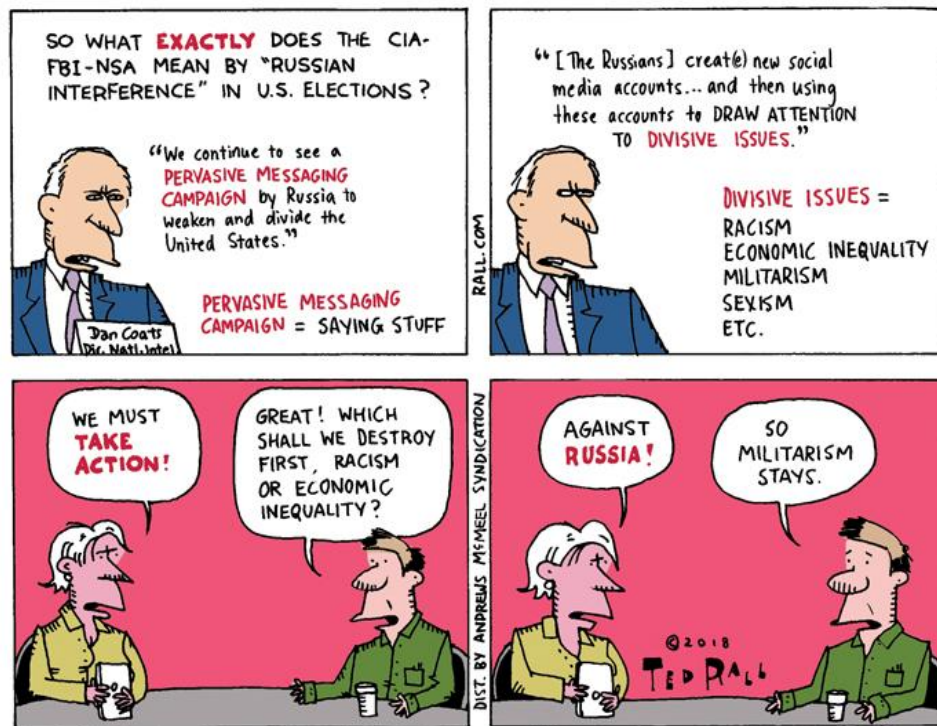


Military Resistance 16H2



Romanians Take The Streets Against “Corruption And Embezzlement, Which Profit The Ruling Class” “Have No Fear! Romanians Will Rise Up!”

August 11 By Siobhán O'Grady, Washington Post & AP & BBC

On Friday, more than 50,000 people took to the streets against what they described as entrenched corruption and low wages in the Romanian capital of Bucharest.

And on Saturday, thousands of protesters returned to the streets to call for the government to resign.



REUTERS

Reuters reported that they were yelling “Resignation!” in front of government buildings.

“Have no fear! Romanians will rise up!” they yelled.

Hundreds wound up injured when the police responded with tear gas and water cannons.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis criticized the heavy-handed police response, calling it a “brutal intervention, strongly disproportionate to the actions of the majority of people.”

“The interior ministry must explain urgently the way it handled tonight’s events,” the centrist leader wrote in a statement posted to Facebook. He also said he requested the attorney general look into the legality of the riot police’s intervention.

In addition to protesters, some police officers were also injured when protesters retaliated, with some reportedly throwing bottles.

Reuters reported that at least 400 people sought medical attention and that the protests were organized in large part by Romanian expats working outside of the country. At least 3 million Romanians live and work abroad, but local media reported that a number of them returned home to take part in this weekend’s demonstrations, which also took place in other parts of the country.

Similar demonstrations are also reported in other cities including Cluj, Sibiu, Timisoara and Iasi.

The demonstrations stem from some Romanians’ long-standing frustrations with the ruling Social Democrats (PSD).

Romania is one of the most corrupt countries in the European Union, according to Transparency International.

The country's anti-corruption agency has pursued a number of corruption cases, and in 2016 managed to prosecute 713 officials, according to the AP. Among them were a number of politicians, including a senator and 28 mayors.

But in July, Laura Codruta Kovesi, the leading anti-corruption prosecutor, was fired. Kovesi had support from the president, but the justice minister accused her of overstepping and it was ultimately Iohannis who was forced to fire her after a court ruling. The PSD also reportedly threatened to discuss suspending him if he put the move off any longer.

This summer, the PSD also moved forward with a judicial overhaul that some observers see as a threat to the rule of law in Romania.

In June, a dozen countries, including the United States, warned against amending legislation "that would weaken the rule of law or Romania's ability to fight crime or corruption." Those changes made it through parliament but are now being challenged in the country's constitutional court.

In early 2017, Romanian protesters took to the streets in response to a decree that loosened corruption laws. It was believed to be the largest demonstration in decades. Protests against the government and rallies in support of it have continued since then.

After Iohannis criticized the police response to Friday's demonstration, Prime Minister Viorica Dancila said Iohannis was "inciting the population against the authorities," AFP reported.

On Twitter, Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz condemned "the violent clashes in Bucharest where numerous demonstrators and journalists were injured."

"We expect full explanations," he wrote. At least one injured journalist worked for an Austrian news outlet.

Ileana Anghel travelled all the way from her home in Spain with her husband to take part in the demonstration.

"We want to see modern roads and schools and above all to not have to pay bribes to the left and right," she told AFP.

Vlad, 60, flew back to Romania from New York, his home of 30 years.

"Corruption and embezzlement, which profit the ruling class, are what bothers me," Vlad told the same news agency.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“For All The Differences, There
Are Striking Parallels Between
The Twenty-First-Century
Occupation Of Afghanistan And
That Of 1839—42”**

**““Whoever Comes To Afghanistan,
Even Now, They Will Face The
Fate Of Burnes, McNaughton And
Dr. Brydon,’ Agreed Mohammad
Khna, Our Host In The Village”**

**“Everyone Nodded Sagely Into Their
Rice: The Names Of The Fallen Of
1842, Long Forgotten In Their Home
Country, Were Still Common
Currency Here”**

**“In Truth, All The Americans Here Know
Their Game Is Over. It Is Just Their
Politicians Who Deny This”**

[Part 2]

I talked about my great-great-uncle, Cohn Mackenzie, who had been taken hostage nearby, and I asked if they saw any parallels with the current situation.

“It is exactly the same,” said Jagdalak. “Both times the foreigners have come for their own interests, not for ours. They say, ‘We are your friends, we want to help.’ But they are lying.”

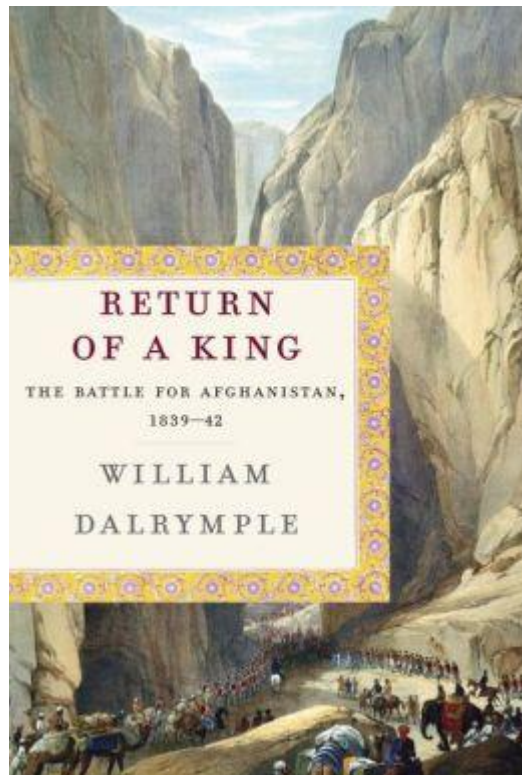
“Whoever comes to Afghanistan, even now, they will face the fate of Burnes, McNaughton and Dr. Brydon,” agreed Mohammad

Another Popalzai ruler lacking a real power base, Hamid Karzai — astonishingly, from the same sub-tribe as Shah Shuja [in 1842]—faces the brunt of concerted guerrilla attacks led by the eastern Ghilzai who today make up the footsoldiers of the Taliban.

They are directed by another Ghilzai tribal leader from the Hotak ruling clan, in this case Mullah Omar. (Mullah Omar is a distant relative of the first Afghan ruler of southern Afghanistan, Mir Waiz Hotaki.)

Excerpts from
RETURN of a KING
The Battle for Afghanistan, 1839—42

By William Dalrymple,
ALFRED A. KNOPE;
NEW YORK 2013



At the end of Kim, Kipling has his eponymous hero say, “When everyone is dead, the Great Game is finished. Not before.”

In the 1980s it was the Russians’ Withdrawal from their failed occupation of Afghanistan that triggered the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union.

Less than twenty years later, in 2001, British and American troops arrived in Afghanistan, where they proceeded to begin losing what was, in Britain's case, its fourth war in that country.

As before, in the end, despite all the billions of dollars handed out, the training of an entire army of Afghan troops and the infinitely superior weaponry of the occupiers, the Afghan resistance succeeded again in first surrounding then propelling the hated Kafirs into a humiliating exit.

In both cases the occupying troops lost the will to continue fighting at such cost and with so little gain.

For all the differences, there are of course striking parallels between the twenty-first-century occupation of Afghanistan and that of 1839—42.

There is a real continuity in the impact of political geography on the evolution of both conflicts. The significance of Kabul's location is one issue — adjacent to both the Tajik population of Kohistan, on one side, and the eastern Ghilzais on the other.

Then there is the tribal issue, as another Popalzai ruler lacking a real power base, Hamid Karzai — astonishingly, from the same sub-tribe as Shah Shuja—faces the brunt of concerted guerrilla attacks led by the eastern Ghilzai who today make up the footsoldiers of the Taliban.

They are directed by another Ghilzai tribal leader from the Hotak ruling clan, in this case Mullah Omar. (Mullah Omar is a distant relative of the first Afghan ruler of southern Afghanistan, Mir Waiz Hotaki.)

On my extended visits to Afghanistan to research this book in 2009 and 2010 I set myself two goals.

Firstly, I wanted to try to find the elusive Afghan sources telling of the war which I was certain had to exist and which I have in due course used to write this book.

Secondly, I was keen to see as many of the places and landscapes associated with the First Afghan War as was possible in a situation where ISAF's (International Security Assistance Force, established by the United Nations in 2001 and taken over by NATO in 2003.) hold on Afghanistan was already visibly shrinking every day.

By 2010, the Taliban had a strong presence in over 70 per cent of the country and Karzai's government had firm control of only 29 out of 121 key strategic districts.

That 70 per cent included most of the route of the British retreat of January 1842 which I knew I would have to travel if I was to have an idea of the geography I was going to write about. I particularly wanted to try to get to Gandamak and see the site of the British last stand.

The route of the 1842 retreat backs on to the mountain range that leads to Tora Bora and the Pakistan border, the Ghilzai heartlands that have always been—along with Quetta—the Taliban's main recruiting ground.

I had been advised not to attempt to visit the area without local protection, so eventually set off in the company of a regional tribal leader who was also a minister in Karzai's government: a mountain of a man named Anwar Khan Jagdalak, a former village wrestling champion and later captain of the Afghan Olympic wrestling team, who had made his name as a Jami'at-Islami Mujehedin commander in the jihad against the Soviets in the 1980s.

It was Jagdalak's Ghilzai ancestors who inflicted some of the worst casualties on the British army of 1842, something he proudly repeated several times as we drove through the same passes.

"They forced us to pick up guns to defend our honour," he said. "So we killed every last one of those bastards." None of this, incidentally, has stopped Jagdalak from sending his family away from Kabul to the greater safety of Northolt in north London.

On the day we were to drive to Gandamak, I had been told to report at seven in the morning to Jagdalak's Ministry in the heart of the administrative district now named Wazir Akbar Khan. Threading my way through a slalom of checkpoints and razor wire surrounding the Ministry, I arrived to find Jagdalak being hustled into a convoy of heavily armoured SUVs by his ever-present phalanx of bodyguards, walkie-talkies crackling and assault rifles primed.

Jagdalak drove himself, while pick-ups full of heavily armed Afghan bodyguards followed behind.

As we headed through the capital, evidence of the failure of the current occupation lay all around us.

Kabul remains one of the poorest and scrappiest capital cities in the world.

Despite the U.S. pouring around \$80 billion into Afghanistan, almost all that money has disappeared into defence and security and the roads of Kabul were still more rutted than those in the most neglected provincial towns of Pakistan. There was no street lighting and apparently no rubbish collection.

According to Jagdalak, that was only the tip of the iceberg. Despite all the efforts of a dozen countries and a thousand agencies over more than a decade since 2001, the country is still a mess: a quarter of all teachers in Afghanistan are illiterate. In many areas, governance is almost non-existent: half the governors do not have an office; even fewer have electricity. Civil servants lack the most basic education and skills.

We bumped through the potholed roads of Kabul, past the blast walls of the U.S. Embassy and the NATO barracks that has been built on the very site of the British cantonment of 170 years ago, past Butkhak, then headed down the zigzagging road into the line of bleak mountain passes—first the Khord Kabul, then the Tezin—that link Kabul with the Khyber Pass.

It is a suitably dramatic and violent landscape: faultlines of crushed and tortured strata groaned and twisted in the gunpowder-coloured rockwalls rising on either side of us. Above, the jagged mountain tops were veiled in an ominous cloud of mist.

As we drove, Jagdalak complained bitterly of the western treatment of his government. "In the 1980s when we were killing Russians for them, the Americans called us freedom fighters," he muttered as we descended the first pass. "Now they just dismiss us as warlords."

At Sarobi, where the mountains debouch into a high-altitude ochre desert dotted with encampments of Ghilzai nomads, we left the main road and headed into Taliban territory; a further five pick-up trucks full of Jagdalak's old Mujehedin fighters, all brandishing rocket-propelled grenades and with faces wrapped in their turbans, appeared from a side road to escort us.

At the village of Jagdalak, on 12 January 1842, the last 200 frostbitten British soldiers found themselves surrounded by several thousand Ghilzai tribesmen; only a handful made it beyond the holly hedge.

Our own welcome that April was, thankfully, somewhat warmer.

It was my host's first visit to his home since he became a minister, and the proud villagers took their old commander on a nostalgia trip through hills smelling of wild thyme and wormwood, and up through mountainsides carpeted with hollyhocks and mulberries and shaded by white poplars.

Here, at the top of the surrounding peaks, near the watchtower where the naked and freezing sepoy had attempted to find shelter, lay the remains of Jagdalak's old Mujehedin bunkers and entrenchments from which he had defied the Soviet army.

Once the tour was completed, the villagers feasted us, Timurid style, in an apricot orchard at the bottom of the valley: we sat on carpets under a trellis of vine and pomegranate blossom, as course after course of kebabs and raisin pullao were laid in front of us.

During lunch, as my hosts casually pointed out the site of the holly barrier and other places in the village where the British had been massacred in 1842, we compared our respective family memories of that war.

I talked about my great-great-uncle, Cohn Mackenzie, who had been taken hostage nearby, and I asked if they saw any parallels with the current situation.

"It is exactly the same," said Jagdalak. "Both times the foreigners have come for their own interests, not for ours. They say, 'We are your friends, we want to help.' But they are lying."

"Whoever comes to Afghanistan, even now, they will face the fate of Burnes, McNaughton and Dr. Brydon," agreed Mohammad Khna, our host in the village and the owner of the orchard we were sitting.

Everyone nodded sagely into their rice: the names of the fallen of 1842, long forgotten in their home country, were still common currency here.

“Since the British went we’ve had the Russians,” said one old man to my right. “We saw them off too, but not before they bombed many of the houses in the village.”

He pointed at a ridge full of ruined mudbrick houses on the hills behind us.

“We are the roof of the world,” said Khan. “From here you can control and watch everywhere.”

“Afghanistan is like the crossroads for every nation that comes to power,” agreed Jagdalak. “But we do not have the strength to control our own destiny. Our fate is determined by our neighbours.”

It was nearly 5 p.m. before the final flaps of naan bread were cleared away, by which time it became clear that it was now too late to head on to Gandamak. Instead we went that evening by the main highway direct to the relative safety of Jalalabad, where we discovered we’d had a narrow escape.

It turned out that there had been a battle at Gandamak that very morning between government forces and a group of villagers supported by the Taliban. The sheer size and length of the feast and our own gluttony had saved us from walking straight into an ambush.

The battle had taken place on exactly the site of the British last stand of 1842.

The following morning in Jalalabad we went to a jirga, or assembly, of Ghilzai tribal elders, to which the greybeards of Gandamak had come, under a flag of truce, to discuss what had happened the day before.

The story was typical of many I heard about Karzai’s government, and revealed how a mixture of corruption, incompetence and insensitivity had helped give an opening for the return of the once hated Taliban.

As Predator drones took off and landed incessantly at the nearby airfield, the Ghilzai elders related how the previous year government troops had turned up to destroy the opium harvest.

The troops promised the villagers full compensation and were allowed to plough up the crops; but the money never turned up.

Before the planting season, the Gandamak villagers again went to Jalalabad and asked the government if they could be provided with assistance to grow other crops.

Promises were made; again nothing was delivered. They planted poppy, informing the local authorities that if they again tried to destroy the crop, the village would have no option but to resist.

When the troops turned up, about the same time as we were arriving at nearby Jagdalak, the villagers were waiting for them and had called in the local Taliban to assist. In the fighting that followed, nine policemen were killed, six vehicles were destroyed and ten police hostages taken.

After the jirga was over, two of the tribal elders of Gandamak came over and we chatted for a while over a pot of green tea.

“Last month,” said one, “some American officers called us to a hotel in Jalalabad for a meeting. One of them asked me, ‘Why do you hate us?’

I replied, ‘Because you blow down our doors, enter our houses, pull our women by the hair and kick our children. We cannot accept this. We will fight back, and we will break your teeth, and when your teeth are broken you will leave, just as the British left before you. It is just a matter of time.’”

“What did he say to that?”

“He turned to his friend and said, ‘If the old men are like this, what will the younger ones be like?’

“In truth, all the Americans here know their game is over. It is just their politicians who deny this.”

“These are the last days of the Americans,” said the other elder. “Next it will be China.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**“Spontaneous And Leaderless”
Rebellion From Below Rocks**

Iraq:

**“Distrust Of, And Lack Of
Confidence In, The Whole Of The
Iraqi Political Establishment”**

**“The Demonstrators Are Opposed To
All Kinds Of Elites In Iraq”**

“They Are Not Targeting Any One Party Or Sector; Basically, They Don’t Like Anyone”

August 2nd by Mustafa Habib, Niqash:

The protests that have been rocking the Iraqi political establishment for almost a month now began when dozens of unemployed young men from the village of Bahila, on the outskirts of the southern city of Basra, gathered outside an oil company premises demanding jobs.

The protests then spread to the city centre and widened their scope, with participants demanding better state services and regular water and power supplies.

Protests are expected in Iraq in summer. It’s so hot that a lack of potable water and power to cool things down, or keep food, is enough to drive people onto the streets in anger.

But these protests – which spread from Basra to other provinces, including the capital Baghdad – are different from past ones in several ways.

For one thing, they appear to be spontaneous and leaderless And if the protestors have one thing in common, it is their distrust of, and lack of confidence in, the whole of the Iraqi political establishment. They are not targeting any one party or sector; basically, they don’t like anyone.

Another unusual thing about the current protests, and a sign that the demonstrators are opposed to all kinds of elites in Iraq:

They were even criticizing the country’s highest Shiite Muslim religious authority, Ali al-Sistani, who is usually not an acceptable target.

Protestors had banners criticizing al-Sistani and asking why he had not spoken in support of the protests during the first week they happened.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi is a more obvious target for the protestors and is often criticised. But over the past three weeks, his acting government – in power until the formation of the next one – has tried rapprochement.

Al-Abadi travelled to Basra but was unable to get very far as he was besieged by angry locals. He later decided to receive delegations in Baghdad instead.

To appease the protestors, al-Abadi has fired his minister of electricity and also promised the creation of thousands of new jobs. The government has also tried to engage influential local personalities – including community and tribal leaders and local politicians – to help restore peace.

Unfortunately nobody believes the government.

“They are lying to us,” Abdul Ridha al-Rubaie, a community leader in Basra, told NIQASH.

“Months ago, when the budget was being discussed, the government announced that it would not be able to create jobs because of the financial crisis in Iraq. Now it is suddenly offering thousands of jobs. But if it is really unable to create jobs – as they said previously – then this promise is worth nothing.”

All this pressure from the demonstrations, as well as al-Sistani’s reproach, has meant that Shiite Muslim political parties are renewing attempts to try and form a government. The political elites of Iraq are currently riven by infighting.

Nonetheless they also remain confused. They’ve been having to try and negotiate with angry mobs and deal with al-Sistani’s call to form a government of technocrats that can change the country for the better, rather than one based on Iraq’s controversial quota system.

Some political parties have even stopped saying that one of their members should get the job of prime minister because they know it angers those on the street.

And now they must deal with the even more difficult part: Iraq has never formed a government that ignores the quota system before. To take a new untried route to power, makes things more difficult. And despite ongoing calls to hurry the process of government formation up, it is quite possible that doing so according to al-Sistani’s call, will delay it even further.

POLICE WAR REPORTS

Stupid, Sadistic Worthless Piece Of Shit Cop Beats Up Marine Vet He Accuses Of Not Being A Real Veteran:

“Sent Man To The Hospital With Injuries NoPD Described As ‘Severe’”

Aug 8 By Emily Lane, NOLA.com. Emily Lane covers criminal justice in New Orleans for NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune. Reach her at elane@nola.com.

One of two rookie New Orleans police officers NOPD fired last month after arresting both in connection to a July 24 beating outside a Mid-City bar had already been on the radar of NOPD's internal investigators, department leadership said.

The NOPD Public Integrity Bureau had two separate internal investigations open on John Galman, 26, before a bar fight he's accused of being involved in while off-duty sent a man to the hospital with injuries NOPD described as "severe," according to records and statements made during a Wednesday (Aug. 8) public hearing.

One of the previous complaints lodged against Galman alleged he initiated a vehicle chase that was possibly unauthorized, said Arlinda Westbrook, NOPD's deputy chief in charge of PIB. Details of the second disciplinary complaint were unclear.



Stupid, Sadistic Worthless Piece Of Shit Cop John Galman (OPSO)

Galman, along with now-fired NOPD officer Spencer Sutton, 24, faces a simple battery charge related to the early morning beating outside Mid-City Yacht Club. He and Sutton pleaded not guilty to the misdemeanor charge in municipal court on July 25, when Sutton's attorney Jake Lemmon said each of the former officers maintained their innocence.

Westbrook, who spoke of the allegation against Galman under questioning from New Orleans City Council President Jason Williams and other council members, declined during the public meeting to say much more about the pending internal investigations. She did say that none of the previous complaints -- lodged in May and June -- alleged criminal acts, and both involved actions Galman allegedly took while on duty.

Galman's attorney, Townsend Myers, had no comment on Wednesday regarding his client's previous internal complaints.

Jorge Gomez, 39, who came forward to local media as the victim in the beating, said he was at the bar and wearing camouflage-print clothing when Galman and Sutton called him over and began harassing him about military service.

He told WVUE Fox 8 they called him a "fake American" when he said he had served in the military, and then beat him.

Gomez was born in the United States, raised in Honduras and returned to New Orleans and served overseas as a member of the Louisiana National Guard, his attorney Stephen Haedicke said.

Galman's NOPD application paperwork says he served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2010 - 2015.

Galman and Sutton both graduated from NOPD's training academy in December and were still on probationary employment status at the time they were fired. It was not lost on council members, they made clear Wednesday, that the off-duty beating in which Galman is accused marked the third complaint in his personnel file in just over six months on the job.

Westbrook, NOPD Superintendent Michael Harrison, NOPD Deputy Chief Christopher Goodly, who oversees the management services bureau; and Amy Trepagnier, New Orleans Civil Service Department's deputy personnel director, each answered questions from council members during Wednesday's City Council criminal justice committee meeting.

The first complaint against Galman was lodged May 22 by "rank," which typically refers to a supervisor, according to an NOPD record of the former officer's complaint history. The record does not describe specifics of the complaint but says he is accused of "neglect of duty," in violation of an NOPD policy under the "performance of duty" category.

A member of the public lodged the second complaint on June 7. Records show the allegations involve a possible violation of two different policies: "adherence to law" under the "moral conduct" category; and "professionalism" under the "professional conduct" category.

It was not clear which of the complaints pertained to the vehicle pursuit. NOPD's vehicle pursuit policy was revised in recent years as part of the federal consent decree. The restrictive policy allows officers to chase fleeing suspects only if the fleeing person is accused of having just committed a violent felony and only with authorization from a supervisor who must consider many factors, including the seriousness of the alleged offense, traffic conditions and other public safety considerations.

Because Galman received two complaints in a short period of time after graduating from the academy, Westbrook said, PIB had intervened by looking more closely at Galman. The complaints were not necessarily related, she said, and after reviewing the allegations he was allowed to continue with his duties while internal investigators continued with their probe.

Williams and City Council Member Helena Moreno asked NOPD leadership Wednesday whether red flags in either of the officers' backgrounds existed before they were accepted into the academy.

"There were zero indicators in their background that made them cause for rejection," said Goodly, referring to the officers' acceptance into the police academy.

Galman's most recent job before joining NOPD was as a supervisor at a private security firm in the Miami area, a job he said he had since 2015, according to his NOPD application paperwork. Prior to that he served with the rank of sergeant in the Marines Corps, the documents say. His duties included providing security at U.S. embassies in Saudi Arabia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was working to earn his bachelor's degree from Florida International University in Miami at the time he applied to work at NOPD, the application says.

Sutton's most recent job was as the "head of security" at a sports bar in the Baltimore area, which he had since 2014. He also worked part-time as an instructor at a baseball camp. He earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 2015 from Towson University, near Baltimore, and was working toward a master's degree in homeland security at the same school when he applied to NOPD, his application says.

Harrison noted federal consent decree monitors perform audits of NOPD's recruitment files, which should turn up any blind spots. When NOPD has had problems with recruits or rookie officers in the past, Westbrook noted, leaders have typically taken it upon themselves to dig back through that person's recruitment file to see if there was something background investigators missed, or whether they can improve the process. NOPD has already taken those steps in the cases of Galman and Sutton, she said.

The police superintendent agreed with Williams, he said, that the alleged actions of Galman and Sutton resulted in a "black eye" for the police department and the city, regardless of whether the men were on or off duty.

"We felt the effects of it just like all the citizens," said Harrison, of the beating allegations.

Harrison reiterated on Wednesday that charges against Galman and Sutton could be upgraded as the investigation continues. The men have remained out on a \$1,500 bond since the day of their arrests.

An Off-Duty California Police Officer Thought A Man Stole Mentos. So He Drew His Gun

May 6, 2018 Alex Horton, Washington Post

For a moment, after the off-duty officer produced his pistol, Jose Arreola considered how he might die over a \$1.19 pack of Mentos.

Arreola had already paid for the mints in an Orange County, Calif., gas station March 16 and slid them into his pocket. The officer behind him, clad in black shorts and a sweatshirt, appears to think he sees a crime in progress.

The officer reaches for his semiautomatic pistol, and in a quick action, pulls back the pistol slide to chamber a round, a video shows. "Give that back ... police officer," he tells a stunned Arreola.

Recounting the event later to the Orange County Register, Arreola envisioned how the next few moments could unfold.

“I thought my wife could be a widow after tonight,” Arreola, 49, told the newspaper about his encounter with the Buena Park police officer.

The encounter, which Buena Park Police Chief Corey Sianez called “disturbing,” had already triggered an administrative investigation, he said in a Facebook statement posted Friday.

“I can definitely assure you that our investigation will be thorough, and if the officer is found to be in violation of any policies and procedures, he will be held accountable,” Sianez said.

In the surveillance video that appears to be recently released, Arreola is seen asking for the price of the mints, then hands over cash to the attendant before pocketing the mints in his jacket.

That is all it took for the officer to take action and demand that Arreola place the mints back on the counter.

“Oh!” Arreola says, shaken. “I paid for this,” he says several times. At one point, his face is stunned as he looks to the attendant for help.

After holding his pistol out for eight seconds, the officer appears to put the pistol back into his pocket. “Try stealing that again. Get your cash and leave,” the officer warns.

As Arreola panics and steps out of the way, the officer directs his attention to the cashier: “Did he pay for this?” The cashier answers yes. The officer asks if he is sure. He offers the same reply: Yes.

“My apologies, sir,” the officer tells Arreola. “My apologies.” Arreola is seen collecting the rest of his change and quickly makes his way toward the exit.

Arreola could not be reached for comment.

In the statement, Sianez says the video clearly shows the officer drawing his gun “but not pointing it” at Arreola, though his assertion is unclear from the video. In a split-second, the officer appears to raise his weapon toward Arreola, then quickly lowers it for the rest of the encounter. His index finger is clearly extended and not on the trigger.

The department did not immediately return comment asking whether the officer is back on duty, or if the department stands by the statement that his weapon was not pointed at Arreola.

It was not clear why the video of the incident, which took place more than seven weeks ago, has only recently surfaced. Arreola has retained an attorney and seeks damages from the police department.

The incident has left him shaken, he told the Register.

"I can't get it out of my mind," he said.

Police shootings of unarmed people have declined since 2015, according to data analyzed by The Washington Post, though experts are unsure what has led to the reduction.

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.

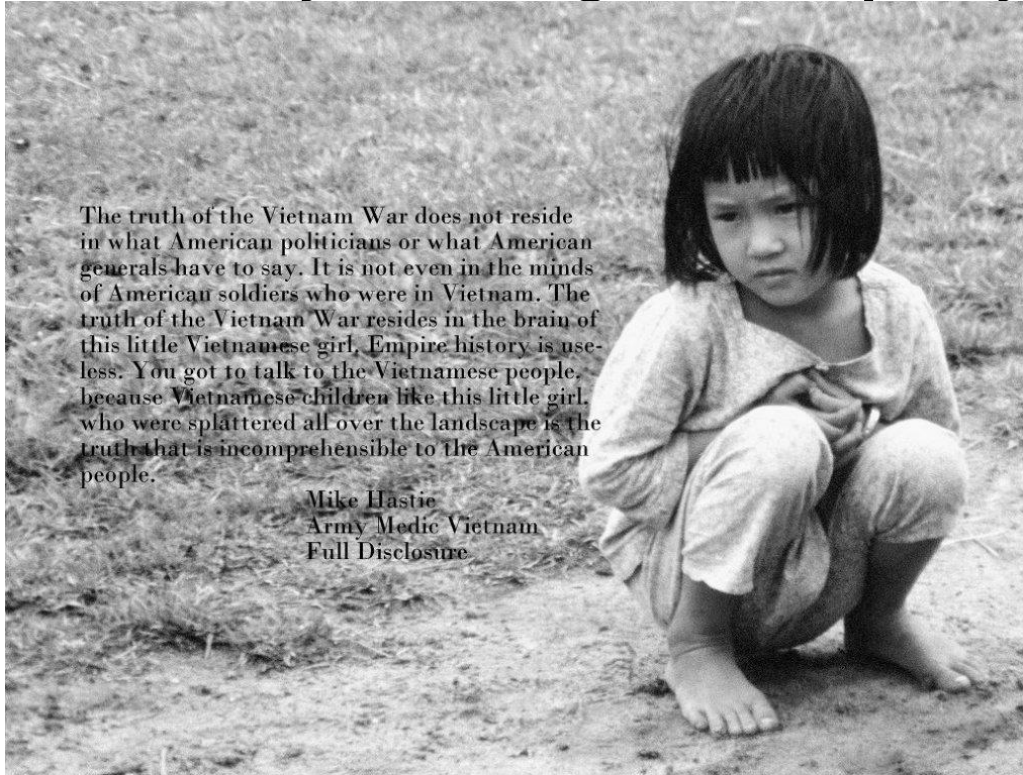
"We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake."

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Therefore, in order for the proletariat's political strike, once transformed into demonstration by the entire people, to become the starting point for a victorious revolution, a sympathetic attitude must be widespread throughout the army.
-- Leon Trotsky, "Up To The Ninth Of January," 1905

The Clarity and Magic of Empathy



The truth of the Vietnam War does not reside in what American politicians or what American generals have to say. It is not even in the minds of American soldiers who were in Vietnam. The truth of the Vietnam War resides in the brain of this little Vietnamese girl. Empire history is useless. You got to talk to the Vietnamese people, because Vietnamese children like this little girl, who were splattered all over the landscape is the truth that is incomprehensible to the American people.

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
Full Disclosure

An Khe, Vietnam 1970. Photo by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: August 31, 2017
Subject: The Clarity and Magic of Empathy

The Clarity and Magic of Empathy

**There was not a U.S. noble cause in Vietnam.
There was never a noble cause in Vietnam.
When the French were defeated in Vietnam
in 1954, the United States simply picked up
the Colonial Lie and continued the political
assault.**

**And when I experienced an American soldier
put an M-16 bullet in his head, that was the
legacy of the Lie in Vietnam. I can still see the**

blood and brains in my lap.

This truth escapes millions and millions of patriotic American fans.

When your core belief system receives a metaphorical head shot, you finally get it. When politicians and the rich start sending their kids to war, I'll start believing in noble causes.

Jesus Christ, this is not rocket science.

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
August 31, 2017
Full Disclosure

It is truth that liberates,
not your effort to be free.
Jiddu Krishnamurti

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

Take Your Pick

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pdpx20RRRvU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VR8iqGjZWB4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CMUlgDJi0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqEltkvVNUk>

ANNIVERSARIES

August 11, 1894: Dishonorable Day: Federal Troops Forced Some 1,200 Jobless Workers Across The Potomac River And Out Of Washington, D.C.

Carl Bunin Peace History August 9-15

Federal troops forced some 1,200 jobless workers across the Potomac River and out of Washington, D.C.

Led by an unemployed activist, “General” Charles “Hobo” Kelly, the jobless group’s “soldiers” included young journalist Jack London, known for writing about social issues, and miner/cowboy William “Big Bill” Haywood who later organized western miners and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Trump Will Give Huge New Tax Break to the Wealthy



**Workers' Resistance To The Corrupt, Thieving Venezuelan Dictatorship Is Spreading:
“They Are Trying To Adjust The Political Regime To The Requirements Of Capitalist Accumulation, Guarantee Themselves Freedom To Engage In Embezzlement, Contain The People Under Social And Repressive Control, And Ensure Impunity For Their Power Elite”
“There Has Been An Escalation Of Conflicts And Demands From Workers And From Many Social Sectors In The Country”**



Striking nurses in Caracas demand a fair wage and relief from the crisis. Socialist Worker 8.8.18

All they are trying to do is adjust the political regime to the requirements of capitalist accumulation of the ruling bureaucracy into the new global framework, guarantee themselves freedom to engage in embezzlement, contain the people under social and repressive control, and ensure impunity for their power elite.

August 8, 2018 by Gonzalo Gómez, Socialist Worker

Gonzalo Gómez is a Venezuelan revolutionary, member of the socialist organization Marea Socialista, co-founder of the independent left-wing website aporrea.org, and a veteran of union and popular struggles in Venezuela for over 40 years.

In mid-July, he was interviewed by Carlos Carcione about the situation in Venezuela and the next steps for socialists in the country. The interview was translated into English by Eva María.

CC: ACCORDING TO the information we have, struggles by workers have begun in the country over wage demands and working conditions. Other large protests are taking place over the collapse of public services, such as electricity, water and telecommunications, as well as the situation with public transportation and roads, and also the CLAPs [boxes with food essentials distributed by the government to low-income families] that are not arriving. Could you tell us what the situation is like?

Gonzalo Gómez:

After the May 20 elections (won by Nicolas Maduro), there has been an escalation of conflicts and demands from workers and from many social sectors in the country.

This process has not stopped. On the contrary, it is increasing with new sectors joining every day.

Among the most outstanding are the mobilizations that the nurses of public hospitals and maternity hospitals have been leading for more than two weeks. They are demanding a fair salary; some slogans call for salaries to match the level of the Canasta Básica [the basic needs for a household], which is also what the Constitution [of 1999, which Maduro is attempting to re-write] states.

It's necessary to bear in mind that the salary today is less than what it costs to get to work.

And this also leads to the demand for the improvement of health services: there are no medical supplies, no medicines, inadequate medical equipment — and to top it off, doctors are leaving the country.

However, the government reportedly granted increases to the military that are known to be very close to the Canasta Básica or higher for the upper ranks.

These motivated nurses to say “We want a salary like the military’s,” and others to say, “We want to make what Tisbay Lucena (the president of the National Electoral Council) makes in two weeks.”

The nurses are taking to the streets and have the support of patients and their families. They are opting for street protests because the government is in a de facto shutdown in the health sector due to a lack of resources and starvation wages.

This situation of crisis and abandonment is suffered by the vast majority of public-sector workers, as well as throughout the country. For example, workers in the university sector are also going out to protest over wages.

Leaders of the official trade unions try to make agreements behind the backs of the workers with increases that are negligible and completely unsatisfactory.

The workers remain unaware of these “agreements,” and the struggles continue.

Workers at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and many satellite institutions in this ministry have joined protests and struggle. And just as in the health sector, the demand for higher wages is merged with the demand to improve the conditions of the services they provide.

Electricity workers, telephone workers for CANTV in some regions, some postal workers are taking action.

And some who have not yet taken to the streets are beginning to issue statements and demands addressed to the government, as well as protests through communiqués about the situation in which they find themselves, mainly in the public sector.

Then there is also a tendency towards workers in related sectors working together, and in some cases, coordinating struggles. This marks the prospect of a general national struggle for wages and also for the improvement of public services.

For workers in other countries to understand the situation, it should be said that Venezuelan workers and their families would be living on these wages with one or two eggs a day or with a can of tuna a day per household.

The government provides care packages with some food products, called CLAP boxes, to a part of the population. These create a clientelist relation with the government, but they are not part of peoples’ salaries. The system is also very insufficient. People can’t freely decide what food or products they buy. Such measures have been typical of neoliberal governments for social control of the poor.

This has to be put in the context of a collapsing situation.

You can’t get transportation to work or you don’t have cash to pay for it, and then you go to work in shifts or part-time. The workers are dividing up a few days a week because they can’t even successfully get to work consistently. The economy is collapsing, and so is Venezuelan society and the state.

We at Marea Socialista are going to be involved in these struggles, bringing our solidarity, our support and our proposals, and helping to amplify the demands and experiences.

We believe that each of these struggles must achieve its objectives. We must not allow them to be repressed, and we should push for them to coordinate into a national struggle for higher wages.

The focus is now in the struggle for wages, but the communities and neighborhoods are also coming out to demand the basic functioning of public services that are currently in disarray: lack of water, constant blackouts, interruptions in phone service, inconsistency in garbage pickup, etc.

“The Government Itself Is Knee-Deep In Corruption”

CC: WHAT DO you think is the current political situation in the country?

GG: The government doesn't guarantee the normal functioning of the country, nor the living conditions of the people, nor does it really manage to govern. It does not stop hyperinflation. It simply contributes to chaos.

It behaves like an authoritarian government toward the people, but it has no authority to bring order to the economy or to put a stop to the corruption of which it is a part.

The situation is so serious that even some sectors of the PSUV (United Socialist Party of Venezuela, the ruling party) are aware of what is happening and criticisms of the government of Nicolás Maduro are beginning to multiply.

Because what the government is doing is equivalent to the effects of neoliberal governments. Because of the precariousness of wages, because employment has no meaning or value, and there is an exodus of professionals and workers.

They are reducing the functioning of the state apparatus to a minimum, albeit without abandoning corruption, to the obvious detriment of living conditions, which is clear in the case of the health sector.

The government attributes all this to a supposed “economic war” against it, but we all know that capital has always sought profit at the expense of everyone else, and it is the government that has the power to influence a set of variables. If the government does not give the necessary wage increases, then they must be held responsible. If it does not provide basic services, the same thing applies.

And we are not only talking about the National Executive, because the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) forged by Maduro — though we can consider it to be illegitimate — is supposed to be supra-constitutional and universal, but even it isn't capable of fixing things.

All they are trying to do is adjust the political regime to the requirements of capitalist accumulation of the ruling bureaucracy into the new global framework,

guarantee themselves freedom to engage in embezzlement, contain the people under social and repressive control, and ensure impunity for their power elite.

Another example of the bureaucratic disaster is PDVSA (the state oil company). Oil production has fallen to an all-time low. The Maduro government is bankrupting the company — if it's not already bankrupt.

Basic industries, including the steel sector, are going through a historic decline in production, producing what was previously produced in a few days over the course of a year.

The government can only keep itself in power while we are overwhelmed by appalling corruption. It does nothing to recover the country's embezzled resources, because the government itself is knee-deep in corruption, whose haul is equivalent to almost a decade of imports.

And on the other hand, the government has prioritized the payment of an illegitimate foreign debt and is pledging the country's little oil production in exchange for Russia's and China's financial aid in the future, putting at risk national and state sovereignty over PDVSA.

This shows that the only plan they have is to unload the crisis on the population. They seek to distract us with calls for electoral processes in very dubious conditions. But the government isn't carrying out its duty to solve national and working people's problems.

In sum, we have a disastrous combination of factors: authoritarianism and the degradation of democracy; the collapse of the functioning of the state for social and economic affairs; a frightening setback in the standard of living of the people in contrast to what had been achieved during the Bolivarian Revolution; as well as rampant corruption linked to a mafia pattern of accumulation, which cannot be fixed with this government, nor with a government of the old oligarchy.

This is why I sometimes comment that “La V se ha cuarteao.” (The Fifth Republic is going the way of the Fourth.)

The people who have begun to rebel in Venezuela are doing so because daily life is already impossible and because they are reacting against the dismantling of everything. The gravity of the current situation leads us to say that the country must go through a refoundation.

“Governments Like Ortega's And Maduro's End Up Becoming Instruments Of Counterrevolution Against Their People”

CC: WHAT DO you propose as a way out?

GG: We have to start from these struggles because they mean a shift in the national situation.

The workers and the popular sectors have started to respond. They have gone from a situation in which uncertainty, demoralization, fear and a desire to flee the country prevailed to the terrain of struggle.

People are going out to fight in the streets because they are cornered by a government that does not want and cannot offer alternatives.

These struggles must be coordinated and extended nationally. But the solution will not come as long as we keep doing the same things we've done up to this point. We need an emergency plan that is really on the side of the workers and the popular sectors, not that of the bureaucracy, the corrupt and those who take advantage of the crisis to do business and become an elite of predatory power.

This emergency plan would have to guarantee a salary at the level of the Canasta Básica of goods and updated periodically to keep up with hyperinflation, so that wages don't plummet. This would just be putting into effect what is established in Article 91 of our Constitution (established by Chávez in 1999, in contrast to the one Maduro is trying to draft).

Initially, at least, it can start with what the nurses who are fighting are demanding. For example, we want to get paid at the same level as military officers.

Among other things, we need to recover the funds embezzled from the country, which amount to billions of dollars. The assets and accounts of the corrupt must be confiscated. We also insist on the cessation of payments of the foreign debt and the initiation of a public and citizen audit of this debt, as it is illegitimate and the product of corrupt dealings.

As for other ways we can get the needed resources. First, we can get them from the production of the state-owned companies themselves, especially the food industry, which the government has left practically inactive and whose products are diverted to smuggling circuits or to parallel markets.

This recovery isn't going to be guaranteed by the corrupt bureaucracy, but rather by the effective participation and control of workers, peasants and communities.

For this plan to be carried out, then, another government is needed, one that is willing and able to carry this plan forward. Neither nor the right-wing opposition, which represents big capital and has leached off the corrupt state, want to apply these solutions. We need another political direction.

This is why we are fighting to build Marea Socialista. At the same time, we say that the workers who are fighting and those who are critical of the government must create a new political alternative for the country that embraces one of our most characteristic slogans: Neither bureaucracy nor capital!

In the international and regional context, the people have also come out to fight and are strongly questioning governments.

Some of these governments are using left-wing rhetoric, but empty of content, and in the name of that, they are snatching democratic and social conquests from the peoples and even committing real massacres.

This is what is happening in the case of Ortega in Nicaragua.

Governments like Ortega's and Maduro's end up becoming instruments of counterrevolution against their people, and today, they are actually implementing a counterrevolution in our countries.

We, in the heat of the struggles, find ourselves needing to build the political vehicles to oppose these leaders and their parties at the same time as we continue to fight the old bastions of right-wing power.

That is why we are trying to build alternatives and new political references with a national reach. But we need and seek to develop international connections with those with whom we share strategic outlooks and who want to struggle alongside us.

Hence our relationship with and our effort to build a new international space as Anticapitalistas en Red, which has been bringing together several revolutionary, democratic, anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic political organizations in Latin America and other parts of the world.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



Zionist Occupiers Confiscate Palestinian Drinking Water: “Lush Gardens, Swimming Pools And Green Lawns Sit Only A Couple Miles From Completely Dry Villages, Where Palestinians Receive Water Once A Week, Or Once Every Few Weeks, If At All”



Villagers in a-Duqaiqah in the West Bank pay four times the average rate to get water from a water truck (Nasser Nawaj'ah | B'Tselem)

July 28, 2016 by Sumaya Awad, Socialist Worker

London is known the world over for its rainy weather, so most people would be shocked to find out that Ramallah, one of the largest cities in the West Bank, actually receives more annual rainfall.

So why during the month of June did Palestinians face some of the harshest water shortages in decades?

The answer is as simple as it is outrageous. Since 1967, when it first occupied the West Bank, Israel has seized control of almost all the major water resources there. Annual quotas on the Palestinian consumption of water are strictly enforced, and attempts by Palestinians to develop their own water infrastructure have been thwarted by the Israeli military.

In 2011 alone, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) destroyed 89 water structures. The only source of underground water in the West Bank is the Mountain Aquifer, of which Israel controls 80 percent.

Palestinians are also not permitted to draw water from the Jordan River.

The destruction of Palestinians buildings--whether homes, outdoor bathrooms, cisterns or other rainwater gathering structures--is often justified by the Israeli army on grounds that they are "weak infrastructure." The other usual pretext for demolition is the lack of building permits-permits that the Israeli government makes near impossible for Palestinians to obtain.

So while Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank struggle to find adequate water resources for their parched communities, Jewish-only settlements right next door live well hydrated on occupied land using appropriated water sources.

To quantify this, Palestinians consume 70 liters of water per capita per day on average, according to a report from Amnesty International. In some areas, the figure is as low as 20 liters per day, well below the 100 liters per capita recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

By contrast, Israelis consume up to 300 liters per capita per day.

Such staggering inequality in water consumption is not only indicative of the discrimination in resource distribution, but of the apartheid laws on which the Israeli state is built.

Lush gardens, swimming pools and green lawns sit only a couple miles from completely dry villages, where Palestinians receive water once a week, or once every few weeks, if at all.

Put more vividly, 450,000 Israeli settlers use more water than the 2.3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank combined.

As a result, Palestinians are forced to spend as much as a quarter of their income on water tanks from private businesses.

Aside from the daily incursions, house demolitions and raids that Palestinians in the West Bank endure, the restrictions on the mobility of people and goods make it difficult for Palestinians to develop water sanitation infrastructure of their own or to use naturally built water infrastructure, such as caves.

Consider the Palestinian town of Susya, for example, in the West Bank not far from Hebron, which used to use water cisterns and caves to gather rainwater to use for irrigation. In 1999 and 2000, Israeli troops raided the village, attempted to expel its inhabitants, sealed off the caves and destroyed the cisterns.

These demolitions are part of the Israeli plan to terrorize inhabitants and force them to move elsewhere, allowing Israeli forces to use the land for more illegal settlements.

The system of permits designed by the Israeli state to restrict access to water, sanitation and infrastructure is an added obstacle to the creation and maintenance of any sustainable water systems.

While the village of Susya fights a daily battle to obtain barrels of water from nearby cities, often enduring hour-long waits at checkpoints and spending large sums of money on poor quality water, the nearby settlement Shadmot Mechola, according to the Amnesty International report, advertises on its website “breathtaking tours of Amaryllis bulbs hot houses, tours of dairy farms, vineyards and orchards, (and) tours of farms in the Jordan Valley who specialize in crops of vegetables, fruits, flowers and spices for export in hot dry climate.”

The site fails, of course, to note that these crops grow on occupied land fed by water stolen from Palestinian villages while Palestinians only a few miles away struggle to get by on approximately five gallons of water a week.

During the month of June--which was also the month of Ramadan this year, during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset--the national Israeli water company Mekorot restricted water distribution to certain areas of the West Bank.

Residents in these areas were forced to live on less than half their normal water allocations.

Shaher Eshtieh, the mayor of Salfit, which is one of the villages affected by the water crisis, told Aljazeera:

“We've never seen anything like this; we are in full crisis mode, working around the clock to help our people, but we are doing this on our own...We've continuously reached out to the Palestinian government, the prime minister even, but they've been no help, and the Israelis are denying there is a problem.

For the past three days, my house has had a bit of water, just enough for drinking and cooking--not cleaning or anything--but before that, we were without any water at all for more than a week...It would be hard to live without water under normal circumstances, but during Ramadan we are all fasting and it's so hot, this is miserable.”

Other areas in the West Bank had to wait 40 days before receiving half their weekly quota from Mekorot.

When crises like these hit, Palestinians are forced to buy water from private companies. Given the conditions of rampant unemployment and poverty in Palestinian communities due to years of economic strangulation by Israel's occupation, many residents simply don't have the extra money to purchase water from private companies.

If forced to buy water for high prices in order to feed cattle and avoid the myriad of illnesses that result from poor hydration or contaminated water, many residents find themselves in debt.

Israeli control of Palestinian water allocations is in line with its ongoing occupation of Palestinian land. The Israeli apartheid state flourishes and expands in part because of its appropriation of water resources, land and coastal territory.

As the water crisis in the West Bank has become more dire, so has the situation in Gaza, the largest open-air prison in the world today.

Ever since Israel's blockade of Gaza began in 2007, the Mediterranean Sea has been deemed off limits to Gaza's residents. This leaves the coastal aquifer as Gaza's main water source. Ninety-six percent of the water provided by the aquifer, however, is deemed unfit for human consumption.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/Default.aspx> and

<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/list.php?id=ej898ra7yff0ukmf16>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Former Dow Chemical Lawyer to Head Superfund Site Cleanup Program



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