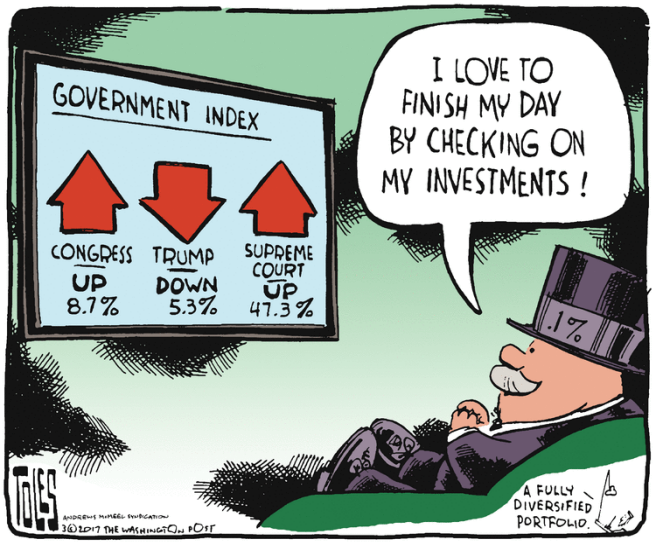
Military Resistance: ***thomasfbarton@earthlink.net*** ***4.6.17*** **Print it out: color best. Pass it on.**

Military Resistance 15D2



The Kids Are Allright #1:

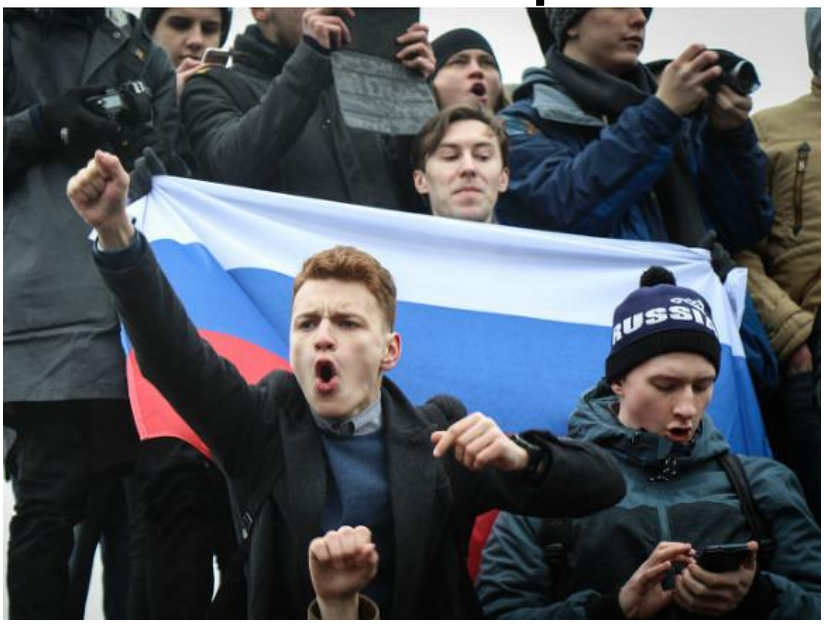
"We Don't Want To Live In A Country Where The Regime Robs Its Own People"

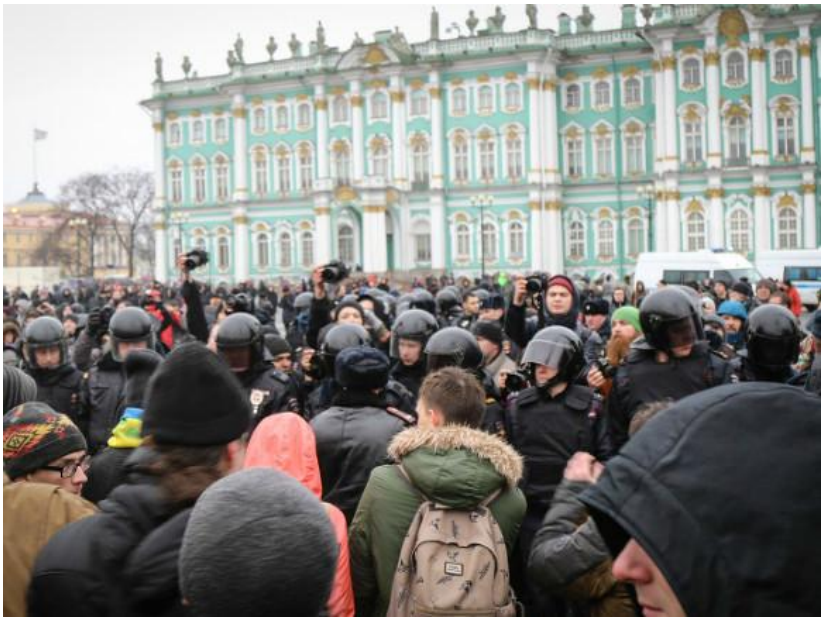
Teens Talk About Why They Went To The Anti-Corruption Rallies:

"Like Any Sensible Person, I Don't Like The Fact Our Official Steal, Accept Bribes, And Build

Themselves Enormous Castles In Italy And Palaces In Russia”

“Individuals Supported Us By Smiling, Laughing, And Photographing Us, While Drivers Honked Their Horns. Only The Police Were Upset”





Students confront riot police at the Winter Palace, St. Petersburg 26 March 2017

"Corruption isn't such a great tradition." "Let's explain to little Dima that taking other people's things is bad." Two protesters holding placards on the Field of Mars, 26.03.2017

March 28, 2017 by Alexander Kalinin, Rosbalt. Translated by the Russian Reader. Except where indicated all photos courtesy of Alexander Polukeyev/Rosbalt. Thanks to Comrade Uvarova for the heads-up

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A huge number of university and high school students attended the anti-corruption rallies in Russia. It was the first time many of the young people had gone to a protest rally. Some protesters even wound up at police stations along with their older comrades.

Some high school and university students told our correspondent what had made them take to the streets.

Kristina, 16, Tenth-Grader From Gatchina

This was my first protest rally.

I came to the Field of Mars because, like most of the people here, I wanted to get through to the regime. After watching the film by the Anti-Corruption Foundation, many people had questions.

Besides, I see how my relatives, acquaintances, and friends get along. We are often cheated.

For example, a relative was illegally sacked from work, and campaigning for United Russia goes on at my school. There are party flags in the health and safety classroom.

I argue about it with my teacher all the time. He says he's a member of the party.

Have you heard the recording in which teachers give high-school students in Bryansk a dressing-down?

Basically, the same thing happens at our school. I get D's and F's when I talk like that, and I'm sent to the principal for "disrupting class."

I was wondering how many people would come to the rally. My parents tried to persuade me not to go. They said, "There will be ten people there, and you'll waste your time."

I went to the rally with my boyfriend. We made a placard about Shuvalov's dogs. We drew Welsh corgis against a backdrop of clouds and wrote, "Happiness if flying like a bird in the sky but without wings." A man on the Field of Mars asked to look at our placard and was surprised we hadn't unfurled it.

I had never seen such a huge crowd before. I was even a bit scared we would be trampled.

When we went to Palace Square, I heard the roar of sirens. I saw the riot police (OMON) in all their glory for the first time on the square. They formed a line and advanced on the protesters.

A policeman approached us and asked for our papers. We replied by asking him to identify himself and show us his badge number. He looked away from us and went over to detain a man holding a placard.

I was ready to be detained. I had read all the posts on the topics and memorized all the articles about what to do when you're detained by police.

When we went to the Legislative Assembly, people broke up into groups. Some demanded freedom for Oleg Navalny, others talked about what was happening with St. Isaac's Cathedral, and still others chanted anti-corruption slogans. Then there were people who went to the subway or to a café.

After hanging out at the Legislative Assembly, we had decided to go home, when we were again approached by a police officer. He asked to check our papers and wondered whether we had been at the rally. We answered that we had.

"Good going!" he said. "I would have gone myself, but I was on duty and I'm afraid of losing my job."

We were stunned, but it was nice to hear.

My parents knew where I had gone. They followed the news. When I got home, we joked about what would have happened if the police had nabbed me.

I don't want to be compared with truant schoolchildren (shkolota). The rally was not entertaining in the least, and we had to go to it. We realize this is our future.

We keep a close eye on grown-ups. They regard what's happening with desperation.

It doesn't scare me if the order comes down to give lectures in the schools about the current political situation. I expect it to happen.

I love discussing the topic. It's fun to argue when you are well versed on the subject. Although maybe I won't be invited to these lessons.

The thing is we had a session of the Leningrad Regional Youth Parliament at our school to which regional MPs were invited. The teachers rehearsed the event with us, and the questions were prepared in advance.

But when I was going to ask my question, I was politely shut up. They realized I could cause a conflict.

Ivan, 16, Ninth-Grader From Kolpino

This was my first protest rally. I made the trip from Kolpino to Petersburg by myself.

I was curious how folks would react to Alexei Navalny's exposé film. I wondered whether people cared or didn't care about what the powers that be were up to. I didn't bring a placard with me, but I shouted slogans with the other protesters, although it felt awkward at first. When somebody chanted a slogan from far off, I kept my mouth shut. But I plugged into the process when people next to me shouted.

There were lots of young people, so I didn't feel alone. At first, police dispersed the people who had climbed atop the memorial next to the Eternal Flame, but then they gave up.

When the rally on the Field of Mars was over, I didn't want to leave. I wanted to keep going.

When we marched towards Palace Square, I didn't hear any negative feedback towards us. On the contrary, individuals supported us by smiling, laughing, and photographing us, while drivers honked their horns. Only the police were upset. They asked us why we had come out.

I felt more confident on Palace Square. I even started some chants first.

The "cosmonauts" (riot police) made their first appearance on the square, but they were very few in number. They didn't do anything. It was only when the crowd pressed against them that they asked us to disperse, but no one was listening to them. Generally, the police behaved decently.

When we walked towards Insurrection Square, we were followed by police cars and paddy wagons. The arrests took place on the approach to the square. A lot of people were kettled opposite a building on Nevsky Prospect.

I want to watch the arrests, and then go home, but I accidentally bumped a riot cop with my shoulder. He said something about my being broad-shouldered. I probably did the

wrong thing. I said to him, “Yeah, I’m broad-shouldered.” Right then, three paddy wagons drove up to the crowd. The cosmonaut grabbed me and put me in one of them.

It was my first arrest.

Our ride to the police station was cheerful. No one was upset. We were taken into the station. We stood for around an hour in the hallway, and then we were led into this weird basement. We were allowed to make a phone call. We chatted with the policemen about whether we had done the right thing by taking to the streets or not. They weren’t aggressive.

The voyage to the police station revved me up. At the precinct, I met a lot of kids.

Human rights advocates helped us. They found the precincts where we’d been taken, brought us food, and advised us on how to behave. It was a tremendous feeling of support.

Then Mom came to get me. She and I left the station at 10:00 p.m. I was told only to write a statement, and I was given a report that I had been delivered to the station.

My parents had known I was planning to go to the rally. They told me I might be detained. When I telephoned Mom from the precinct, she was a bit peeved, but there no heavy discussions at home.

I don’t think there will be any blamestorming sessions at school. Most of our teachers say that Russia isn’t a very good country. I think they would have supported my trip to the rally.

The high school students who went to the Field of Mars shouldn’t be dubbed “truants.” Spring holidays had begun.

There are lots of dissatisfied young people, so that was why, apparently, they attended the rally.

We think about our future. We don’t want to live in a country where the regime robs its own people. But people who are older could not care less anymore, it seems. They’re too lazy to go outside in bad weather.

Mikhail, 16, Tenth-Grader, Moscow

I had already been in the Boris Nemtsov memorial march and the protests against the Yarovaya package.

Like any sensible person, I don’t like the fact our official steal, accept bribes, and build themselves enormous castles in Italy and palaces in Russia.

The corruption schemes in Russia are no different from the ones used by the now-ex-president of South Korea. She also laundered money through charities.

The authorities have not reacted to the Anti-Corruption Foundation's investigation. All that happened was Medvedev banned Navalny on Instagram.

After watching Navalny's film, I had questions and I wanted answers to them. The Anti-Corruption Foundation argues that the rally was authorized in keeping with the Constitutional Court's ruling.

I consider my arrest illegal, although I was ready for it to happen.

I was walking down the street with my friends. We weren't shouting slogans, but we were carrying placards featuring Zhdun and the Rubber Duck.

Apparently, I was arrested for carrying a placard. My arrest sheet said I had been waving my arms, grabbing people, and running out into traffic. But they wrote that in everyone's arrest sheet.

The only thing they changed was people's names. Eleven hours passed from the moment of my arrest until I left the police station, although I'm a minor. I should have been released as quickly as possible.

No one told my parents I was at the police station. I telephoned them myself. The police charged me with me violating Article 20.2 of the Administrative Procedures Codes ("Violation of the established procedure for organizing or holding a meeting, rally, demonstration, march or picket"). There will be a court hearing. I imagine the verdict will be guilty. I will appeal it to the European Court of Human Rights.

My parents knew I was going to the rally. They reacted differently to my arrest. My father took it lightly. He remembered his brother, who back in the day had been involved in the events outside the White House. But Mom was upset because I was unable to go to a relative's birthday party.

I'm glad so many people showed up to the rally.

People realize that corruption is an evil, that something has to change. I hope the teenagers who went to the rally will keep involved in civic activism and fight to make our country law-abiding.

I don't think this is the last time you'll see young people taking to the streets.

As for the consequences, I don't think there will be a crackdown at my school. I hope the Moscow Education Department doesn't apply any pressure.

Svetlana, 17, First-Year University Student, Petersburg

This was the first protest in my life. I had wanted to attend the rally against transferring St. Isaac's Cathedral to the Orthodox Church, but it didn't work out. The reason I attended the rally was Navaly's exposé film. I didn't want to stand on the sidelines.

I saw lots of indignant people at the Field of Mars. Initially, I didn't want to stand out. I even felt uncomfortable chanting with everyone else. Then I went and stood next to some young activists. I felt comfortable with them. Of course, I didn't want my university to find out I'd been involved in the rally.

They don't like it when students start "uprisings."

When we were walking down Nevsky Prospect toward Palace Square, I was already in the front. I took the subway to Insurrection Square. When I came out, I saw the police had blocked the road. I didn't see any of the arrests myself. Friends told me about them.

There is nothing extraordinary about the fact that young people came out for the rally. It's not the first time they've been called a driving force. It is always young people that kick everything off. Lots of people are now talking about what happened. I was pleased to be involved in the beginning of the big fight against corruption.

Victoria, 18, 2nd-Year University Student, Petersburg

I used to go to rallies mainly dealing with educational problems. I had been to rallies in defense of St. Petersburg State University, the Publishing and Printing College, and the European University. As a student, I take this issue to heart. I wouldn't want to find myself in a situation in which my university was being closed.

As for the topic of the March 26 rally, corruption is on everyone's minds.

There is corruption in Petersburg's universities and colleges, too. Everyone has seen Navalny's exposé film. It was no longer a question of going to the Field of Mars or not. I had to go. Naturally, I realized the police could nab us, but I didn't go looking for trouble. I didn't provoke the police indiscriminately.

I don't understand, for example, why people had to climb on the monument. But painting one's face green was a completely innocent gesture.

What I liked about the rally was the spirit of unity, the sense of belonging to a common cause.

Ultimately, I went with everyone else from the Field of Mars to Palace Square, and then I went home. I was freezing.

I don't think there will be crackdowns in the schools and colleges after something like this. First, the teachers and lecturers are themselves dissatisfied with the current state of affairs.

Second, none of them wants to find themselves in the role of the Bryansk schoolteachers.

After all, high school and university students record all preventive discussions and then post them on the internet. No one wants to be a laughing stock on the web.

MORE:

The Kids Are Allright #2: "While You Were Stealing Money, We Were Growing Up!" "Gleb Tokmakov, A Fifth Grader In Tomsk, Articulately And Patiently Explained To A Crowd Of Adults Why Russia Needed Systemic Political Reform And Decried How Politicized The Nation's Schools Have Become"

A young demonstrator is arrested by Russian riot police during an opposition rally in central Moscow on March 26.

March 27, 2017 by Brian Whitmore, RFEurope [Excerpts]

Marching down Moscow's central Tverskaya Ulitsa, a group of teenagers chanted "While you were stealing money, we were growing up!"

In one widely watched video, Gleb Tokmakov, a fifth grader in Tomsk, articulately and patiently explained to a crowd of adults why Russia needed systemic political reform and decried how politicized the nation's schools have become.

"If you refuse to doodle in support of the authorities, they might fail you," he said.

Another featured a 17-year-old in Perm explaining the connection between official corruption and declining living standards.

This is a generation that didn't live through the Soviet collapse or the deprivation of the 1990s. The only Russia they know is Putin's Russia.

This is the Putin generation. It also represents Russia's future. And if the Kremlin is losing them, it doesn't bode well.

MORE:

The Kids Are Allright #3:

Led By Young, Serbian Anti-Government Protests Rock Belgrade, Novi Sad And “More Than 15 Towns Across Serbia”

“Thousands Took The Streets”

“Down With Dictatorship” And “Get Out”

“Also Asking For Socio-Economic Reforms, Such As Ending Austerity Measures”

“We Do Not Want To Live Like Slaves”

Belgrade. Photo: BIRN

Novi Sad. Photo: BIRN

05 Apr 17 by Vanja Djuric, Filip Rudic; BIRN [Excerpts]

Thousands of people gathered in Belgrade and Novi Sad on Wednesday evening to protest against the rule of President-Elect and current Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, which they describe as a “dictatorship”.

News agency Beta reports that around 8,000 people protested earlier tonight in front of the government building in Belgrade.

They will once again make a round of the city streets until they reach the seat of Serbia's Government, after which they will return to the National Assembly building.

Protesters in Belgrade shouted “Down with Dictatorship” and “Get Out” in front of the building of the State Electoral Commission, RIK. One smaller group returned in front of the building of the parliament, where the protests started earlier tonight.

Belgrade: Photo: BIRN

Thousands of protesters are now walking towards the building of Serbian public broadcaster, RTS. Serbian students today demanded removal of RTS management, among other things.

They blocked the traffic in front of the building of public broadcaster RTS, shouting “Thieves Out!”, “You Sold Out!” and "We want resignations!"

One of the demonstrator’s demands is the removal of the top management at the State Electoral Commission.

Demonstrators claim Vucic's supporters rigged the presidential vote on Sunday.

“Five years of thefts, lies, false degrees … and breach of Constitution. It is too much! I don’t want ‘90s (back)]. I want 21st Century,” said physicist Milos Vlainic who participated in protest in Novi Sad.

College student Sasa Loncar said he and his friends came to the protest in Belgrade because they want things to change in Serbia.

“I came here because of Aleksandar Vucic's tyranny, especially because other presidential candidates were blocked in the media," said Loncar.

He said he and his friends voted in the presidential election because they are young and have to shape the country’s future.

“We want a normal country, we do not want to live like slaves. This is one great, rich country and as long as it led by criminals, thieves, uneducated and sick people – we will not step back,” Milos Jevtovic, one of the protesters in Belgrade, told BIRN.

They are chanting “Vucic, you are a thief” and banging drums as they go.

College student Sasa Loncar said he and his friends came to the protest in Belgrade because they want things to change in Serbia.

“I came here because of Aleksandar Vucic's tyranny, especially because other presidential candidates were blocked in the media,“ said Loncar.

He said he and his friends voted in the presidential election because they are young and have to shape the country’s future.

It is not clear who the organisers of the protest are but groups of students who took to the streets of the capital and the northern cities of Novi Sad and Subotica issued a list of requests on Wednesday.

They are calling for the immediate resignation of Maja Gojkovic, the Serbian parliamentary speaker who they claim unlawfully prorogued parliament during campaigning ahead of Sunday’s presidential vote.

Other demands include cleaning up the electoral roll that is said to contain the names of more than a million ineligible voters - including deceased Serbs - and implementing measures to ensure the public broadcaster is independent from government and free of political influence.

They are also demanding the removal of the top management at the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media and the State Electoral Commission.

The Students' Movement of Novi Sad, while supporting the core demands is also asking for socio-economic reforms, such as ending austerity measures.

If those demands are not met, they insist Serbia should hold snap parliamentary elections.

“I am protesting because I think it is not too late for changes, as much as some tell us hitting the streets is useless now,” says Sofia Balac, photography student at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad.

She says she voted in the presidential elections because “others have fought hard so we can have that right”, but also because it is “useless to sit and complain if you do nothing to change things”.

“For the first time in a long while things are moving, even if the people do not know exactly what they want yet. I hope there is a chance to build an alternative to the current state of affairs.

“At the very least we can make the politicians realize they can not do whatever they want with us,” said college student Alexandar Vracaric.

He says did not vote in the presidential elections, not because he is not interested in politics but because he did not want to give legitimacy to any of the candidates.

Protesters in Novi Sad blocked the street leading to provincial public broadcaster RTV earlier tonight. They said they did not want someone to attack the building and accuse protesters.

Anti-government rallies, organised via social media, were held on Tuesday evening in more than 15 towns across Serbia.

The largest demonstrations took place in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis and Kragujevac, with thousands attending.

Several hundred people protested in the mining town of Bor, blocking traffic and chanting against Serbian PM and President-elect Aleksandar Vucic.

Several hundred people in the town of Cacak protested tonight against Aleksandar Vucic's rule. They walked to the seat of the local branch of Vucic's Serbian Progressive Party and shouted "Thieves, out" and "We want jobs, not sandwiches".

Two hundred protested in Kraljevo, mostly college and high school students. They gathered at the city square and walked the streets.

About a hundred walked in the town of Krusevac from the City Parliament to the main square and back carrying banners.

The protest began an hour earlier than scheduled and went without incident. Informal organizers animated the crowd with megaphones, Beta news agency reports.

MORE:

What Happened On March 26th? "About 60 Thousand People Participated In Rallies All Over Russia" "Overwhelmingly, As Has Been Mentioned Many Times Already, They Were Young People:

“It Is Evident That Throughout This Year, Events Will Develop At An Accelerated Rate”

April 1, 2017 by lefteast. [This text was originally published in Russian in OpenLeft.ru. We would like to thank Eliza Ivanova for the translation.]

Introduction

On March 26th, people in many Russian cities participated in rallies connected to the recent anti-corruption investigation by Alexey Navalny’s Anti-corruption Foundation.

One could say that these were the most numerous street protests of the past few years. In contrast to the Bolotnaya protests of 2012, which focused on demanding fair and open elections, the main issues these rallies addressed were the unjust distribution of resources and the Russian oligarchical system.

Many of the rallies were uncoordinated, which has inspired the intense interest of the police; the official mass media, however, has tried to ignore the events.

In the rally in Moscow, there were about 7-8 thousand participants, according to the data of the GUVD (the Moscow State Police); there were about 10 thousand, according to the estimations of the eyewitnesses; and the OVD-info has reported 1,042 people detained.

In Petersburg, about 10 thousand people also came out to Marsovo Polye. Afterwards, about 2-3 thousand people set off to the Palace Square, to Isaac’s and to the Office of Civic Registration. About 130 people were detained.

More than 2 thousand people rallied in Ekaterinburg and over 4,000 came out in Novosibirsk. In addition, people took to the streets of Tomsk, Chelyabinsk, Saratov, Voronezh, Irkutsk, Perm, and other cities.

Based on the data from the local mass media, photos, and the video footage from Echo Moscow, about 60 thousand people participated in rallies all over Russia.

Ilya Budraitskis and Kirill Medvedev tell us how everything went, how the present protest differ from the Bolotnaya rallies five years ago, what we can expect from it, and what this protest means for the Left.

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“The Vital Question Has Become Not The Lack Of Political Freedoms, But The Widening Chasm Between The Absolute

Majority Of The Population And The Ultra-Rich Corrupt Elite”

“The Present Movement Is Born Out Of The Economic Crisis And The Deterioration Of The Putin Social Model”

Ilya Budraitskis

By Ilya Budraitskis

Ilya Budraitskis(1981) is a historian, cultural and political activist.

Since 2009 he is Ph.D. student at the Institute for World History, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow. In 2001-2004 he organized Russian activists in mobilizations against the G8, in European and World Social Forums.

Since 2011 he has been an activist and spokesperson for Russian Socialist Movement. Member of Editorial board of “Moscow Art Magazine”. Regular contributor to the number of political and cultural websites.

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Today, a day after the events in Moscow and other cities, the liberal media is full of speculations about the “school kids,” the fundamentally new age audience which Navalny was able to mobilize.

The mass participation of youth in yesterday’s “walks” is, of course, a fact. However, I am more inclined to agree with the sociologist Alexander Bikbov, who noted that, after all, the majority of the protesters belonged to that generation around thirty years old.

Nonetheless, these protests extended well beyond the group that came out to the Bolotnaya protests five years ago. For many of the people who came out into the streets—not only in Moscow, but in a dozen other large cities—the vital question has

become not the lack of political freedoms, but the widening chasm between the absolute majority of the population and the ultra-rich corrupt elite.

The present movement is born out of the economic crisis and the deterioration of the Putin social model.

Navalny has deftly captured this mood, increasing the social-populist component of his investigations and public statements throughout the past year.

He has clearly indicated that corruption is not a defect, but rather a part of a system which is based on large-scale upward redistribution of property.

As to the pathos of his revelations, it has sometimes bordered on the red line of frank hatred towards the hedonist elite. One might say that right now, Navalny is doing what the Left called on the public to do during the Bolotnaya protests five years ago.

He is widening the audience, drawing connections between political and social demands. The fundamental difference, however, is that for him, this is an instrumental, technical move, subordinate to an emphasis on his own status as the unquestionable leader of the opposition.

For the Left, this situation presents both new possibilities and new threats: the people, who came out yesterday to rally at the protests are more open to our ideas.

And yet, at the same time, the configuration that is concentrated around Navalny's movement complicates the development of any other alternative, organized centers. In contrast to 2011, the protest has not yet become a place for the collision of different ideas. The Left participated quite actively in yesterday's protests in Moscow, Petersburg, Vladivostok and other cities, but was unable (and didn't even really try) to designate itself as a noticeable single pole of attraction.

It is evident that throughout this year, events will develop at an accelerated rate and we must urgently draw conclusions from the experience of March 26th.

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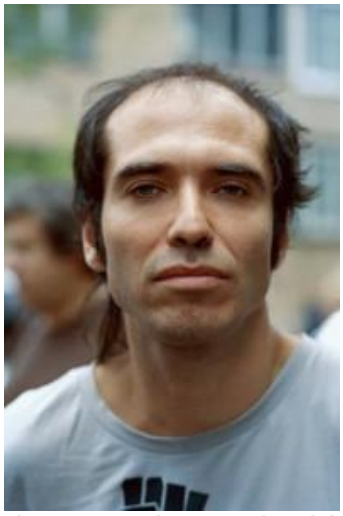
"Overwhelmingly, As Has Been Mentioned Many Times Already, They Were Young People: "The Most Terrible Nightmare Of The Regime"

By Kirill Medvedev

In part, the people who came out to Tverskaya street in Moscow were the Bolotnaya crowd; others were those who have been recently politicized and, overwhelmingly, as has been mentioned many times already, they were young people.

Importantly, through his film, Navalny has been able to emotionally overcome the effect of the Crimea and Donbass story, the forceful impact of which has paralyzed protest

politics for the past three years. That's even more important than the specific facts that are being exposed.



Kirill Medvedev is a Moscow-based poet, translator, and activist. He is the founder of the Arkady Kots band.

Incredibly ably and practically alone, Navalny is destabilizing the system.

The breach that he is creating, the challenges that he is thrusting at the official Left, forcing it to react and, at least somewhat, become more radicalized, must be exploited.

The best possible result would be a conditional unification of the forces unleashed in 1991 and 1993, that is, of those people for whom the fight for democracy is a fight against the usurpation of power by a party and those for whom this is a fight against the possibility of small groups of the rich and the privileged to control the majority (even when it's happening in the most lawful, uncorrupt, and "transitory" fashion). Retrospectively, the social forces of these two years typically get opposed to each other: now we have a chance for their carriers to come together.

And, of course, yesterday's school kids, if they don't become disillusioned in politics, will ultimately adopt one of these two perspectives.

This unification would be the most terrible nightmare of the regime, as well as a quite unpleasant piece of news for those nationalists and liberals who hope, above all else, to call it quits on the Soviet heritage and its carriers.

Navalny, in his case, attempts to settle this paradox through the power of his own figure; thus, the unification of the movement is directly dependent on direct loyalty towards his persona. This is a problem.

But no other serious oppositional movement, separate from the Navalny-initiated anti-corruption protest, exists or will exist in the near future. Therefore, naturally, we must be with those who participate in it. But by remembering how a pair of irreplaceable national leaders (first Yeltsin, then Putin) was forced upon us (partially by the same circle of people) in the 1990s, it is necessary to participate in these protests with the most democratic and anti-authoritarian program.

We don’t need a Navalny cult; we don’t need President Navalny or any other president. Nor do we need nationalism, which he tries to mobilize for his own support. Therefore, this is a Trojan horse, which can implode from inside, destroying the entire movement, the society or, at the minimum, will again relinquish the power of initiative to the regime.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Taliban Bomber Kills Afghan Commander

April 01, 2017 by Ayaz Gul, VBOA News [Excerpts]

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN —
A Taliban suicide car bomber killed an Afghan regional base commander and two soldiers Saturday in the southeastern province of Khost, officials and insurgents said.

A government spokesman, Mubarez Zadran, told VOA the Afghan forces were targeted in Mando district.

A Taliban spokesman who said insurgents carried out the assault claimed the explosion had killed five Afghan special forces members. He asserted the slain Afghan commander was a "trustworthy" partner of U.S. forces and had worked closely with them in the region.

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4 Afghan Intelligence Agents Killed In Taliban Attack

Apr 3 AP & Apr 02 2017 By Khaama Press

KABUL, Afghanistan -- Afghan officials confirm that at least four provincial intelligence service agents have been killed in an attack by Taliban insurgents in eastern Ghazni province.

The local officials confirmed the incident took place in the vicinity of Domand district in northern part of the province.

The eyewitnesses and local residents said the explosion was powerful enough to shatter the glasses of the several houses in the area.

Two provincial officials from eastern Paktika province confirmed on Monday that the deputy provincial director for Paktika, Abdul Wahib Khan, as well as his driver and two other people were killed in the ambush on Sunday.

The attack took place when their convoy was travelling from Ghazni toward Paktika province. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity, because they were not authorized to talk about intelligence-related issues.

The officials added that there were reports of others being wounded, but the exact number was not known.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, claimed responsibility for the ambush.

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

What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.
-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787

The My Lai Massacre, 49 Years Later:
"An Act Of Barbarity That Would Redefine The War In Vietnam"
"Larry Colburn, Who Was A Door Gunner Said 'The Only Thing The U.S. Soldiers Did Not Do Was Cook Them And Eat Them'"

My Lai mural

March 21, 2017 by Mike Hastie, CounterPunch. Mike Hastie served as a US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71.

March 16, 2017, was the 49th anniversary of the My Lai Massacre, located in Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam.

It was Saturday morning, March 16, 1968, when approximately 115 U.S. Army soldiers of the Americal Division's Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, landed in helicopters just outside the village of My Lai 4. Over the course of the next four hours, these American soldiers, and their Military High Command, who were flying overhead in helicopters observing the massacre, took part in a horror show far beyond the human imagination. They took the term, "War Crimes," and added a butcher shop to the equation of morbid extermination. In essence, they became a U.S. version of the final solution.

They committed an act of barbarity that would redefine the war in Vietnam. It would take years to decipher what happened that day, as denial is the elixir that protects us from experiencing national shame. It is these two words, "National Shame," that continues to hide the truth of what really happened in Southeast Asia. This is what the U.S. Military did on that day on March 16, 1968. I use the word "We," because our taxes paid for the massacre, and our ignorance about the war wrote the check.

Among the dead were a hundred and eighty-two women, seventeen of them pregnant. A hundred and seventy-three children were executed, including fifty-six infants. Sixty older men were also murdered.

The museum at My Lai includes the accounting of another important fact: there was another village located about a mile away from My Lai 4, called My Khe 4, that U.S. soldiers from Bravo Company on the same day, also committed atrocities. So, 407 were murdered at My Lai 4, and 97 were murdered at My Khe 4, for a total of 504 Vietnamese civilians. It also must be noted, that there were twenty rapes committed, not to include attempted rapes. I have chosen not to go into detail about how those executions were committed, or the torture and extreme suffering that was committed by American soldiers under Pentagon command. This butcher shop mentality would be extremely difficult to read and comprehend by most people.

I will say this, and it is a quote from Larry Colburn, who was a door gunner on Hugh Thompson's helicopter that landed on the ground during the massacre, and attempted to stop the killing. These are Larry Colburn's words: "The only thing the U.S. soldiers did not do was cook them and eat them."

In order to understand WHY these two massacres were committed on March 16, 1968, a synopsis and history of what happened in Quang Ngai Province during the war would be helpful for the reader. I came across an article written on October 2, 1994, by award winning author, and Vietnam veteran, Tim O'Brien. The title of the article is: "The Vietnam in Me."

"Brutality Was S.O.P. Scalded Children, Pistol-Whipped Women, Burning Hootches, Free-Fire Zones, Body Counts"

These are his words:

“In the years preceding the murders at My Lai, more than 70 percent of the villages in Quang Ngai Province had been destroyed by air strikes, artillery fire, Zippo lighters, napalm, white phosphorus, bulldozers, gunships and other such means. Roughly 40 percent of the population had lived in refugee camps, while civilian casualties in the area were approaching 50,000 a year. These numbers, reported by the journalist Jonathan Schell in 1967, were later confirmed as substantially correct by Government investigators.

“Not that I needed confirmation. Back in 1969, the wreckage was all around us, so common it seemed part of the geography, as natural as any mountain or river. Wreckage was the rule. Brutality was S.O.P. Scalded children, pistol-whipped women, burning hootches, free-fire zones, body counts, indiscriminate bombing and harassment fire, villages in ash, M-60 machine guns hosing down dark green tree lines and human life behind them.

“In a war without aim, you tend not to aim. You close your eyes, close your heart. The consequences become hit or miss in the most literal sense. With so few military targets, with an enemy that was both of and among the population, Alpha Company began to regard Quang Ngai itself as the true enemy–the physical place, the soil and paddies.

“What had started for us as a weird, vicious little war soon evolved into something far beyond vicious, a hopped-up killer strain of nihilism, waste without want, aimlessness of spirit. As Schell wrote after the events at My Lai, ‘There can be no doubt that such an atrocity was possible only because a number of other methods of killing civilians and destroying their villages had come to be the rule, and not the exception, in our conduct of the war’”

In his book, Kill Anything That Moves, by Nick Turse, he states on page 11 ”The war’s casualty figures are staggering indeed. From 1955 to 1975, the United States lost more than 58,000 military personnel in Southeast Asia. Its troops were wounded around 304,000 times, with 153,000 cases serious enough to require hospitalization, and 75,000 veterans left severely disabled. While Americans who served in Vietnam paid a grave price, an extremely conservative estimate of Vietnamese deaths found them to be proportionally 100 times greater than those suffered by the United States.”

Also, on page 61 of Nick Turse’s book, he states: According to Westmoreland’s memoir, MacArthur “urged me to make sure I always had plenty of artillery, for the Oriental, he said, ‘greatly fears artillery,’” and suggested that Westmoreland might have to employ “a scorched earth policy” in Vietnam.

As I did more research in writing this article, I had to put my mind in a place that required the attention of bearing witness. So much of the research is heart breaking, especially when you watch video of Vietnamese grieving the loss of loved ones. The shame you feel is gut wrenching.

As an Army medic in Vietnam in 1970-71, the Vietnam War completely redefined my life. I was raised in a military family, as my father was a career Army officer, and combat veteran in North Africa during World War II. I spent my early life on U.S. military bases in Japan, and Germany, to include bases on the East Coast and West Coast of the United States.

My core belief system was a direct result of that upbringing. As far as I was concerned, the United States was the greatest country in the world. I wholeheartedly believed that until I went into the Army in March 1969. By the time I got to An Khe, Vietnam in September 1970, I was experiencing the rapid deterioration of American involvement in Vietnam. I was seeing periodic casualties coming in by medevac helicopters from the field, occasional attacks from mortars and rockets, but mostly internal violence in my own unit. Heroin addiction was rampant, suicides and shoot-outs between U.S. soldiers could happen at anytime.

I spent most of my time on a reconnaissance support base that included three other heavily armed fire bases. The 155mm howitzers on those bases occasionally fired into free-fire zones just like most bases throughout Vietnam. Our assault helicopters and gunships went out often on hunting missions. To this day, I have no idea the damage they inflicted on the Vietnamese people.

In early April 1971, I was working in our aid station, when an Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) pulled up to our aid station, because one of the crew members had a minor injury. On the front of that APC, the crew had painted in large white letters: KILL A GOOK FOR CALLEY. Lt. William Calley, was of course the only one who was found guilty of the My Lai Massacre. He was found guilty of war crimes on March 29, 1971, and was sentenced to life in prison. However, President Nixon pardoned him, and he eventually returned to Atlanta, Georgia to work in his father-in-law's jewelry store.

During his trial, millions of Americans believed he was not guilty, and sent thousands of letters to the White House asking for his release. Even though Calley was guilty, the one thing most people do not realize, is that you always protect the upper echelon of military command. It is an unwritten rule in the military. The military almost always blames it on a bad apple in the lower ranks. The important thing to remember, is that the My Lai Massacre was a military operation that had a predictable outcome. You do not bring the enemy to the peace table by just killing military combatants. You ultimately bring the enemy to the peace table by killing innocent civilians. They are military targets. The primary goal of the aggressor nation is to break the will of the people, and its ability to defend its homeland. This strategy is as old as warfare itself.

"When I Came Back From Vietnam I Finally Had To Face The Truth, That I Was The Enemy In Vietnam"

It is now March 16, 2017, forty-nine years after the My Lai Massacre.

Since the end of World War II, my lifetime, as I am now 72, the United States has bombed 30 countries.

The atrocities have never stopped. What happened at My Lai is extremely important to understand, because atrocities during the war were U.S. Policies! My Lai is a metaphor for the entire Vietnam War. My Lai was NEVER an aberration. The most important realization that has come out of writing this article, is that it always comes back to me, because My country did this. I cannot divorce myself from this reality. When I came back from Vietnam I finally had to face the truth, that I was the enemy in Vietnam. That realization was to eventually put me in two psychiatric hospitals. My core belief system was completely dismantled. I felt like a stranger in a strange land. And, whenever I tried

to convince people that We were the barbarians in Vietnam, the more people avoided me.

The “Why” medivac helicopter, 1970, in An Khe, Vietnam. Photo by author

“The survivor, then, is a disturber of the peace. He is a runner of the blockade men erect against knowledge of ‘unspeakable’ things. About these he aims to speak, and in so doing he undermines, without intending to, the validity of existing norms. He is a genuine transgressor, and here he is made to feel real guilt. The world to which he appeals does not admit him, and since he has looked to this world as the source of moral order, he begins to doubt himself. And that is not the end, for now his guilt is doubled by betrayal– of himself, of his task, of his vow to the dead. The final guilt is not to bear witness. The survivor’s worst torment is not to be able to speak." Terrence Des Pres, The Survivor

In closing, I have to remind myself that Lying Is The Most Powerful Weapon In War. I am reminded of what Dalton Trumbo wrote in his famous novel, ”Johnny Got His Gun.” These are his words: ”If the thing they were fighting for was important enough to die for then it was also important enough for them to be thinking about it in the last minutes of their lives. That stood to reason. Life is awfully important so if you’ve given it away you’d ought to think with all your mind in the last moments of your life about the thing you traded it for. So, did all those kids die thinking of democracy and freedom and liberty and honor and the safety of the home and the stars and stripes forever? You’re goddamn right they didn’t.”

Viktor E. Frankl, who wrote, “Mans Search For Meaning,” was very instrumental in my healing, when he wrote, ”Suffering ceases to be suffering when it has meaning.” In 1994, and 2016, I made trips back to Vietnam, with special emphasis on spending time at the My Lai Massacre site. This past year, I helped raise $8,600.00 with the help of

Veterans For Peace, to restore a very large mosaic tile mural, that depicts the massacre of those civilians in the last moments of their lives. It is a very powerful piece of art.

While I was there, I met a Vietnamese woman who is the co-director of the My Lai Museum. She has worked there for 17 years, and has met countless tourists who make the journey to this place. I told her I was a veteran, and that millions of Americans who were adamantly against the war, see this memorial as being very important. I also said to her, that as far as I was concerned, the My Lai Massacre site was sacred ground. In an instant, she broke down and cried. The emotional connection I felt was beyond understanding. I think it was the closest thing to love I had felt since I came back from Vietnam in 1971.

Shortly after I met her, she asked me if I wanted to meet one of the lone survivors of the massacre. His name is Pham Thanh Cong, who was eleven-years-old when U.S. troops came into his village that early morning on March 16, 1968.

An American soldier threw a hand grenade into his family hut, and killed his mother, three sisters and a six-year-old brother. He was protected by their bodies during the explosion. He himself was wounded in three places. It was a privilege to meet him, but I have to admit, I was somewhat apprehensive, because I had been an American soldier in HIS country.

Shortly after we met, he asked me if I had been at My Lai during the massacre. I assured him that I had not, and that I was in the Central Highlands two years after the massacre. I could tell he was relieved. We talked for about ten minutes through an interpreter. There was a brief recording of that conversation made. When I began to see his eyes turn red, with tears welling up, I switched the conversation to having a picture made with him and me, and another American veteran who was with me by the name of Sandy Kelson. In the back of my mind, I didn't really know what I would say to him as we parted. In the end, I kissed him on the cheek, and told him I loved him.

The Laws Of Capitalist Anarchy: "Increasingly Threatening The Existence Of Society With The Spread Of Anarchy, And Forming A Chain Of Devastating Economic And Political Catastrophes"

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

The year 1848 was to see both the culmination and the crisis of socialism in all its varieties.

The Paris proletariat, influenced by traditions of earlier revolutionary struggle and roused by various socialist systems, passionately clung to the vague ideas of a just social order.

As soon as the bourgeois monarchy of Louis-Philippe was toppled, the Paris workers used their position of power to demand from the terrified bourgeoisie the realization now of the “social republic” and a new “organization of labor.

For the achievement of this program, the proletariat afforded the provisional government the celebrated timeframe of three months, during which time the workers starved and waited, while the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie quietly armed and prepared the subjection of the workers.

The period ended with the memorable butchery of June, in which the ideal of a “social republic achievable at any tlme was drowned in the streaming blood of the Paris proletariat!

The revolution of 1848 did not introduce the realm of social equality, but rather the political rule of the bourgeoisie and an unprecedented upswing of capitalist exploitation under the Second Empire.

At the same time, however, that socialism of the old schools seemed buried forever beneath the demolished barricades of the June insurrection, the socialist idea was placed on a completely new footing by Marx and Engels.

These two sought the basis for socialism not in moral repugnance towards the existing social order nor in cooking up all kinds of possible attractive and seductive projects, designed to smuggle in social equality within the present state.

They turned to the investigation of the *economic* relationships of present-day society.

Here, in the laws of capitalist anarchy itself, Marx discovered the real starting-point for socialist efforts. If the French and English classics of political economy had discovered the laws by which the capitalist economy lived and developed, Marx took up their work half a century later precisely at the point where they had broken this off.

He discovered for his part how these same laws of the present day social order acted towards their own downfall, by increasingly threatening the existence of society with the spread of anarchy, and forming a chain of devastating economic and political catastrophes.

It was thus, as Marx showed, the developmental tendencies of the rule of capital itself that at a certain stage of their maturity made necessary the transition to a planned mode of production, consciously organized by the whole working society, if the whole of society and human culture were not to collapse in the convulsions of unleashed anarchy.

And the rule of capital hastened this fateful hour ever more energetically by bringing together its future grave diggers, the proletarians, in ever greater masses, by spreading itself over all corners of the earth, producing an anarchic world economy and in this way creating the basis for the proletariat of all countries to combine in a revolutionary world power for the abolition of capitalist class rule.

In this way socialism ceased to be a project, a beautiful fantasy or even an experiment of particular groups of workers in separate countries.

As the common program of political action of the international proletariat, socialism is *a historical necessity*, since it is a fruit of the economic developmental tendencies of capitalism.

ANNIVERSARIES

April 6, 1968: Anniversary Of A Murder By The Cowards In Blue

Bobby Hutton

Carl Bunin Peace History April 6-12

Bobby Hutton, the 17-year-old first member of the Black Panther Party was gunned down by officers of the Oakland Police Department.

Police opened fire on a car of Black Panthers returning from a meeting. The Panthers escaped their vehicle and ran into a house. Police attacked the house with tear gas and gunfire.

After the building was on fire, the Panthers tried to surrender.

Hutton came out of the house with his hands in the air.

But a police officer shouted, "He's got a gun." This prompted further police gunfire that left Hutton dead and Panthers co-founder Eldridge Cleaver wounded.

Police later admitted that Hutton was unarmed.

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