

Military Resistance 8B7

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



A U.S. Marine wounded in a rocket-propelled grenade attack, Marjah, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 13, 2010. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

**“Between Patrols,
Soldiers Openly Speak
Of Being Betrayed”
“It Doesn’t Matter If We Get
Killed — We’re Here To Die”**

**“Our Lives Are Not Valuable
Enough To Protect”
“About 95% Of The Locals Are
Taliban Or Aid The Militants”
“People Here Are On The Side Of The
Insurgency And Have No Trust In The
Government”**

FEBRUARY 11, 2010 By YAROSLAV TROFIMOV, The Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

PASHMUL, Afghanistan— When the first Taliban shots at the U.S. Army patrol cracked from behind the tree line, an Afghan villager who had just been talking to the soldiers crumpled into the mud.

An Army medic rushed to help the man, apparently a civilian caught in the crossfire.

But hours later, at the American base where the victim was taken for treatment, troops found in his pocket the polished dog tag of an American soldier killed three weeks earlier.

As fighting intensifies here in southern Afghanistan, the central tenet of the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy—to protect Afghan civilians — faces a fundamental test: how to separate these civilians from the insurgents in places where much of the population backs the Taliban cause.

Across southern Afghanistan, including the Marjah district where coalition forces are massing for a large offensive, the line between peaceful villager and enemy fighter is often blurred.

American troops have dubbed Pashmul, a cluster of villages sprawling across the fertile belt of grape and poppy fields west of Kandahar city, “the heart of darkness.”

Capt. Duke Reim, commander of the American unit responsible for Pashmul, estimates that about 95% of the locals are Taliban or aid the militants.

District Gov. Niyaz Mohammad Serhadi agrees. “People here are on the side of the insurgency and have no trust in the government,” he says. “Insurgents are in their villages 24 hours.”

Among front-line troops, many of them used to more liberal rules of engagement in Iraq, frustration is boiling over.

“It’s like fighting with two hands behind your back,” says Sgt. First Class Samuel Frantz, a platoon sergeant in Capt. Reim’s unit, the Charlie Company of the 1st Battalion of the 12th Infantry Regiment. “We’re so worried about not hurting the population’s feelings that we’re not doing our jobs.”

Some of the Afghan war’s biggest and bloodiest battles were fought around Pashmul in 2006, as the small Canadian contingent responsible for Kandahar province shot its way into the village, incurring steep casualties, just to pull out later.

Abandoned by most of its residents, this once prosperous area has been reduced to a landscape of crumbling ruins amid booby-trapped fields where the bomb craters turn into small lakes after rains.

American forces started pouring in here last year. Charlie Company two months ago established a permanent outpost in Pashmul, aiming to disrupt the flow of explosives and militants between Kandahar city and nearby Helmand province, which includes Marjah.

Facing the outpost is an abandoned compound from which the soldiers often take fire. When Charlie fought in Iraq, such a compound would have been long obliterated. Here, the soldiers are still waiting for permission to destroy Afghan property.

Whenever Charlie soldiers leave the outpost, they face a daunting terrain of chest-high mud walls that prop up grapevines, turning the fields into a labyrinth of slippery trenches.

The Taliban bury improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, along the pathways — so the soldiers jump across walls to take the most unpredictable path when they patrol.

Helicopters are indispensable in hunting down the squads that plant IEDs — the cause of the company’s four fatalities and of most of its 14 serious injuries on this deployment.

But, after Kiowa choppers fired rockets at two people spotted digging near road culverts at the end of last year, an angry delegation of Pashmul area elders descended on the battalion headquarters, demanding an end to overflights.

“Villagers were just livid with me,” says the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Reik Andersen. “Because so much lethality was going on, they said that the kids are crying, the women are scared” whenever choppers appear in the sky.

Attempting to win local support, Col. Andersen says he promised to the elders that the helicopters would stay away unless called in for a specific incident.

He also ordered that villagers spotted digging near culverts be scared away with smoke rather than killed.

IED activity has continued unabated in the area since then. Two villagers died in recent weeks after stepping on buried home-made bombs near the Pashmul outpost, and an American contractor lost a leg.

Between patrols, soldiers openly speak of being betrayed. “It doesn’t matter if we get killed — we’re here to die,” says Lt. Mark Morrison, 24 years old, the leader of the second platoon.

“Our lives are not valuable enough to protect.”

On a recent patrol, the troops came upon a crater from an earlier IED.

Lt. Morrison ordered his men to knock down the upper part of a mud wall fringing the path, so that anyone burying explosives there could be seen from the outpost.

Soon afterward, an angry field owner, Ghulam Farooq, confronted the Americans. “Why are you destroying the wall? If there is no wall, the sheep and the goats will come into my field,” he said.

“I’d rather cut down a few trees and break a few walls so that the bad guys stop coming here and placing the IEDs,” Lt. Morrison answered.

Hearing the translation, Mr. Farooq broke out in sarcastic laughter. “What’s so funny?” Lt. Morrison demanded.

The villager snuffed out his laughter, but didn’t respond.

Moments later, explosions rang out in the distance.

The lieutenant’s radio operator, Pfc. Justin Jun, shuddered.

“Why does everything have to blow up in that country?” he asked, and vaulted himself over yet another mud wall.

MORE:

**“The Taliban Are From Here,
They’re Not Coming Into Senjaray
From The Outside”**

**“Half Of The Village Elders And The
Village People Support Them”
[But I’ll Allow You Americans To Irrigate
My Opium Poppy Fields]**



Elders in Senjaray show troops their proposed site, outside town, for a Western-funded irrigation project that will bring water to their poppy fields. Photo: Yaroslav Trofimov/The Wall Street Journal

“This is where we will start digging,” said Hajji Hani Pia. “But the workers must not find out that the money is coming from the foreigners. Nobody should tell them.”

Then, he pointed at the poppy fields to the east: “That land there belongs to me,” he said, “that one to Hajji Jalat, and that one over there, to Hajji Lala.”

Work should start soon, says Capt. Ellis.

FEBRUARY 12, 2010 By YAROSLAV TROFIMOV, The Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

SENJARAY, Afghanistan—Capt. Jeremiah Ellis is a man with a problem: how to spend a million dollars.

American troops under his command moved late last year into this town of 12,000 people, a Taliban stronghold just west of Kandahar. Now, armed with more than \$1 million in coalition funds, Capt. Ellis is trying to dent the insurgents’ lingering power by jump-starting development projects.

Yet, the only construction work here so far has been the hammering of U.S. Navy Seabees, or construction troops, erecting a vast American base overlooking Senjaray.

“You can have all the money in the world, but no one will pick up a shovel until they feel secure,” says Capt. Ellis, who commands the Dog Company of the 1st Battalion of the U.S. Army’s 12th Infantry Regiment.

The Canadians built a large, modern school in Senjaray several years ago, but it has been shuttered since the Taliban booby-trapped it in 2006. Virtually no other work has been carried out here since then.

Senjaray is considered relatively secure because American troops here can work with a local tribal strongman who's allied with Kabul, Hajji Abdullah Khan, better known as Hajji Lala.

In town, only the Taliban dare to defy the will of Hajji Lala, who has a personal force of 40 guards assigned by President Hamid Karzai. The guards are paid for by the central government and wear Afghan National Police uniforms.

A recent meeting between Capt. Ellis and the town's elders to discuss development plans was preceded by a shootout. Three Taliban fighters tried to ambush one of the policeman. The policeman was unhurt, and one of the Taliban was injured and captured.

But as Capt. Ellis rolled into Senjaray's police compound, Hajji Lala wasn't celebrating.

The injured attacker, he said, was a local kid from a well-known family. "The Taliban are from here, they're not coming into Senjaray from the outside," Hajji Lala said. "Half of the village elders and the village people support them. If we start working on projects, people will be killed."

Sipping on tea, Capt. Ellis countered that waiting for weeks until Afghan army units and additional Afghan policemen are deployed in Senjaray may be an even riskier strategy considering that fighting here reaches its peak around May.

"Every day, more fighters are arriving from Helmand and Pakistan, and if we don't start soon, my concern is that we won't be able to start at all," Capt. Ellis said.

Minutes later, four turbaned, bearded elders walked into the compound, stoically submitting to frisking by young American soldiers.

Capt. Ellis's own dream is to reopen the Senjaray school—but, unless a permanent security force were deployed next to the building, the Taliban would booby-trap it again within days.

He agreed with the elders that the first priority should be clearing silted irrigation canals.

"But we don't need your soldiers — stay away from there. Come by just once a week to see how the work is progressing," demanded one of the men, Hajji Hani Pia.

As Capt. Ellis agreed, the stickiest point turned out to be how to pay these 300 day laborers. The elders wanted to disburse the money—some \$6 a day per worker—warning that any foreign presence would turn the site into a Taliban target. "If you promise me the whole world, I will not accept it," declared one of the elders, Hajji Jalat.

The Canadian officers quickly interjected, saying their national rules require them to be present on pay day, to make sure the laborers funded by Canadian taxpayers actually exist, and that the money doesn't end up in the elders' own pockets—as has usually

happened in the past. “I don’t want 300 workers being pissed off with us because they’re getting a fraction of what they’ve been promised,” said Canadian Petty Officer Kelly Webb, the coalition’s district official in charge of civil-military cooperation.

As Hajji Lala, the local chieftain, responded indignantly that he was insulted by such suggestions of corruption, Capt. Ellis offered a quick-witted retort. “I trust the Pashtun people and know that you wouldn’t do anything dishonorable,” he said. “But American or Canadian people would steal the money, and so we have to follow the American and Canadian rules.”

After hours of haggling, the two sides reached a compromise: The workers will be monitored by a concealed video camera on pay day, their receipt of the coalition’s cash documented on tape.

A few minutes later, the American and Canadian convoy rumbled onto the Kandahar-Helmand highway, following the elders to a site where they wanted the work to begin.

As the miles added up, Capt. Ellis realized that the Afghans were taking him far outside Senjaray.

Finally stopping outside the gates of his batallion headquarters, the elders led the American to a dry canal bed and perched themselves on the ground — in the safest spot in the district.

Capt. Ellis wondered quietly about who owned the poppy fields around, and expressed his surprise at being so far from Senjaray and its citizens.

The elders ignored his protests. “This is where we will start digging,” said Hajji Hani Pia. “But the workers must not find out that the money is coming from the foreigners. Nobody should tell them.”

Then, he pointed at the poppy fields to the east: “That land there belongs to me,” he said, “that one to Hajji Jalat, and that one over there, to Hajji Lala.”

Work should start soon, says Capt. Ellis.

MORE:

**Lesson Unlearned:
“The Americans Are Fighting A
People And Not A Regular Army”
“They Should Understand That It Is
Impossible To Fight Against A Nation”**

1.25.10 By Benoit Finck (AFP) [Excerpts]

The United States is repeating the mistakes that the Soviet Union made in Afghanistan, Russian veterans say, convinced the USSR's disastrous near decade-long war there harbors deep lessons for Western forces.

'It is now (nearly) nine years since the coalition invaded Afghanistan and nothing has changed,' said retired Lieutenant General Ruslan Aushev, 55, who served five years in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation there from 1979-1989.

However, Aushev, who was made a Hero of the Soviet Union after being wounded on his third Afghan deployment, admitted that NATO and US troops face a fiercer enemy today than did Soviet troops.

Then, the Red Army untrained for the mountainous terrain found themselves bogged down in an unwinnable guerrilla war against Mujahedeen Islamist fighters backed financially and militarily by Washington.

'Today, the situation is more complicated. The Mujahedeen were more moderate than the Taliban, who are radical. In our era, there were no suicide bombers,' said Aushev, who now heads the Afghan veterans committee.

'The Americans are fighting a people and not a regular army. Napoleon never could win in Spain. They should understand that it is impossible to fight against a nation,' Gareyev, now president of the Academy of Military Sciences in Moscow, told AFP.

Moscow initially saw its incursion into Afghanistan in December 1979 as a brief mission to bolster its Afghan supporters but became bogged down in a protracted and bloody struggle that lasted nearly 10 years.

Retired General Victor Yermakov, who commanded Soviet forces in Afghanistan from 1982 to 1983, has been among the first to point to the Soviets' failure as a warning to the West, calling Afghanistan an 'impossible' fight.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three U.S. Troops Killed In Kandahar Province

February 13, 2010 By the Associated Press

Three U.S. service members have been killed in southern Afghanistan.

The Americans died following a bombing.

Afghan National Army Maj. Abdul Rahman said the U.S. troops were killed when a bomber on a motorbike targeted a joint foot patrol of Afghan and U.S. soldiers in Kandahar province, located on Helmand province's southern border.

Two U.S. Troops Killed Near Marjah

February 13, 2010 The Associated Press

The U.S. military reported Saturday that two U.S. troops have been killed during the offensive on Marjah. U.S. military spokesman Lt. Col. Todd Vician said the deaths occurred in Helmand province. One service member died in an IED strike, while another died from small-arms fire. It did not give their nationalities.

Family Remembers Fallen Marine

29 Jan 2010 Kristin Wright, MyFoxTampaBay

A Bay Area family just returned from Dover Air Force Base, where their son's body arrived from Afghanistan. Sgt. Daniel Angus made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. Being a U.S. Marine was his life and in the end, his death.

"We came home from fishing Sunday morning to find a van in the front yard with two Marines dressed in full uniform. I said 'please don't tell me you're here to tell me my son's dead'," said Kathy Angus, Sgt. Angus' mother.

In the front yard now, a flag flies at half staff. Angus has lost her only son.

"He was just a Marine through and through. He said that he was never worried about what he could see, but he was worried about what he couldn't see," she said.

Sgt. Daniel Angus of Thonotosassa died Sunday in Afghanistan. He was on foot patrol when an improvised explosive device detonated. Two other Marines were also killed.

"He died loving what he did. He loved the Marine Corp," she said.

The Armwood High School graduate joined the Marines in 2003, in search of direction and passion. He found both in the military.

Angus served two tours in Iraq. He rose to the rank of sergeant and received many honors. Angus' battallion was part of the first wave of the troop surge to Afghanistan. In December, Angus was interviewed by a Chinese T.V. station as he headed to war.

"It's a jump and run kind of thing. You never know when you are going to go. It is not my first Christmas away from home. It is not going to be my last," Angus told CCTV.

Angus leaves behind his wife Bonnie and daughter Kaitlyn. The couple married last month, days before he deployed. Angus had one sister, Tracy. He was the best man in her wedding. Tuesday, Tracy gave birth to a baby boy. Andrew is the nephew Angus will never get the chance to meet.

"I can't begin to tell you what life with Daniel was like except that I was very privileged to have him in my life," said Angus' friend Carroll Hanson.

A motorcade will escort Angus' body from MacDill down Bayshore Boulevard to Riverview. Two previous processions have brought out hundreds of people to stand and honor our fallen heroes. Angus' family says the procession will likely happen Thursday, February 4th.

Two Australian Soldiers Wounded In Afghan Fighting

2.13.10 Abc.net.au

An Australian soldier is in a serious condition after being injured in a roadside bomb attack in southern Afghanistan.

Two Australian soldiers were wounded in separate attacks in Afghanistan yesterday.

The soldier who was seriously injured has been taken to a United States medical facility at Bagram airbase. The other soldier suffered minor injuries after being hit east of Tarin Kowt.

The Defence Department says Taliban insurgents were responsible for the bombings as well as a third attack on Australian forces yesterday.

Weird Bullshit Award Of The Week Goes To

[According to the lines of argument below: if civilians stay in Marjah rather than running away, it's means they're doing what the Occupation commanders want, and if they leave Marjah to run away, it means they're "defying militant orders."]

**#1: Marjah:
"NATO Forces Have Decided To Advise
Civilians Not To Leave Their Homes"**

February 12, 2010 By Golnar Motevalli, Reuters [Excerpts]

MARJAH, Afghanistan (Reuters) - U.S.-led NATO troops launched a major offensive on Saturday against the Taliban's last big stronghold in Afghanistan's most violent province, a test of President Barack Obama's troop surge strategy.

"So far there has been no contact," Gunnery Sergeant Brandon Dickinson, waiting in a muddy field, told Reuters.

NATO forces have decided to advise civilians not to leave their homes, although they have said they do not know whether the assault will lead to heavy fighting.

#2: Marjah: "Hundreds Of Civilians Defied Militant Orders And Fled The Area"

Feb 12, 2010 By ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU and CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA - Associated Press Writers [Excerpts]

NEAR MARJAH, Afghanistan -- Helicopter-borne U.S. Marines and Afghan troops swooped down on the Taliban-held town of Marjah before dawn Saturday, launching a long-expected attack to re-establish government control and undermine support for militants in their southern heartland.

On the eve of the attack, cars and trucks jammed the main road out of Marjah on Friday as hundreds of civilians defied militant orders and fled the area.

For weeks, U.S. commanders had signaled their intention to attack Marjah in hopes that civilians would seek shelter.

Marine Captain Sends An Encouraging Message To The Insurgent Command

February 13, 2010 By Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpt]

Marine Capt. Tom Grace, whose Bravo Company had seized a key roadway leading out of Marja to prevent Taliban from fleeing, said the fighting "sends a message to the insurgents that we are not afraid of them."

"The maxim in war, that your enemy is ever to be dreaded until at your feet, ought to be held inviolate."

-- Major-Gen. Light Horse Harry Lee; "War In The Southern Department Of The United States: Accounts Of The American Revolution"

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



U.S. soldiers during a clearing operation in Kandahar City, southern Afghanistan, Jan. 19, 2010. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)



A U.S. soldier from the 293rd Military Police Company out of Fort Stewart, Georgia, U.S.A., in farm land in Kandahar City, southern Afghanistan, Jan. 19, 2010. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)



U.S. Army soldier patrols in Ghalbalay, a village in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 23, 2010. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)



U.S. Army soldier of the 2-12 Infantry on patrol in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 23, 2010. The soldiers of Task Force Lethal regularly receive small and large-arms fire from Taliban militants who operate in the hillsides of the Pech Valley. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR;

RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. Army takes a retina image of an Afghan man stopped at gunpoint at a checkpoint, west of Lashkar Gah, in Helmand province, Southern Afghanistan, Feb. 9, 2010. (AP Photo/Pier Paolo Cito)

Foreign occupation soldiers from the USA make a daily practice of publicly humiliating Afghan citizens.

This encourages self-respecting honorable Afghans to kill them.

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 80,000 Afghan troops over here to the USA.]

[They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, bomb and butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in a U.S. military prison in the invaded nation without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Afghans are sure a bunch of backward primitives.]

[They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship killing them wholesale, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country.]

[What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by Barrack Obama. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Fresh Resistance Battalion Enters Somali Capital

11 February 2010 Somaliweyn Media Center & 2/12/2010 Shabelle

A new battalion of Al-Shabab has reached the Somali capital Mogadishu on Wednesday evening after having successfully accomplished their training in one of their training camps in Somalia as the spokesman of Al-Shabab has told the media in a press conference on Wednesday.

“The arrival of this battalion known as Khalid Bin Walid who has recently accomplished their military training is to boost and partake the fighting against the infidels and their followers who have invaded in our country” said Sheikh Ali Dere the spokesman of Al-Shabab.

Sheik Moktar Robow Ali (Abu Mansour), high profile official of Harakat Al-shabab mujahideen has Friday declared war against the African Union troops (AMISOM) and transitional government troops in the Somali capital Mogadishu.

Speaking to hundreds of supporters of Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen in Nasrudin mosque in the capital, Abu Mansour called for the people to fighting with the allied troops of AMISOM and government troops.

“We are urging for all the Islamist representatives, fighters to fight with the AMISOM and TFG soldiers together.

“They are only in small areas in the country. We should attack the positions those troops together,” said Sheik Abu Mansour.

The official had accused to the AMISOM and government soldiers for bombing several civilian areas in the capital like: Suqa-holaha, Sinay and Bakara market in Mogadishu expressing surprise about denying the shelling that they often target to the civilian populated areas and also the attacks and explosions they are targeted.

This statement from the rivals of the Somali government comes at a time when there are signs of combat between the Somali transitional federal government and its adversaries in the capital Mogadishu.

On the other hand there were thousands of troops of Somali transitional federal who were as well pouring in the country after having successfully accomplished their military trainings some countries in Africa such as Djibouti, Uganda and Kenya.

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The coffin of Spc. Gooch at Arlington National Cemetery Dec. 10, 2009. Spc. Gooch of Ocala, Fla., died Nov. 5 in Jelewar, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered from an improvised explosive device. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

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

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.

-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”

Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.

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

Firearms are second only to the Constitution in importance; they are the peoples’ liberty’s teeth.

-- George Washington

The Social-Democrats ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression no matter where it appears no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and

everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.”

-- Lenin; What Is To Be Done

A revolution is always distinguished by impoliteness, probably because the ruling classes did not take the trouble in good season to teach the people fine manners.

-- Trotsky, History Of The Russian Revolution

“Obama’s Efforts To Preserve Neoliberal Capitalism Actually Fuel The Fires Of Rightwing Populism”

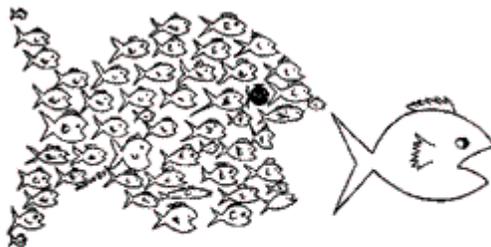
January 10, 2010 Bill Fletcher Jr., The Activist

Obama’s efforts to preserve neoliberal capitalism actually fuel the fires of rightwing populism.

Of course right-wing populism is not anti-capitalist, but in opportunistic fashion, plays on the fears and grievances that people face as a result of the reality of neoliberal capitalism.

Insofar as Obama places attention on protecting capital, right-wing populism plays upon this because there is very little left-wing challenge that speaks to the grievances felt by so many.

The Chicken Factory



ORGANIZE

Traveling Soldier: March-April, 2005 - Issue 10

Once upon a time there was a chicken factory, where, let us suppose, 1000 men and women work.

Live chickens come in one end of the factory complex, and cut up chicken parts and whole chickens come out the other end.

The people who cut up the chickens make about \$3 an hour, work in cold, wet rooms, get sick a lot, and frequently lose body parts during the chicken cutting process. The managers are cold assholes interested in profits, and don't give a shit how dangerous the equipment is. The supervisors are petty tyrants and frequently sexual predators.

If you get too sick or hurt to work, too fucking bad, you get put out the door.

This is not a desirable state of affairs.

You think maybe there should be some kind of organization of the work force to resist this shit. Maybe you can get more money, or insist that you have decent protection from being maimed or killed.

At that point you are alone, and powerless. So you have to very carefully find somebody else that agrees, and then somebody else, and all unnoticed by the assholes in command of the chicken factory, you slowly but surely build an organization.

You need meetings to talk over plans. Off company territory. You need security. You need some kind of way of communicating, maybe a newsletter, but you're careful about that too.

You can take it from there.

But it is obvious that you do not want anybody to stand up in the middle of the third shift and loudly tell management, "I refuse to participate any further in your immoral enterprise and will defy all your orders."

He or she is immediately gotten rid of, and is lost to organizing inside your chicken factory because he or she is gone. And the management is delighted, because they've just ID'd and fired somebody who could give them trouble in the future.

So, if you're alone, organize. People who act together can have an effect.

And if somebody snaps and does an individual refusal, and gets arrested, in trouble, or whatever, your organization does not leave them behind; they've been hurt, and let no one judge them, because anybody can snap, anytime.

A soldier from the 1st ID summed up his job situation like this:

"Before any soldier risks going to prison he should realize that his ability to communicate with other troops will be limited.

"We choose our battles and continue to speak out in our underground action.

"There has to be a point when we reach a high enough number of troops in our peace effort that a unified boycott of all military action will have a desired effect."

Use Traveling Soldier to serve your organizing purposes and say what you have to say. You say how. That's what it's for.



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

February 13, 1968: The Anniversary Of Five Honorable Soldiers Who Stood Up

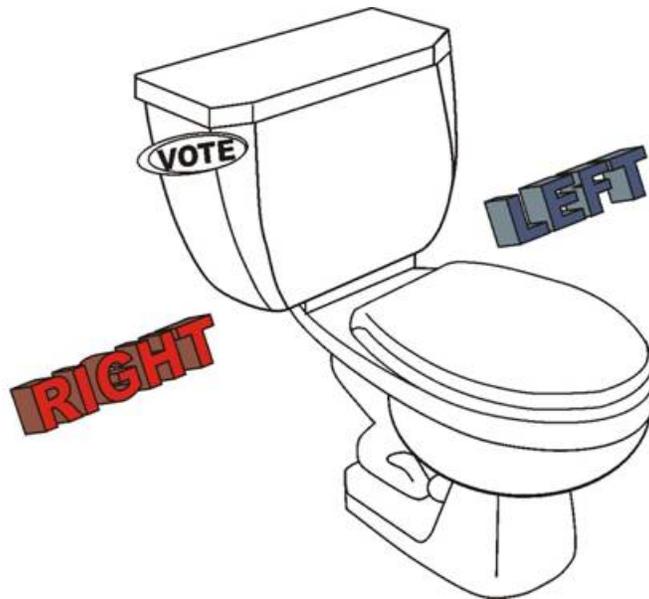
Carl Bunin Peace History February 11-17

Five soldiers were arrested at a pray-in for peace in Vietnam at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Two were court-martialed for refusing to stop praying. The pray-in was repeated a year later.

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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



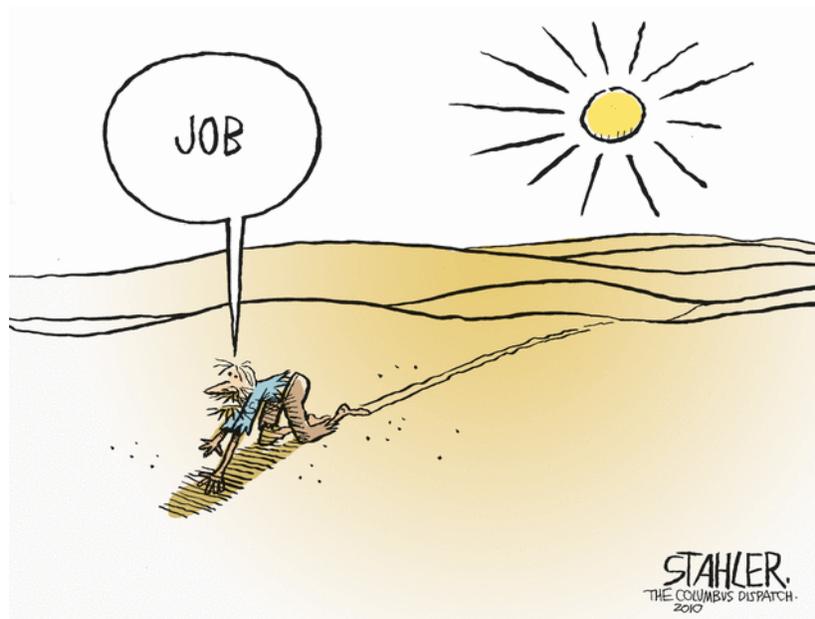
Stupid Bankrupt Empire Going Down

09 February 2010 by: Maya Schenwar, Executive Director, Truthout Op-Ed

[T]he US will spend more on its occupation of Afghanistan alone than any other country except China spends on its entire defense budget.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**“A Record 40 Percent Of The Jobless Still Looking For Work Have Been On The Streets For At Least 6 Months”
“With Final Demand Growth Remaining Weak, There Is Little Prospect For A Turnaround Of Employment In The Near Future”**



February 4, 2010 By Carl Bloice, Black Commentator Editorial Board, Black Commentator [Excerpts]

A study recently commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Mayors predicts jobless rates in most urban areas are likely to cease rising some times this year but it will be a long time before they return to what was normal in the 1990s. Furthermore, in places like the inland portions of California, it will remain above 10 percent at least through 2013. The Congressional Budget Office says unemployment will remain above 9 percent for at least the next two years.

A record 40 percent of the jobless still looking for work have been on the streets for at least 6 months. Twenty percent of the 25 to 54 year old men in the country are not working.

And, it goes without saying - but should be repeated anyway - joblessness is highest proportionately for communities of color, young workers, and women who head households.

Nearly one third of all people in the country now live below the federal poverty line, according to a recent Gallup poll.

Close to one in five say they lacked the money to buy food at some point in the last year. Over 38 million people - one in eight - now receive food stamps, the highest portion ever.

Economist Dean Baker commented last week that the latest data on unemployment insurance filings indicate that the economy is still shedding jobs. "With final demand growth remaining weak, there is little prospect for a turnaround of employment in the near future." he wrote.

The Rich Have Tripled Their Incomes In Since 1980: The Rest Of Us [90%] Got 20% Less

February 4, 2010 By Paul Buchheit, CommonDreams [Excerpts]

From 1980 to 2006 the richest 1% of America TRIPLED their after-tax percentage of our nation's total income, while the bottom 90% have seen their share drop over 20%.

That's a TRILLION dollars a year, one-seventh of America's total income. that went to the richest 1% while 90% of us went backwards.

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

Iran: Eyewitness Report: "We Say No To The West; We Say No To The East; We Want An Independent Republic Of Iran"

“What Is Being Attacked In Recent Demonstrations Goes Beyond Attacking Individuals Who Currently Represent The System. They Are Attacking The System Itself”

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]

06 February, 2010 By Azita Ebrahimi, Dissident Voice [Excerpts]

I went to Iran, the country of my birth, in November of 2009 and stayed there for two months after being away for 30 years.

I had left Iran right before 1979 revolution that overthrew the Shah. Before I left for my visit back to Iran, I was feeling very agitated and depressed about the way things are here in the USA, and I felt like I needed to get away for a while.

My trip to Iran was a pleasant, interesting, and eye-opening trip, but at times I felt strongly the gloomy atmosphere that was overshadowing the country of my birth.

I was constantly asked this question: “How is it in the USA — is it any better? Is it different?”

And my reply was “Different? Yes. Better? I am not sure,” because I felt the same gloomy and depressing atmosphere here in the USA, and I knew people in this country are also uncertain about their future and dissatisfied and unhappy about a lot of things.

At times, I felt trapped.

I was hearing almost the same stories from people miles away in another continent, people not being happy with their jobs, their relationships, struggling to make ends meet, the economic hardship that they have to endure, corrupt politicians, and so on. I especially felt sad for the young ones.

Iran’s population is more than 70 million and 75% of them are under the age of 30.

I promised my new young Iranian friends (men and women) that I would try to stay truthful to what I heard from them and to get their message across as best as I can.

While I was in Iran, I lived in a women’s dormitory (filled mostly with university students from different cities of Iran) which was near Revolution Street, the street that most of the recent demonstrations passed by.

Because of where I was housed, I had the opportunity to hear and watch from the balcony of the dormitory the demonstrations that took place while I was there.

During my two months of stay in Iran, I got the opportunity to talk to people who participated, as well as some who were heavily involved in organizing for these demonstrations. They were students, teachers, doctors, small businessmen, and even factory workers.

I came out of these conversations with the understanding that there is a degree of political maturity among Iranian people, and they are very courageous people with a great sense of pride.

People get out in streets for different reasons to express publicly their dissatisfaction and make demands for change! And some are even willing to face the harsh and cruel consequences of their actions.

In Iran, most of the people that I talked to openly expressed their anger and dissatisfaction about the current economic situation in Iran, about high inflation, about lack of jobs, lack of business opportunities, about the disastrous outcomes of economic, trade and scientific sanctions enforced on Iran by the US and European countries. [1]

My Iranian friends were surprised to hear that except for one or two organizations most progressive groups in this country have done NOTHING so far to stop these sanctions, and they were wondering if the people of this country have already forgotten the catastrophic result of the US sanctions on the Iraqi people during 1990s.

Furthermore, Iranian people are very frustrated by the degree of corruption among their government officials, and they feel like they are being robbed of the money that should go toward providing more social services and creating more jobs for them.

Many Iranians believe that there is a cold war going on between different factions of the Iranian government, and they believe these factions are at the service of countries such as US, Britain, China, Russia.

While I was in Iran I promised myself that when I returned to the USA, and was asked questions about how things are in Iran, my response would be that things are very complicated and there are many layers to any given political, social, cultural and economical issue, and there are no black and white answers to any question that we might have.

But here I am back in the USA and in a conversation that I had with a dear political activist a couple weeks ago, the first question that I was asked was “while I was in Iran, did I see any street demonstrations, and in my opinion, are these demonstrations being led by the people or are they being organized by foreign agents?”

I was very much turned off by this question, and it took me back to the meaningless conversations that I had with people before I left for Iran. To ask questions such as the one above is an attempt to simplify a political and social situation that by no means is as simple as yes-or-no answer. But here in the USA we are trained to think and operate that way!

There are a lot of nuances involved in shaping any political or social situation in any country and Iran is no different.

I think people in general and the ones who want to be in the business of changing the world in particular should better educate themselves about the social and political movements of this country and other countries to understand better how any political, social change happens in any given country.

The social and political consciousness of people in any given country has HISTORY and if we are serious about changing things we better know this history! Otherwise we are wasting our time and the time of others!

The Islamic Republic of Iran became the governing body of Iran after the Shah was overthrown in response to the genuine dissatisfaction of Iranian people with the way things were.

This dissatisfaction was less evident among the middle class and upper class people of Iran than it was among the working class people and poor sections of the country.

When the Islamic Republic of Iran became the governing body of Iran and so called Islamic rules were enforced upon people, radical changes started to take place in all aspects of Iranians' life, and the country went through social and cultural changes as well as political changes.

But 30 years later, one can clearly observe (and not just in big cities but also in small towns) that these rules and restrictions on the Iranian people on how to live, dress, or conduct one's day-to-day business are not being followed by many!

In the past 30 years, average Iranians gradually have changed their situation and have broken some of these rules and restrictions whenever and however it was possible for them to do so — ultimately forcing the government officials to leave them alone in some aspects of their personal lives if not all.

What happened right after the June 2009 presidential election on the streets of Iran was a representative of a desire among some Iranian people, especially the younger generation, for some radical changes in the political and social system of their country.

What is being attacked in recent demonstrations goes beyond attacking individuals who currently represent the system. They are attacking the system itself.

That is why in recent demonstrations you will hear people say: Death to the Dictator, Death to the supreme leader of Islamic Republic of Iran, and We say no to the West; we say no to the East; we want an Independent Republic of Iran.

When I heard it myself in the last demonstration that took place in Iran, I could not help myself from shouting it as loud as I could from the balcony of our dormitory as demonstrators were passing by and being violently attacked by Revolutionary Guards and Basij military forces.

Some of the people who I talked to think the current government should be replaced by a secular type of government. I found it very surprising that even among young practitioners of Islam, there is this strong belief in separation of religion from politics now.

Some are suggesting the type of government that exists in Moslem countries such as Turkey or the type of governments that exists in countries such as Sweden or Norway. Some people are very clear as to what sort of government should replace the current government of Iran and some are not.

What is clear is that they want a democratic system that will be at the service of the people.

In the past 30 years, Iranian people in their attempt to create a more democratic and just society have made some progress through their civic organizations and their own personal resistance to rules and civil disobedience activities. Iranian people know that in their struggle for change not only they have to deal with resistance from their own government officials, but also they have to deal with manipulation of their struggle by agents of foreign countries and political groups in Iran or outside of Iran. Of course, knowing that through different means of operation, superpowers always want to interfere with the affairs of Third World countries and manipulate their struggle for independence, freedom and democracy in way that it will serve their interests does not undermine the genuine struggle of people of these countries.

The bottom line is that the ruling power whether in the USA or Iran has no regard for the will and needs of the people ... otherwise we would live in societies where people were happier with their lives and less worried about their future, the future of their children, and their grandchildren.

In the USA people are losing their jobs, homes and livelihoods, and there is still talk about sending more troops to the Middle East or other parts of the world to wage more wars. [2]

As I have told my new friends in Iran, people in USA have more personal freedom than people in Iran, but there is a big difference between having a personal freedom and having a political freedom which I don't think exists in this country.

And of course, one should expect some degree of personal freedom in a country that consider itself a model for freedom and democracy for the rest of the world. So I hope American people will put their focus more on their own struggle for freedom and democracy in this country and let people in other countries worry about freedom and democracy in their countries.

As a conscientious citizen of this world and a mother two boys, I am tormented by the ways things are in the USA, Iran, and other parts of the world.

Let us try for a second to see the big picture here for a change; let us try to see humanity as whole for a change; let us try to see in ourselves others for a change: the homeless people, the poor, the orphans, the ones that they have been wounded in the wars that are destroying lives and countries, the ones that are being tortured and the ones that are being kicked out of their homes, the ones who don't have money to pay for their medical bills, the ones that have nothing to eat and those who eat mud cakes to survive ... the

ones that are being denied medial supplies because of sanctions on their countries ... the ones that are committing suicide because they have no hope for future ... the ones that have lost their children in wars waged by powers at hand to serve their interests with no regards for human life ... to them we are all collateral damage, and we will remain collateral damage if we stay silent.

[1] For an introduction on the history of these sanctions Wikipedia is reasonably good place to start.

[2] Anyone who thinks that in the USA people are enjoying more than a superficial degree of political freedom and democracy better read the Chris Hedges recent article: "Democracy in America Is a Useful Fiction."

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