

Military Resistance 1611



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Forces Cede Faryab District To The Taliban

August 27, 2018 BY BILL ROGGIO, Long War Journal. [Excerpts] Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of FDD's Long War Journal.

Afghan security forces ceded control of the district of Ghormach in Faryab province after being besieged by the Taliban.

The Afghan military's weak grip on remote areas of the country forced the government to punt again on another district.

Ghormach "completely fell into the hands of Taliban insurgents on Monday after security forces exited the town," Pajhwok Afghan News reported, based on comments by anonymous Afghan officials.

The Taliban ambushed Afghan forces as they left the district and killed three soldiers, according to ATN News. Afghan military officials claimed that 50 Taliban fighters, including two commanders, were killed in retaliatory airstrikes.

The Taliban, in a statement on its official website, Voice of Jihad, reported that “those enemy troops who were under siege of Mujahideen for the last one year following the conquest of Ghormach district center and other installations, fled earlier today through invaders aircraft, bringing the whole district under complete control of Mujahideen.”

Ghormach has switched hands several times in the past year. Most recently, the Taliban overran Ghormach in Aug. 2017. Afghan forces were able to retake the district center, but held little else in the district. The Taliban surrounded the administrative seat and besieged Afghan forces stationed there.

The fall of Ghormach was all but certain after the Taliban overran the Chenayeeha (or Chinese) base in the district on Aug. 11. More than 40 Afghan soldiers surrendered to the Taliban after the base was besieged for 48 hours. At least 43 soldiers were killed and 17 more were captured in the fighting that led up to the surrender.

Afghan forces have taken heavy casualties in Ghormach, according to Naqibullah Faiq, Faryab’s governor. According to Faiq, an estimated “1,000 Afghan forces have been killed over the past three years” in the district, Pajhwok reported.

Faryab province, like many provinces in Afghanistan, has been hotly contested by the Taliban. Of Faryab’s 15 districts, four are Taliban controlled, four are government controlled, and seven are contested, according to an ongoing study by FDD’s Long War Journal.

The Taliban has used its prowess in Afghanistan’s rural areas to harass Afghan forces and force them to defend remote bases and outposts. The Taliban routinely attacks and overruns these remote bases, as well as remote districts.

Resolute Support, NATO’s command in Afghanistan, has recommended that the Afghan military withdraw from more remote outposts in order to defend more populous areas. The Taliban, in turn, has leveraged remote areas under its control to attack more populated areas. Additionally, the withdrawal of Afghan forces from remote areas of the country has eroded Afghan’s confidence in the government’s ability to defend them from the Taliban.

Faryab Capital Under Taliban Threat As Afghan Troops Desert Bases:

“When They Leave Maimana In Their Helicopters, The Roads Are Closed Once Again”

August 30, 2018 BY BILL ROGGIO, Long War Journal. [Excerpts] Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of FDD's Long War Journal.

Afghan officials are warning that Maimana, the capital of Faryab province, is in danger of a Taliban incursion. Security in the northern province continues to worsen as Afghan forces have abandoned some bases and outposts around the city.

Naqibullah Fayiq, the governor of Faryab, said that “The majority of areas (in Faryab province) are under control of the Taliban,” and that the Taliban is poised on the outskirts of Maimana, TOLONews reported.

Fayiq offered a stinging rebuke of Afghan officials, who he claims put on a show for “the delegation” (presumably other officials from Kabul) and opened the roads to Maimana to show Afghan President Arshaf Ghani that the security situation in the province is positive.

“I want to mention that sadly the delegation which visits here (Faryab), they (local officials) try to open routes to make a report for the president via a video conference to show that the roads are open.

“But when they leave Maimana in their helicopters, the roads are closed once again,” he said, according to TOLONews.

“This leaves us and the people prone to security threats and in an under-siege situation.”

Fayiq’s warning about the situation in Maimana occurred as Afghan forces suffered a defeat in Ghormach district. Afghan troops withdrew from the besieged district center earlier this week and were ambushed by the Taliban on the way out. More than 20 Afghan soldiers were reportedly killed in the attack.

Afghan troops also “left their bases in the Qaisar-Almar and Maimana-Jawzjan highways and have stationed themselves at other bases in district centers in the last few days,” local Afghan officials told TOLONews.

Afghan military officers said there are no problems and that the abandonment of the bases was all part of plan.

“Outposts were in bad condition. They (the soldiers) were ordered to leave the bases to receive better training and equipment,” General Amanullah Mobib, the Commander of 209 Shaheen Army Corps claimed.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defense claimed that the troops in Faryab evacuated their bases as part of “the four-year security plan which will become a six-year plan ... there is no other issue.”

Taliban threatens at least nine provinces

Maimana is one of seven provincial capitals that were identified in May by the Afghan Ministry of Defense as being under direct Taliban threat. The others are Farah City, Faizabad in Badakhshan, Ghazni City, Tarin Kot in Uruzgan, Kunduz City, and Pul-i-Khumri in Baghlan.

The Taliban briefly overran Farah and Ghazni Cities in May and August, respectively.

Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand, while not on that list, is also threatened by the Taliban. Just this week, it was disclosed that Afghan forces are battling to clear the Taliban from Police District 4 within the provincial capital.

The Taliban has controlled this area of Lashkar Gah for nearly two years.

Afghan officials were beginning to raise warning flags that the Taliban is planning to attack Gardez, the provincial capital of Paktia. A member of Paktia provincial council reportedly said “almost all the districts of the province are under threat.”

The Taliban has taken advantage of its strength in Afghanistan’s rural areas as well as its safe havens inside Pakistan to threaten Afghanistan’s major population centers.

Army Soldiers Desert Bases Without Any Fight “At Least 100 Government Forces, Half Of Them Well-Trained Commandos, Went Missing” “Morale Among Soldiers Is Low”

28 AUGUST 2018 By Tamim Hamid, Tolo News

Local officials in Faryab province on Tuesday confirmed that in the last two weeks the Afghan National Army (ANA) deserted their bases in parts of the province without defending themselves against insurgents.

The officials said the soldiers have left their bases in the Qaisar-Almar and Maimana-Jawzjan highways and have stationed themselves at other bases in district centers in the last few days.

On Monday, an army convoy that had left Ghormach district in the province and was heading to Qaisar district was ambushed by the Taliban.

The number of soldiers in the convoy was reportedly between 350 and 400 but their clash with the Taliban continued for three hours.

According to the Defense Ministry, 20 soldiers were killed and wounded in this incident. Faryab Governor Naqibullah Fayeq admitted that the morale among soldiers is low - especially after the collapse of a base in Ghormach recently.

“The morale of soldiers has been affected,” the governor said. “Taliban came from Darzab district with high morale. They launched propaganda campaigns and we lost areas without any fighting,” Fayeq said.

However, Gen. Amanullah Mobib, the 209 Shaheen Army Corps Commander in Balkh, gave another reason for the army’s decision to leave the bases in Faryab.

“Outposts were in bad condition. They (the soldiers) were ordered to leave the bases to receive better training and equipment,” said Mobib.

The Ministry of Defense meanwhile said the soldiers in Faryab and other parts of the country have left their bases based on the four-year security plan.

“Based on the four-year security plan which will become a six-year plan as we have obtained financial support (for it) at the Brussels (summit) through to 2024, insecurity, relocation of army and other security plans are implemented in accordance with this plan and there is no other issue,” said Ghafoor Ahmad Jawed, a spokesman for the Defense Ministry.

Recently, security agencies have come under harsh criticism by the people and analysts in acting against planned attacks by insurgents including the one in Ghazni.

At least 100 government forces, half of them well-trained commandos, went missing following a Taliban attack on their outposts in Ghazni’s Ajristan district.

Kunduz officials said the Afghan forces are also facing a high casualty rate in the northern province.

“They (Taliban) have repeatedly stormed army bases over the last month and have killed around 40, 30 and 50 soldiers in every base,” said Amruddin Wali, a member of Kunduz Provincial Council.

The high casualty rate among security forces in recent months has become a serious concern for government.

115 Dead, Wounded In Faryab Clash:

“A Large Convoy Of The Security Forces Was Ambushed By The Taliban Militants”

Aug 28 2018 By Khaama Press

At least one hundred and fifteen people were killed or wounded during a clash in northern Faryab province of Afghanistan.

The 209th Shaheen Corps of the Afghan Military in the North said a large convoy of the security forces was ambushed by the Taliban militants between Ghormach and Qaisar districts at around 9:30am local time on Monday.

A Humvee armored personnel carrier and a Ranger vehicle were destroyed while three armored personnel carrier were damaged, the Shaheen Corps added.

The Afghan Air Force and coalition forces based in Afghanistan also carried out numerous airstrikes during the clash.

More Resistance Action

September 01, 2018 KABUL: Afghanistan's Daesh affiliate detonated a roadside bomb in eastern Nangarhar province killing five border police and wounding four others, a statement issued on Friday by the insurgent group said.

The vehicle carrying the officers struck the mine in Achin District on Thursday, police officer Qais Saifi said.

Even before the Daesh issued its statement claiming responsibility, Safi had suspected the group, saying it regularly plants roadside bombs to target Afghan officials and security forces.

According to the Daesh statement, an explosive device was detonated and a police Humvee was destroyed. It said another explosive device was detonated among those troops who came to the scene killing five of them, including a squadron leader, and wounding five others.

Afghan officials reported only one explosion.

The statement also said Daesh soldiers killed a pro-government militia leader in Achin.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, a van hit a roadside mine in northeaster Kunar province, killing three people and wounding 16 others Wednesday, said Abdul Ghani Musamim, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Daesh has a strong presence in Nangarhar, where Afghan and US support troops have targeted their outposts.

Known as the Daesh in Khorasan province, an ancient name for large swaths of Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia, the insurgent group has carried out a number of blistering attacks in recent months in Afghanistan.

POLICE WAR REPORTS

‘It’s Definitely Intimidation’ Police Accused Over Raids On Activist’s Family: Massive Raid On Two Memphis Homes First Day Of A Trial In Which Police Face Claims Of Illegal Surveillance Of Black Campaigners “In One Case Pulling Over A Vehicle In Which One Passenger Was An ACLU Lawyer Representing The Activists”

26 Aug 2018 by Jamiles Lartey in Atlanta, The Guardian

The peace and quiet of a south Memphis neighborhood gave way to chaos on Monday, as more than two dozen police cars, most unmarked, blocked off the street before officers raided two homes.

Witnesses described more than 50 heavily armed officers: local police, sheriff’s deputies, some from other agencies. Many shielded their identity with black ski masks.

The score from this elaborate, multi-agency gang taskforce effort? A single “roach” from an ashtray, containing a quantity of marijuana too small to trigger an arrest. The homeowner was given a written citation.

Minutes away, at a downtown courthouse, the police department was entering its first day on trial.

The case, brought by activists and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), alleges the Memphis police department (MPD) engaged in illegal surveillance of activists involved with Black Lives Matter and Fight for 15, including “catfishing” them with fake social media accounts.

In a statement to the Guardian, the MPD said the timing of the raid was “not related to the ACLU lawsuit in any way”.

Activists feel differently – the homes raided belonged to the uncle and grandmother of Antonio Cathey, one of the city’s more well-known activists and one of the targets of the alleged police spying.

Following the raids, activists reported police searching a community garden, tailing activists in unmarked cars, and in one case pulling over a vehicle in which one passenger was an ACLU lawyer representing the activists.

The lawyer was briefly detained, in handcuffs.

“It’s most definitely intimidation and it’s to show us that even the courts can’t stop them doing what they want to do,” said Keedran Franklin, a prolific activist who has described being watched and targeted by Memphis police over the last two years.

According to Cathey, in the raid on his uncle’s home police tossed drawers, left clothing strewn about the house and broke family pictures.

When officers entered the second house, he said, they pointed weapons at his 71-year-old grandmother.

“It was a retaliation to what was going on in court and it was an intimidation tactic but it didn’t scare me,” he said.

Cathey, Franklin and the ACLU lawyer Scott Kramer were at the courthouse for the first day of the trial when Cathey got word of the raid. When Kramer arrived at the scene, he said, he saw a number of officers using masks and bandannas.

“One guy used what looked like a white sheet on his head and then sunglasses over top of it,” Kramer said.

He also noted that several of the vehicles used appeared to display civilian license plates.

In its statement to the Guardian, the MPD did not address questions about masks or vehicles. It said the gang unit was dispatched on a warrant on suspicion of cocaine trafficking, then moved to Cathey’s grandmother’s house and arrested his cousin on an unrelated outstanding assault charge.

“You Guys Are Not Going To Continue To Do This Shit And Get Away With It, Point Blank. Period.”

When authorities left the scene, Kramer was in a car with several activists who decided to follow one of the unmarked cars. They did so briefly before the county sheriff sent four vehicles to pull them over, for “following too closely”.

In a video posted to Facebook Live by the driver, Spencer Kaaz, another local activist, Kramer can be heard asking “why are you putting me in handcuffs” as an officer pats him down. The other passengers decline to get out. After some time, officers uncuff Kramer. He returned to court for the rest of the day’s proceedings.

Kramer said: “The bullet point is: on the same day that the ACLU is bringing a suit against the Memphis police, (they are saying) ‘We can pull you over and put you in handcuffs whenever we want to.’”

Cathey reported being followed by one of the undercover cars later in the week. On Thursday, Franklin discovered that MPD officers had paid a late-night visit to a community garden maintained by activists in Memphis’s Concerned Citizen Coalition, the group police are principally accused of spying on.

MPD would only tell the Guardian there was no call for service made at the garden. It declined to provide a reason why officers might have been there.

The surveillance project was operated by the MPD’s office of homeland security, which officials said was “originally designed to deal with threats to the MPD or Memphis in general”.

In a deposition for the ACLU lawsuit, officials said the office had been “retooled” around 2016, due to an increase in policing-related protests and to focus on “local individuals or groups that were staging protests”.

This included the publication of daily joint information briefings on potential protests and known protesters. According to the suit, the briefings regularly included information about meetings on private property, panel discussions, town halls and even innocuous events like “Black Owned Food Truck Sunday”.

A good deal of that information appears to have been obtained by a fake MPD Facebook profile for “Bob Smith”, which the ACLU said was used “to view private posts, join private groups, and otherwise pose as a member of the activist community”.

In one case, the Bob Smith pseudonym chatted with a protester on Facebook, describing himself as “just a fellow protester” and later saying “block me if you want, but I’m not a cop”.

A federal judge is currently considering his verdict on the ACLU lawsuit. He has already ruled that the city violated a federal consent decree barring the city from engaging in political surveillance.

The judge will issue rulings later on several issues, including if the ACLU has standing in the case, if the consent agreement should be modified and if police violated the activists’ first amendment rights by gathering political intelligence.

Late on Friday night, Franklin and Cathey were riding in a car when they were pulled over once again, allegedly for a busted turn signal light. Franklin streamed the incident to Facebook Live.

“I guess this is shit we’re going to go through, until they get it together,” he said.

Cathey told the Guardian: “The cops intimidate and follow us and do those things because they think they can just get away with it.

“But I’m going to be that voice for the people and let them know that this is not right. You guys are not going to continue to do this shit and get away with it, point blank. Period.”

Customs, Border Officers Forcing Women And Children To Submit To Stripping, Body Cavity Probing, Forced Hospital Procedures: Minor Girls Subjected To Supposedly Prohibited Genital Fingering

August 19, 2018 By Susan Ferriss, Center for Public Integrity [Excerpts]

Tameika Lovell was retrieving baggage at New York City’s Kennedy Airport when two female U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers stopped her for a “random search.”

It was Nov. 27, 2016, the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and the school counselor from Long Island had just arrived from a short Jamaica vacation.

Lovell, who is black, had been stopped and felt profiled before, but this time a CBP supervisor began posing questions she hadn’t heard previously.

“Don’t you think you’re spending too much money traveling?” Lovell, 34, recalls him asking.

What allegedly happened next is outlined in a harrowing civil lawsuit Lovell filled in March in federal court. And the assertions aren’t unique, based on allegations in similar suits filed not just in New York but also in California, Arizona, Texas, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Inside a secure room, Lovell’s litigation asserts, one of the female officers searched Lovell’s belongings, presumably for illegal drugs, and asked Lovell if she were using a tampon or sanitary pad. The question upset her, but she replied “no” and complied when told to remove her shoes, lift her arms and spread her legs.

As the other female officer observed, hand on her firearm, the suit says, the first touched Lovell from “from head to toe,” before ordering her to squat. The officer squeezed Lovell’s breasts “hard,” and allegedly “placed her right hand into her (Lovell’s) pants ‘forcibly’ inserting four gloved fingers into plaintiff’s vagina” before parting Lovell’s buttocks with her hand “for viewing.”

Lovell was left “violated, shocked and afraid,” according to her suit, which accuses CBP officers of violating not only her constitutional rights, but the agency’s own handbook as well.

An August 1 Justice Department filing sought to dismiss CBP and individual officers, but not the U.S government, as defendants. Nevertheless, Lovell’s lawsuit — and 10 others since 2011 reviewed by the Center for Public Integrity — raise timely and unsettling questions about how far border and other immigration officers can go with their considerable power to detain people at the nation’s 328 ports of entry.

The existing rules can be shocking for travelers.

Legal precedents grant federal officers at ports of entry the power, without warrants, to require people to strip for a “visual inspection” of genitals and rectums, and to submit to a “monitored bowel movement” to check for secreted drugs.

At the same time, a CBP detention-and-search handbook instructs officers to record a solid justification for every single step beyond a frisk, and to respect detainees’ dignity and “freedom from unreasonable searches” and to “consider the totality of the circumstances ... when making a decision to search.”

The handbook also warns officers against engaging in what could be considered either a “visual or physical intrusion” into vaginal or anal cavities.

Yet in these suits, innocent women — including minor girls — who were not found with any contraband say CBP officers subjected them to harsh interrogation that led to indignities that included unreasonable strip searches while menstruating to prohibited genital probing.

Some women were also handcuffed and transported to hospitals where, against their will, they underwent pelvic exams, X-rays and in one case, drugging via IV, according to suits.

Invasive medical procedures require a detainee’s consent or a warrant. In two cases, women were billed for procedures.

The suits underscore mounting criticism that accountability for officer conduct is too weak — at a time when President Donald Trump is beefing up the ranks of CBP officers and urging ever-tougher crackdowns at the border and other ports of entry. Settlements show that the government has opted to close some cases before trials that could require CBP court testimony; six of these suits have resulted in settlements that cost taxpayers more than \$1.2 million in payments to plaintiffs by the U.S. Treasury Department. A Canadian traveler who sued lost a jury trial in 2013. Other cases continue to wind their way through the system.

CBP Agents Commit “Battery, Sexual Assault, False Arrest, Abuses “Under Color Of Law” And Discrimination”

In one pending suit, filed in March in Fresno, California, a detained undocumented teen from Guatemala alleges that in 2016 in Presidio, Texas, a male CBP agent touched her vaginal area and breasts after ordering her to strip. He allegedly said he was checking for weapons. A federal court has sealed the case.

In February in San Diego, another suit filed in federal court on behalf of C.R., a 16-year-old, alleges that CBP strip-searched her last September as she and her adult sisters were returning from a family visit in Mexico through the San Ysidro pedestrian port.

The sisters were allegedly “flagged” after a false drug-sniffing dog alert. Female officers took C.R. aside, the suit asserted, and allegedly told the tearful girl to disrobe, hand over a sanitary pad—and squat and cough “while officers probed and shined a flashlight at her vaginal and anal areas.” Justice Department attorneys representing officers have filed to dismiss C.R.’s suit, arguing that it was not filed properly.

But C.R.’s alleged experience isn’t isolated: It is one of three alleged San Diego border strip searches of Hispanic minors and one 42-year-old Hispanic woman reported just since last September to the San Diego office of the American Friends Service Committee, a rights group.

And C.R.’s lawsuit isn’t the first of its kind filed in San Diego.

Unbeknownst to the public, almost two years before C.R.’s search, records reviewed by the Center show that in 2015 the U.S. government quietly settled a different lawsuit for \$500,000 with a woman also subjected to a prolonged ordeal at the San Ysidro port — an ordeal that allegedly involved vaginal probing, twice, by a CBP officer.

CBP said its officers “encounter persons attempting to smuggle narcotics into the United States internally, a very dangerous smuggling method that comes with the risk of great personal harm.” But the agency would not discuss at what rates officers discover drugs secreted in travelers’ bodies. At a May 30 congressional hearing on borders and opioids, Tucson, Arizona, acting CBP field director Guadalupe Ramirez testified that officers “regularly find drugs concealed in body cavities,” as well as taped to bodies and hidden in vehicles and hygiene products.

In New York, Lovell’s lawsuit says CBP officers’ search at JFK “shocked the conscience,” and caused her to seek immediate medical care at a hospital, as well as rape counseling. When the search ended, Lovell said, the CBP supervisor told her to expect other searches since she often travels.

“We’re the federal government and we have the right to search you the way we think we need to,” Lovell recalls him saying. “I’ll never forget that.”

In May 2017, Lovell followed a standard procedure by filing a “federal tort claim” directly with CBP. The claim was denied in March 2018 and she filed suit against the United

States, CBP and officers referred to as “John Doe” or by last names and badge numbers.

Lovell’s suit and the others reviewed by the Center level a range of accusations at officers, including violations of due process and the Fourth Amendment’s protection against illegal searches, as well as battery, sexual assault, false arrest, abuses “under color of law” and discrimination.

8	Q. What happened then?
9	A. Then he proceeded to put two fingers up my rectum
10	and I started crying.
11	Q. After he said that there were no drugs?
12	A. Yes. In my vagina.

An Arizona teen CBP detained as she returned from Mexico says she didn’t authorize a hospital to perform a pelvic exam that found no hidden drugs.

Lawyers for the women say that the relatively modest number of suits shouldn’t be considered a measure of how frequently detained people are invasively searched.

“Instances like these are traumatic and people feel sexually assaulted. Filing a lawsuit requires detailing a significantly painful incident in a public forum,” said Adriana Piñon, staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union in Texas.

Since September, AFSC U.S.-Mexico Border Program director Pedro Rios said, he’s helped file two complaints alleging invasive searches on the San Diego border directly with the CBP Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

The family of a male autistic teen traumatized by a strip search, Rios said, decided against a complaint out of fear of retaliation.

CBP officers, the CBP handbook says, should “weigh all factors” before an officer, who should ordinarily be of the same gender, searches a juvenile. Officers are told to seek parental consent for a strip search and refrain from touching or a “visual” search of a minor’s body cavities.

If a parent refuses consent, officers should seek advice from CBP counsel. In addition to compensatory and punitive damages, C.R.’s suit in San Diego seeks an injunction blocking CBP defendants “from engaging in invasive law enforcement searches.”

The handbook also instructs officers to perform duties “in a non-discriminatory manner.”

A person’s ethnicity isn’t grounds for a search. But officers do consider factors such as travel to certain countries, unusual travel patterns and behavior that seems evasive or otherwise suspicious, according to lawyers who’ve represented travelers in suits.

Canine contraband alerts are also a factor — but it's not uncommon for alerts to be false, the American Civil Liberties Union has argued.

Officers' ability to initiate warrantless searches on "reasonable suspicion," a lower threshold than "probable cause," is grounded in arguments that ports merit greater scrutiny, as well as a 1985 Supreme Court ruling. In that case, *United States vs. Montoya*, the court found that a rectal exam revealing cocaine-filled balloons didn't violate a woman's Fourth Amendment rights because officers considered various factors and had "reasonable" concerns that she'd concealed drugs.

Settled civil suits accusing officers of failing to wisely act on suspicions don't establish guilt or criminal liability. But documents do reveal how searches escalated, and how attorneys attempted to defend CBP before settling. In an Arizona case, Justice Department attorneys representing CBP officers argued that the detention handbook was simply "guidance."

Each of the suits tells a story:

The case that led to the \$500,000 settlement was rooted in a Nov. 2013 incident involving an American church volunteer returning from an orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico. She was stopped by CBP at a San Diego's Otay Mesa pedestrian port at about 4 p.m.

Officers, the woman's suit asserts, repeatedly ignored pleas that she was not the person on a Contra Costa County, California, outstanding drug arrest warrant from 1997 that appeared in officers' computer system. The name on the warrant was hers and it bore her driver's license number, but her birthdate and her race were different.

Officers allegedly separated the woman from her group, without explaining to other travelers why, and placed her in a room where she was frisked and fingerprinted. An hour later, an officer allegedly told her something to the effect of "this isn't you," and indicated that she'd be released.

But officers argued, with one suggesting another check more databases, the suit says. Several hours later, the woman was handcuffed and driven 10 miles away to the San Ysidro port of entry along with other female and male detainees. There, the suit alleges, the woman and three other detainees were told to line up and spread their feet.

"Plaintiff could observe the female CBP officer placing a gloved hand down each of the three women's pants as part of this search," the suit alleges.

"This officer squeezed my breasts hard and went into my underwear and in my vagina with her finger. She did this with the same glove that she did three other women before me!!" the woman later wrote later in an email to a CBP official, according to the suit. "I was mortified!!!! I never felt so violated!!!!"

"Plaintiff was visibly upset, crying and professing her innocence during and after the search," the suit alleges. The officers allegedly "mocked" her, calling her a "basket case."

After 20 minutes the same female officer allegedly repeated a vaginal search.

“When I questioned why she was doing it again she told me ‘Because I am’ and the male officer behind her said, ‘What, do you work here?’ Even if I was a criminal NO ONE should be treated in this manner,” the woman wrote to CBP, which allegedly did not respond.

Around 10 p.m., an officer allegedly suggested “this is all wrong” and that he’d investigate. The suit alleges that the officer spoke with Contra Costa law enforcement about the warrant’s discrepancies and was told to hold the woman for later transport to that county.

At about 1:40 a.m., the woman was handcuffed and driven to the Las Colinas Detention Facility, a San Diego County jail for women. She wasn’t released until she posted a \$10,000 bond the next day.

“People with tremendous power are not always using it in a discerning fashion,” said San Diego attorney Timothy Scott, the woman’s lawyer.

He accused officers of acting with “indifference, and compounding error with arrogance.” Scott said his client didn’t seek to air her grievances in media because she was so upset, and still doesn’t want to be identified.

The U.S. government and CBP didn’t file responses to the suit, and within two months settled for the \$500,000, according to Treasury Department records. Contra Costa County settled with her for an additional \$450,000, according to a document obtained from that county.

MORE

Invasive Searches: A Philadelphia Woman’s Hideous 24 Hour Ordeal; And Many, Many More

August 19, 2018 By Pratheek Rebala, Center for Public Integrity [Excerpts]

This timeline is based primarily on allegations in a lawsuit filed by a woman traveler who was stopped by U.S. Customs and Border Protection as she returned from a trip abroad. The lawsuit filed against the United States and CBP officers and staff at a Philadelphia area hospital has been settled.

An African-American woman, 36, flew into the Philadelphia International Airport from a one-day trip to Punta Cana, the Dominican Republic, on Dec.4, 2012 — and a 24-hour ordeal ensued in a fruitless search for hidden drugs, her 2015 lawsuit says.

The woman's complaint against CBP defendants was quietly settled in 2017 for \$189,500 paid by the U.S. Treasury Department.

After her arrival, CBP officers intercepted the woman at customs and took her to a screening room to search her belongings and allegedly interrogate her about suspicions that her short trip might indicate drug smuggling. The woman allegedly explained that she travels often on airline employee discounts available to family members. "At no time did the CBP defendants contact the airline" to confirm her relative's job or make other attempts to verify her story, her suit asserts.

Officers then tried to "shame" the detained woman into a false confession, the suit says, by asking if she was religious or had children. Her suit says that she was told she'd be released after a pat down.

But after seven hours — and attempts to get her to consent to an X-ray — the woman was allegedly handcuffed, shackled and "dragged" from the airport and taken to a local hospital.

Officers "provided false and misleading information" to staff suggesting that she was "packing" drugs, the woman's suit further alleges, and that she'd have to remain in a room "until she had urinated and defecated into a plastic container in the presence of an officer."

After a staff shift change, the suit alleges, a nurse announced that the woman's heart rate was elevated, and doctors "involuntarily" admitted her to care due to "possible drug toxicity."

According to the suit, the woman was tied to a bed with restraints, stripped naked by medical staff and had a tampon removed from her vagina during a body search. In court filings, the hospital doesn't deny conducting the exam, administering sedatives using an IV, catheterizing the woman to collect urine and putting her through X-rays and abdominal and pelvic CT scans.

"The agents had no basis for their suspicion" of the plaintiff, her suit says. "Medical personnel confirmed what (the plaintiff) had told CBP agents from the moment she encountered them: that she had no contraband on her person."

Justice Department attorneys, however, argue in a filing that the "federal defendants deny that CBP officers had no basis for their suspicions," and that the Dominican Republic is "a known illegal drug source country." CBP officers, the response alleges, asked the woman to "consent to an X-ray that would expeditiously determine" if drugs were inside her and "explored whether to seek a warrant" but did not because she was involuntarily admitted to the hospital.

"Plaintiff was afforded all constitutional rights and protections to which she was entitled at all material times to the incidents alleged," the response also argues.

After she woke from a sedated state, the woman's suit asserts, she was driven back to the airport and suffered an accident driving her own car to her destination. The woman's lawyer said that his client asked not to be identified and that he refrain from commenting.

Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital in Darby, Pennsylvania, where procedures were conducted, said in a statement: "While we cannot provide details about any specific patient's health or treatment, we strive to honor the sacredness and dignity of every person." Documents show the hospital system agreed to close the case in what the woman's attorney said is an undisclosed settlement.

In Texas

A Hispanic U.S. citizen, 52-year-old "Jane Doe," was returning from visiting a deported family friend in Mexico in December 2012 when CBP took her aside at about 2 p.m. at El Paso's Cordova Bridge pedestrian port of entry for a "random" check, according to her lawsuit.

The suit, which was filed and publicly disclosed by the ACLU, was settled in 2016 with a \$450,000 payment by the U.S. Treasury Department and a total of another \$1.1 million from El Paso's University Medical Center and other medical defendants.

During an initial frisk, Doe's suit alleges, a CBP officer allegedly inserted a finger into the crevice of Doe's buttocks.

Then a CBP canine handler tapped his foot in front of Doe and his dog lunged, after which Doe, inside a room, was made to lower her pants and squat, while an officer allegedly looked at her anus with a flashlight. Another officer allegedly "pressed her fingers into Ms. Doe's vagina and visually examined her genitalia with a flashlight. ... Ms. Doe was understandably humiliated and she began crying."

Around 4 p.m., a handcuffed Doe was taken to the medical center, where she was allegedly ordered to take a laxative and execute a bowel moment in the presence of CBP officers. She was then subjected to an X-ray, without a warrant or her consent, and handcuffed to an exam table and given a vaginal and anal exam followed by an abdominal CT scan.

"Ms. Doe felt that she was being treated less than human, like an animal," her suit asserts.

Jane Doe refused to sign a consent form that a CBP officer allegedly said would allow CBP to cover procedure costs. She was billed more than \$5,000, according to her suit, which claims that CBP had a "pattern and practice" of using the hospital to carry out searches on suspected carriers.

"I think this should give everyone pause, in terms of what the government is doing," said Piñon of the ACLU, which represented Doe.

"The touchstone of the Fourth Amendment is reasonableness," Piñon said, which means officers can't keep invasively searching "on a whim."

In initial court filings, CBP officers either denied abuse or asserted "qualified immunity," a defense for government officials if their actions don't violate "clearly established" rights.

In the end, though, the government settled.

The University Medical Center also settled, issuing a statement that the agreement was “meant to bring closure for the plaintiff” and ensure that “we have taken steps to tighten our policies.” The settlement included a CBP commitment to provide one hour of extra training to officers in the El Paso region. The ACLU also wrote letters to hospitals along the border warning them of liability if they engage in unconstitutional searches.

In Arizona

An 18-year-old Hispanic U.S. citizen closed a lawsuit against CBP last October — terms haven’t been revealed — that accuses CBP of violating her rights after she returned to Arizona through a pedestrian crossing in 2014 from a brief trip to Nogales, Mexico.

Ashley Cervantes initially discussed her allegations with media outlets, but she and her attorney recently declined to comment as litigation in federal court came to a close.

Cervantes’ suit and her testimony at a deposition allege that officers had dogs sniff at her, handcuffed her to a chair and subjected her to “invasive pat-downs” before taking her to a hospital where she agreed to an X-ray to “get out of there.” Instead, after she donned a hospital gown, a doctor removed a tampon from her and “forcefully and digitally probed Ashley’s vagina and anus.”

She was “shocked and humiliated,” her suit asserts. Her family was billed for the procedures.

In this case, Justice Department attorneys argued in a filing that the CBP handbook isn’t the final word on searches: “This handbook does not limit the search authority of CBP officers” and is “merely for internal guidance,” attorneys wrote, quoting from a 2004 version of the handbook.

Another defense filing contends that Cervantes “was afforded all constitutional rights and protections to which she was entitled.” In an affidavit, the doctor who performed the pelvic exam on Cervantes asserts that Cervantes permitted the exam. Defendant Holy Cross Hospital “denies it is vicariously liable for the CBP agents or the United States.”

On July 20, a federal judge dismissed the claims against all medical defendants, finding that they couldn’t be held liable under a federal tort claims lawsuit and that other legal options, such as a medical malpractice suit, had been available under Arizona law.

Up north, in Michigan, a Canadian woman settled a lawsuit in 2016 for \$25,000 after alleging that CBP officers at a tunnel checkpoint had searched her so roughly that a tampon she was using was dislodged.

And at Kennedy Airport in New York, CBP officers intercepted two women returning from a short trip to Grenada in 2014 who later sued and settled for \$8,500 last March. After being allegedly threatened with handcuffing and jailing, one woman, 40, a legal Guyanese immigrant, was allegedly forced remove her underwear, hand over a sanitary pad and squat, as menstrual blood flowed from her exposed genitals.

Officers linked the woman to an address used by drug traffickers who'd been arrested, according to court filings. But the women said one officer also made "racially motivated remarks that it was officers' right to search them because black people "are the ones trafficking illegal drugs."

Lovell's suit also accuses CBP at Kennedy of racial profiling. These sorts of allegation aren't new.

A 1997 lawsuit on behalf of 87 black women also alleged racial profiling by Customs officers and illegal strip searches and pat downs at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

The suit was settled in 2006 with a \$1.9 million payment by the U.S. Treasury Department.

In 2000, the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that two years earlier, black female U.S. citizens were nine times more likely than white counterparts to be X-rayed by customs officers after airport frisking, although they were less than half as likely to be found with contraband than white females also X-rayed.

"The racial profiling issue was absolutely constant," said Gil Kerlikowske, a CPB commissioner during former President Barack Obama's administration. Kerlikowske said he tried to improve a complaint system and began regular meetings with the ACLU and other rights groups.

Piñon of the ACLU said: "I worry that the cases we represent underestimate how often this (invasive searching) occurs."

MILITARY NEWS

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

Third Former Marine Recruit Sues War Profiteers For Undercooked Beef:

“Abbott Suffered Permanent Brain And Kidney Damage”

8.29.18 By: Todd South, Marine Corps Times

A third former Marine recruit has sued a food services provider to the service’s West Coast boot camp, alleging undercooked meat served to recruits gave him permanent brain and kidney damage, which led to his early discharge from the Corps.

Tristan Abbott, 19, of Saline County, Arkansas, filed the federal civil lawsuit against Sodexo Inc. on Aug. 24, making him the third former recruit thus far to sue the Maryland-based company in connection with exposure to undercooked beef last year at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California.

Vincent Grano, 19, was the first to sue this summer, followed in early August by Michael Baker Jr., 21.

All three have made similar claims in court documents that they were exposed to the tainted food served by Sodexo, later developed E. coli-related symptoms and were hospitalized and later discharged early from the Marine Corps as a result.

The trio are part of a group of at least 302 Marine recruits treated for E. coli exposure at both MCRD San Diego and Camp Pendleton, California, in late October 2017.

Though only three former recruits have filed lawsuits so far and the MCRD spokesman confirmed three had been discharged, an estimated 15 recruits developed a potentially deadly syndrome because of their exposure, and six of those became critically ill, according to the lawsuit.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention investigation identified two strains of E. coli present and traced the exposure to undercooked ground beef served to recruits at the dining facilities.

Steven Posy, an MCRD San Diego spokesman, previously told Marine Corps Times that three recruits were discharged “based on medical conditions that may be associated with E. coli.”

Enrico Dinges, Sodexo’s spokesman, responded to an earlier Marine Corps Times request for comment that the CDC report “did not conclusively determine or identify the source of the E. coli.”

Posy said that after the incident and investigation, he said officials increased medical inspections of the dining facilities and reinforced recruit hygiene practices.

But officials did not modify the Sodexo food service contract.

Abbott alleges that he was discharged from the Marine Corps on April 27 after having developed Hemolytic uremic syndrome, or HUS, from the E. coli-contaminated beef and continues to suffer medical consequences from contracting HUS.

He had arrived at recruit training only a few weeks before the incident, on Sept. 27, 2017. He and other recruits were exposed to E. coli in about a month later. He fell ill on Oct. 24, 2017, suffering from bloody diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and other symptoms, according to the lawsuit.

Days later, while at Camp Pendleton for training, his symptoms worsened. He was hospitalized on Oct. 29 and was put on dialysis for HUS-related kidney failure within days.

He remained hospitalized until the end of November.

Abbott suffered permanent brain and kidney damage as a result, he alleges. The scenario of his medical injuries and discharge closely mirror those of fellow plaintiffs Baker and Grano.

The F-35 Lightning II Can't Handle Lightning

August 27, 2018 By JARED KELLER, Task and Purpose

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter may be named the “Lightning II” in homage to two of Lockheed Martin’s World War II-era aircraft, but it turns out at least one variant can’t actually handle the lightning at all.

In early August, the Marine Corps put out a solicitation for portable lightning rods to draw lightning strikes away from the branch’s F-35B aircraft current parked at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Japan.

“Since the F-35 as a composite type aircraft does not provide inherent passive lightning protection, the lightning rods being requested are needed for deploying aircraft to any expeditionary airfield in support of combat operations or training exercises that do not support all lightning protection requirements for the F-35B,” the Marine Corps says in its justification or the purchase.

According to the Pentagon’s annual intensive assessment of the F-35 program, conducted by the Office of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation and published in January, Lockheed Martin is currently testing new lightning protection capabilities for the designed to appropriately protect the aircraft’s vital Autonomic Logistics Information System (ALIS) from the sudden surge of a lightning bolt.

The War Zone, which first identified the Marine Corps solicitation last week, has the details of the specific lightning rods if you’re into that sort of thing, as well as the new protections that Lockheed’s whipping up to keep the ALIS secure from outside shocks.

But more importantly, The War Zone notes that the F-35's fuel system poses a unique risk of, well, combustion:

“Combined with the aircraft's lack of inherent lightning strike protection, it is difficult and complicated to make the fuel system “inert” once the plane is on the ground.

“What this means is that there is a distinct potential for a build-up of both oxygen and fuel vapors inside fuel tank that could be dangerous by itself. If a bolt of lightning were to hit a non-inert plane on the ground, there could be an increased risk that it would set off an explosion or cause a fire.”

This problem isn't new.

According to a 2012 Pentagon report, tests of the fuel tank inerting system a decade ago “identified deficiencies in maintaining the required lower fuel tank oxygen levels to prevent fuel tank explosions,” deficiencies which “required levels of protection from threat and from fuel tank explosions induced by lightning.”

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

People do not make revolutions eagerly any more than they do war. There is this difference, however, that in war compulsion plays the decisive role, in revolution there is no compulsion except that of circumstances.

A revolution takes place only when there is no other way out. And the insurrection, which rises above a revolution like a peak in the mountain chain of its events, can be no more evoked at will than the revolution as a whole. The masses advance and retreat several times before they make up their minds to the final assault.

-- Leon Trotsky; The History of the Russian Revolution

The Roots Of Crisis, Stagnation, And Financialization In The Real Economy:

**“Since Finance Capital Cannot, In The
End, Expand Indefinitely Without A Base
In The Productive Economy, We Are
Prone To Both Speculative Bubbles And
Spectacular Busts”**



By Hadas Their, Issue #110, International Socialist Review, Fall 2018

A decade after the Great Recession, almost half of US households still struggle to meet “a bare-bones household budget of housing, child care, food, transportation, and healthcare.”¹

Despite the boastful pronouncements of our pathological tweeter-in-chief, falling unemployment figures are not a good gauge of the state of the working class. “Discouraged” workers (those that have given up looking for work) and underemployed workers are not counted among the ranks of the unemployed, and labor participation rates are still 4 percentage points lower than their pre-recession levels.

Low unemployment numbers have failed to lift workers’ abysmally low wages.

Perhaps it should have been predictable that what would follow a neoliberal boom, and a neoliberal recession, would be a neoliberal recovery.

If Alan Greenspan got anything right during his tenure as Federal Reserve chief, it’s that decades of economic polarization have created a “traumatized” workforce. The jobs that have come back are largely poorly paid, low-skilled, temporary, and part-time work.

American society has, in fact, hit new highs of polarization. As Bernie Sanders recently pointed out: “The three wealthiest people in America own more wealth than the bottom 50 percent—over 160 million people.”²

THE FACTS OF FINANCIALIZATION

Though the stock market has bounced back to much fanfare, as have record-setting corporate profits, investment in new production has remained weak.

The recovery has yielded anemic growth rates for the US economy as a whole. GDP growth has barely hovered above 2 percent a year (as compared to 3 or 4 percent for previous decades).

The depth of the recession and the shallowness of the recovery have raised questions for the left to grapple with. Have we entered a new normal of “secular stagnation,” as former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers dubbed it? If so, what is causing it?

A common, seemingly plausible answer blames the state of the economy on the growing position of finance capital in today’s society.

Undoubtedly, the deregulation and increasing autonomy of the financial sector since the 1970s have opened the way to an explosion of financial markets and a drive to “securitize” everything: that is, to transform debt (from state bonds to workers’ mortgages) into financial instruments, which can be publicly traded.

Casino capitalism has certainly played a large role in exacerbating the speed and fury of the Great Recession, and will no doubt play a role in the next one.

Though the twisted role of finance was widely acknowledged in the years following the recession, today the same toxic cocktails are being served. “Subprime mortgages” have been replaced with “nonprime mortgages.” A market for mortgage-backed securities is growing again, but this time dwarfed by a market (\$200 billion and growing) for student loan-backed securities.

In case you thought Wall Street couldn’t get any nastier than profiting off working-class families’ housing nightmares, now investors are turning a sweet buck off millions of people who have been slammed under crushing debt loads and unforgiving bankruptcy laws. And now the inadequate regulations for financial institutions set during the Obama years are being completely removed by the Trump administration.

PROFITABLE GROWTH, NOT STAGNATION, PRODUCED FINANCIALIZATION

It certainly seems an understandable proposition then, to point to an era of financialization as having ushered in a new phase of capitalism—as Monthly Review editor John Bellamy Foster has called it, “monopoly-finance.”

Financialization, he argues, has become “a permanent structural necessity of the stagnation-prone economy.”³ Since capital is unable to generate enough profits through the traditional production of goods, it has become increasingly reliant on the easy, but ultimately faulty, profits of complex financial products.

However, since finance capital cannot, in the end, expand indefinitely without a base in the productive economy, we are prone to both speculative bubbles and spectacular busts.

In fact, investment in financial cocktails was the outcome of an opposite trend. So much profitability had been restored through the neoliberal boom that capital needed additional outlets for investment.

Since the 1970s tremendous material growth in production and output has taken place. This process accelerated in the early 2000s, with the rising oil boom. “Everyone was looking for a yield,” explained T. J. Lim, one of the early members of JP Morgan’s swaps team. “You could do almost anything you could dream of, and people would buy it. Every week, somebody would think of a new product.” Capital investment found an effective channel in the form of consumer debt, ushering in an “age of securitization.”⁴

As Marx argued, crises do not originate in the field of credit, but nevertheless first appear there. “In a system of production where . . . the reproduction process rests on credit,” he wrote, “a crisis must inevitably break out if credit is suddenly withdrawn . . . in the form of a violent scramble for means of payment. “

At first glance, therefore, the entire crisis presents itself as simply a credit and monetary crisis.” 5

In other words, because the system depends on credit, and because the extension of credit both prolongs the expansion of production and then dries up when boom turns bust, it gives the impression that this is where the crisis begins.

Integration of productive and financial capital

There is no actual divide between the “real” economy of industrial capital, which engages in the production and selling of goods, but has little capital of its own from which to seed this activity, and finance capital, which plays a purely facilitating role in circulation.

Quite the contrary: the last few decades have witnessed an increasing overlap and merging of productive and financial capital. Non-financial firms have had greater access and connectivity to financial markets.

To the extent that there is a separation between the two types of capital, they are still completely interdependent.

Production has always relied on credit. Finance capital is simply that wing of the elite that extends, manages, and handsomely profits off of the extension of credit, even if that handsome profit has gotten more exaggerated and deranged.

No matter how far unhinged financialization seems to become from production or how strong it has grown in influence, economics, like gravity, is based in material conditions.

In the case of the Great Recession, low interest rates set by the Federal Reserve allowed US debt to grow and grow, undergirding a global expansion of production and exacerbating a worldwide glut of goods. In real estate, an overproduction of houses, alongside of declining wages, meant that millions could not afford payments of outrageous interest rates.

Defaulting mortgages, in turn, led the bottom to fall out from under financial derivatives, and trillions of dollars evaporated in the process.

Rather than money creating more money in never-ending tech or housing loops, the real economy inevitably asserted itself.

The “fictitious capital,” in Marx’s words, behind mortgage-backed securities was exposed as completely toxic.

NOTES:

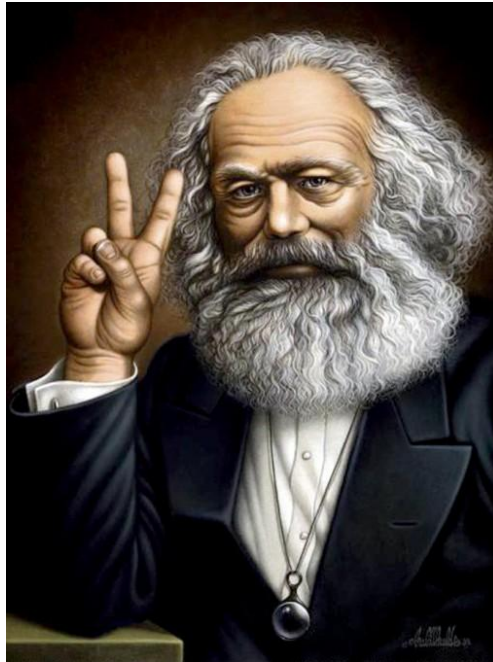
1. Cited in Jessica Corbett, “Sanders Slams US Inequality as Report Finds Nearly Half of Americans Can’t Afford Basic Necessities,” Common Dreams, May 18, 2018, <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/05/18/sanders-slams-us-inequality-report-finds-nearly-half-americans-cant-afford-basic>.

2. Ibid.

3. John Bellamy Foster, “The Financialization of Capitalism,” Monthly Review 58, no. 11 (2007), <https://monthlyreview.org/2007/04/01/the....>

4. Gillian Tett, Fool’s Gold (New York: Free Press, 2010), 31.

5. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 3 (New York: Penguin Classics, 1991), 621.



MORE:

Monetary Crisis:
**“On The Eve Of The Crisis, The
Bourgeois, With The Self-
Sufficiency That Springs From
Intoxicating Prosperity, Declares
Money To Be A Vain Imagination”**
“Commodities Alone Are Money”
**“But Now The Cry Is Everywhere: Money
Alone Is A Commodity!”**

Excerpt from *Capital*, K. Marx, pp. 154-155

The fact that a number of sales take place simultaneously, and side by side, limits the extent to which coin can be replaced by the rapidity of currency.

On the other hand, this fact is a new lever in economizing the means of payment.

In proportion as payments are concentrated at one spot, special institutions and methods are developed for their liquidation.

Such in the middle ages were the *virements* at Lyons. The debts due to A from B, to B from C, to C from A, and so on, have only to be confronted with each other, in order to annul each other to a certain extent like positive and negative quantities. There remains only a single balance to pay.

The greater the amount of the payments concentrated, the less is this balance relatively to that amount, and the less is the mass of the means of payment in circulation.

The function of money as the means of payment implies a contradiction without a terminus medius (the middle stage in a process).

In so far as the payments balance one another, money functions only ideally as money of account, as a measure of value.

In so far as actual payments have to be made, money does not serve as a circulating medium, as a mere transient agent in the interchange of products, but as the individual incarnation of social labour, as the independent form of existence of exchange-value, as the universal commodity.

This contradiction comes to a head in those phases of industrial and commercial crises which are known as monetary crises.

Such a crisis occurs only where the ever-lengthening chain of payments, and an artificial system of settling them, has been fully developed.

Whenever there is a general and extensive disturbance of this mechanism, no matter what its cause, money becomes suddenly and immediately transformed, from its merely ideal shape of money of account, into hard cash.

Profane commodities can no longer replace it.

The use-value of commodities becomes valueless, and their value vanishes in the presence of its own independent form.

On the eve of the crisis, the bourgeois, with the self-sufficiency that springs from intoxicating prosperity, declares money to be a vain imagination.

Commodities alone are money.

But now the cry is everywhere: money alone is a commodity!

As the hart pants after fresh water, so pants his soul after money, the only wealth.

In a crisis, the antithesis between commodities and their value-form, money, becomes heightened into an absolute contradiction.

Hence, in such events, the form under which money appears is of no importance.

The money famine continues, whether payments have to be made in gold or in credit money such as bank-notes.

“The sudden reversion from a system of credit to a system of hard cash heaps theoretical fright on top of the practical panic; and the dealers by whose agency circulation is affected, shudder before the impenetrable mystery in which their own economic relations are involved” (Karl Marx, Capital; p. 126.)

“What Are, Generally Speaking, The Characteristics Of A Revolutionary Situation?”

Comment: T

Whatever you may think of the politics of this writer, he was rather skilled at figuring out when a revolutionary situation was present:

He describes the essential ingredients:

- 1. A ruling class split and at war within itself about what to do: “a crack through which the dissatisfaction and the revolt of the oppressed classes burst forth”**
- 2. An economic crisis squeezing the working class**
- 3. War that breaks the passivity of “peacetime” politics.**
- 4. He might have added, had this been written later, a ruling class so blind and stupid it can’t conceive of a whole population rising in revolution against it, and an army happy to join the mass movement from below.**

1915, Excerpts from Collapse Of The Second International & IMPERIALISM AND SOCIALISM IN ITALY, Kommunist, Nos. 1.2, 1915, By V. I. Ulyanov. [The writer used the pen name “Lenin” to keep the government from terrorizing his family. Excerpts]

For a Marxist there is no doubt that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, we know that not every revolutionary situation leads to revolution.

What are, generally speaking, the characteristics of a revolutionary situation?

We can hardly be mistaken when we indicate the following three outstanding signs:

(1) it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their power unchanged; there is a crisis “higher up,” taking one form or another; there is a crisis in the policy of the ruling class; as a result, there appears a crack through which the dissatisfaction and the revolt of the oppressed classes burst forth.

If a revolution is to take place it is necessary that “one is incapable up above” to continue in the old way;

(2) the wants and sufferings of the oppressed classes become more acute than usual;

(3) in consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses who in “peace time” allow themselves to be robbed without protest, but in stormy times are drawn both by the circumstances of the crises and by the “higher-ups” themselves into independent historic action.

Without these objective changes, which are independent not only of the will of separate groups and parties but even of separate classes, a revolution, as a rule, is impossible.

The co-existence of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation.

This situation existed in 1905 in Russia and in all the periods of revolution in the West, but it also existed in the seventh decade of the last century in Germany; it existed in 1859, 1861 and in 1879-1880 in Russia, though there was no revolution in these latter instances.

Why?

Because a revolution emerges not out of every revolutionary situation, but out of such situations where, to the above-mentioned objective changes, subjective ones are added, namely, the ability of the revolutionary classes to carry out revolutionary mass actions strong enough to break (or to undermine) the old government, it being the rule that never, not even in a period of crises, does a government “fall” of itself without being “helped to fall.”

“There Is No Middle Road; In Other Words, The Attempt To Take A Middle Position Means, In Reality, Covertly To Join The Imperialist Bourgeoisie”

Take the present army. It is one of the good examples of organisation. This organisation is good only because it is flexible; at the same time it knows how to give to millions of people one uniform will.

Today these millions are in their homes in various parts of the country. Tomorrow a call for mobilization is issued, and they gather at the appointed centres. Today they lie in the trenches, sometimes for months at a stretch; tomorrow they are led into battle in another formation.

Today they perform marvels, hiding themselves from bullets and shrapnel; tomorrow they do marvels in open combat. Today their advance detachments place mines under the ground; tomorrow they move dozens of miles according to the advice of flyers above ground.

We call it organisation when, in the pursuit of one aim, animated by one will, millions change the forms of their intercourse and their actions, change the place and the method of their activities, change the weapons and armaments in accordance with changing conditions and the vicissitudes of the struggle.

The same holds true about the fight of the working class against the bourgeoisie.

Today there is no revolutionary situation apparent; there are no such conditions as would cause a ferment among the masses or heighten their activities; today you are given an election ballot - take it.

Understand how to organise for it, to hit your enemies with it, and not to place men in soft parliamentary berths who cling to their seat in fear of prison.

Tomorrow you are deprived of the election ballot, you are given a rifle and a splendid machine gun equipped according to the last word of machine technique: take this weapon of death and destruction, do not listen to the sentimental whiners who are afraid of war.

Much has been left in the world that must be destroyed by fire and iron for the liberation of the working class.

And if bitterness and despair grow in the masses, if a revolutionary situation is at hand, prepare to organise new organisations and utilize these so useful weapons of death and destruction against your own government and your bourgeoisie. .

This is not easy, to be sure.

It will demand difficult preparatory activities. It will demand grave sacrifices.

This is a new species of organisation and struggle that one must learn, and learning is never done without errors and defeats.

The relation of this species of class struggle to participation in elections is the same as storming a fortress is to maneuvering, marching, or lying in the trenches.

This species of struggle is placed on the order of the day in history very infrequently, but, its significance and its consequences are felt for decades.

Single days when such methods can and must be put on the programme of struggle are equal to scores of years of other historic epochs.

The question has been put squarely, and one cannot fail to recognise that the European War has been of enormous use for humanity in that it actually has placed the question squarely before hundreds of millions of people of various nationalities: either defend, with, rifle or pen, directly or indirectly, in whatever form it may be, the great-nation and national privileges, in general, as well as the prerogative or the pretensions of “our” bourgeoisie, that is to say, either be its adherent and lackey, or utilize every struggle, particularly the clash of arms for great-nation privileges, to unmask and overthrow every government, in the first place our own, by means of the revolutionary action of an internationally united proletariat.

There is no middle road; in other words, the attempt to take a middle position means, in reality, covertly to join the imperialist bourgeoisie.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Heroic Zionist Occupation Forces Assault Palestinian Fruit Farmers In Jerusalem



AUG. 20, 2018 Ma'an [Excerpt]

JERUSALEM -- Israeli municipality staff assaulted Palestinian farmers and vendors in the streets of occupied East Jerusalem on Monday, a day before the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha.

Locals said that Israeli municipality staff, under armed security by Israeli forces, targeted Palestinian farmers in the streets of the Old City of Jerusalem and in the Salah al-Din Street of the city.

Sources confirmed that Israeli municipality authorities stormed the areas, issuing tickets to the farmers and vendors forcefully removing them.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces assaulted an elderly Palestinian woman and several other farmers and destroyed their crops, including grapes, apples and peaches.

It is noteworthy, that farmers in Jerusalem are subjected to such assaults on a daily basis, preventing them from selling their crops in the street. In addition, the proceeds of selling these crops support dozens of needy or less fortunate Palestinian families in various neighborhoods.

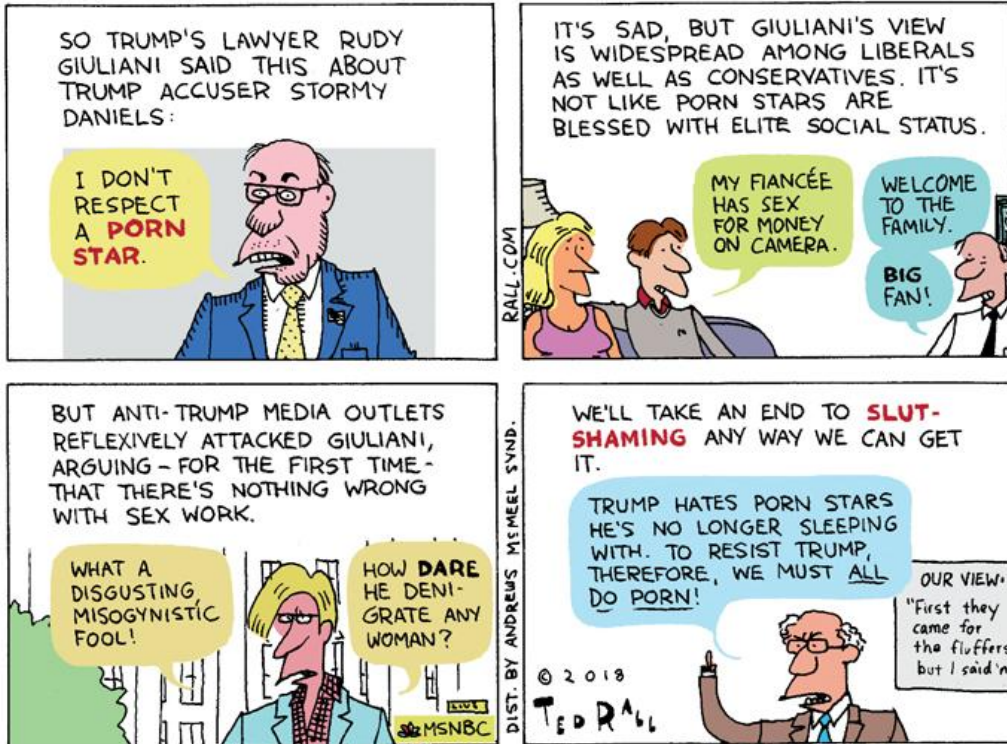
The assault on farmers and vendors in occupied East Jerusalem coincides with preparations for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha.

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



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