

GI SPECIAL 7C14:



**“We Are There For The
Malagasy People”
Soldiers Join Revolution From
Below:
Explosions And Gunfire Erupted
As Tanks Smashed The
Presidential Palace Gates:
Opposition Leader Says The
President Is “A Tyrant Who
Misspends Public Money”**

“Popular Frustration At The Failure Of New Wealth To Trickle Down” After President Made Deals With Foreign Investors



Madagascan soldiers stand guard to protect civilians at a demonstration against the government of President Ravalomanana in Antananarivo. AFP/Alexander Joe)

16 March 2009 BBC

Soldiers have seized one of the palaces of embattled Madagascar President Marc Ravalomanana in the centre of the capital Antananarivo.

Explosions and gunfire erupted as tanks smashed the palace gates. The central bank was also reportedly taken.

Mr Ravalomanana was in another residence on the outskirts of the city.

Earlier opposition leader Andry Rajoelina called for the arrest of the president and won public backing from the armed forces' self-declared head.

Mr Rajoelina told the BBC he wanted a transitional government that would organise elections in the next 18 to 24 months “at the very latest”.

The fierce power struggle on the Indian Ocean island has triggered a military mutiny.

Col Andre Ndriarijaona, who last week said he had replaced the military chief of staff, told AFP news agency that soldiers had seized the presidency “to hasten Ravalomanana’s departure”.

An unnamed colonel inside the captured building told Reuters: "The palace is occupied. This was our mission for today. For now, we have no more orders."

Mr Ravalomanana was hunkered down about 15km (nine miles) from the city centre at the Iavoloha palace, where hundreds of his supporters were camped out

"We are against any bloodletting, so we won't go there until we obtain guarantees on the presidential guard's intentions," said Col Ndriarijaona.

The BBC's Jonah Fisher in Antananarivo says round after round of gunfire - believed to be soldiers celebrating - lit up the night sky but the capital is now quiet, except for the howling of stray dogs.

Our correspondent says it may now be a question of when, not if, the president finds himself under siege.

Col Ndriarijaona said the army was virtually all behind the opposition.

"We are there for the Malagasy people. If Andry Rajoelina can resolve the problem, we are behind him," he said. "I would say 99% of the forces are behind him.

The opposition leader says the president is a tyrant who misspends public money.

Under President Ravalomanana, Madagascar's economy has opened up to foreign investment, particularly in the mining sector.

But 70% of the 20 million population still lives on less than \$2 (£1.40) a day and correspondents say the opposition has tapped into popular frustration at the failure of this new wealth to trickle down.



Madagascan soldiers loyal to the opposition movement storm the office of President Marc Ravalomanana in Antananarivo. (AFP/Alexander Joe)



Madagascan soldiers loyal to the opposition movement take over the office of President Marc Ravalomanana in Antananarivo. (AFP/Alexander Joe)

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 917.677.8057

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Commander In Baghdad Says "I Want To Leave It Very Clear That There's No

Cessation Of Combat Operations” After June 30:

He Also Says “U.S. Troops Would Continue Combat Operations In The Cities After June 30”

He Also Says U.S. Soldiers That Train Iraqi Forces “Will Remain At Posts Within The City”

Iraq’s Prime Minister Says “Any Withdrawals Must Be Done With Our Approval”

He Says “U.S. Troops Will Not Be Removed From Areas That Are Not Completely Secure Or Where There Is A High Probability That Attacks Could Resume After The Americans Leave”

March 16, 2009 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, The Associated Press

U.S. troops will not be removed from areas of Iraq that are not completely secure or where there is a high probability that attacks could resume after the Americans leave, Iraq’s prime minister said Sunday.

[Well, that's only +90% of Iraq. Thanks for making it so clear.]

Nouri al-Maliki said in an interview with The Associated Press that he had told President Barack Obama and other top U.S. officials that any withdrawals “must be done with our approval” and in coordination with the Iraqi government.

[So, the local agents of the occupation running the government of Iraq will dictate when and if U.S. troops get to leave. That's pretty clear too.]

“I do not want any withdrawals except in areas considered 100 percent secure and under control,” al-Maliki said during his flight from Australia to Baghdad at the end of a five-day visit.

“Any area where there is a likelihood of a resumption of attacks, withdrawals from there will be postponed,” he said. [And if you don't like it, go fuck yourself.]

The U.S.-Iraq security pact that went into effect Jan. 1 calls for U.S. combat forces to leave the cities by the end of June in the first step of a plan to remove all American troops from Iraq by the end of 2011. **[Below, the U.S. military command cleared that one up too. They'll be based outside the cities, and from the bases go fight the war in the cities.]**

Also Sunday, a senior U.S. officer told reporters that American troops will focus on attacking insurgent supply routes and rural hide-outs after combat troops withdraw from Baghdad at the end of June.

Brig. Gen. Frederick Rudesheim, a deputy commander of U.S. forces in Baghdad, said the shift from the cities to large bases outside will help make the capital safer because U.S. troops can go after militants at the source: The countryside where they plan their attacks and load up on guns and bombs.

“I want to leave it very clear that there's no cessation of combat operations” after June 30, Rudesheim told reporters in Baghdad's heavily guarded Green Zone.

He also said U.S. troops would continue combat operations in the cities after June 30 but from bases outside town rather than outposts that were established throughout various neighborhoods as part of the 2007 U.S. troop surge.

He said the giant Camp Victory complex on the western outskirts of Baghdad will remain open, but the fate of U.S. military forces in the central Green Zone remains under discussion.

“We will not forsake the security that has been established by the Iraqi security forces and coalition forces,” he said.

Rudesheim said U.S. military transition teams that train Iraqi forces will remain at posts within the city.

[Translation of the above: U.S. troops will continue fighting in the cities they're sort of leaving, but not really, and not leaving the Green Zone, even though they're

sort of leaving the cities, more or less, except for the troops remaining at their posts within the city or engaging in combat in the cities. Get it?]

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

16 March 2009 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20090316-01

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division–Baghdad Soldier died March 16 from combat related injuries while conducting a patrol in Baghdad.

Majority Of Iraqis Say Occupation Has Been Bad Or Very Bad; Majority Of Iraqis Say The Invasion Was Wrong; [Who Gives A Shit What Iraqis Think; Iraq Belongs To The U.S. Empire, Right?]

March 16, 2009 The Associated Press

Iraqis are still unhappy with the way the U.S. and coalition forces have carried out their responsibilities in Iraq, with 69 percent saying they have done quite a bad job or a very bad job — similar to the 70 percent last year.

Only 30 percent thought they had done quite a good job or a very good job, from 29 percent last year.

Looking ahead, 35 percent of those polled thought President Barack Obama's government would make things better for Iraq, and 38 percent thought it would not make much of a difference.

The Iraqis surveyed said they are still unhappy with the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. Just over half — 56 percent — think the invasion was somewhat or absolutely wrong, up from 50 percent last year.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Tucson High Graduate Among Soldiers Killed In Afghanistan

03/15/09 KVOA

A New Mexico man has identified a soldier who grew up in Tucson as one of four Americans killed Sunday by a roadside bomb in eastern Afghanistan.

The father of 24-year-old Air Force Staff Sgt. Timothy Bowles says the military notified him Sunday morning about his son's death.

Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Louis Bowles tells KVOA News his son graduated from Tucson High School in 2002 and also attended Pima Community College.

Timothy Bowles was born in Anchorage, Alaska.

He was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska before being deployed to Afghanistan last November.

Mr. Bowles described his son as sensitive, caring and always willing to help others.

Timothy Bowles is survived by his parents and sister.

They now live out of state, which is why they got in touch with family friends in Southern Arizona to help spread the word.

"Lisa called me today about one o'clock this afternoon, and was crying. And I said, what's wrong, what's wrong? And she said, it's Timmy," said Blanca Berjeron, a family friend who worked with Bowles' mother when they lived in Tucson.

"It's very tough, cause I knew Timmy since he was little. But I know that, he loved what he did, so there's a purpose there," Berjeron said.

"Even though he was young, he was mature for his age, and he was just very caring. But always funny, playing tricks and so forth," Berjeron said.

Bowles comes from a military family - one that knows the risks that come with serving our country - a sacrifice that's brought sadness, but also pride.

"But it makes me think a little more about that and about the war, when it's someone close to you that passes on. But what's comforting is that that's what he loved and that's what he wanted to do," said Berjeron.

Two Soldiers From The Royal Electrical And Mechanical Engineers Killed Near Garmsir

16 Mar 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the deaths of Corporal Graeme Stiff and Corporal Dean John of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Helmand province on Sunday 15 March 2009.

Both soldiers were members of the Light Aid Detachment of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG).

The men had been conducting a vehicle move to the west of Garmsir in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan. Corporals John and Stiff had been travelling in a Jackal patrol vehicle when, at about 1630 hours local time, it was struck by an explosive device and they were both killed.

Ninth Australian Soldier Killed Near Tarin Kowt

03/17/09 The Australian

A ninth Australian soldier has died in Afghanistan after a firefight with 20 Taliban insurgents on Monday.

The latest casualty takes to nine the number of Australian soldiers killed in Afghanistan since February 2002.

Australia currently has about 1,100 troops operating in Afghanistan's dangerous Oruzgan province in the country's south-central region.

The soldier was part of a mentoring and reconstruction taskforce patrol operating with members of the Afghan National Army, near a village 12 kilometres north of Tarin Kowt.

"Initial reports indicate they were engaged by a group of around 20 Taliban insurgents who were using small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

"The patrol returned fire and, sadly, an Australian soldier was killed as a consequence of this engagement." The soldier was shot during the firefight.

Lance Corporal Christopher Harkett Killed Near Musa Qaleh

15 Mar 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence confirms the death of Lance Corporal Christopher Harkett of 2nd Battalion The Royal Welsh who was killed in Afghanistan on Saturday 14 March 2009.

Lance Corporal Christopher Harkett, aged 22, from Pontardawe in Swansea, died as a result of an explosion near Musa Qaleh in Afghanistan on the morning of Saturday 14 March 2009. He was part of a foot patrol from C Company the 2nd Battalion The Royal Welsh who are working to help extend and enforce the writ of the Government of Afghanistan.

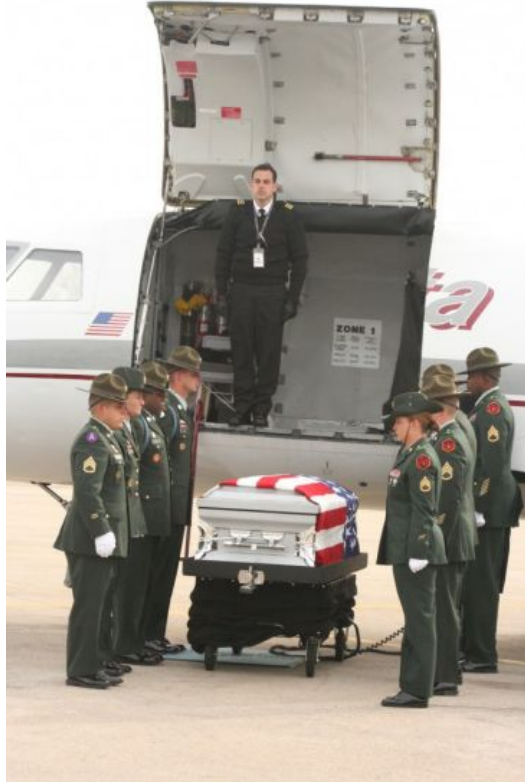
**ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT;
ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers prepare to go for a patrol in Ghazni province February 18, 2009. (Shir Ahmad/Reuters)

TROOP NEWS

**THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THE TROOPS
HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**



MAR 5, 2009: Sgt. Daniel Thompson, 24, of Madison and a 2003 graduate of Portage High School, was killed in Afghanistan on Feb. 24. Jen McCoy - Portage Daily Register

“I Have Seen So Much Money Wasted On Senseless Stuff It Makes Me Sick To My Stomach”

3.16.09 Army Times Online Discussion

SAVE THE MINI-TABASCO

The one little thing that gives our beloved (sarcasm) MRE any kind of flavor is now in jeopardy. Oh, but look at the bright side. (Exchanging Tabasco mini-bottles for packets) will save the taxpayers \$700,000.

Well, yippy skippy. ...

I have seen so much money wasted on senseless stuff it makes me sick to my stomach. Now I just have to go carry a (Tabasco) bottle around with me.

— YOGIDAVE

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

3.16.09 (AP) & DPA & Reuters & (KUNA)

An Iraqi soldier was killed Sunday in a bombing in Mosul.

Armed insurgents killed four soldiers in an overnight attack in northern Iraq, Iraqi security officials reported Monday morning. According to the officials, the attack occurred at an army checkpoint along a rural road near the town of Samarra.

A guard assigned to watch over a mobile phone base station near the city of Kirkuk was killed. According to the Vol news agency, a second guard was injured in the attack.

A roadside bomb struck a U.S.-backed neighbourhood patrol, wounding three people, including one guard, in the Doura district of southern Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents clashed with Iraqi forces and killed a soldier in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad on Sunday evening, police said.

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed in an armed attack east Samarra, some 110 KM north of the capital Baghdad. Major Ahmad Subhi Al-Fahal, Director of the Office of Counter-terrorism and riots in Salah El-Din district told KUNA that four Iraqi soldiers were killed Sunday in an armed attack at an Iraqi checkpoint on the agricultural road eastern Samarra near Al-Adheim river.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATIONS**

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!**

**NEED SOME TRUTH?
CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

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.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”
-- Camille Desmoulins

**“When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, “No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country.”
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

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**

Trash

From Peace Speaks From The Mirror

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

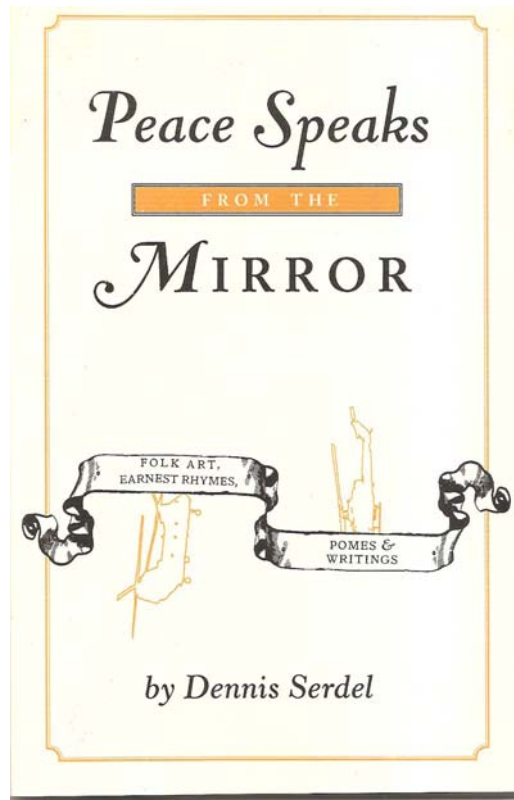
Trash

**Stan waited in line in the creepy drizzly cold rain
waiting to vote for his favorite rich man, who above all,
wanted his son to carry a weight on his back
and carry a rich man’s gun in a holocaust called Iraq
Removed forward in the lines lies, but good people
trying to decide if they will vote for
Republican and Democrat trash.
Stan was finally at the table and they found his name,
then another table where he had to wait.
At least the people were warm now,
then they gave Stan his ballot and he stood alone in the booth
trying to figure out if he wanted to vote for
Republican and Democrat trash.
Stan was switching from one leg to the other for a long time
trying to decide which rich man would let a few pennies
trickle down to him or cut off welfare
and send jobs to China or stop the war
when they were making billions**

and voting for Democrat and Republican trash
Make him have to be a Christian to live in the USA
and round up the gays and gas them
make elementary classes have a course how to breakdown
a M-16 and put it together.
Build walls and make it legal for minute men
to shoot Mexicans in a second
and voting for Republican and Democrat trash
Build walls around the blacks in the inner city ghettos
like they did to the Jews in Warsaw
Put huge crosses on the tops of our schools
on the top of the white house
on the top of the supreme court
and on top of the soldier's helmets
Outlaw evolution and outlaw abortion
and vote for Republican and Democrat trash.
So Stan ripped up his ballot and threw it on the floor
people looked up as he left the room
some with an I feel that way too.

MORE:

Get Some For Your Friends:



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Perry,
Michigan 48872

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Or payment can be made by well hidden American dollars in a Registered Mailing.

Let me know.

Dennis Serdel

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Rich In Cowardly Brutality: Zionist Predators Using Ruger Sniper Rifles Against Unarmed Demonstrators

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

15 March 2009 Peter Beaumont, The Observer

Israeli armed forces and border police used the cover of the war against Hamas in Gaza to reintroduce the firing of .22 rifle bullets - as well as the extensive use of a new model of tear-gas canister - against unarmed demonstrators in the Occupied West Bank protesting at the building of Israel's "separation wall".

The tactics were highlighted on Friday, when a US protester, Tristan Anderson, 38, was hit in the head by one of the new extended-range gas canisters in the village of Ni'ilin, suffering an open wound in his skull and substantial brain damage.

Anderson's friend, Gabrielle Silverman, claims he was struck by a canister fired from a high-velocity rifle.

The extended-range canisters have been brought into service at the same time that the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and border police have again been using live rounds fired

from Ruger sniper rifles, banned in 2001 by Israel's then military advocate general, Menahem Finkelstein.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**Rich Rats Ban Rentals;
“Even Though Demand For
Rentals Is At An All-Time High, 18
Million Housing Units Are Sitting
Empty In The U.S.”**

“The Idea That Renters Are About As Good For A Neighborhood As An Infestation Of Termites Has Been Around For A Long Time, Particularly In Upscale Communities” Soldiers Wife Says Bullshit

March 12, 2009 By Smart Money

Renters: neighborhood contagion or a lifeline to beleaguered homeowners?

In growing numbers of American towns and subdivisions, that question has become anything but academic, as homeowners associations abruptly ban rentals. Blame it on the huge slump in the housing market. For owners who have to move or who own houses as investment properties, short-term rentals can bring in some cash and keep them from having to sell at a big loss.

The conflicts help explain one of the more bitter ironies of the real-estate scene.

Even though demand for rentals is at an all-time high, 18 million housing units are sitting empty in the U.S., according to the Census Bureau.

More than a third of those properties are being left vacant by their owners intentionally, a trend that's being exacerbated by local renting rules.

The idea that renters are about as good for a neighborhood as an infestation of termites has been around for a long time, particularly in upscale communities.

During the boom years, antipathy toward renters was heightened by the easy availability of credit. When anybody could get an adjustable-rate mortgage, someone who couldn't get approved for a mortgage seemed truly untrustworthy.

This skepticism fueled a huge surge in restrictions, says Joseph Cusimano, a Cleveland attorney who represents almost 500 condo and homeowners associations.

The rules don't discriminate between hardened speculators and owners who have more benign reasons for renting.

When Sun Meadows opened on the south side of Sacramento in 2004, the first wave of buyers into the 55-and-over development mingled affably in the evenings around the community pool, fitness center and putting green. "The first six months, it was paradise," says Mitchell Geise, who paid \$328,000 for his stucco, three-bedroom home. The market cooled before all 136 homes could be sold, however, so the developer began

renting the unsold homes. Geise even became a landlord himself, when he bought a neighbor's home out of foreclosure.

But the influx of renters proved to be the flash point for personality conflicts that soon split the community.

One faction claimed the renters trashed the billiards room, while the other defended renters and pushed for them to have a greater say in setting the rules.

For Geise, the conflict reached its nadir when he got into a scuffle with a 69-year-old neighbor who was a leading anti-renter agitator.

Today the two sides continue to squabble, and the conflict isn't helping home prices: Two sales have fallen through after prospective buyers learned of the lingering discord. "This whole thing put the kibosh on the ability to sell here," says resident Deborah Jessee.

Comment On The Article: "My Husband Is In The Army

Madson#4

Tuesday, March 03, 2009 11:21:50 AM

Not all renters are bad.

My husband is in the army and where you have a military base, you will have renters.

We rent not because we can't get financed for a home but rather we are only at some posts for 1-2 years.

With the markets the way they are and the difficulty homeowners are having selling a home, buying just doesn't make sense for everyone. We take care of the yard, even planted shrubbery, have a yard service treat our grass, and keep the house very neat. Anyone driving down the street would not know we lived in a rental.

However, we do have some neighbors who are against rentals. They are retired military which I find somewhat ironic since I'm sure they rented at some point in their career.

It is the responsibility of the landlord to put quality people in the homes and have stringent rules for taking care of the home.

MORE:

Capitalism At Work:

**One In 50 Children Is Homeless In
The United States Every Year:**

“42 % Of Homeless Children Are Younger Than 6”

March 10, 2009 (CNN)

One in 50 children is homeless in the United States every year, according to a report released Tuesday.

The report, by the National Center on Family Homelessness, analyzed data from 2005-06 and found that more than 1.5 million children were without a home.

“These numbers will grow as home foreclosures continue to rise,” Ellen Bassuk, president of the center, said in a statement.

The study ranked states on their performance in four areas: the extent of child homelessness, the risk for it, child well-being and the state’s policy and planning efforts.

The states that fared the poorest were Texas, Georgia, Arkansas, New Mexico and Louisiana.

Connecticut, New Hampshire, Hawaii, Rhode Island and North Dakota performed the best.

Homeless children have poor health, emotional problems and low graduation rates, the study found.

“The consequences to our society will play out for decades,” Bassuk said. “As we bail out the rest of our nation, it is also time to come to their aid.”

The report offers recommendations such as improved support to ensure that children’s schooling is not interrupted when they lose their homes, and services to address the trauma of homelessness.

Other highlights in the report, “America’s Youngest Outcasts: State Report Card on Child Homelessness:”

- 42 percent of homeless children are younger than 6.
 - African-American and Native American children are disproportionately represented.
 - More than 1 in 7 homeless children have moderate to severe health conditions, such as asthma.
 - Approximately 1.16 million of homeless children today will not graduate from high school.
-

After Police Attack Peaceful Marchers In Pakistan, They Turn To Self-Defense And Fuck Up The Cops: “By Evening Police Withdrew, And Thousands Of Flag-Waving Supporters Turned Out To Cheer Sharif”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in. She writes: “I think the new Pakistan government was very wrong in refusing to restore the judiciary that had so consistently opposed Musharraf. This lack of foresight has led to growing support for Sharif. The latest act of stupidity, if continued, might end in their downfall.”]

15 March 2009 Saeed Shah in Islamabad, Haroon Siddique and agencies [Excerpts]

Pitched battles broke out between police and demonstrators in Lahore today as the Pakistani opposition’s “long march” calling for restoration of an independent judiciary degenerated into ugly clashes.

Police in riot gear confronted a previously peaceful protest near the high court buildings, launching baton charges and firing teargas rounds at thousands of demonstrators, who in turn pelted officers with stones.

But by evening police withdrew, and thousands of flag-waving supporters turned out to cheer Sharif, who set off for Islamabad in a convoy of about 200 vehicles.

Before leaving, he told activists: “The government has turned the country into a police state.”

The protesters, a coalition of political parties and civil activists, were demanding the appointment of independent judges and the reinstatement of former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, who was dismissed in 2007 by the then president, Pervez Musharraf.

Last week, police detained hundreds of lawyers and opposition activists and forcibly stopped marchers from travelling out of town, but the clashes in Lahore today were the most violent since the “long march” - which is travelling through Pakistan to Islamabad - set off on Thursday.

Before police charged the crowd, many there had described the atmosphere as jubilant. Lahore is the political base of Sharif and the centre of Pakistan’s lawyers movement.

MORE:

Mass Resistance Wins!

“The Government Releasing Hundreds Of Opposition Figures Arrested In Recent Days And Lifting A Ban On Protests In Much Of The Country”

“Police Melted Away In The Face Of Mass Protests”

MARCH 16, 2009 By MATTHEW ROSENBERG and ZAHID HUSSAIN in Islamabad and JAY SOLOMON in Washington, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

President Asif Ali Zardari's government restored Pakistan's chief justice and made other key concessions to opponents after a day that saw his tenuous grip on the country slip further.

The compromise -- announced by the prime minister in a televised address as dawn broke Monday -- appeared likely to end a showdown between Mr. Zardari and opposition leader Nawaz Sharif.

In making Monday's announcement, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani said the government was releasing hundreds of opposition figures arrested in recent days and lifting a ban on protests in much of the country.

The reinstatement of the chief justice, Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry, caps a nearly two-year struggle by a lawyers' movement that was instrumental in restoring Pakistan's democracy.

Hours before Mr. Zardari agreed to the concessions, police melted away in the face of mass protests and authorities tried -- and failed -- to put Mr. Sharif under house arrest, opposition leaders said.

Two of his cabinet ministers quit in recent days, a ban on a major news station was only being partly enforced by satellite-TV providers and security forces put up just a short fight Sunday against stone-throwing protesters in the eastern city of Lahore.

The lack of resistance by police left Mr. Sharif to lead thousands of government opponents on a so-called long march to Islamabad. Surrounded by thousands of

cheering and flag-waving supporters, Mr. Sharif called the rally a “prelude to a revolution” as he set out on the 200-mile trip trailed by scores of cars and trucks.

But the march was halted on the road to Islamabad as word of the concessions spread, and Pakistani television channels broadcast images of a protest transformed into a celebration, with men and women dancing, singing and cheering.

PAYBACK!

#1



A Pakistani citizen wielding his own bamboo stick chases a policeman who is running away during a demonstration against the government in Lahore March 15, 2009. Pakistani police routinely beat anti-government demonstrators with bamboo sticks. During this demonstration, citizens used their own, bigger bamboo sticks to defend themselves. Pakistani protesters clashed with police on Sunday as former prime minister and opposition leader Nawaz Sharif said the government had turned the country into a police state. Photo: REUTERS/Mohsin Raza

PAYBACK!

#2

“Activists Overwhelmed Riot Police, Shaking Government Authority”



Pakistani opposition party activists celebrate in front of a burning police bus in Lahore. Activists overwhelmed riot police, shaking government authority. (AFP/Asif Hassan)

Comment Unnecessary



A protestor is arrested during an annual march against police brutality in Montreal March 15, 2009. REUTERS/Christinne Muschi

In New Terror Video, AIG Demands Huge Ransom from U.S.

March 15, 2009 The Borowitz Report

American intelligence experts are analyzing a new terror video from the American International Group (AIG) in which the leader of the shadowy organization demands billions of dollars from the United States.

In the four-minute tape, which surfaced over the weekend and caused deep concern among U.S. officials, a man believed to be the chairman of AIG says that if his organization is not paid its ransom, "chaos and destruction will rain down on the American economy."

"If we are not paid billions more in bonuses and corporate golf retreats, America will be made to suffer," the man threatens.

Intelligence analysts said that the man, AIG chairman Edward M. Liddy, appears to be speaking at a luxury beach resort that offers few clues as to his exact location, although there is "good intelligence" pointing to the Ritz Carlton in the Cayman Islands.

"We have some reason to believe that he and other AIG executives are there, based on a series of intercepted room service orders from the all-day dining menu," one analyst said.

Reacting to the video, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano raised the nation's terror alert level to orange, meaning "taxpayers are about to get reamed again."

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner also released a response to AIG's latest demands, but intelligence experts said they would need several weeks to decipher Mr. Geithner's response.

RECEIVED

**THE BUTCHER OF GAZA IS COMING TO
NEW YORK!**

Israeli Occupation Forces Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi Raising Money For Zionism March 17: PROTEST!!

**Tuesday, March 17, 2009
5pm
Waldorf Astoria (50th & Park)
New York City**

Subway: 6 to 51st St./E/V to Lexington Ave.

3.15.09 Via New York City Labor Against The War

Stand in Solidarity with the Palestinian People of Gaza and in outrage against an elite fundraising dinner (\$1,000 a plate) for the Israeli Occupation Forces featuring its Chief of Staff.

Over 1,300 Palestinians were murdered in cold-blood in the recent attacks on Gaza, and thousands more have died before and since due to the IOF's genocidal blockade.

This is the criminal behavior which the "Friends" of the IOF want to raise more money to fund!

The dinner will feature Israeli Occupation Forces Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi who, along with other high Zionist officials, is under investigation in Turkey, various European countries and elsewhere for war crimes charges.

Since the massacres in Gaza, many of these officials have been afraid to visit other countries for fear of being arrested and/or charged with war crimes. A big turnout Tuesday can be a small but significant step toward ending the impunity they enjoy in the US!

While New Yorkers lose their jobs and homes in increasing numbers every day, billions of our tax dollars go every year to fund murder and oppression of Palestinians--but for the super-rich dining at the Waldorf, even that's not enough!

While diners inside the Waldorf party to raise money for murderers, an American citizen, Tristan Anderson lies in critical condition from a tear gas canister (paid for with US tax dollars) fired at him during a peaceful protest Friday in the West Bank. A fellow protestor said "He had a large hole in the front of his head, and his brain was visible." (Ha'aretz, 3/14/2009).

This is the kind of cold-blooded murder Palestinians face every day, and which diners at this event want to raise more money for!

Join Al-Awda NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, to protest this outrage!

**WAR CRIMINALS NOT WELCOME HERE!
PROTEST "FRIENDS OF THE IOF"!**

Bring banners, signs and Palestinian Flags!

Protest the Genocide inflicted on Gaza!

Protest the Israeli Occupation Forces' Fund-raising Dinner!

Stand in Solidarity with the people of Gaza, Demand an End to all US Aid to "Israel", Demand an immediate return of all Palestinian refugees to their rightful homes and a free Palestine!

For more information, please contact:

Al-Awda NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition
info@al-awdany.org
<http://www.al-awdany.org>
718-228-8636

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

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**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

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