

GI SPECIAL 7H17:



[Thanks to Phil G]

GI Special Website Down

The GI Special website at <http://www.militaryproject.org> and the associated email address contact@militaryproject.org are down. Work going on now to fix. T

**“A Majority Of
Americans Now See The
War In Afghanistan As
Not Worth Fighting”**

Survey Finds Two To One Opposition To Sending More Troops

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & The Military Project, & Phil G, who sent this in.]

August 20, 2009 By Jennifer Agiesta and Jon Cohen, Washington Post Staff Writers
[Excerpts]

A majority of Americans now see the war in Afghanistan as not worth fighting, and just a quarter say more U.S. troops should be sent to the country, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll.

The new poll comes amid widespread speculation that Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, will request more troops for his stepped-up effort to remove the Taliban from Afghan towns and villages.

That position gets the backing of 24 percent of those polled, while nearly twice as many, 45 percent, want to decrease the number of military forces there.

(Most of the remainder want to keep the level about the same.)

In January, before President Obama authorized sending an additional 17,000 troops to the country, public sentiment tilted more strongly toward a troop increase.

Among all adults, 51 percent now say the war is not worth fighting, up six percentage points since last month and 10 since March.

Less than half, 47 percent, say the war is worth its costs.

Those strongly opposed (41 percent) outweigh strong proponents (31 percent).

Opposition to the Iraq war reached similar levels in the summer of 2004 and grew further through the 2006 midterm elections, becoming issue No. 1 in many congressional races that year.

By the time support for that conflict had fallen below 50 percent, disapproval of President George W. Bush's handling of it had climbed to 55 percent, in contrast to the solid overall approval of the way Obama is dealing with Afghanistan.

But there are warning signs for the president.

Among liberals, his rating on handling the war, which he calls one of "necessity," has fallen swiftly, with strong approval dropping by 20 points. Nearly two-thirds of liberals stand against a troop increase, as do about six in 10 Democrats.

On the GOP side, views are more evenly distributed, as Republicans divide about equally in support of an increase, a decrease and no change to troop levels.

MORE:

**Majority Of Americans Now
Oppose War In Afghanistan:
Support At “A New Low”
[Because The USA Is Political
Dictatorship Where The People With The
Money Own The Government, What We
The People Want Is Treated With
Contempt By The Imperial Scum Who
Rule The Nation]**



30 July 2009 New Statesman

[Just in case you missed it the first time. T]

August 6, 2009 (CNN)

A new national poll indicates that support among Americans for the war in Afghanistan has hit a new low.

Forty-one percent of people questioned in a CNN/Opinion Research Corp. survey released Thursday say they favor the war in Afghanistan -- down 9 points from May, when CNN polling suggested that half of the public supported the war.

Fifty-four percent say they oppose the war in Afghanistan, up 6 points from May.

The CNN/Opinion Research Corp. poll was conducted July 31 through August 3

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Most Powerful Resistance Attack Of The War So Far Hits U.S.-Allied Iraqi Government: Baghdad Foreign Ministry And Finance Ministry Buildings Destroyed, Parliament Damaged: “Iraqi Officials Sought To Get Baghdad Under Control Yesterday”



Aug. 20, 2009: Iraqi Foreign Ministry after Wednesday's massive bomb attack in Baghdad. Explosions targeting government and commercial buildings struck Baghdad, killing scores and wounding hundreds more. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)



Iraqi rescue workers looks for survivors inside the Foreign Ministry building August 20.
(AFP/Khalil al-Murshidi)



Iraq's ruined Foreign Ministry building after a bomb attack in Baghdad, August 20, 2009.
REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani



The ruins of the Iraqi Finance Ministry after a truck bomb attack in Baghdad August 19, 2009. Other blasts were near the Foreign Ministry and Baghdad's central governorate building, causing huge destruction. REUTERS/Saad Shalash



The remains of the Mohammad al-Qassem bridge following a massive explosion in the northern Baghdad neighbourhood of Waziriyah. AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye)



Damage inside the Iraqi parliament building, following an explosion in Baghdad Aug. 19, 2009. At least four explosions struck Baghdad, including one near the parliament building in the Green Zone. (AP Photo/APTN)

August 21, 2009 By Sahar Issa and Adam Ashton, McClatchy Newspapers
[Excerpt]

Iraqi officials sought to get Baghdad under control yesterday, heightening security and arresting 11 police and military officers as part of an investigation into how insurgents managed to park truck bombs in front of two government ministries Wednesday in attacks that killed 95 people and wounded as many as 1,203.

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

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

**Remember That Stupid, Lying Obama
Regime Bullshit About How All U.S.**

Troops Have Been Withdrawn From Urban Areas?



8.20.09: US troops patrol the area around the Iraq Finance Ministry building (R) following a massive explosion in the government center of Baghdad. (AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye)

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

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Christian A. Guzman Rivera Killed By Mine In Afghanistan

August 10, 2009 By JOSE PAGLIERY, Miami Herald Staff Writer

Having just graduated from Miami-Dade County's fire rescue academy, Christian A. Guzman Rivera thought the two-year wait to become a firefighter was too long.

The Homestead teen was already addicted to the adrenaline rush he got from tiptoeing the line between life and death.

So he joined the U.S. Marines in 2007, hoping to specialize as a firefighter and secure a spot with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue upon his return.

But Cpl. Guzman, 21, and three fellow Marines died Thursday as they drove their Humvee over an improvised explosive device as they crossed the Afghan desert at the break of dawn, according to family members.

The incident occurred in Afghanistan's western province of Farah, which borders Iran. The others in the Humvee included a New Yorker - Lance Cpl. James D. Argentine, 22 - and two Texans - Lance Cpl. Travis T. Babine, 20, and Sgt. Jay M. Hoskins, 24.

"They are our heroes," said Guzman's mother, Velma Torres.

Family members said Guzman was a different man when they last saw him in May. The thin Puerto Rican teen who had left Homestead came back a Marine weighing 35 pounds more - all muscle, said stepfather Felix Torres. And he had something special to show them: a tattoo he got while stationed in Japan's Okinawa Prefecture. It ran across his sculpted chest in bold black letters that read "Death before dishonor."

It was his oath to brotherhood that transformed his life - and proof that he had not changed much since his days at Homestead Senior High School, where he participated in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. To Guzman, the Marines were a continuation of what he had learned to love in high school: working hard and earning rank.

"He liked the hierarchy, the whole system," said his 18-year-old brother, Jonathan Guzman. "He loved moving up the ranks."

He sustained that determination in the Marines, moving up to corporal in less than 17 months while traveling the world.

But that drive didn't stop Guzman from keeping up with the latest fashions and constantly adding to his massive collection of bright-colored, top-notch sneakers.

"It was his obsession," his mother said.

Jordans, Dunks, Blazers, SB's - he had to have them all, said Jonathan Guzman, who estimated his brother's collection at three dozen pairs.

For the young man who so often wore drab military uniforms, fashion was how he expressed himself, saying in bright red and blue what he couldn't say in camouflage.

Family members said that Guzman bought a pair of shoes and an outfit with every paycheck, and would even attend sneaker conventions. Whenever a popular new

sneaker would hit the shelves, Guzman would wait outside a store at 5 a.m. to get a pair from the first batch.

He defined himself by his clothing and style, Jonathan Guzman said.

He will be wearing his uniform when he is buried at Caballero Rivero Woodlawn South Funeral Home and Cemetery, 11655 SW 117th Ave., when his body arrives from overseas later this week.

Two British Soldier Killed Near Sangin

21 Aug 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that one soldier from 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) and one soldier from 2nd Battalion The Rifles have been killed in Afghanistan.

The soldiers died as a result of an explosion that happened whilst on a routine foot patrol, not connected to election security, near Sangin, northern Helmand province, on the morning of Thursday 20 August 2009.

“The Soldiers Are Serving The Strategic And Regional Interests Of The White House And The Consequences Of Their Occupation So Far Have Been Devastating For My People”

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veterans For Peace & The Military Project.]

I believe that if the ordinary folk of Afghanistan and the NATO countries were able to vote, and express their wishes, this indefinite military occupation would come to an end and there would be a real chance for peace in Afghanistan.

August 20, 2009 By Malalai Joya, The Independent [Excerpts]

The writer is an Afghan politician. In 2005, she became the youngest person to be elected to the new parliament, representing Farah province. Her new book Raising My Voice is out now.

Like millions of Afghans, I have no hope in the results of today's election.

In a country ruled by warlords, occupation forces, Taliban terrorists, drug money and guns, no one can expect a legitimate or fair vote.

Even international observers have been speaking about widespread fraud and intimidation and, among the people on the street, there is a common refrain: the real winner has already been picked by the White House.

Democracy will never come to Afghanistan through the barrel of a gun, or from the cluster bombs dropped by foreign forces. The struggle will be long and difficult, but the values of real democracy, human rights and women's rights will only be won by the Afghan people themselves.

So do not be fooled by this façade of democracy.

The British and other Western governments that claim to be bringing democracy to Afghanistan ignore public opinion in their own countries, where growing numbers are against the war.

In my tours to countries that have troops in Afghanistan, I've met many bereaved parents who have lost their loved ones in the war in my home.

I am very sorry to see governments putting the lives of their soldiers in danger in Afghanistan in the name of bringing democracy.

In fact the soldiers are serving the strategic and regional interests of the White House and the consequences of their occupation so far have been devastating for my people.

I believe that if the ordinary folk of Afghanistan and the NATO countries were able to vote, and express their wishes, this indefinite military occupation would come to an end and there would be a real chance for peace in Afghanistan.

But today's election does nothing for that.

**Pashtun Nationalism Is What The
Afghanistan War Is All About:
“The Boundary Line That Runs
Through What They Call
Pashtunistan Is No More Legitimate
Than The Border That Once Divided
East And West Germany”**

“Pashtuns On Both Sides Of The Border Have To Help Taliban”

Aug 1, 2009 By KATHY GANNON (AP) [Excerpts]

KABUL — In a recent debate leading up to the presidential elections here, the first question was not about terrorism, or violence, or even opium.

It was about how candidates viewed a jagged line casually drawn on a map 115 years ago by British colonial rulers.

For the West, this border separates Afghanistan from Pakistan, and it is a source of great frustration that neither country seems able or even willing to enforce it.

But for many Pashtuns, the most powerful ethnic tribe here, the line runs through what they call “Pashtunistan” and is no more legitimate than the border that once divided East and West Germany.

The Pashtuns and their ethnic agenda are in many ways at the center of the upcoming elections and the armed conflicts in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Like the Pashtun-dominated Taliban, many Pashtuns who have not taken up arms still share the dream of a united Pashtunistan.

This dream grows stronger as the Pashtuns on both sides of the border get more disgruntled.

The Pashtuns number about 42 million people — 42 percent of the population of Afghanistan and 15 percent in Pakistan.

They support and, indeed, largely make up the Taliban.

“Pashtuns on both sides of the border are feeling that all the world is against them,” says Moabullah, a burly six-foot bearded Pashtun.

From a pocket inside his dark brown vest, Moabullah pulls out an election registration card. He laughs. It shows his picture and identifies his father, his district, his village, but it does not say that he is Taliban.

Moabullah got the registration card when he marked his ballot in Afghanistan's 2004 presidential elections. He won't be voting this time around.

Instead, Moabullah uses the card to slip safely through government-run checkpoints. “If I get stopped outside my area, on the highway, I show this card.”

When the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, Moabullah was a reluctant fighter, who says he often hid to avoid being sent to the northern front lines.

In 2001, when the Taliban were routed, Moabullah returned to his home in Ghazni, south of the Afghan capital. He even sought international money to build some wells and irrigation ditches in his district.

He says he didn't get any.

He says the victors -- mostly non-Pashtuns of the Northern Alliance, dominated by ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks -- hounded him, demanding weapons and money, with threats to turn him over to their U.S. allies as a Taliban unless he capitulated.

Eventually he fled to Iran.

In 2007 he came home and returned to the Taliban.

"The people were suffering. Pashtuns were feeling their life was tough," he says. "Slowly, slowly Mullah Omar began organizing and we all went back..."

"We are one tribe in Pakistan and Afghanistan. There is no difference. We are the same culture, the same turban, the same language. Our people are coming and going. Pashtuns on both sides of the border have to help Taliban."

Moabullah's story reflects the resentment that many Pashtuns feel, which makes them all the more open to the Taliban.

In Pakistan's northwest, Pashtun tribesmen are still bristling at the Pakistani military's incursion into their tribal areas, starting in 2003.

Since then they have killed 1,800 Pakistani soldiers.

In the early 18th century, Afghanistan was born as a Pashtun nation, with its borders stretching deep into what is present-day Pakistan and its capital in Southern Kandahar. Pashtuns on both sides of the border still long for those glory days.

It irks the Pashtuns that they, descendants of kings who have ruled from Iran to New Delhi, feel relegated to secondary citizen status by Tajiks and other tribes who led the resistance to the Taliban. They are eyed with suspicion by their non-Pashtun brethren and targeted by international forces.

The Taliban stoke the Pashtun dream. A few years ago, Mullah Mohammed Omar wrote a Pashtu-language letter to his senior military commander Mullah Akhtar Mohammed Usmani, making it clear that the Taliban on both sides of the border were operating as one.

"The Pakistan Taliban are part of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and they should be under the command of Jalaluddin Haqqani," Omar said in the letter provided to the AP, referring to a powerful Taliban commander with an elaborate network of fighters and suicide bombers on both sides of the border.

This ill-defined border is called the Durand line, after colonial British representative Sir Mortimer Durand.

Under a treaty, the line originally marked where British rule in India ended and that of Afghanistan began.

The treaty expired in 1993 after 100 years.

Pakistan wants the border to be reinforced with a fence to stop unhindered crossings of militants and supplies.

But many Pashtuns on both sides believe a new border should be established that would give Afghanistan all the Pashtun lands, including those in Pakistan.

Even Afghanistan's pro-West government was not ready to accept the Durand Line, saying a grand council would have to be called to decide where a border could be established.

"Pashtun and Afghan mean the same thing really," says Lateef Afridi, a former Parliamentarian of the secular Awami National Party in Pakistan, who reviles the Taliban but shares their dreams of Pashtunistan.

The Taliban made the point in a colorful map of Afghanistan drawn at a school in Kandahar.

The word "Pashtunistan" runs the entire 2,430-kilometer (1,520-mile) border with Pakistan.

WELCOME TO VIETNAMISTAN: HAVE A NICE DAY



U.S. soldier from the 10th Mountain Division from Fort Drum, NY, patrols the Tangie valley, Aug. 5, 2009, in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Dima Gavrysh)

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Resistance Attacks Occupation Troops In Capital Of Somalia

August 21, 2009 By Abdi Guled, MOGADISHU (Reuters)

Fighting erupted between Islamist rebels, government forces and African Union peacekeepers [translation: occupation troops] in Somalia's capital Mogadishu on Friday, killing at least 22 people, witnesses and medical staff said.

Battles broke out around the city's strategic K4 junction after the insurgents launched a pre-dawn attack on an AU base and on government troops. Witnesses said the clashes spread to three other districts.

A business leader in Mogadishu's sprawling Bakara Market said a further five people had died there when a mortar bomb exploded in a busy restaurant.

Adding to the carnage, residents said Ethiopian troops also fought battles on the border in Bakool region with ethnic Somali rebels from the Ogaden National Liberation Front. Ethiopian officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

Ethiopia repeatedly denies its troops are in Somalia fighting alongside pro-government militiamen but residents of Baladwayne, in central Somalia, say soldiers from the neighboring country have been camped a few km from their town for months.

The troops marched into Baladwayne on Friday with Somali government soldiers, they said.

"Ethiopian troops entered the town and are now patrolling the streets in and around Baladwayne," local elder Farah Guled told Reuters.

U.S.-Allied Lawmakers Declare State Of Emergency In Somalia: “Insurgent Groups Control Many Districts In The Capital And Most Regions In South-Central Somalia”

20 August 2009 Garowe Online

Mogadishu —

The Somali parliament passed a law that calls for a state of emergency.

The parliamentary session was held in the Somali capital Mogadishu, with 480 MPs presenting their various opinions.

MP Mohamed Qanyare, one of Mogadishu's ex-warlords, told fellow lawmakers that passing the bill “would make it easier (for the government) to re-capture regions” under the opposition's control.

Sheikh Aden “Madobe” Mohamed, the parliament Speaker, reported the vote as: 451 MPs voted yes; 23 MPs voted no; and 6 MPs abstained.

It is not clear what the new law will do to help restore order in Mogadishu, but insurgent groups control many districts in the capital and most regions in south-central Somalia.

TROOP NEWS

4 Soldiers Charged With Cruelty And Maltreatment Of Subordinates In Iraq: “A Suicide Investigation Brought To Light Alleged Wrongdoing”

August 21st, 2009 CHELSEA J. CARTER, Associated Press Writer & CNN)

Four U.S. soldiers have been charged with cruelty and maltreatment of four subordinates in their platoon in Iraq after a suicide investigation brought to light alleged wrongdoing, the military said Friday.

There is no confirmed evidence that the suicide — involving a fifth subordinate in the unit — was a result of any mistreatment, said Lt. Col. Kevin Olson, a spokesman for Multi-National Division-South, who added the military is still looking into that possibility.

Charges were preferred Wednesday against three sergeants and a specialist with the 13th Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Bliss, Texas, accusing them of engaging in “verbal abuse, physical punishment and ridicule of subordinates,” according to Olson. He described the physical punishment as falling into the category of “undue calisthenics.”

In a statement, the military identified the men as Sgt. Enoch Chatman, Staff Sgt. Bob Clements, Sgt. Jarrett Taylor and Spc. Daniel Weber of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment from Fort Bliss, Texas. The military did not provide their ages.

Chatman of West Covina, California, was charged with four counts of cruelty and maltreatment, one count of making a false statement and one count of reckless endangerment. If convicted on all counts, he faces up to 10 years in prison, a dishonorable discharge and forfeiture of pay, the military said.

Clements of Eastland, Texas, faces four counts of cruelty and maltreatment, three counts of making a false statement, one count of impeding an investigation and one count of reckless endangerment. If convicted on all counts, he faces up to 25 years in prison and a dishonorable discharge, the military said.

Taylor of Edmond, Oklahoma, was charged with two counts of cruelty and maltreatment, one count of making false statement and one count of reckless endangerment. He faces up to eight years in prison, if convicted on all charges.

Weber of Frankenmuth, Michigan, has been charged with three counts of cruelty and maltreatment, one count of reckless endangerment and one count of impeding an investigation. The charges together carry a nine year maximum, if convicted.

The statement does not provide any further details nor does it say where the allegations occurred. Multi-National Division-South is headquartered in southern Iraq in the rich city of Basra. Olson said the period of time the actions allegedly took place was under investigation.

As Disabled Veterans Wait Months And Sometimes Years For Benefits, VA Bosses Hand Out \$24 Million In Bonus Money To Their Buddies

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & Military Project, who sent this in.]

8.21.09 By KIMBERLY HEFLING, Associated Press Writer & 08/20/2009 By Gautham Nagesh, Nextgov.com [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON – Outside the Veterans Affairs Department, severely wounded veterans have faced financial hardship waiting for their first disability payment. Inside, money has been flowing in the form of \$24 million in bonuses.

In scathing reports this week, the VA's inspector general said thousands of technology office employees at the VA received the bonuses over a two-year period, some under questionable circumstances. It also detailed abuses ranging from nepotism to an inappropriate relationship between two VA employees.

The inspector general accused one recently retired VA official of acting “as if she was given a blank checkbook” as awards and bonuses were distributed to employees of the Office of Information and Technology in 2007 and 2008.

“In addition to the improperly administered awards, we found the frequent and large dollar amount awards given to employees were unusual and often absurd,” investigators reported.

“A current and a former deputy assistant secretary both told us that they were 'stunned' by the total amount of appropriated funds that (the Office of Information and Technology) spent on awards/bonuses....” In some cases the justification for the bonuses was inadequate or questionable, the IG said.

The official, Jennifer S. Duncan, also engaged in nepotism and got \$60,000 in bonuses herself, the IG said. In addition, managers improperly authorized college tuition payments for VA employees, some of whom were Duncan's family members and friends. That cost taxpayers nearly \$140,000.

Separately, a technology office employee became involved in an “inappropriate personal relationship” with a high-level VA official. The technology office employee flew 22 times from Florida to Washington, where the VA official lived. That travel cost \$37,000.

The number of claims the VA needs to process has escalated, and the Information and Technology Office has a critical role in improving the technological infrastructure to handle the increase.

Much of the IG's focus was on Duncan, the former executive assistant to the ex-assistant secretary for information and technology, Robert Howard.

In one situation, a part-time intern with connections to Duncan was allowed to convert to a full-time paid position even though the individual was working a part-time schedule 500 miles away at college, the IG said.

“We have never known of any other new VA employee provided such favorable treatment,” the IG said.

Investigators recommended that the employees who received the college money pay it back. The largest amount awarded was \$33,000.

In addition to Duncan, three other high-level employees received \$73,000, \$58,000 and \$59,000 in bonuses in 2007 and 2008, the IG said. In 2007 alone, 4,700 employees were awarded bonuses, on average \$2,500 each.

Some employees were given cash awards for services that were supposedly provided before the employees started working at VA, the IG said.

A man who answered the phone at Duncan's residence in Rehoboth Beach, Del., said she was not available, and he said not to call back.

The IG also found that Katherine Adair Martinez, deputy assistant secretary for information protection and risk management in the Office of Information and Technology, misused her position, abused her authority and engaged in prohibited personnel practices when she influenced a VA contractor and later VA subordinates to employ a friend.

The IG also said Martinez “took advantage of an inappropriate personal relationship” with Howard to transfer her job to Florida. In the nine months after she moved, the IG said Martinez traveled to Washington 22 times “to accomplish tasks that she could easily do from Florida.”

The relationship between Martinez and Howard started in April 2007 and continued several months after Howard left the VA in January of this year, the IG said.

The VA has faced criticism before in its awarding of bonuses. In 2007, the AP reported that the then-VA secretary had approved a generous package of more than \$3.8 million in bonus payments in 2006, citing a need to retain longtime VA executives.

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

**“Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies.”
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

Honorable Anniversary: Nat Turner's Rebellion



Carl Bunin, Peace History Aug 21-27

August 21, 1831

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

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

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Hitler And Stalin Would Be Proud: The Zionist Terror That Comes By Night

[Thanks to Ewa Jasiewicz, who sent this in.]

Moammad Khatib was recently released on bail after his lawyer proved that a picture the military prosecution claimed was of him throwing stones that was accompanied by a confession form one of the arrested youth recognizing Mohammad, was taken while Mohammad was out of the country.

August 20, 2009 By The Bil'in Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements, ISM [Excerpts]

Once again the night in Bil'in was disrupted by a raid ending with the arrest of one the members of the Village's Popular Committee Against the Wall and Settlements.

This occurred the night after the childrens demonstration where the children had chanted slogans like "We want to sleep," "Stop the night raids".

The house of Bil'in Popular Committee member and vice president of the Bil'in village council, Mohammad Abu Rahma, (age 50), known by his friends as Abu Nizar, was raided shortly before 2am on Thursday morning.

About 25 soldiers with their faces painted in black had come to the village on foot.

The soldiers broke into Abu Nizar's home and forcefully took him from his bed where he and his wife were sleeping.

They then beat and dragged him to the Annexation Wall where jeeps were waiting to pick them up.

During the arrest, the soldiers where confronted by international solidarity activists who live in the village and Haitham Khatib the village's camera man. As Haithem was filming the arrest, one soldier hit him, broke his camera and hit two of the activists.

Abu Nizar's son Nashmi Mohammed Ibrahim Abu Rahma (age 14) had been arrested 5 days ago. To date, Israeli forces have arrested 28 people (most of which are under 18). Nineteen residents of Bil'in remain in Israeli detention.

Through Israel's interrogation and intimidation tactics, some of arrested youth have 'confessed' that the Bil'in Popular Committee urges the demonstrators to throw stones. With such 'confessions', Israeli forces then proceed to arrest leaders of the non violent struggle in the community.

Magda abu Rahme , 17 , sister to Nashmi and daughter to Mohammad who are both currently in Israeli military prison stated; “These crimes, these armed invasions, breaking into homes where women sleep, these will only make us stronger and more steadfast. We remain samideen – steadfast – and will not back down. The strategy is to fragment our families and community and create distrust, and this will fail, we remain strong and we are immovable.”

What you can do?

Attempts to criminalize the leadership of non-violent protests where curbed in the past with the help of an outpouring of support from people committed to justice from all over the world.

The Popular committee of Bil'in is in desperate need for legal funds in order to pay legal fees and Bail. Please donate to the Bil'in legal fund by paypal click <http://tinyurl.com/lcr6rg> .

If you would like to make a tax deductible donation in the US or Canada contact: bilinlegal@gmail.com.

The Palestinian village of Bil'in has become an international symbol of the Palestinian popular struggle.

For almost 5 years, its residents have been continuously struggling against the de facto annexation of more than 50% of their farmlands via the construction of the Apartheid Wall.

In a celebrated decision, the Israeli Supreme court ruled on the 4 September 2007 that the current route of the wall in Bil'in was illegal and needs to be dismantled; the ruling however has not been implemented.

The struggle of the village to liberate its lands and stop the illegal settlements has been internationally recognized and has earned the popular committee in Bil'in the Carl von Ossietzky Meda. <http://tinyurl.com/nfmsvm>

Another leading Bil'in non-violent activist, Adeb Abu Rahme, remains in detention since his arrest during a non-violent demonstration on July 10th (see report & video: <http://palsolidarity.org/2009/07/7652>).

Adib Abu Rahme as well as Bil'in's popular committee Member Mohammad Khatib have been charged with “incitement to damage the security of the area.”

Moammad Khatib was recently released on bail after his lawyer proved that a picture the military prosecution claimed was of him throwing stones that was accompanied by a confession form one of the arrested youth recognizing Mohammad, was taken while Mohammad was out of the country.

MORE:

The Zionist Terror That Turns A Courtroom Into An Obscenity: “The Evidence Presented Against The Defendants Is Known As ‘Secret Evidence’”

“Only The Prosecution And The Judge Can See It, And Hence No Defense Can Be Put Forward”

20 August 2009 Jody McIntyre writing from Bilin, occupied West Bank; The Electronic Intifada

The Ofer military base is not an easy place to get into.

But after most of my friends and the father of the family I was living with, Mohammed Khatib (also a leading member of the Bilin Popular Committee) were arrested in a brutal night raid on the occupied West Bank village of Bilin, I was determined to go to their court hearing.

Unfortunately, the taxi driver dropped me off at the wrong entrance. Four menacing Israeli soldiers faced me, and they did not look pleased at my presence.

“What are you doing here?” they demanded, “Don't you know that no one is allowed here?!”

“No,” I replied, “I'm just here for a friend's court case.”

“No you can't, you must leave, go home now!”

Fortunately, one of the soldiers unwittingly pointed me in the direction of the court, before reasserting, “but you can't go there.” Nevertheless, I was not intending to follow his orders.

Sitting outside were the families of all seven men on trial -- although the term “men” would be misleading; five of the seven were aged 18 or younger.

Also waiting to enter were a small group of international volunteers, hoping to observe the trial.

But as usual with Israel's so-called “democracy,” they would not be permitted to do so.

Luckily for myself, I arrived at the same time as Lamia Khatib, Mohammed's wife, and her insistence that I was a member of the family secured my entrance.

Once inside, I felt like I was at the heart of apartheid.

We sat out all day in a Shawshank Redemption-esque yard, feeling jailed ourselves, with the unbearable heat beating down on our heads. As I sat on the concrete floor, staring at the youthful soldiers patrolling the cage we sat in, I couldn't help but contemplate the occupation. When will the injustice stop? How can this be overcome?

At that moment, I could see it all around me. Right down to the Palestinians working for peanuts to repair the building behind us -- cheap Palestinian labor is hugely exploited inside the green line, the internationally-recognized boundary between Israel and the West Bank, while the workers are treated as third-class citizens in their own homeland.

We were finally called for the hearing at around 3:30pm, even though it was due to start at 9:30am.

In the court, the system of apartheid was even clearer.

Despite the guards demanding the shackled teenagers not communicate with visitors, 18-year-old Mustafa couldn't help but to shout out "HALA JODY!" when he saw my face. It was difficult seeing my adoptive family in brown uniforms, knowing they wouldn't be freed in this sham of a trial.

The evidence presented against the defendants is known as "secret evidence," meaning only the prosecution and the judge can see it, and hence no defense can be put forward.

The whole process is conducted in Hebrew, a language most Palestinians don't understand.

Translation is kindly provided by a young Israeli soldier -- yet another bitter irony considering the overwhelming force used to drag the boys from their homes in the dark of the night.

By the end of the day, there was no conclusion. No one was released.

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 to thomasfbarton@earthlink.net: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

Zionist Regime Makes It Official: Israel At War With Non-Violent Unarmed U.S. Civilians



Tristan Anderson being treated by medics following being shot in the forehead with a high-velocity tear gas canister by Israeli soldiers.

19 August 2009 The Alternative Information Center

The Israeli Ministry of Defense informed American activist Tristan Anderson's family and legal counsel that it considers his shooting during a nonviolent protest in the West Bank village of Nil'in, which left him critically injured, an "act of war," absolving the soldiers responsible from any liability under Israeli law.

Anderson was shot directly in the forehead with a high-velocity tear gas canister by Israeli forces on March 13th, 2009, suffering several condensed fractures and necessitating several life-saving surgeries.

To date, he remains unconscious at Tel Hashomer Hospital in Tel Aviv; his prospects for recovery are as of now unclear.

The designation, under a recently amended tort law, automatically relieves Israel of its obligation to pay Anderson's family any kind of compensation; according to Leah Tsemel, the attorney leading the Andersons' civil suit against the Israeli government, this categorization is used in cases against Palestinian victims "all the time."

Overwhelming eyewitness and video evidence indicates that Tristan was not a combatant and presented no threat to the authorities; he was shot from a distance of 60 meters while taking pictures of the Wall with a group of Palestinians and internationals hours after the protest had been dispersed from the Wall's construction site by the Israeli military.

The Andersons, who have filed both a criminal complaint and a civil suit against the Israeli government, plan to fight the decision in Israeli and, if necessary, international courts.

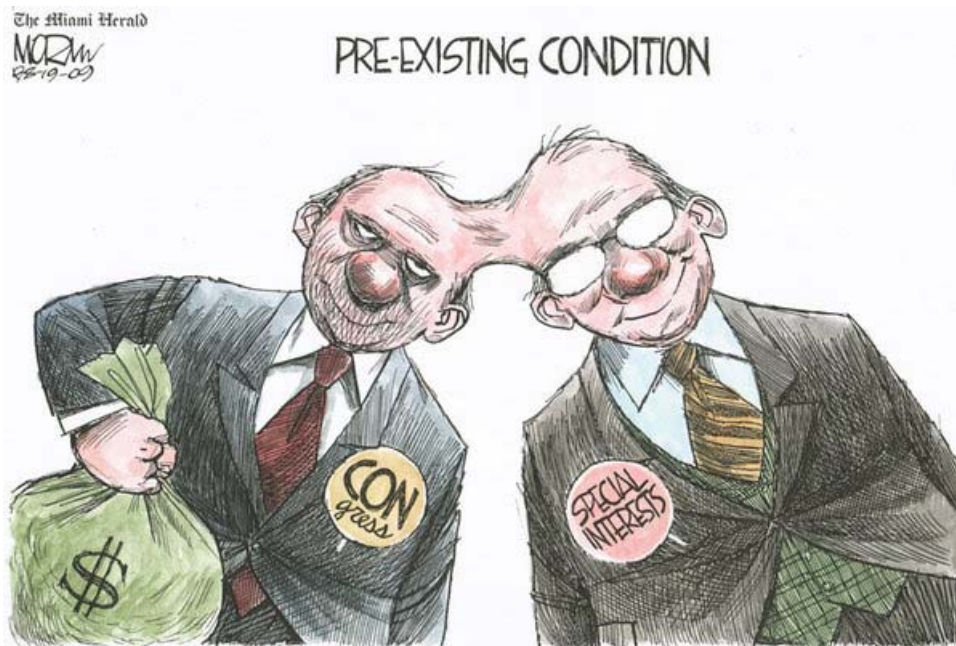
In the words of Michael Sfard, the family's criminal attorney, "[...] if a process by which unarmed civilian demonstration is classified by Israel as an 'act of war,' then clearly Israel admits that it is at war with civilians.

"International law identifies the incident as a clear case of human rights abuse."

Tristan suffered multiple condensed fractures as a result of being hit in the right frontal lobe. On 10 August 2009, Tristan underwent another surgery to reattach the top part of his skull, which was removed in order to save his life immediately after his shooting five months ago.

[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."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Phil G]

Voters Take Revenge:

Tax Cheating British Politician's Car Trashed



Hazel Blears' car with tyres slashed and window smashed

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

10th August 2009 By James Tozer, Daily Mail

Hazel Blears had her car windscreen smashed and its tyres slashed while out in her constituency trying to salvage her political career.

The former Communities Secretary, who quit the Cabinet over the expenses scandal, was canvassing in Salford when she returned to find her people carrier had been attacked.

Last night the MP - who came under fire for avoiding a tax bill of more than £13,000 on the sale of her London flat - insisted the incident was nothing more than 'kids on a hot afternoon with nothing better to do'.

However, residents claimed she had been specifically targeted by constituents furious at her recent performance.

The attack comes months after tackling anti-social behaviour was at the top of Miss Blears's agenda as a minister.

Earlier this year, she hit out at an inner-city hardcore of 'Shameless' families and 'freeloaders' who hadn't had a job for generations and made hard-working, law-abiding neighbours' lives a misery.

Miss Blears was knocking on doors in the rundown Weaste area, and had left her black Citroen Xsara Picasso parked nearby.

On returning to the car with her husband Michael and two party workers, they discovered it had been vandalised. All four tyres had been slashed and the windscreen smashed, causing damage estimated at £1,000.

Yesterday, Miss Blears put the attack down to random anti-social behaviour plaguing the estate rather than a deliberate act.

'This is just the actions of a tiny minority,' she said.

Asked whether she was the victim of a vendetta, she replied: 'I don't think so. It's a bit pathetic.

'We know that the area has problems with anti-social behaviour, and this is what a lot of people here have to put up with. 'This kind of thing has happened to many people in Salford. I think it was just kids on a hot afternoon with nothing better to do.'

However, Norman Eaton, 51, who lives nearby, said it was no coincidence that it was her car which had been attacked.

'This is the people of Salford telling her they don't accept what she has done,' he said.

'Lots of people saw them and people

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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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**“Income Inequality In The United States Is At An All-Time High”
The Top 10% Of American Earners
“Pulled In 49.7% Of Total Wages”**

08-14-09 Huffington Post [Excerpts]

Income inequality in the United States is at an all-time high, surpassing even levels seen during the Great Depression, according to a recently updated paper by University of California, Berkeley Professor Emmanuel Saez.

The paper, which covers data through 2007, points to a staggering, unprecedented disparity in American incomes. On his blog, Nobel prize-winning economist and New York Times columnist Paul Krugman called the numbers “truly amazing.”

Though income inequality has been growing for some time, the paper paints a stark, disturbing portrait of wealth distribution in America.

Saez calculates that in 2007 the top .01 percent of American earners took home 6 percent of total U.S. wages, a figure that has nearly doubled since 2000.

As of 2007, the top decile of American earners, Saez writes, pulled in 49.7 percent of total wages, a level that’s “higher than any other year since 1917 and even surpasses 1928, the peak of stock market bubble in the ‘roaring’ 1920s.”

Beginning in the economic expansion of the early 1990s, Saez argues, the economy began to favor the top tiers American earners, but much of the country missed was left behind. “The top 1 percent incomes captured half of the overall economic growth over the period 1993-2007,” Saez writes.



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