

Military Resistance 15H4



Sec Def Promising To Count How Many U.S. Troops Are Really In Afghanistan: Number In Syria And Iraq? Depends On Who Is Counting How; [Make Sense Of This If You Possibility Can]

8.22.17 By: Tara Copp, Army Times & By: Aaron Mehta and 8.21.17 Tara Copp, Army Times & By Gordon Lubold and Nancy Youssef, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon maintains more than 12,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, defense officials said, currently about 3,500 more than it publicly acknowledges, a critical factor as military planners weigh how many additional forces to deploy under a new strategy.

The actual number of troops, which hasn't been previously disclosed, reflects the true U.S. force level on the ground in Afghanistan.

The Pentagon for many years has kept the actual number of forces deployed to a war zone hidden, choosing to publicly disclose only those deployed for longer periods while not counting those who slip in and out of a war zone on temporary status.

Before the Pentagon deploys potentially 3,900 additional troops to carry out President Donald Trump's revised strategy for Afghanistan, it will square how many boots it actually has on the ground now, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Tuesday.

"The first thing I have to do is 'level the bubble,' and account for everybody that is on the ground there now, the idea being that we're not going to have different pockets that we are accounting for," Mattis told reporters traveling with him in Iraq.

The Defense Department reports there are 8,400 U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan, but that figure does not take into account forces there on a temporary-duty assignment of 120 days or less.

Officially, the Pentagon has about 8,500 troops in Afghanistan, and has reported that its force management levels are capped at 5,262 troops for Iraq and 503 for Syria.

At least in Iraq and Syria, there are far more troops in both places.

As of April there were more than 7,000 forces on the ground in Iraq and more than 900 in Syria, defense officials have previously said on the condition of anonymity.

Units have deployed on a temporary basis to assist Iraqi and Syrian partnered forces in both countries.

Not all of those units have been counted against the force management levels, either because they were on temporary duty status — which can mean up to 120 days in country — or were in certain special forces units.

There are already 23,525 contractors in Afghanistan supporting U.S. forces — about 9,500 of those contractors are American and the rest are foreign nationals, according to a July 2017 quarterly report released by U.S. Central Command.

Mattis said he would provide the total number of forces on the ground in Afghanistan once accounted for.

In June, the White House provided Mattis the authorization to set troop levels as he saw necessary, but it also capped the total additional number Mattis could send to 3,900.

"I'll tell you what the total number is, and there is a number that I am authorized to go up to," Mattis said Tuesday.

However on Monday, Trump suggested that the Pentagon would not be that transparent.

“We will not talk about numbers of troops or our plans for further military activities,” Trump said during his speech at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall in Virginia Monday announcing the Afghanistan strategy. “Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timetables, will guide our strategy from now on. America’s enemies must never know our plans or believe they can wait us out.”

Mattis said now that the Pentagon has the way forward, he has directed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford to provide a plan to execute the president’s strategy.

“When he brings that to me I’ll determine how many more we need to send in — it may or may not be the number that’s bandied about up until now. I’ve got to get the plan in from the chairman.”

Mattis would not confirm or deny that 3,900 forces would be sent.

“I’d rather not say a number and then have to change it later on. Let me look at the plan that the military brings me,” Mattis said. “We’ve given them the strategic goals. They now have to line up the different things they have to do, assign troops to each one of those efforts. Once I see that, look at the number we have on the ground, reorganize those on the ground to align with new strategy and then bring in whatever gap fillers I need.”

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: “Insanity: Repeating the same action over and over and expecting different results.”]

“The Taliban Are Getting Stronger, The Government Is On The Retreat, They Are Losing Ground To The Taliban Day By Day”

“The Taliban Are Gaining Ground And Now Control More Territory In Afghanistan Than They Have Since An American Invasion Ousted Them From Power Nearly 16 Years Ago”

“Bombers Have Made Kabul, Once An Oasis Of Relative Safety, Now Statistically The Most Dangerous Place In Afghanistan”

An Average Of 31 Afghan Soldiers And Police Officers Are Killed Daily

AUG. 21, 2017 By HELENE COOPER and ROD NORDLAND, New York Times
[Excerpts]

TACTICAL BASE GAMBERI, Afghanistan — Lt. Gen. Mohammad Zaman Waziri had an immediate question about the possibility that President Trump would send more American troops to Afghanistan.

“Are there going to be only advisers?” he asked an American delegation visiting his base in heavily contested Nangarhar Province on Monday.

His question cut to the heart of the line that the Pentagon is trying to straddle in the war against the Taliban, who are gaining ground and now control more territory in Afghanistan than they have since an American invasion ousted them from power nearly 16 years ago.

Taliban fighters overran Khamab District in northern Jowzjan Province on Monday. It was the sixth government-held territory in Afghanistan to fall to the Taliban in the past month.

Casualties and armed clashes have risen to their highest of the war.

On an average day, 31 members of the Afghan national security forces are killed, as well as nine civilians, according to data from official sources.

Attacks on the capital, Kabul, have turned so deadly that the government and the American-led coalition plan to double the size of the so-called Green Zone of security, carving a square-mile chunk out of the center of the city for embassies, ministries and military offices.

Bombers have made Kabul, once an oasis of relative safety, now statistically the most dangerous place in Afghanistan.

The insurgents are at the gates of at least half a dozen provincial capitals.

In some, like Lashkar Gah and Kunduz, only heavy American aerial bombing has prevented a complete takeover.

While the Afghan military and police forces have also increased in size as the Americans withdrew, they are troubled by poor leadership, high rates of attrition and so-called ghost soldiers, who exist on paper only to collect pay for corrupt officers.

Two generals from Helmand Province are among 1,000 Afghan officers facing corruption charges.

The latest setback was the fall of Khamab District, overrun by insurgents on Monday morning, according to the spokesman for the Afghan National Army's special forces units, Ahmad Jawid Salim. He said Afghan forces intended to recapture it.

This month, the Taliban took the center of Ghormach District in Faryab Province in the north. The Afghan National Army retains control of a base in the district, which is under Taliban siege and is resupplied by helicopter.

"If reinforcements don't reach them, the situation will get badly worse," said the district governor, Abdullah Waqif, who estimated that as many as 500 Afghan soldiers were at the base.

Also this month, what was asserted to be a combined force of Taliban and Islamic State militants overran the strategic valley of Mirza Olang in Sar-i-Pul Province in the north.

The Afghan National Army has stopped releasing casualty figures, saying they are now classified. But a senior United States military official said an average of 20 Afghan National Army soldiers a day were being killed this month.

Separately, a spokesman for the Afghan Interior Ministry, Najib Danish, cited statistics showing that 1,302 police officers were killed from March 21 through Aug. 16, about nine a day.

And statistics from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction showed that an additional 181 Afghan local police officers were killed over a similar period.

Taken together, the figures suggest an average of 31 Afghan soldiers and police officers are killed daily, not counting insurgents.

Last year, 6,000 Afghan soldiers were estimated to have been killed, according to senior military officials. That was far more than the roughly 3,500 fatalities sustained by American and coalition forces during the entire war.

The reported death rate for Afghan soldiers is running even higher this year.

While some Afghan officials insist that they have begun winning, others ridicule that assertion.

“The Taliban are getting stronger, the government is on the retreat, they are losing ground to the Taliban day by day,” said Abdul Jabbar Qahraman, a retired general who until last year was President Ashraf Ghani’s military envoy to Helmand Province.

“As a military general, the Afghan war is a mystery to me,” he said. **“Our security forces have the capacity to handle it, but due to weak leadership they are not able to do so.”**

Bomber Targeting Afghan Policemen And Soldiers Collecting Their Pay Kills At Least Seven People And Wounds More Than 40

AUGUST 23, 2017 Reuters Staff

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan

A bomber targeting Afghan policemen and soldiers collecting their pay killed at least seven people and wounded more than 40 on Wednesday, officials said.

The attacker with a car bomb struck in Lashkar Gah, capital of the southern province of Helmand, provincial police chief Abdul Ghafar Safai said.

Omar Zwak, spokesman for Helmand's governor, put the toll at seven dead. The Taliban, seeking to restore Islamic rule after their 2001 ouster, claimed responsibility.

Militants had previously attacked security forces gathered to collect their pay at a bank in Lashkar Gah in June.

That prompted officials to move a bank branch into the city's police headquarters to improve security.

"In the past, the slave enemy received their pay from banks but after several attacks they began taking their pay inside the headquarters that we have now attacked," local Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi told Reuters.

He said the attack killed 39 soldiers and police, including senior commanders, a claim rejected by officials.

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.

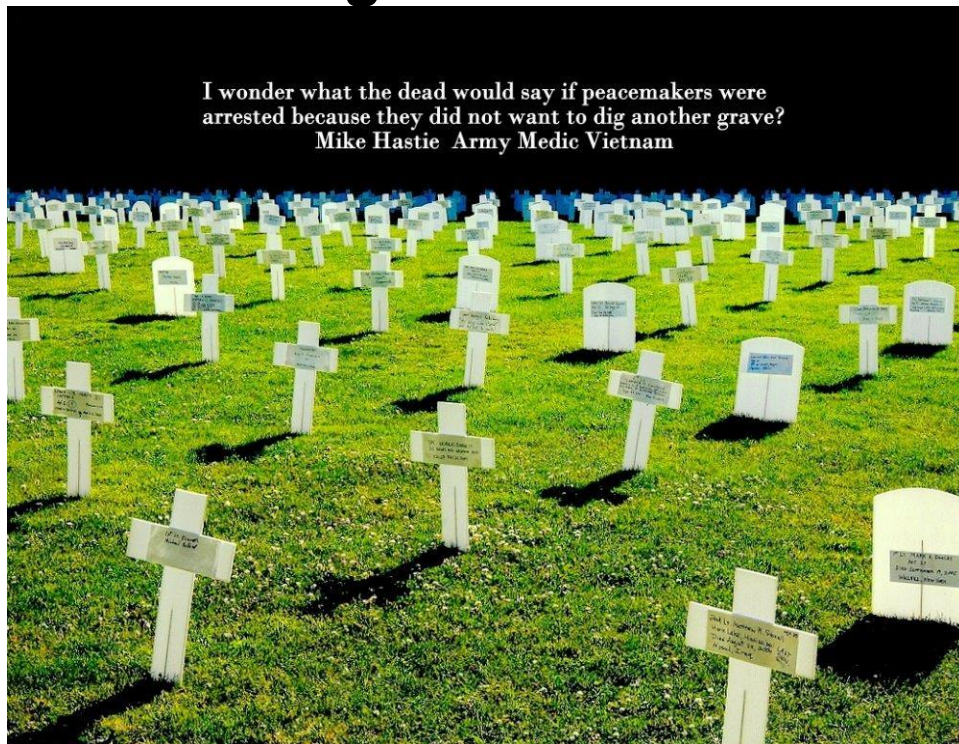
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**He is whipped oftenest, who is whipped easiest.
-- Frederick Douglass; My Bondage And My Freedom**

The Origins Of Madness



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: Saturday, August 26, 2017
Subject: The Origins Of Madness

The Origins Of Madness

Like most of us in Veterans For Peace, I am enveloped in what we call, "Full Disclosure."

How can we get our truth out involving the Vietnam War to the American public, as we respond to the Ken Burns 18 hour series on the Vietnam War. I did a little research, especially involving the Korean War, which no doubt needs its own Full Disclosure.

I will let most of the quotes stand for themselves, as we backtrack to the origins of the madness that came before the war in Vietnam. Obviously this could be a long discussion, but I have chosen to focus on a few things. For those of you who have read extensively on the subject, bear with me.

Full Disclosure Korean War (kill anything that moves), over three million killed VS Full Disclosure Vietnam War (kill anything that moves), over three million killed. So, if you tally up just those two wars, over six million people were killed by the United States Government. That means every man, woman, and child was killed in the state of Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

**After destroying North Korea's 78 cities, and thousands of her villages, and killing countless numbers of her civilians, we killed off 20% of the population.
General Curtis LeMay**

**There are no innocent civilians. It is their government and you are fighting a people, you are not trying to fight an armed force anymore. So it doesn't bother me so much to be killing the so-called innocent bystanders.
General Curtis LeMay**

**My solution to the problem would be to tell the North Vietnamese Communists frankly that they've got to draw in their horns and stop their aggression or we're going to bomb them into the Stone Age.
General Curtis LeMay**

He retired from the Air Force in 1965, in time to advise President Johnson on the early stages of the U.S. Air War over Vietnam.

After the 1968 election, Curtis LeMay was disappointed that Lydon Johnson did not order a sustained bombing campaign like the one he organized against Germany and Japan during the Second World War.

**I am staggered by the amount of firepower the US used and the incredible death and destruction it caused on an innocent people. Here are some statistics:
Over 6 million Southeast Asians killed.
13,000 of 21,000 of Vietnamese villages, or 62% , severely damaged or destroyed, mostly by bombing.
Nearly 950 churches and pagodas destroyed by bombing.
350 hospitals and 1,500 maternity wards destroyed by bombing.
Nearly 3,000 high schools and universities destroyed by bombing.
Over 15,000 bridges destroyed by bombing.
10 million cubic meters of dikes destroyed by bombing.**

26 million bomb craters created, the majority from B-52s (a B-52 bomb crater could be 20 feet deep, and 40 feet across.)

21 million gallons of poisonous herbicides were sprayed on South Vietnam from 1961 to 1970.

Over 500,000 Vietnamese have died from chronic conditions related to chemical spraying with an estimated 650,000 still suffering from such conditions.

Brian Willson

Vietnam Veteran

From his article:

2016 Memorial Day Statement

Witnessed atrocities in Vietnam

from U.S. Air Strikes

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 and 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, 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.

Tim O'Brien

Vietnam Combat Veteran

Award winning author

If you are going to use military force, then you ought to use overwhelming military force. Use too much and deliberately use too much, and you'll save lives, not only your own, but the enemy's too.

General Curtis LeMay

In air campaigns against Japan during World War II, LeMay abandoned the established policy of daylight, precision bombing. Instead, he loaded his B29's with firebombs and sent them out over Japanese cities during the night. As General Curtis LeMay described it: " We scorched and boiled and baked to death

more people in Tokyo on that night of March 9-10, 1945 than went up in vapor in Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined."

General Curtis Apocalypse LeMay died on October 1, 1990

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
August 26, 2017

Washington (CNN) President Donald Trump issued an extraordinary ultimatum to North Korea on Tuesday August 8, 2017, warning Pyongyang not to make any more threats against the United States or they will " face fire and fury like the world has never seen," during a photo op at the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey.

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

**“While The Majority Struggle,
Many At The Top Of The Maduro
Government Are As
Comfortable As The Venezuelan
Capitalists And Their
Supporters Who Are Trying To
Bring The Government Down”**

**“Now The Right-Wing ‘Free
Marketeers’ Tell Us That This
Shows ‘Socialism’ Does Not Work
And There Is No Escape From The
Rigors Of The Market”**

**“But The History Of The Last Ten
Years Is Not The Failure Of
‘Socialism’ Or Planning”**

**“It Is The Failure To End The Control Of
Capital In A Weak (An Increasingly
Isolated) Capitalist Country With
Apparently Only One Asset, Oil”**

Aug 3, 2017 by Michael Roberts , Michael Roberts Blog

As the Maduro regime tries to impose its new Constituent Assembly as a rival or replacement of the existing Venezuelan Congress and arrests the leaders of the pro-capitalist opposition, the dire economic and social situation in the country continues to worsen.

According to the IMF, Venezuela’s GDP in 2017 is 35% below 2013 levels, or 40% in per capita terms.

That is a significantly sharper contraction than during the 1929-1933 Great Depression in the US, when US GDP is estimated to have fallen 28%. It is slightly bigger than the decline in Russia (1990-1994), Cuba (1989-1993), and Albania (1989-1993), but smaller than that experienced by other former Soviet States at the time of transition, such as Georgia, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Ukraine, or war-torn countries such as Liberia (1993), Libya (2011), Rwanda (1994), Iran (1981), and, most recently, South Sudan.

So, on this measure, according to Ricardo Hausman, former chief economist of Inter-American Development Bank, Venezuela’s economic catastrophe dwarfs any in the history of the US, Western Europe or the rest of Latin America.

Back in 2013, I warned that the achievements of the ‘Bolivarian revolution’ under Chavez were seriously under threat.



Chavez had improved the conditions of the poorest with increased wages, social services and reduced inequality.

But these improvements were only possible within the confines of capitalist economy by using the revenues of oil exports at a time of very high global oil prices.

But oil prices started to mark time and have virtually halved in the last two years.

Oil exports fell by \$2,200 per capita from 2012 to 2016, of which \$1,500 was due to the decline in oil prices. The Maduro government started to rack up huge foreign debts to try and sustain living standards.

Venezuela is now the world's most indebted country. No country has a larger public external debt as a share of GDP or of exports, or faces higher debt service as a share of exports.



The government resorted to the devaluation of the currency to boost dollar revenues, but this only stimulated outrageous inflation and cuts in real wages.

At the same time, the government decided to 'honour' all its foreign debt payments and cut imports instead. As a consequence, imports of goods and services per capita fell by 75% in real (inflation-adjusted) terms between 2012 and 2016, with a further decline in 2017. Such a collapse is comparable only to that of Mongolia (1988-1992) and Nigeria (1982-1986) and bigger than all other four-year import collapses worldwide since 1960.

This led to a collapse in agriculture and manufacturing even larger than that of overall GDP, slashing almost another \$1,000 per capita in locally produced consumer goods.

The minimum wage – which in Venezuela is also the income of the median worker, owing to the large share of minimum-wage earners – declined by 75% (in constant prices) from May 2012 to May 2017.

Measured in the cheapest available calorie, the minimum wage declined from 52,854 calories per day to just 7,005 during the same period, a decline of 86.7% and insufficient to feed a family of five, assuming that all the income is spent to buy the cheapest calorie.

With their minimum wage, Venezuelans could buy less than a fifth of the food that traditionally poorer Colombians could buy with theirs.

Income poverty increased from 48% in 2014 to 82% in 2016, according to a survey conducted by Venezuela's three most prestigious universities.

The same study found that 74% of Venezuelans involuntarily lost an average of 8.6 kilos (19 pounds) in weight. The Venezuelan Health Observatory reports a ten-fold increase in in-patient mortality and a 100-fold increase in the death of newborns in hospitals in 2016.

According to a study carried out between October and December 2016 by Caritas Venezuela, in collaboration with Caritas France, the European Commission and the Swiss Confederation, there are clear indications of chronic malnutrition among children in Venezuela.

In some areas, it reaches levels close to what, according to international standards, is a crisis. The report says: "Insecure and irreversible survival strategies are being recorded from an economic, social and biological point of view, and the consumption of street foods is especially worrying." "According to a survey conducted in June 2016 in the state of Miranda, 86% of children feared to run out of food. Fifty percent said they went to bed hungry for lack of food in their homes. "

Erika Guevara, director of Amnesty International's Regional Office for the Americas in June 2016, wrote: "J.M. Children's Hospital. Of the Rivers in Caracas, once a source of pride as a model of pediatric care in Venezuela, today is a tragic symbol of the crisis that is sweeping this South American country. Half the gigantic building is collapsing, the walls stagger, the floors are flooded and the rooms are so deteriorated that they are no longer used. Halfway through, hundreds of children are being treated. But both medicines and basic medical supplies are in short supply, and the children's mothers have already given up ordering them. (...)"

The Voices of Hunger, a report made by Telemundo and led by the Venezuelan journalist Fernando Girón, shows how Venezuelan children fight with birds of prey for bones discarded by butchers (El Nacional, 02/28/17).

Before Chavez, most Venezuelans were desperately poor after a series of right-wing capitalist governments. But now once again, under Maduro, this is the situation for the poor and the majority of the Venezuelan working class.

No wonder support for the Maduro government has subsided while the forces of reaction grow stronger.

While the majority struggle, many at the top of the Maduro government are as comfortable as the Venezuelan capitalists and their supporters who are trying to bring the government down.

The Maduro government is now relying increasingly not on the support of the working class but on the armed forces.

And the government looks after them well.

The military can buy in exclusive markets (for example, on military bases), have privileged access to loans and purchases of cars and departments, and have received substantial salary increases. They have also won lucrative contracts, exploiting exchange controls and subsidies, for example, selling cheap gasoline purchased in neighboring countries with huge profits.

As Rolando Asturita has pointed out in a series of posts. the army has strong direct economic power, since the FANB directs and controls a whole series of companies: the bank BANFANB; AGROFANB, for agriculture; EMILTRA, transport; EMCOFANB, company communications systems of the FANB; TVFANB, an open digital TV channel; TECNOMAR, a mixed military technology projects company; FIMNP, an investment fund; CONSTRUFANB, constructor; CANCORFANB, Bolivarian Mixed Company; Water Tiuna, water bottling plant; And then there is CAMINPEG, the anonymous military, mining and oil and gas company.

Many of the Maduro government elite have used the economic crisis to their own personal benefit. They have bought up government debt for rich returns, while at the same time ensuring that there is no default, all at the expense of falling living standards for the people who must pay this debt through taxes and foregone oil revenues.

Foreign exchange earmarked for the payment of foreign debt has been offset by the reduction of imports of food, medicines or essential industrial inputs.

So, as anti-government protestors fight the police and army on the streets and the Maduro government moves ever closer to outright authoritarian rule, the working class is left in the cold.

The economic and social program of the opposition is the traditional one of the national capitalists backed by imperialism: namely, reform of the labor laws (ie more exploitation and sackings), privatization or re-privatization of state enterprises, deregulation of controls over investment (ie ensuring a high rate of labor exploitation) and, of course, the lifting of price controls and exchange reunification.

The implementation of this program would impose even more losses on the majority. As would the planned sanctions by US imperialism and its acolytes in the region.

What went wrong with the laudable aims of Chavismo? Could this tragedy been avoided?

Well, yes, if the Chavista revolution had not stopped at less than halfway, leaving the economy still predominantly in the control of capital.

Instead, the Chavista and Maduro governments relied on high oil prices and huge oil reserves to reduce poverty, while failing to transform the economy through productive investment, state ownership and planning.

Between 1999 and 2012 the state had an income of \$383bn from oil, due not only to the improvement in prices, but also to the increase in the royalties paid by the transnationals.

However, this income was not used transform the productive sectors of the economy. Yes, some was used to improve the living standards of the most impoverished masses. But there was no plan for investment and growth.

Venezuelan capital was allowed to get on with it – or not as the case may be. Indeed, the share of industry in GDP fell from 18% of GDP in 1998 to 14% in 2012.

Now the right-wing ‘free marketeers’ tell us that this shows ‘socialism’ does not work and there is no escape from the rigors of the market.

But the history of the last ten years is not the failure of ‘socialism’ or planning, it is the failure to end the control of capital in a weak (an increasingly isolated) capitalist country with apparently only one asset, oil. There was no investment in the people, their skills, no development of new industries and the raising of technology – that was left to the capitalist sector. Contrast that with ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’, albeit in the largest country and now economy in the world.

Just over a year ago, I argued in a post that, to save the aims of Chavismo, *“it is probably too late, as the forces of reaction gain ground every day in the country. It seems that we await only the decision of the army to change sides and oust the Chavistas.”*

ANNIVERSARIES

August 21, 1831:

Honorable Anniversary: Nat Turner's Rebellion



Carl Bunin, Peace History Aug 21-27

August 21, 1831

Nat Turner, a 30-year-old man legally owned by a child, and six other slaves began a violent insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia.

They began by killing the child's stepfather, Joseph Travis, and their family. Within the next 24 hours, Turner and ultimately about 40 followers killed the families of adjacent slaveholding properties, nearly 60 whites, while freeing and inciting other slaves to join them.

Militia and federal troops were called, and the uprising was suppressed with 55 African Americans including Turner executed by hanging, and hundreds more killed by white mobs and vigilantes in revenge.

The Radio “This August, Remember Jeremy King”

[From: GI SPECIAL 5H19: 8.24.07]

07/25/2007 by Justin C. Cliburn

[Iraq Veterans Against The War] [www.ivaw.org/]
Branch of service: Army National Guard of the United States (ARNG)
Unit: 1st Battalion 158th FA Oklahoma ARNG
Rank: SPC
Home: Lawton, Oklahoma
Served in: LSA Anaconda: MSR Patrol, one month. Camp Liberty, Baghdad: PSD/IP
Training, ten and a half months.



Jeremy King

When I was in Mrs. Riner's junior English class at MacArthur high school, we were required to read a short story titled "The Radio."

The premise was simple. A couple in the 1930s were given a special radio that allowed them to hear all their neighbors' conversations. At first they were elated, but, ultimately, they were haunted by the miracle of their ability. They could hear all the horrors of society that usually go unnoticed or are covered up and sterilized . . . and they couldn't turn it off.

They couldn't change the channel.

It took seven years, but I eventually went back to that story in my head and felt their horror.

August 24th, 2006 was a routine day for my squad in Baghdad. We had gone to Traffic Headquarters and I had gotten to visit with Ali. Business taken care of, we started to make the familiar trek back to Camp Liberty.

It was a hot day, over 120 degrees, and I stood up just a little higher than usual with my sleeves unbuttoned to let the air circulate inside my body armor and clothing. It had been a good day.

Back on Route Irish, we were on the home stretch when the call came out over the radio:

"Eagle Dustoff, Eagle Dustoff, this is Red Knight 7* over"

"This is Eagle Dustoff, over"

"Eagle Dustoff, I need MEDEVAC; my gunner has been shot by a sniper."

The voice went on to recite the nine line MEDEVAC report and I marveled at how cool, calm, and collected he sounded. My squad leader plotted the grid coordinates and found that this had occurred only a couple blocks away from one of our two main destinations on Market Road.

“Cliburn, go ahead and get down; someone might be aiming at your melon right now”, CPT Ray said. Sergeant Bruesch concurred and I sat down, listening intently to the radio transmissions that I couldn’t turn off if I wanted to.

Five minutes in, the voice on the radio was losing his cool.

“Have they left yet?! He’s losing a lot of blood; we need that chopper now!”

In the background, you could hear other soldiers yelling, screaming, trying to find any way to save their friend’s life. At one point, I swear I heard the man gurgle.

Ten minutes in, the voice on the radio was furious.

“Where’s that fucking chopper!? We’re losing him! He’s not fucking breathing! Where the fuck are you!?”

Every minute to minute and a half the voice was back on the radio demanding to know what the hold up was. Every minute to minute and a half the other voice on the radio, a young woman’s voice, tried to reassure him that the chopper was the way from Taji. She was beginning to tire herself; I could hear it in her voice. She was just as frustrated as he was.

All the while, there I sat.

Sitting in the gunners hatch, listening life’s little horrors with no way to turn the channel.

No one in the truck was speaking.

The music was on, but no one heard it. There was just an eerie silence.

All I heard was the radio transmissions; I watched as the landscape passed me by in slow motion.

I didn’t hear wind noise or car horns or gunfire or my own thoughts. I was only accompanied by the silence of the world passing me by, interrupted only by the screams of the voice on the radio.

At this point, I was as frustrated as I had been all year. Where the fuck was that goddamn chopper and why was it taking so long?! What if it were me?

Would I be waiting that long? Would this pathetic exchange be included in the newscast if the guy dies?

I was angry, upset, frustrated, and anticipating the next transmission in this macabre play by play account. Forget about TNT, HBO, and Law and Order: THIS was drama. This was heart wrenching.

Seconds seemed like hours; minutes seemed like days.

Finally, after several more non-productive transmissions where Eagle Dustoff attempted to reassure the voice, after twenty minutes and a few more frantic, screaming transmissions by the voice, the man's voice was calm again.

"Eagle Dustoff, cancel the chopper. He's dead."

. . . and that was that. The voice had gone from being the model for the consummate soldier (cool, calm, collected, professional) to the more human screams and frantic pleading for help to solemn resignation.

Now, the voice was quiet.

"Eagle Dustoff: requesting recovery team. We can't drive this vehicle back; we need someone to come get the vehicle and body. Over."

"Do you have casualty's information?"

"Yes. SGT King, over."

I sat in that gunners sling in a fit of rage that I couldn't let out.

I had to be a soldier; I had to keep my cool.

We all did.

I was so angry, I still am, about being an unwilling voyeur, forced to listen to the gruesome play by play of another soldier's life and death.

We had been told that the insurgency was in its last throes, that they were just a bunch of dead enders. No, not this day.

Today, SGT King was in his last throes, and I was there to listen to the whole thing, whether I liked it or not.

A soldier's death isn't anything like the movies. There was no patriotic music; there was no feeling of purpose. It's just . . . death.

I wasn't there physically; I didn't see him, but I was there.

Any sane person would have wanted to turn the channel. No one wants to hear the screams of a man losing his friend, but I couldn't turn it off. We were required to monitor that channel.

Either way, it didn't take long to become emotionally invested in it; was he going to make it? I hung on every word until I got the final, sobering news.

My truck was the only one in the convoy monitoring that net. When we got back to base, no else had heard it, and SSG Bruesch, CPT Ray, and I didn't discuss it. I don't think we ever did.

A few days later, I felt like I had to find out more about his soldier. I felt like I had lost a friend, yet I didn't know anything but his name and rank.

Looking back on it, I should have just let it go, but I didn't. Using the miracle of the Internet, I found out all I needed to know about the young man.

SGT Jeremy E. King was 23 years old. He was from Idaho, where he played high school football. He had joined the army to get out of Idaho and see the world.

He was one year younger than I was, and he was dead. He sounded like any of a number of teammates I played high school football with.

I've replayed that scene in my head more times than I'd ever want since that day.

I don't believe in fate or karma or any type of pre-destined events, but I often wonder what made that sniper hole up on North Market Road instead of South Market Road, where I often found myself.

I was fortunate enough in my time there to never have to call in MEDEVAC.

I didn't bury any of my comrades, but I will always remember what it was like listening to the miracle of modern communications, the radio, and for the first time in my life being terrified, much like the couple in the story over eighty long years ago.

This August 24th, remember Jeremy King:

Wednesday, August 30 2006 @ 04:20 AM EDT
Contributed by: River97
Views: 621

Star Telegram -- KILLEEN, Texas - A Fort Hood soldier from Idaho has died in Iraq of injuries sustained when troops came under fire during combat, the Department of Defense said Friday.

Sgt. Jeremy E. King, 23, of Meridian died Thursday in Baghdad. He was assigned to the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood.

Noble Anniversary: August 25, 1969 **The Rebellion Of Company A;**

“One Of Hundreds Of Mutinies Among Troops During The War”



Carl Bunin, Peace History Aug 20-26

Company A of the 3rd Battalion the 196th Light Brigade refused to advance further into the Songchang Valley of Vietnam after five days of heavy casualties; their number had been reduced from 150 to 60.

This was one of hundreds of mutinies among troops during the war.

“He (President Nixon) is also carrying on the battle in the belief, or pretense, that the South Vietnamese will really be able to defend their country and our democratic objectives (sic) when we withdraw, and even his own generals don’t believe the South Vietnamese will do it.”

James Reston in the New York Times

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Military Resistance Newsletter, 459 Columbus Avenue, PMB#282, New York, N.Y. 10024 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

Honorable Anniversary: August 28, 2008



Iraq Veterans Against The War, Denver [www.ivaw.org/]

“Soldiers In Uniform Began The Four-Mile March To The Pepsi Center In Downtown Denver To Protest The Iraq War”

[From GI Special 6H20: 8.29.08]

The thing that stays with me is the sight of those troops looking worried but determined in the face of police force and possible public hostility, trying to make their statement for peace, and how, at the last moment, the whole, huge crowd of civilians had joined them, lifting up their little march and transforming it into an enormous, uplifting show of support.

August 28, 2008 By Ruth Conniff, The Progressive & By Patti Thorn, Rocky Mountain News (Colorado) & Ivaw.org/ & By Paul A. Anthony, Rocky Mountain News [Excerpts]

It started as a modest sized march.

Two squads of 25 IVAW members each formed up outside the venue and began marching to the Pepsi center.

From the Rage Against the Machine concert at the Denver Coliseum, about 150 soldiers in uniform began the four-mile march to the Pepsi Center in downtown Denver to protest the Iraq War.

The squads were led by members in dress uniforms and combat uniforms, with thousands of supporters marching behind them in support.

The group of mostly young people walked behind a banner that said: “Support GI Resistance.”

“Support GI Resistance”

Though the event, co-sponsored by the anti-war group Tent State University and Iraq Veterans Against the War, was unpermitted, the parade proceeded peacefully.

Behind the troops, who marched calling cadence and chanting antiwar slogans, came a larger group in civilian clothes, cheering and waving signs, and growing larger and larger as the marchers wended their way through the downtown.

Wearing T-shirts and stickers with slogans such as “Arrest Bush” and “Make Out Not War,” they sang rolling chants, Marine- style. “Tell Me What We’re Marching For,” sang one group. “Stop the torture, stop the war,” answered another.



Protesters march behind Iraq Veterans Against The War Wednesday from the Denver Coliseum to the Pepsi Center after a concert by Rage Against the Machine. Tim Hussin: The Rocky Mountain News

People lined the streets to watch, most approvingly.

As the marchers wound their way through the neighborhoods west of the coliseum, they found solidarity with a group of Latinos holding up an anti-war sign and cheering them on.

“Si, se puede!” shouted some young marchers. “Yes, we can!”

Not everyone was as respectful.

From the balcony of an apartment complex, a man yelled at the throngs of protesters to move on. “Don’t come back here,” he said.

But one protester had the last word: He suggested the man join the Army.

As they drew near the heavily guarded convention center, cops in riot gear lined the street, and helicopters buzzed overhead. At an intersection, the group stopped facing squad cars with lights on and a phalanx of black-clad police.

“We can go on here or not,” one of the march’s organizers told the troops through a megaphone. The march was unauthorized and it was unclear whether the police intended to have a confrontation.

She seemed to be trying to calm everyone for a moment, pointing out that the Denver police so far have not been “prone to violence.”

The march continued, and the civilians bringing up the rear cheered.

It was quite a spectacle: the soldiers in dress uniform and fatigues, and the cops in riot gear watching them from the sidelines.

The soldiers chanted:

“Everywhere we go
People want to know
Who we are
Where we came from.
We are the veterans
Iraq War veterans
Antiwar veterans
Pissed-off veterans”

At an intersection, the group stopped to read a letter to Barack Obama asking that he agree to three core principles: the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq, full and adequate health care for all returning U.S. service members, and reparations to the Iraqi people.

The letter also upbraided the Democratic Party for their “initial and continued” support for the war.

The police presence intensified. I passed a cop videotaping the marchers and a marcher in a green “copwatch” vest videotaping him right back.

Over the long course, from the outskirts of town into the denser downtown, the energy from the crowd seemed to build. The marchers chanting had a hypnotic effect.

“It’s alright
It’s OK
Remember MLK
He tried to lead the way
But he was shot one day
early in the morning”

Thus far, the march has been peaceful and well received, as residents along the route sprayed the marchers with hoses and provided water from their homes and businesses.

More and more people joined the march, until, suddenly, looking back as the group crossed a bridge and then paused right outside the Pepsi Center, you could see several thousand people in a line stretching as far as the eye could see.

As the group passed into the perimeter of the convention hall, the police presence grew more threatening.



Members of Iraq Veterans Against The War (IVAW) march in downtown Denver, leading several thousand activists towards The Pepsi Center. (Photo: Rocky Mountain News)

“Hey, those ones have masks,” someone pointed out. A group of police in gas masks were pulling on thick gloves and grabbing their batons. A white van with police in black flak jackets hanging off it rolled alongside the marchers.

The feeling of the whole, thousands-strong group was moving. “It’s beautiful,” one marcher said, looking back at the crowd in the late afternoon sun. Joey Minicucci, 18, of Littleton, noted that his brother was in the military and would soon be sent to Iraq. That was one of the reasons he was going to the march.

Anne Hill, of Montrose, had other reasons. “I’m marching because it seems to be the last vestiges of our free speech and because people have demands and our government’s not listening,” she said.

The march came to a standstill at the perimeter of the Pepsi Center around 6:30 p.m., at which time the veterans attempted to have their statement delivered to Obama.

Tension with police seemed to escalate, until several veterans stepped forward and saluted police. “We are your brothers and sisters in arms,” said one.

“We don’t want to hurt you. We don’t want you to hurt us.”

With that, the standoff melted away and soon an appropriate aide was contacted. “I figured as long as we kept things peaceful, they would hear us, and they did,” said Army veteran Jeffrey Wood.

Nancy Pelosi, meanwhile, was answering tough questions from the founder of Digg on CNN about why the Democrats in Congress have failed to pull the troops out of Iraq.

The thing that stays with me is the sight of those troops looking worried but determined in the face of police force and possible public hostility, trying to make their statement for peace, and how, at the last moment, the whole, huge crowd of civilians had joined them, lifting up their little march and transforming it into an enormous, uplifting show of support.

RECEIVED FROM READERS

**POLITICAL RUSH ORDER
(THE MILITARY AS NATURAL ALLY)
(*Seeing There's Not A Cop In Sight*)**

From: Alan Stolzer, Military Initiative
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: August 27, 2017
Subject: "Political Rush Order"

In the 1960s the head of the American Nazi Party was something called George Lincoln Rockwell, who, among other things, threatened the young people sitting in at Southern lunch counters so courageously and dangerously.

Malcolm X sent him a telegram indicating if anything happened to those sitting in, he, Rockwell, would be held personally responsible.

Think for a moment, what it might be like while attempting to pull down a Confederate memorial and a large band of torchbearing Neo-Nazis, Klansmen/women and allies turn a corner and head straight for you and your group (assuming you ((stupidly)) hadn't planned your action alone). You're either lightly armed or not at all and have no choice but to await your fate or run.

Suddenly, a detachment of U.S. Military personnel mixed from the various services, pops to right behind you.

Remember, they're not marching with your imminent attackers but facing them as you are. And they're just like you except for their uniforms and weapons they've been trained to use after they, upon induction, swore to defend our Constitution. But since they're more like us they're better than politicians who took the same oath which they trash at the earliest convenience.

What do you think might happen?

Maybe one or more of these troops had a relative (a friend perhaps) arrested, even killed without provocation by one of the cops non-materialized between you and the oncoming horde.

Maybe, the young woman just killed in Charlottesville has an admirer in service.

Maybe these troops (as we) just don't like Trump and the events he's helped breed recently or in the near future and they want to do something about it. Ever think of that?

Really, there's only one way to find out and that's go out and talk with them. See what they think. I know they're under orders but they can think for themselves. Remember the quote from Bertolt Brecht?:

"General, your tank is a powerful vehicle.

It crashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.

But it has one defect:

It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.

It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.

But it has one defect:

It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.

He can fly and he can kill.

But he has one defect:

He can think."

It's all been done before - more than once.

Natural allies abound. It's merely joining them and finding out what torchbearers might do at that point.

We might be at the beginning of something quite serious. After all, the country's full of dedicated right-wing militia. If and when they march what will we do? Rolling over is a non-starter.

Reach out to troops! We have experience. We can help:

MILITARY INITIATIVE

www.militaryproject.org

contact@militaryproject.org

At The Bar

8.9.2917 Via David McReynolds

Having already downed a few power drinks, she turns around, faces him, looks him straight in the eye, and says, "Listen here, good looking. I will screw anybody, anytime, anywhere, their place, my place, in the car, front door, back door, on the ground, standing up, sitting down, naked, or with clothes on It doesn't matter to me. I just love it."

His eyes now wide with interest, he responds, "No kidding... I'm in government too. Are you city, federal, or state?"

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Forces Invade Palestinian Hospital; Action Kills Patient

Aug 16 2017 PalestineChronicle.com

An Israeli police raid on Al-Makassed Hospital in East Jerusalem last month left one critically wounded Palestinian dead, an investigation by Israeli NGO B'Tselem concluded, adding that the raid endangered the lives of other patients.

Muhammad Abu Ghanam, 20, was rushed to the hospital on July 21 after being critically shot by Israeli security forces during the 'Day of Rage' demonstrations in East Jerusalem.

Abu Ghanam, who was studying at Bir Zeit University, was about to be taken into the operating room when Israeli police officers forced their way into the hospital to arrest him.

B'Tselem says the police overpowered the hospital guards and dozens of Palestinian youths who tried to prevent them from going inside the building.

"The officers responded with stun grenades and sponge-round fire. About half of the force entered the building, where they split up and searched various wards for the injured youth," the NGO said, releasing CCTV footage of the raid.

The officers searched various wards and harassed medical staff and patients inside the maternity ward, the blood bank, and the emergency room.

When they discovered the location of the 20-year-old Palestinian, they assaulted the doctors and nurses treating Abu Ghanam, preventing medical staff from taking him into the operating room.

Abu Ghanam's condition quickly deteriorated. Doctors tried unsuccessfully to resuscitate the man in a nearby X-Ray room, but he was declared dead at the scene 20 minutes later.

Amid the chaos, Palestinian activists at the hospital smuggled the body out of the medical compound.

“Words fail to convey the gravity of the police’s conduct inside the hospital,” B’Tselem said. “The fright engendered by scores of armed police raiding a hospital cannot be downplayed. When these feelings of terror are accompanied by an assault on medical staff and interference with medical care, the situation escalates to one of a real risk to the lives of the many patients in the hospital.”

Noting that the July 21 police raid was just one in a series of many, the NGO stressed that Israel continues to violate international law, which stipulates that medical facilities treating the wounded are protected areas.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:
<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>
The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out
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