, over the past decade, around 400,000 Americans died from drug overdoses, another 400,000 committed suicide and about 250,000 died from alcohol-induced diseases.

For millions of others who are not trying to self-medicate away their blues, the American Dream continues to fade.

Working hard and playing by the rules in this country no longer ensures that you'll get ahead. That social compact is broken. Downward mobility is too often the norm.

Consider this disquieting data point: In another study published yesterday, economists and sociologists from Stanford, Harvard and the University of California identified the income of 30-year-olds starting in 1970, using tax records and census data, and compared it with the earnings of their parents when they were about the same age.

In 1970, 92 percent of American 30-year-olds earned more than their parents did at a similar age. In 2014, that number was just 51 percent.

It's been tough to be a blue-collar worker for a long time now.

Our Fact Checker calls out the White House this morning for repeatedly exaggerating the number of manufacturing jobs that have been created during the past eight years.

Press Secretary Josh Earnest claims that, during Obama's presidency, the number of manufacturing jobs increased by more than 800,000. But actually, the number of jobs has fallen by 300,000.

Glenn Kessler explains the cherry picking that's going on: "Earnest is counting from when the low point in U.S. manufacturing was reached in February 2010. ... That was about 1.1 million fewer than when Obama took office — and nearly 2.3 million fewer than when the Great Recession officially began in December 2007.

So 807,000 jobs represents the number of jobs created since the low point in Obama's term, not 'while he was in office.'"

VIETNAM GI: REPRINTS AVAILABLE



Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command.

The pages and pages of letters in the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

Military Resistance has copied complete sets of Vietnam GI. The originals were a bit rough, but every page is there. Over 100 pages, full 11x17 size.

Free on request to active duty members of the armed forces.

Cost for others: \$15 if picked up in New York City. For mailing inside USA add \$5 for bubble bag and postage. For outside USA, include extra for mailing 2.5 pounds to wherever you are.

Checks, money orders payable to: The Military Project

Orders to:
Military Resistance
2472 Broadway,
New York, N.Y.
10025

All proceeds are used for projects giving aid and comfort to members of the armed forces organizing to resist today's Imperial wars.



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

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether at a base in the USA or stationed outside the Continental United States, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2472 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025.

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

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