

Military Resistance 8B17

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



Feb. 22, 2010: Marines carry the body of a U.S. Marine killed in action to a U.S. Army medevac helicopter, in Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Washington Sgt. Dies Of Iraq Wounds

February 26, 2010 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 156-10

Sgt. William C. Spencer, 40, of Tacoma, Wash., died Feb. 25 at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany, of wounds sustained Feb. 20 while supporting combat operations at Combat Outpost Marez, Iraq. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery Regiment, Olympia, Wash.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Indiana Sgt. Killed In Afghanistan



Marine Sgt. Jeremy R. McQueary, Columbus, Ind., died while serving in Afghanistan. McQueary, 27, was killed during combat in Afghanistan Feb. 18. McQueary was assigned to 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Camp Lejeune, N.C. (AP Photo/Department of Defense photo via The Republic)

Soldier From 28 Engineer Regiment Killed In Nad 'Ali

26 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with regret that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 28 Engineer Regiment, attached to the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, was killed in Afghanistan today, Friday 26 February 2010.

The soldier died from wounds received as a result of an explosion near Check Point Shamal Storrei in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province this morning.

Soldier From 4 RIFLES Killed Near Sangin

25 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from A Company, 4th Battalion The Rifles (4 RIFLES), part of the 3 RIFLES Battle Group, was killed in Afghanistan today, Thursday 25 February 2010.

The soldier died as a result of small arms fire near Sangin, in Helmand province, this morning.

RAF Regiment Airman Killed In Kandahar

25 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that an airman from II Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment, part of the Kandahar Airfield Force Protection Wing, was killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday 24 February 2010.

The airman was part of a vehicle mounted patrol and died from wounds received as a result of an explosion which occurred in an area north of Kandahar Airfield in Kandahar province.

Marine And ECU Alum Injured In Afghanistan

February 25, 2010 By Laura Phelps, WNCT

It's every military family's worst fear: getting that phone call with bad news from overseas.

The parents of one marine from Henderson, NC said that fear recently became reality. Their son, 33-year-old SSgt. Steven Matea, was severely injured by a Taliban missile in Afghanistan. The ECU graduate's job is to neutralize and disarm bombs and IED's.

"It's a nightmare," said his mother, Drucilla Matea. She said the initial call provided very little information on her son's condition. "The first thing that goes through a mother's mind is has his legs been blown off? Does he have permanent head trauma?"

She and husband Jim are waiting for their son to be flown from Afghanistan to a hospital in Maryland. Doctors tell the Mateas one of their son's lungs was pierced and he's lucky to be alive. "The Marine that was beside him died," said his mother.

Doctors expect SSgt. Matea to make a full recovery.

This was his 4th tour between Iraq and Afghanistan.

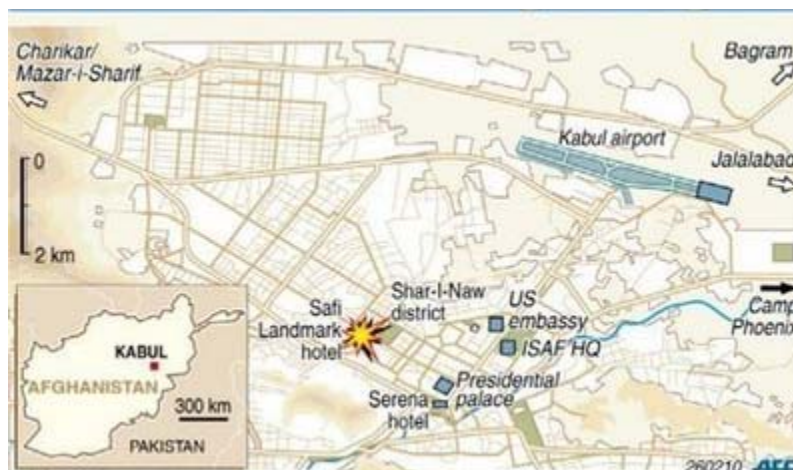
At home, he has a wife and 4-year-old son.

“He would never dream about passing this obligation to somebody else,” said his father.

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

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

Resistance Attacks Neighborhood In Afghan Capital “Frequented By Foreigners And Affluent Afghans” Taliban Spokesman Says “The Exact Target Was Those Foreign People Whose Troops Are In Afghanistan And Backing The Strategy Of The American Invaders”





The hotel frequented by foreigners and affluent Afghans after Taliban attack in Kabul, February 26, 2010. (AP Photo/Musadeq Sadeq)

February 25, 2010 The Associated Press & FEBRUARY 27, 2010 By ALAN CULLISON And MATTHEW ROSENBERG, Wall St. Journal & By Karin Brulliard, Washington Post & By Mark Magnier and Aimal Yaqubi, The Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

A complex attack in the heart of Kabul on Friday showed the continued ability of the Taliban to stage sophisticated operations in the heavily guarded capital, with the aim of undermining international support for the Afghan war.

A crew of Taliban fighters armed with grenades and Kalashnikov rifles attacked a major hotel and two guesthouses frequented by foreigners here early Friday, setting off a gun battle with Afghan police and killing at least 17 people.

"I saw foreigners were crying and shouting," said Najibullah, whose face and hands were covered in blood. "It was a very bad situation inside.

The choice of the Shahr-e-Naw neighborhood frequented by foreigners and affluent Afghans sent a not-so-subtle message: foreign occupiers and those who follow their profligate ways must be eliminated.

The dramatic raid in central Kabul began around daybreak and wounded at least 38 people.

The dead included Indian Army officers, a noted French filmmaker and an Italian diplomat. Five Indian army officers were injured in the attack.

The Italian killed was a diplomat, Pietro Antonio Colazza, according to Maurizio Massari, a spokesman for Italy's Foreign Ministry. The Italian news agency ANSA reported that Mr. Colazza had been on the telephone with the Afghan police when he was shot by one of the bombers who had entered the Park Residence.

The Taliban said five bombers took part in Friday's attacks — the group's second major assault on Kabul this year — and that foreigners were the target.

Friday's attack began around 6:30 a.m. when a driver detonated an explosives-packed van outside the Aria guesthouse, used by foreigners, gutting the guesthouse and leaving a swimming-pool-size crater. A second assailant then blew himself up, killing three policemen

The explosion could be heard across Kabul, as could the bursts of gunfire that followed when the attackers stormed another guesthouse favored by foreigners, Park Residence.

After shooting their way indoors, the gunmen set off a bomb and moved from room to room killing residents, officials said.

"It was really a huge bombing; the one guesthouse completely collapsed," said Zemary Bachery, the Interior Ministry spokesman. "It was completely surprising, such a target."

That blast destroyed the facade of the five-story Safi Landmark Hotel, 300 metres from the Interior Ministry, which sits atop one of Kabul's swankiest shopping malls.

Every window in the high-rise hotel was blown out and shattered glass covered the street below, crunching underfoot.

"The first explosion took out all of the windows," said Tanel Sepp, the chargé d'affaires of Estonia, which maintains diplomatic offices inside the hotel.

The two guesthouses were in even worse shape. Outside the Hamid Guest House, the car bomb left a crater 8 feet deep and more than 12 feet across. Across the street, the blast uprooted a hefty pine tree, which lay on its side on the muddy sidewalk.

At the Park Residence, the windows were blown out and the metal gates in front of the ground-floor shops, which had been locked for the weekly Friday holiday, were crumpled like aluminum foil.

Foreign residents of the Park Residence, Britons and Eastern Europeans who managed to escape, stood on the street outside as the gunfire crackled, looking stunned. They said they had been told not to speak to a reporter.

An ensuing gun battle with police lasted more than three hours, leaving the street strewn with debris and bloodied body parts. All five attackers were killed, Afghan police said.

Early morning television broadcast images of a plume of black smoke rising from the area, shattered glass lining the streets and broken windows in shops and homes.

Afghan police crouched behind traffic barriers as the remaining insurgents remained holed up in the guesthouse basement.

The six Indian casualties included two Indian Army majors, one of whom taught at the Afghan military academy; a constable of the Indian border police; and a diplomat.

“If we have security, why do we have this kind of drama?” asked Ahmad Haji Zada, 22, as he surveyed the damage to his mangled building-materials store, about a block from the two small hotels.

“How is it possible for them to get into the city?”

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the Taliban wanted to target any “foreign civilians and military personnel who are cooperating with the Afghan government.”

“The exact target was those foreign people whose troops are in Afghanistan and backing the cunning policy and the strategy of the American invaders,” Mr. Mujahid said.

The early morning timing on a weekend probably made it easier to get the attackers, vehicles, weapons and explosives into position since security forces presumably would be less vigilant

The insurgents still retain control over swaths of Afghanistan and command the loyalty of tens of thousands of fighters.

Got Another One



Burning oil tanker that was carrying fuel supplies for U.S. forces in neighboring Afghanistan, after it was attacked by militants in Peshawar, Pakistan, Feb. 25, 2010. Militants have frequently attacked trucks traveling through the Khyber pass carrying supplies to US troops in landlocked Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Mohammad Sajjad)

“There Is No Difference Between Taliban And The Civilian People”
“The Taliban Are The Rural People. They Are Our People”
“I Can Sense Them All Around Us”



Abdul Hamid, 12, at an Italian charitable hospital in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Feb. 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Abdul Khaliq)

Abdul Hamid, 12, said a raid conducted by a party of “foreign soldiers” opened fire outside his house. “I was in front of my house, and they were running and shooting,” the boy said. “I tried to get back into my house, but they shot me in the leg, and there were more bullets, and they shot me again in my belly.”

“We were not unhappy with the Taliban,” he said. “The government didn’t do anything for us. Before the government didn’t help us.”

02/24/2010 By KATHY GANNON Associated Press Writer & Feb 27 By ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU and DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press Writers [Excerpts]

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan—Taxis turned into ambulances ferry wounded civilians out of the combat zone in southern Afghanistan, but one man’s long trip to a hospital began with a two-hour wheelbarrow ride.

Mohammad's legs were peppered with shrapnel when a bomb exploded nearby. His brother found him unconscious and lifted him into the only thing he could find, pushing him in the wheelbarrow before he flagged a taxi.

Most of the wounded civilians recuperating at the whitewashed Italian-run hospital said their injuries were caused by “the foreign soldiers”—a claim that does not bode well for international and Afghan forces who are trying to get residents to renounce the Taliban and embrace the Afghan government.

For many of those interviewed by The AP, the Taliban who are fighting coalition forces are villagers, underscoring the dilemma international forces face trying to rout the Afghan government's armed opposition.

“There is no difference between Taliban and the civilian people. The Taliban are the rural people. They are our people,” said Musa Jan, who arrived a week ago from Marjah.

Jan said his neighbors house was bombed by an aircraft, killing five occupants inside, including children.

On the hospital lawn, three wounded civilians took turns explaining how their injuries were caused by either aircraft bombardments or shooting from “foreign soldiers.”

Sayed Lal said he was going to his home when he was hit. “They shot me. They came at night. They were foreigners,” he said. “I was outside in the field with a friend.”

Lal's legs were covered with a thin white shawl. He fidgeted with his black beard as he told of three other villagers he said had been injured.

Twenty-two-year-old Assadullah, sporting a closely cropped beard, said he was on his motorcycle when “Americans fired at me.”

“I don't know why they shot at me,” said Assadullah whose arm was shattered by bullets. “I didn't even know they were there.”

Abdul Hamid, 12, said a raid conducted by a party of “foreign soldiers” opened fire outside his house.

“I was in front of my house, and they were running and shooting,” the boy said. “I tried to get back into my house, but they shot me in the leg, and there were more bullets, and they shot me again in my belly. Near me some other people fell into a canal. Then they called a plane and they bombarded.”

Hamid said that afterward, the troops said one person outside the house was a Taliban fighter.

“He wasn't,” the boy said. “He was a civilian.”

Sultan Mohammed who fled last Friday from Marjah said he had to walk for several hours before a motorcyclist gave him a lift. He said the Taliban fled when the soldiers came to his area.

“But who are the Taliban? They are the rural people,” he said.

Mohammed said residents had not had problems from the Taliban—that they brought security to the area.

“We were not unhappy with the Taliban,” he said. “The government didn’t do anything for us. Before the government didn’t help us.”

Marine spokesman Capt. Abe Sipe said that while armed resistance has “fallen off pretty dramatically” in the past four to five days, the combined forces expect to face intermittent attacks for at least two more weeks.

“We are not calling anything completely secure yet,” Sipe said.

Capt. Abdelhai Hujum, who spent two decades with various Afghan militias before joining the nascent Afghan National Army, said he suspected most of the local Taliban buried their guns and blended with the civilian population.

“They’re not stupid. I’d do the same if I saw a company of U.S. Marines coming my way,” said Hujum, commander of an Afghan unit.

“I can sense them all around us,” Hujum said Friday as squads of Afghan troops and some Marines stormed a mosque where a child had said eight insurgents were preparing an ambush.

Villagers exhibited hostility. One threw a stone at a Marine waiting outside.

Defectors From Taliban Betrayed And Abandoned: “They Idle Away The Days Debating Whether To Return To The Insurgency, As Some Already Have” “If I Have No Choice, I Have To Become A Talib”

February 26, 2010 By Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

All of the former fighters interviewed said they were promised jobs if they gave up the fight, but for the past four months, the government has honored none of these commitments.

Among the aid available are some food rations and the limited supply of USAID-funded “winterization kits” -- sacks of blankets and coal.

Many former fighters have taken up residence in downtown Herat, afraid enough of Taliban reprisals that they do not return to their villages. They idle away the days debating whether to return to the insurgency, as some already have.

[Suleiman] Amiri, the former militia commander, has been offered a position as a district police chief, but the approval from Kabul has not come. He shares a house with dozens of his men who have no work and grow more anxious by the day. “I pay for 80 people out of my own pocket,” he said.

For now, he is prepared to wait. “We will not leave the government until they say, ‘We have nothing for you,’” he said. “If I have no choice, I have to become a Talib.”

The prospects for Wahab, the former Taliban district commander who joined the insurgency after being fired from his job as a major in the police department, look no better. He rents a decrepit mud hut in a slum on the outskirts of Herat. On rainy days, the dirt floors turn to mud; on cold ones, to frozen earth.

He must borrow money to medicate his five sniffling children. He can rarely offer hot food to his guests.

For the first three weeks after he left the insurgency in November, the Taliban’s “shadow governor” in Herat called Wahab on his cellphone. He was a traitor, an infidel, no different from an American soldier, he was told: “As we kill them, we will kill you.”

As a fighter for most of his life, Wahab does not feel qualified for a civilian job, but the Afghan security forces have offered him nothing.

He refuses to go back to farming in his village of Salimi, unwilling to endure the jeers of his neighbors for falling so low.

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

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

“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR
HEALTH;
ALL HOME, NOW**



U.S. Army armor near where foreign and Afghan soldiers began fighting each other after a 'misunderstanding' in the Sayed Abad district in Wardak, Afghanistan, Jan. 30, 2010.
(AP Photo/Rahmat Nikzad)



U.S. Marines patrol outside Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand province Feb. 11, 2010.
(AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines camp for the night in a gas station in Marjah, Helmand province Feb. 13, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. soldiers at the site of an attack in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, Feb. 13, 2010. Foreign troops were killed when by a bomber on a motorbike. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)



U.S. Marines from Bravo Company of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines during battle in the town of Marjah, in Nad Ali district of Helmand province February 14, 2010. A U.S. Marine company position came under intense fire from all sides at a building where a Karzai government flag had been raised. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic



U.S. Marines from 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment in an open poppy field as Taliban fighters fire on them in the town of Marjah Feb. 15, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



Sgt. Adam Ray's casket outside Okolona Christian Church in Louisville, Ky., Feb. 20, 2010. Ray, 23, died in Afghanistan on Feb. 9. He was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He was assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. (AP Photo/The Courier-Journal, Michael Hayman)

Australian Soldiers “Returning From Afghanistan And Iraq With Drug Addictions After Using Cocaine, Heroin And Other Hard Drugs On Tours Of Duty”

[From Max Watts, Australia, who began helping GIs resisting the Vietnam War in the 1960's, and has never stopped helping soldiers resisting Imperial wars.]

February 21, 2010 By James Campbell, The Sunday Mail [Excerpts]

THE cost of caring for injured Australian veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq has exploded in the past two years, with mental illness the leading cause of disability.

Department of Veterans Affairs figures provided to The Sunday Mail reveal the annual cost of caring for veterans under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act has risen 280 per cent - from \$4.7 million in 2006-07 to \$17.9 million in 2008-09.

The new figures follow alarming Sunday Mail revelations last November that Diggers had been returning from Afghanistan and Iraq with drug addictions after using cocaine, heroin and other hard drugs on tours of duty.

Freedom of Information figures showed hundreds had tested positive to a string of illegal drugs since Australian troops were sent to Afghanistan and Iraq.

The president of Queensland welfare organisation Young Diggers, John Jarrett, said soldiers were mainly developing addictions to cocaine.

“Soldiers are going over there, healthy and normal, and coming back with all kinds of addictions,” he said.

“A lot of the young people ... don’t really realise the issues they have until they are posted to another unit or take their discharge and get out of the military.”

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**

Vietnam And Beyond



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance
Sent: February 19, 2010
Subject: Vietnam And Beyond

Vietnam And Beyond

**“There is no flag large enough to cover
the shame of killing innocent people.”
Howard Zinn**

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

**“The ‘Wolves Of Finance’ Are
Hollowing Out National Treasuries
And Subjecting Governments To
Unsustainable Debt Burdens”**

**“A Major Hallmark Of The Age Of
Finance Capital Is Domination Of The
State And/Or Political Process By
The Financial Oligarchy”**

**“Proposed Government ‘Solution’ In All
These Cases Is To Have The General
Public Pay For The Gambler’s Debt — In
The Form Of Extensive Cuts In Essential
Social Programs And Drastic Reductions
In Living Standards”**

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Resistance, who sent this in. He writes: “Political theatrics within the ruling circles over “how to create jobs” should not mask the fact that delays in job creation are deliberate: they are designed to further subdue American workers and bring down their wages and benefits in line with those of workers in countries that compete with the U.S. in global workers, just like NAFTA, other trade agreements and globalization policies have. This is what the members of our military and their children and grandchildren can expect in return for their service. The ruling class consist of traitors to the ruled class, civilians and military both. Shame!”]

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February 13, 2010 By Ismael Hossein-zadeh, Information Clearing House. Ismael Hossein-zadeh, author of *The Political Economy of U.S. Militarism*, teaches Economics at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa. [Excerpts]

The main purpose of the administration's (or, shall we say, of the ruling kleptocracy, both Democratic and Republican) strategy of delaying direct job creation is to stall, and fraudulently keep the hopes of the unemployed alive, until the massive supply-side corporate welfare giveaways would eventually begin to gradually trickle down and slowly create jobs.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the financial meltdown of 2008 and the subsequent economic contraction that continues to this day represent more than just another recessionary cycle.

More importantly, they represent a structural change, a new phase, the phase of the dominance of "finance capital," as the late Austro-German political economist Rudolf Hilferding put it.

Although the current domination of our economy by finance capital seems new, it is in fact a throwback or "retrogression" (as financial expert Michael Hudson puts it) to the capitalism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, that is, the capitalism of monopolistic big business and gigantic financial institutions.

The rising economic and political influence of powerful financial interests in the early 20th century led a number of political economists (such as John Hobson, Rudolf Hilferding and Vladimir Lenin) to write passionately on the ominous trends of those developments — developments that significantly contributed to the eruption of the two World Wars and precipitated the devastating Great Depression of the 1930s, by creating an unsustainable asset price bubble in the form of overblown stock prices.

The harrowing experience of the Great Depression, followed by the devastating years of World War II, generated momentous social upheavals and extensive working class struggles worldwide.

The ensuing "threat of revolution," as F.D.R. put it, and the "menacing" pressure from below prompted reform from above — hence, the New Deal reforms in the US and socialist/Social-Democratic reforms in Europe. Combined, these historic developments significantly curtailed the size and the influence of big business and powerful financial interests — alas, only for a while.

As those reforms saved Western capitalism from more radical social changes, they also provided grounds for its regeneration and expansion.

By the 1970s, finance capital, headed by major US banks, had risen, once again, to its pre-Depression levels of concentration, of controlling the major bulk of national resources, and of shaping economic policy.

Since then, big banks have created a number of financial instabilities and economic crises — usually through predatory, sub-prime loan pushing or unsustainable debt bubbles.

These include the “Third World debt crisis” of the 1980s and 1990s, the 1997-98 financial crises in Southeast Asia and Russia, the tech or dot.com bubble of the 1990s in the U.S. and other major market economies, and the latest, housing/real estate bubble that burst in 2008.

A number of characteristics distinguish the stage of the dominance of finance capital from lower phases of capitalist development.

Under liberal capitalism of the competitive industrial era, a long cycle of economic contraction would usually wipe out not only jobs and production, but also the debt burdens that were accumulated during the long cycle of expansion that preceded the cycle of contraction.

In the stage of finance capital, however, debt overhead is propped up through its monetization, or socialization, even during a most severe financial meltdown such as that which occurred in 2008.

Indeed, due to the influence of the powerful financial interests, national or taxpayers’ debt burden is further exacerbated by the government’s generous bailout plans of the bankrupt financial giants, that is, by simply transferring or converting private to public debt.

In *The Class Struggle in France*, Karl Marx wrote, “Public credit rests on confidence that the state will allow itself to be exploited by the wolves of finance.”

Today we see more clearly how the “wolves of finance” are hollowing out national treasuries and subjecting governments to unsustainable debt burdens.

This explains the near bankruptcy not only of the US Government but also of many of the European states, especially those of Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and a number of East European countries.

Proposed government “solution” in all these cases is to have the general public pay for the gambler’s debt — in the form of extensive cuts in essential social programs and drastic reductions in living standards.

A major hallmark of the age of finance capital is domination of the State and/or political process by the financial oligarchy.

Bank- or finance-friendly policies of the government have been facilitated largely through generous pouring of money into the election of “favorite” policy makers.

Extensive deregulations that led to the 2008 financial crisis, the scandalous bank bailout in response to the crisis, and the failure to impose effective restraints on Wall Street after the crisis can all be traced to Wall Street’s political power.

Wall Street spent more than \$5 billion on federal campaign contributions and lobbying from 1998 to 2008, and its fervent spending on the purchase of politicians continues unabated.

Michael Hudson, Distinguished Research Professor at University of Missouri (Kansas City), aptly calls this ominous process of the buying out of policy-makers by major contributors to their election “privatization of the political process.”

Paul Craig Roberts, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration, likewise argues that the political system “is monopolized by a few powerful interest groups that...have exercised their power to monopolize the economy for the benefit of themselves.”

Such sentiments regarding the class nature of the State are corroborations of Vladimir Lenin’s characterization of the capitalist state as “the executive committee of the ruling class.”

Lenin was often scoffed at by the capitalist ruling elites when he made this statement over ninety years ago; they deviously dismissed him as having overstated his case.

Perhaps it is time to dust off and read old copies of Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*, if only to better understand the incestuous politico-business relationship between the State and the financial oligarchy of our time.

Another hallmark of the stage of finance capital is that, under the influence of the powerful financial interests, government intervention in national economic affairs has come to essentially mean implementation of neoliberal or supply-side restructuring policies.

Government and business leaders have for the last several decades used severe recessionary cycles as opportunities to escalate application of neoliberal economic measures in order to reverse or undermine the New Deal reforms.

Naomi Kline has called this strategy of using periods of economic crisis to reverse the gains of the New Deal and other reform programs “the shock doctrine”—a strategy that takes advantage of the overwhelming crisis times to apply supply-side austerity programs and redistribute national resources from the bottom up.

This explains how under the Bush-Obama administrations the financial oligarchy has been able to use the failure of the Lehman Brothers and the specter of “apocalyptic” failure of other financial giants to extract their gambling losses from the public purse.

It is generally believed that neoliberal supply-side economic policies began with the election of Ronald Reagan as the president.

Evidence shows, however, that efforts at undermining the New Deal economics in favor of returning to the old-time religion of market fundamentalism began long before Reagan arrived in the White House. As Alan Nasser, emeritus professor at the Evergreen State

College in Olympia (Washington), points out, “The foundations of neoliberalism were established in economic theory by liberal Democrats at the Brookings Institution, and in political practice by the Carter administration.”

Neither President Clinton changed the course of neoliberal corporate welfare policies, nor is President Obama hesitating to carry out those policies.

His administration has made available more than \$12 trillion in cash infusions, loans and guarantees to the financial industry, but for state governments that are facing massive budget deficits, it has thus far provided only one quarter of 1 percent of that amount in federal stimulus funds — about \$30 billion.

The White House is sitting by while states across the country lay off workers and slash spending on education, health care and other essential social programs.

The left/liberal supporters of President Obama who bemoan his “predicament in the face of brutal Republican challenges” should look past the president’s liberal/populist posturing.

Evidence shows that, contrary to Barack Obama’s claims, his presidential campaign was heavily financed by the Wall Street financial titans and their influential lobbyists. Large Wall Street contributions began pouring into his campaign only after he was thoroughly vetted by the powerful Wall Street interests and was deemed a viable (indeed, ideal) candidate for presidency.

On ideological or philosophical grounds too President Obama is closer to the neoliberal, supply-side tradition than the New Deal tradition.

This is clearly revealed, for example, in his *The Audacity of Hope*, where he shows his disdain for “...those who still champion the old time religion, defending every New Deal and Great Society program from Republican encroachment, achieving ratings of 100% from the liberal interest groups. But these efforts seem exhausted...bereft of energy and new ideas needed to address the changing circumstances of globalization. . . .”

It is no accident that Mr. Obama has surrounded himself by neoliberal economic experts and financial advisors such as Larry Summers, Timothy Geithner, and Ben Bernanke.

Not only has the major bulk of the Obama administration’s anti-recession assistance been devoted to the rescue of the Wall Street financial magnates, but also the relatively small stimulus spending is funneled largely through the Wall Street (mainly through generous government loans and tax incentives) in the hope that this would create jobs.

This stands in sharp contrast to what F.D.R. did in the earlier years of the Great Depression: creating jobs directly and immediately by the government itself.

The main purpose of the administration’s (or, shall we say, of the ruling kleptocracy, both Democratic and Republican) strategy of delaying direct job creation is to stall, and fraudulently keep the hopes of the unemployed alive, until the massive supply-side corporate welfare giveaways would eventually begin to gradually trickle down and slowly create jobs.

In the absence of compelling pressure from below, this neoliberal scheme of further weakening the working class may eventually succeed. But even if successful, the jobs thus created would be supply-side jobs, subsistence or below-subsistence jobs, which would be grabbed by desperate workers at any price/wage, not union jobs that would pay decent wages and benefits.

Political theatrics within the ruling circles over “how to create jobs” should not mask the fact that delays in job creation are deliberate: they are designed to further subdue American workers and bring down their wages and benefits in line with those of workers in countries that compete with the U.S. in global workers.

It is part of the insidious neoliberal race to the bottom, to the lowest common denominator in terms of international labor costs. It is, indeed, an application of the IMF's notorious Structural Adjustment Program of austerity measures that have been vigorously pursued in many less-developed countries for decades — with disastrous results.

It is no accident that President Obama frequently pleads with the unemployed Americans to “be patient,” and “keep hope alive.” What he really means to say is: “look, we have invested trillions of dollars through bailout schemes and other supply-side recovery measures. So, please be patient and wait until they come to fruition and benefit you through trickledown effects.”

At least, Ronald Reagan had the honesty and integrity to explicitly defend or promote his supply-side philosophy. Perhaps that is why Barack Obama can be called Ronald Reagan in disguise.

In the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown, many left/liberal economists envisioned an opportunity: a reversion back to the Keynesian-type economic policies.

One year later, it is increasingly becoming clear that such expectations amounted to no more than wishful thinking — a dawning recognition that, regardless of the resident of the White House, economic policies are nowadays heavily influenced by the powerful financial interests.

The view that economic policy would be switched back to the Keynesian or New Deal paradigm by default stems from the rather naïve supposition that policy making is a simple matter of technical expertise or economic know-how, that is, a matter of choice — between good or “regulated capitalism” and bad or “neoliberal capitalism.”

A major reason for such hopes or illusions is a perception of the State that its power is above economic or class interests; a perception that fails to see the fact that national policy-making apparatus is largely dominated by a kleptocratic elite that is guided by the imperatives of big capital, especially finance capital.

Historical evidence shows, however, that more than anything else the Keynesian or New Deal reforms were a product of the pressure from the people.

Economic policy-making is not independent of politics and/or policy-makers who are, in turn, not independent of the financial interests they are supposed to discipline or regulate.

Stabilization, restructuring or regulatory policies are often subtle products of the balance of social forces, or outcome of the class struggle.

Policies of economic restructuring in response to major crises can benefit the masses only if there is compelling pressure from the grassroots. In the absence of an overwhelming pressure from below (similar to that of the 1930s), Keynesian or New Deal economic reforms could remain a (fondly-remembered) one-time experience in the history of economic reforms.

**The Coming Default On U.S.
Government Debt:
Leaders “Following A Familiar
Pattern Of Switching Responsibility
For The Global Debt Pile From Credit
Markets To The Banks, From Banks
To Sovereigns And Now From Weak
Sovereigns To Stronger Ones”
“Once This Transfer Is Complete, The
Debt Pile Really Will Have Nowhere Else
To Go”**

FEBRUARY 13, 2010 By SIMON NIXON, The Wall Street Journal

Why did Europe blink?

The decision by European leaders to offer Greece support, albeit unspecified, likely owed more to fears for the weakened European banking system and its ability to supply credit to a fragile recovery than fraternal concern for a struggling neighbor.

Shares in euro-zone banks slumped as the sovereign-debt crisis unfolded, with Greek banks tumbling more than 50%. Aside from the political imperative for leaders to make a statement, the fear of contagion to the wider euro-zone economy was real.

Falling government-bond prices themselves aren't the biggest problem. Most European banks hold government bonds as available-for-sale assets, which means mark-to-market

losses are recognized through the profit-and-loss account only when they become impaired.

And although mark-to-market losses are recorded on the balance sheet as a reserve, it doesn't count under current Basel rules as a deduction against regulatory capital. If governments continue to pay their coupons and the bonds remain eligible for central-bank facilities, then bank capital or liquidity positions should be unaffected.

But there are several channels through which contagion can operate. Rising government-bond yields could push up yields on other assets, triggering mark-to-market losses on trading books. They also could lead to higher bank-funding costs, because bank credit-default swaps tend to track sovereign swaps.

At the same time, fiscal tightening could tip economies back into recession, leading to higher bad-debt charges. If gross domestic product fell 1%, loan volumes fell 2%, nonperforming loans increased 5% and bond spreads widened, Credit Suisse estimates the European bank sector's 2010 earnings and return on equity would be nearly halved.

But European leaders likely also had their eye on an even bigger risk: Sovereign-debt fears could lead to a collapse in lending to vulnerable countries. The exposure of French banks to Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain is equivalent to 30% of GDP, according to Stephen Jen of Bluegold Capital Management.

Irish and Portuguese banks also are heavily exposed to those countries.

Austrian banks' exposure to Eastern Europe is equivalent to 54% of GDP.

These linkages between banking systems are a potentially potent transmission mechanism, making it hard to put a fence around the Greek sovereign crisis.

No wonder European leaders felt unable to leave Greece to the mercy of the markets.

But in offering support, they are merely following a familiar pattern established during the crisis of switching responsibility for funding the global debt pile from credit markets to the banks, from banks to sovereigns and now from weak sovereigns to stronger ones.

Once this transfer is complete, the debt pile really will have nowhere else to go.

The Fix

[Thanks to Mary F, who sent this in.]

There recently was an article in the St. Petersburg Fl. Times. The Business Section asked readers for ideas on: "How Would You Fix the Economy?"

I think this guy nailed it!

Dear Mr. President,

Please find below my suggestion for fixing America 's economy.

Instead of giving Billions of dollars to companies that will squander the money on lavish parties and unearned bonuses, use the following plan. You can call it the "Patriotic Retirement Plan":

There are about 40 million people over 50 in the work force. Pay them \$1 million apiece severance for early retirement with the following stipulations:

- 1) They MUST retire. Forty million job openings - Unemployment fixed.
- 2) They MUST buy a new American CAR. Forty million cars ordered - Auto Industry fixed.
- 3) They MUST either buy a house or pay off their mortgage - Housing Crisis fixed.

It can't get any easier than that!!

P.S. If more money is needed, have all members in Congress pay their taxes...

Mr. President, while you're at it, make Congress retire on Social Security and Medicare. I'll bet both programs would be fixed pronto!

If you think this would work, please forward to everyone you know. As you can see, I agree.

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 contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 888.711.2550

February 26, 1984:

Reagan Withdraws U.S. Troops After Saying To Do So “Means The End Of Lebanon”

“There Was No Way That We Could Really Contribute To The Original Mission By Staying There As A Target”



[Thanks to Carl Bunin Peace History Feb 25-March 2]

The last of the 1400 peacekeeping troops Pres. Ronald Reagan had sent to the Lebanese capital of Beirut were evacuated. The troops were part of an international force sent to deal with the Lebanese civil war.

The president withdrew almost all American troops following the deaths of 241 Marines and 58 French paratroopers in a suicide truck bombing carried out four months earlier by combined forces of Islamic Jihad and Hizbollah.

France withdrew its troops as well.

Three weeks earlier, Reagan had told the Wall Street Journal, “As long as there is a chance for peace, the mission remains the same. If we get out, that means the end of Lebanon.”

In a barb directed at House Speaker Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill Jr. (D-Massachusetts), Reagan had said, “He may be ready to surrender, but I’m not.”

BBC News: On This Day

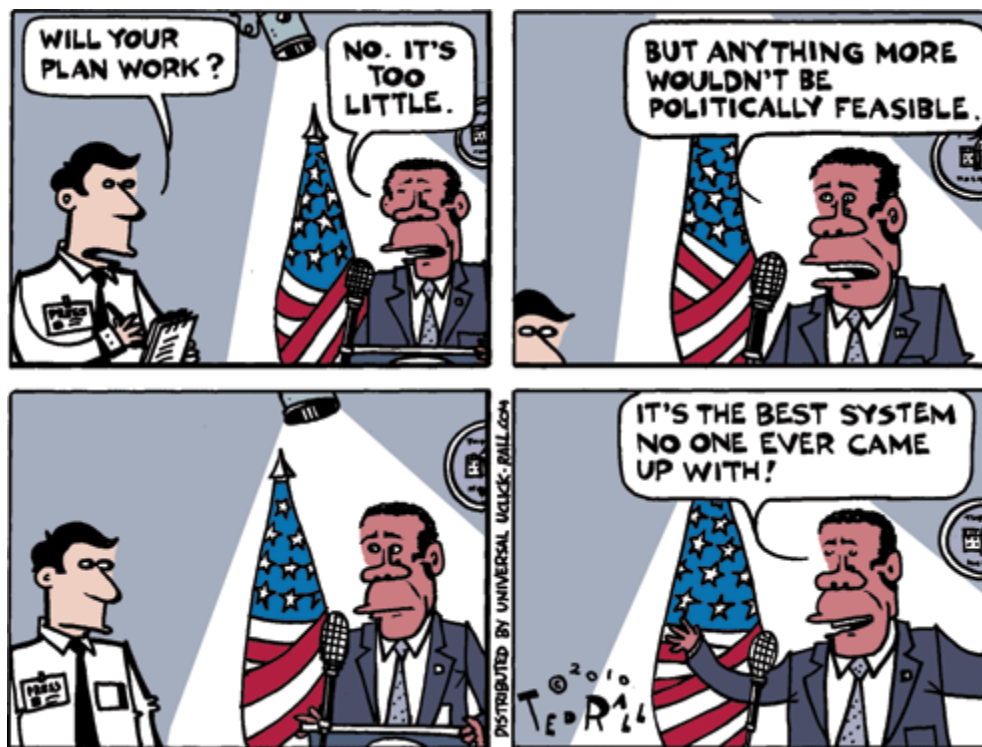
American forces have withdrawn almost all of their troops from the Lebanese capital, Beirut. About 1,000 US Marines left the coast beside the international airport as Shi'ite militiamen arrived in jeeps and armoured vehicles to take over.

US President Ronald Reagan ordered military personnel to begin pulling out of the area over a week ago following a recent upsurge in terrorist attacks.

“Once the terrorist attacks started there was no way that we could really contribute to the original mission by staying there as a target just bunkering down and waiting for further attacks,” he said.

The US Marines were sent in 18 months ago to help the Lebanese administration but as the last troops pulled out there was no official government delegation present to see them off. Instead, Insurgents riding motorcycles watched without emotion as US military helicopters airlifted the last front line troops to warships off the Lebanese coast.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward Military Resistance 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 Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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/)

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