

Military Resistance 8C18

The Most Terrifying Sight An Evil Government Can See: Military Resistance



Mar 28: Thai soldiers wave and give thumbs-up sign to citizens marching In Bangkok against the military dictatorship of politicians and Army Generals that controls Thailand. (Photo: AFP/Nicolas Asfour)

“Women Threw Flowers At The Departing Troops, Who Smiled And Snapped Photos To Cheers From Protesters”

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

Mar 27 by Thanaporn Promyamyai, AFP [Excerpts]

BANGKOK (AFP) – Thai troops retreated from security posts in the capital Saturday, bowing to demands from 80,000 jubilant red-shirted protesters who mounted a rally to demand fresh elections.

The “Red Shirt” supporters of ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra targeted seven points where soldiers have been stationed during two weeks of street demonstrations, including the city’s zoo and Buddhist temples.

In the face of the huge crowds of flag-waving protesters, who arrived in cars, on motorbikes and on foot, the military agreed to withdraw from the positions in Bangkok’s old quarter where the Reds have their main rally base.

Women threw flowers at the departing troops, who smiled and snapped photos to cheers from protesters, who turned the streets red with their colourful clothes and heart-shaped clappers.

MORE:

Building For The Future: An Excellent Example Of How To Move Soldiers Towards Armed Revolution Against A Corrupt Government



Demonstrators leave no open space between themselves and the Thai soldiers, who are surrounded as they walk in line past the anti-government protesters March 27, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. This is a perfect example of what, in past revolutions, has been described as “the hot breath of the people melts the hearts of the soldiers.” (Photo: AP Photo/Apichart Weerawong)



Protesters cheer and offer flowers to the soldiers as they retreat from their temporary base, March 27, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. Thousands of protesters marched to seven temporary bases comprising schools and temples and asked the soldiers to abandon their bases and return to their barracks. (AP Photo/Apichart Weerawong)



Protesters cheer the soldiers as they leave their temporary base following the pressure from protesters March 27, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. Thousands of protesters marched to seven temporary bases comprising schools and temples and ask the soldiers to abandon their bases and return to their barracks. (AP Photo/Apichart Weerawong)



A marcher hugs a Thai soldier in Bangkok March 27, 2010. Photo: REUTERS/Chaiwat Subprasom



A protester kisses and thanks a soldier for retreating from a temporary base in Bangkok, Thailand, March 27, 2010. (AP Photo/Apichart Weerawong)



Warm smiles and waves as Thai soldiers leave the streets to go back to barracks in Bangkok, Thailand, March 27, 2010. Tens of thousands of red-shirted protesters marched across the historic heart of Bangkok on Saturday, clogging traffic in a renewed show of strength aimed at bringing down the government. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lalit)

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

The Dog Bites: Maliki Orders Arrests Of Winning Opposition Parliamentary Candidates:

Uses “State Security” Forces “To Remove Political Rivals” And Destroy Their Majority Win



Nouri Kamel al-Maliki: نوري كامل المالكي

Maliki’s critics say the Shiite prime minister is using state security forces and the courts to remove political rivals in a last-ditch effort to disqualify candidates from Allawi’s Iraqiya coalition, which holds only a two-seat lead ahead of Maliki’s State of Law bloc.

March 27, 2010 By Hannah Allam and Mohammed al Dulaimy, McClatchy Newspapers & Rod Nordland, The New York Times [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — At least four candidates who appear to have won parliamentary seats on the winning ticket of secular leader Ayad Allawi have become targets of investigation by security forces reporting to the narrowly defeated Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki, according to interviews Saturday with relatives, Iraqi security forces and the U.S. military.

All four candidates ran in Diyala province, a restive mainly Sunni area north of Baghdad.

One candidate who won more than 28,000 votes is being held incommunicado in a Baghdad jail, two other winners are on the run and the whereabouts of the fourth, a woman, are unknown.

Maliki’s critics say the Shiite prime minister is using state security forces and the courts to remove political rivals in a last-ditch effort to disqualify candidates from Allawi’s Iraqiya coalition, which holds only a two-seat lead ahead of Maliki’s State of Law bloc.

One of the fugitive candidates said security forces had staged two raids on his home this week, including one Saturday morning.

"I'm confused as to how I can make it to parliament to be sworn in when I can't even go home," said Raad Dahlaki, the chairman of the Baqouba City Council. McClatchy reached him by telephone at an undisclosed location.

"Will I be stripped of my right to fill the seat I won through hard work? Will I be able to keep the promises I made to people, to improve their lives? I have no clue why there are all these attempts to arrest me," he said.

A senior Iraqi security official in Diyala confirmed investigations against the four, but did not provide any details of possible evidence against them.

Speaking on condition of anonymity because he isn't authorized to address the cases publicly, the official identified the four candidates as: Dahlaki, the Baquba council chairman who won nearly 12,000 votes, according to official results; Najm Abdullah al Harbi, a Diyala provincial council member with more than 28,000 votes; Mohammed Othman, former mayor of the town of Saadiya with nearly 10,000 votes; and Ghydaa Saeed, a political newcomer who's said to be under scrutiny because she's related to a cabinet member from Saddam Hussein's former regime. She won nearly 6,800 votes.

The security official said arrest warrants have been issued for the first three and that a fourth, for Saeed, is expected any day.

Iraqi forces detained Harbi in a Feb. 7 raid on his house in the city of Muqdadia, Abdullah said. Initially held on suspicion of involvement with a homicide, Harbi retained an attorney and was ordered released by a judge for lack of evidence, Abdullah said.

In the few days it took before his release was processed, a special Iraqi counterterrorism force that's said to answer directly to Maliki arrived from Baghdad, took Harbi into custody and has held him without access to an attorney or visitors ever since, his brother and the Diyala security official said.

Abdullah said he's called several security offices in hopes of finding out where his brother is being held and what charges he faces, but hasn't received an answer.

"When they took him to Baghdad, all access to him was cut," Abdullah said. "No one has seen him, spoken to him or even heard his voice."

McClatchy also tried to pin down charges against Harbi, but to no avail.

The Diyala security official said Harbi "confessed to facilitating a suicide-vest bombing this year and, consequently, we detained him, his driver and two bodyguards."

U.S. forces, who worked closely with Harbi during his stint as the mayor of Muqdadia and in his long campaign against Sunni insurgents, said they received a different story from Iraqi forces.

"He is currently arrested and is likely held in Baghdad. He was arrested for stealing money from government projects. Any speculation beyond that as to why this happened would be for the (government of Iraq)," said Maj. Lee Peters, spokesman for the U.S. military in northern Iraq.

Harbi's family and friends were gathered around a TV set Friday in hopes of hearing his name announced as part of Allawi's winning coalition, a victory made bittersweet because of his detention. Abdullah said he's not even sure his brother knows he's the second highest vote-getter in the entire province, with 28,273 votes, according to figures released by Iraq's election commission.

On another front, officials in charge of purging the government of former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party said Saturday that they still expected to disqualify more than 50 political candidates, many of them members of Mr. Allawi's Iraqiya Party.

That could strip Mr. Allawi of his plurality, 91 parliamentary seats compared with 89 for Mr. Maliki's State of Law party.

Stupidest Iraq Media Lie Of The Year, So Far

26 March 2010 By **Bram Vermeulen in Baghdad**, NRC Handelsblad [Excerpts]

Today, no Americans can be seen in the streets.

The US armed forces are only visible in their giant helicopters gunships, or while escorting diplomats, ramming through the city in their armoured Chevrolets.



US soldiers patrol the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) headquarters in Baghdad on March 8. Photo: AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three Australian Soldiers Wounded In The Mirabad Valley

March 28, 2010 AAP

Three Australian soldiers have been wounded in two separate incidents in Afghanistan.

Two of the soldiers, who were patrolling in the Mirabad Valley region of Oruzgan Province, were wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated.

One of the soldiers suffered minor blast and fragmentation wounds and is expected to arrive back in Australia within a few days.

Another Australian soldier received superficial wounds in an IED blast while on a separate patrol in the same region.

The latest casualties take the number of Australians wounded in Afghanistan so far this year to 18.

Both incidents occurred on Saturday.

Two of the wounded soldiers are expected to remain in Afghanistan while they are treated for their injuries.

It was decided to evacuate the most seriously injured soldier to ensure the best chance of a full recovery.

Kandahar:
**“The Taliban Can Walk Around,
And Government Officials Cannot”**
**“The Government, Corrupt And
Ineffective, Lacks Almost Any
Popular Support”**

“Only 5 Of 17 Districts In The Province Are Accessible For Government Officials”

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

American helicopters swoop in on villagers who are on motorbikes or are working in the fields and hover over them until the men remove clothing and stand with their arms aloft to show they are not militants, said one man who frequently visits his village by motorbike from the city. He asked not to be named for fear of trouble from any side.

March 26, 2010 By CARLOTTA GALL, New York Times [Excerpts]

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — American forces have begun operations to push back Taliban insurgents in this most important southern province, the birthplace and spiritual home of the Taliban, and a full-scale offensive is expected in coming weeks.

But the Taliban have already turned this city into a battlefield as they prepare for the operation, which American officials hope will be decisive in breaking the insurgency's grip on southern Afghanistan.

The insurgents boldly walk the streets, visit shops and even press people into keeping guns and other supplies in their houses for them in preparation for urban warfare, residents say.

The government, corrupt and ineffective, lacks almost any popular support. Anyone connected to the government lives in fear of assassination. Its few officials sit barricaded behind high blast walls. Services are scant.

Security, people say, is at its worst since the fall of the Taliban government in 2001.

“The Taliban can walk around, and government officials cannot,” Hajji Lalai said.

The man nominally in charge of Kandahar Province, Gov. Tooryalai Wesa, sat alone in his office reading papers on a recent afternoon.

The spacious lawns and rooms of his palace, thronged by tribal elders and petitioners a few years ago, stood empty and silent.

Outside the city, it is worse. Government services barely exist. Only 5 of 17 districts in the province are accessible for government officials.

Administrators and police chiefs are appointed to the districts, but they have so little backup and so few resources, they can do little.

With 40 to 60 police officers in each district, they can barely guard the district center.

In Malahjat and Panjwai, agricultural districts to the west and southwest of Kandahar city, farmers say they are under constant threat from mines laid by the militants, as well as from American drones and helicopters combing the skies.

Villagers described at least three instances in recent weeks when drone strikes killed farmers digging ditches or bringing goods home from the market, as well as other cases when Taliban fighters were hit.

American helicopters swoop in on villagers who are on motorbikes or are working in the fields and hover over them until the men remove clothing and stand with their arms aloft to show they are not militants, said one man who frequently visits his village by motorbike from the city. He asked not to be named for fear of trouble from any side.

In addition to the dangers, residents say they are despairing about the political crisis gripping the province.

Real power rests with just two families who have prospered under the presence of American forces in the past eight years.

One of them is the family of President Hamid Karzai, who is represented here by his brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai, who heads the provincial council.

The other belongs to Gul Agha Shirzai, the former governor of Kandahar, and his brothers Bacha Shirzai and Razziq Shirzai, who have gotten lucrative security and construction deals with NATO forces.

Residents and elders accuse the families of persecuting rivals and excluding all other tribes from access to power. Their domination has undercut any popular backing for the government or the foreign forces supporting them.

“The first thing Afghans fear is the coming of more foreign troops, and the second thing they fear is the empowering of the current leadership and administration,” said Shahabuddin Akhunzada, a tribal elder from Kandahar city. His Eshaqzai tribe has complained of repeated arrests and political exclusion.

The West’s acceptance of Mr. Karzai’s re-election despite widespread fraud was the last straw, he said.

“The Americans, the international community, all the military forces have lost the people’s trust,” he added.

“We don’t trust what they say anymore.”

Marjah: The Farce Rolls On:

Occupations' Most Trusted Advisor Leads Marines Away From Taliban:

**“Police Are Able To Patrol Effectively
Only The Dusty Street Market Right
Outside The Marine Compound”**

**“The Place Is Not Clear Yet. There Is No
Security, So We Can't Go There Right
Now”**



Mar 28: Marines under heavy fire from the Taliban during a foot patrol in a Taliban stronghold area, in northern Marjah, Helmand province, southern Afghanistan.
(AFP/Mauricio Lima)

“We’ve been through thick and thin together,” one Bravo Company Marine officer said of the Afghan soldiers. “We’ve been through thick, and they’ve been through thin.”

Marine officials said that Shah’s forces could remain in Marjah for a year. “Hopefully, they have the ability to do the right thing,” said Coderre, 32. “If not, shit, we’re fighting a losing battle.”

Mar. 28, 2010 By DION NISSENBAUM, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

MARJAH, Afghanistan -- Maj. Mubarak Shah strode confidently into the U.S. Marine combat center with important intelligence: Three Taliban fighters were preparing to attack a nearby checkpoint.

The tall, lanky Afghan police commander, part of Afghanistan's new elite police force, pointed out the Taliban ambush spot on a wall-sized satellite map at Combat Outpost Turbett as his men and a team of Marines prepared for a fight.

When the Afghan police officers suited up and led the way through the busy Marjah market, however, they immediately threw the patrol a confusing curve.

“We’re heading in the opposite direction of what Maj. Mubarak pointed out on the map,” said Tim Coderre, a veteran sheriff’s deputy from Wilmington, N.C., and former Army sniper who’s working as a law enforcement adviser with the Marines.

Shah had identified the wrong spot on the map, and his officers now were leading the team to the right place.

However, the suspected Taliban fighters had quietly disappeared back into the surrounding fields long before the quick response team arrived to check out the report.

The U.S. and its allies in the international military force are hoping that the Afghan National Civil Order Police will be a model for the much-disparaged Afghan National Police force, which the United States and its allies have been struggling to rebuild for more than seven years at a cost that now exceeds \$6 billion.

ANCOP shows “what the potential might be,” Royal Marines Maj. Gen. Gordon Messenger, the top British military spokesman on Afghanistan, said last week at a briefing in Washington. **[Yes indeed. Leading the occupation soldiers in precisely the “opposite direction” from where the resistance fighters are located certainly does show “what the potential might be” -- for the resistance. T]**

The Marines at Combat Outpost Turbett almost universally consider ANCOP police more motivated than the Afghan soldiers who followed U.S. forces into battle against Taliban fighters last month.

“We’ve been through thick and thin together,” one Bravo Company Marine officer, speaking only on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the topic, said of the Afghan soldiers. “We’ve been through thick, and they’ve been through thin.”

Marines in other parts of Marjah have faced early problems working with ANCOP leaders who’ve blunted their effectiveness, said Army Lt. Col. Bob O’Brien, 40, from Fort Bragg, N.C., who commands one of the military coalition ANCOP advisory teams.

A few officers have had to be pushed out.

The new Afghan police station at this combat outpost is little more than three sparse rooms surrounded by sandbag walls. It has no lockup, and it must detain suspects in the rooms where the officers operate.

Apart from a small number of checkpoints scattered across this part of Marjah, the police are able to patrol effectively only the dusty street market right outside the Marine compound.

The limits of the police work were evident earlier this month when a young farmer with a bloody gauze bandage wrapped around his head walked into the police station to file a complaint.

A gang of rivals had slashed the farmer's head open with a scythe in a feud over a water pump.

Shah, a former Soviet-era police commander with a gravelly voice, sent the farmer off to be treated by U.S. Navy medics and told the man to let Shah's police know if he saw his assailants walking around the nearby market.

"There is no security, so we can't go there right now," Shah said after the farmer left to be treated for his life-threatening injury. "The place is not clear yet."

Despite the constraints, Shah has become an integral part of the U.S. military operation.

Coderre said the accuracy of Shah's tips was about 50-50, but that may have been a charitable estimate. On the other hand, tips, which come from locals, are often off the mark. [A military tactic sometimes known as "disinformation."]

American officials are betting that Shah and his police can buy them time and good will while they train the regular national police to assume control of Marjah and Afghanistan.

There are no firm plans for the transition, but Marine officials said that Shah's forces could remain in Marjah for a year.

"Hopefully, they have the ability to do the right thing," said Coderre, 32.

"If not, shit, we're fighting a losing battle."

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

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

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



A soldier belonging to the Army National Guard 162 Engineer Company attached to the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion of U.S. Marine Corps secures the area around a broken vehicle in a convoy delivered supply to the remote Forward Operating Base (FOB) Cafferata in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, March 8, 2010. Picture taken March 8, 2010. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov



U.S. Marine with the First Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment, Alpha company patrol in Marjah, Afghanistan, March 18, 2010. (AP Photo/Dusan Vranic)



Soldiers with the 508th Special Troops Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division outside the town of Kandahar, southern Afghanistan March 27, 2010. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Bomb Attack Kills Somali Senior Official

March 27 (Xinhua) & AP

The Islamist radical group of Al Shabaab in Somalia on Saturday claimed responsibility after a senior Somali government official was killed by a roadside bomb explosion in the Somali capital Mogadishu.

Ahmed Sheikh Mohamoud Qorleh, District Commissioner (DC) of Hamar Jajab district in Mogadishu, was killed after a remotely controlled bomb ribbed through his car, Banadir regional authority Abdi Kafi told Xinhua. The deputy DC for security was also injured in the blast which took place in the Somali government-controlled Afisyoni neighborhood, south of the capital Mogadishu.

Islamist Al Shabaab movement has previously targeted Somali government officials and security forces and have carried out similar high profile assassinations of senior Somali government officials.

The group, which controls much of south and center of the war ravaged east African country, wants to topple the internationally recognized Somali government which it considers as un-Islamic and a puppet of the West.

Islamist rebels control large swathes of the restive coastal city while they covertly operate in the Somali government controlled side of the city where they have carried out attacks on the security forces and important government installations.

Somali government has been lately stating that it plans to wage a major offensive to stamp out Islamist insurgents from the capital.

The Islamist groups on the other hand have been parading newly trained fighters in Mogadishu and digging trenches along main streets in areas under their control in an attempt to stop the advance of Somali government forces backed of almost 5,000 African Union forces based in Mogadishu.

A Somali government official says three people have been killed and four injured in clashes Saturday between government soldiers and armed protesters opposing the demolition of their houses near Mogadishu's main airport.

Witnesses on Friday said hundreds of poor Somali families are being forcibly evicted from their homes near the airport. Human rights groups say the families — who squatted the idle land — have no place to go.

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The remains of Private 1st Class Zachary Lovejoy of Albuquerque, N.M. and Capt. Daniel Whitten of Grimes, Iowa at Dover Air Force Base in Del., Feb. 5, 2010. Lovejoy and Whitten were killed in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Posted at: <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS28.pdf>

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

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

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.

-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War

“The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy”

-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.

-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers

Poster Soldier After 20 Years In Iraq



Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance
Sent: March 21, 2010
Subject: Poster Soldier After 20 Years In Iraq

Poster Soldier After 20 Years In Iraq

On and on and on and on...

**The Iraq War initially started on
January 17, 1991.**

**There have been four U.S. Empire
presidents who have been in power.**

**This war has lasted twice as long as the
Vietnam War.**

It has drained the U.S. economy to death.

It has drained the life out of millions of people.

**Today I marched in an anti-war rally that marked
the 7th anniversary of the second half of this war.**

**Beginning on March 20, 2003, the United States
launched 800 cruise missiles into Baghdad
in the first 48 hours.**

**When I attended the rally in Portland, Oregon,
there were less than 500 people who marched.**

**Except for the die-hard anti-war people across
this country,**

99% of the American people did nothing.

**My conclusion is that America has become a
mental hospital of denial.**

**Before I left for Vietnam in September 1970,
I witnessed shock therapy being done on an
American soldier at a military hospital.**

It was a frightening thing to watch.

**He was still a teenager, and when he walked
into the room prior to the procedure,
he had that thousand yard stare because he
was so medicated with Thorazine.**

**After the shock therapy was over, he was rolled
out of the room semiconscious on a hospital gurney,
and taken back to his psychiatric ward.**

**This is what 99% of the American people
do not know about war.**

**The number one lying bumper sticker in this
country is: "Support The Troops."**

**Ever stand in line at a pharmacy in a VA
hospital and interact with veterans who have
been severely traumatized by war?**

I have.

Many times.

**Ever see a veteran walk out of a VA
hospital with a thousand yard stare?**

I have.

Many times.
Ever know a vet personally who committed suicide?
I have.
Just about every Vietnam veteran I know has had
this experience.
America,
you have become a mental hospital of denial.
Your disease is Silence.
America,
you will get away with nothing.

If you think this piece will
raise awareness, pass it on.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
March 20, 2010

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)

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

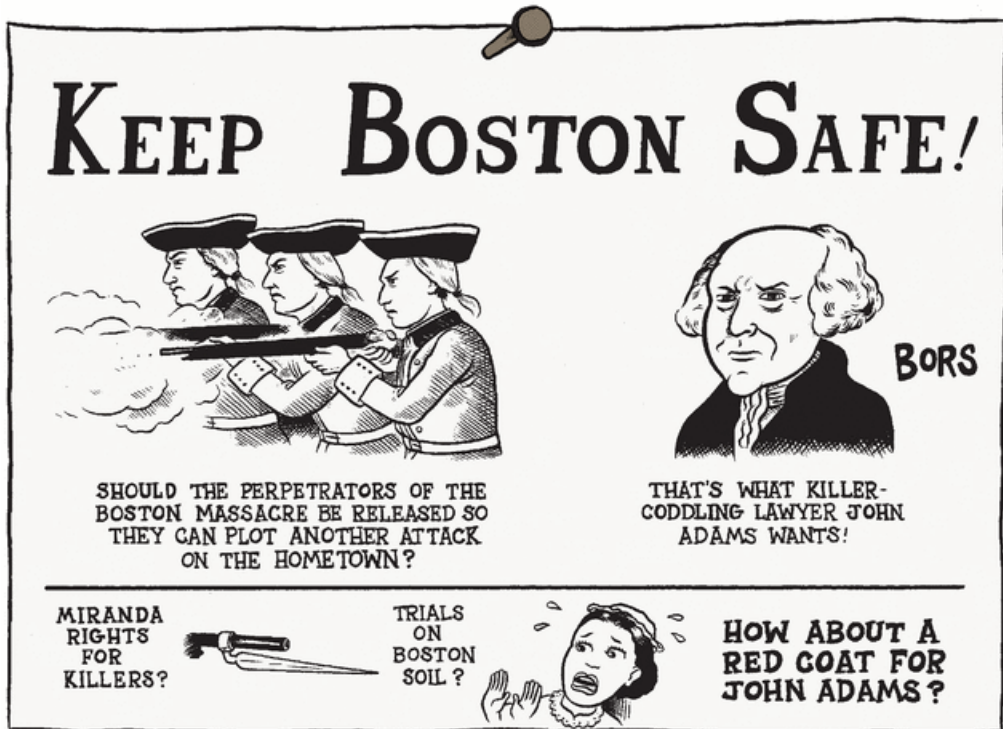
Troops Invited:

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

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email contact@militaryproject.org

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Obama Democrats Vs. Tea Party
Republicans:**

**A Fake Fight Over Fake Health
Care Reform:**

**“Both Sides Work For The Same
Bosses, For Big Pharma, Big
Insurance, And The Biggest Medical
Providers”**

**“The Too Big To Fail Private Health
Insurers Get A Stream Of Compulsory**

Customers, Some Of Them Paid For In Part With Government Money”



In health care, as in war and peace, as in the environment and education, as in the rights of women and immigrants, the First Black President's historic role is clear.

His job is to smile and speechify and neutralize the left on every front, while taking the country further to the right than his white Republican predecessor would ever have been able.

03/25/2010 By managing editor Bruce A. Dixon, Black Agenda Report

There are real fights and there are fake fights, engineered to distract attention away from the real deal.

The shouting match between Obama's Dems and the Tea party Repubs is one of those fake fights.

The health care legislation passed by the Obama Democrats is incomparably worse than anything they could have passed right after the presidential election, and significantly worse than anything Democrats could have passed at midyear 2009.

The president and his minions have delayed as long as possible to guarantee the worst, not the best bill for patients, and the best deal possible for Big Insurance, Big Pharma and Big Medicine.

The fifteen month running battle between Obama Democrats and tea party Republicans was never much more real than televised professional wrestling.

Like the opposing wrestlers, both sides work for the same bosses, for Big Pharma, Big Insurance, and the biggest medical providers.

The real health care fight waged by the Obama administration has not been against Republicans, who never had the votes to stop, let alone dictate or pass anything.

The administration's effort all along has been to pass the worst bill possible, with the greatest amounts of corporate welfare and loopholes, and the fewest protections for patients, while silencing, neutering and coercing the voices of most Democrats, who have favored some form of single payer, or Medicare For All from the beginning.

The Fake Reform

On the whole, the Obama health care legislation is just plain bad.

It's fake reform.

Most of the people getting medical coverage for the first time under its provisions will get it through an expansion of Medicaid. The Medicaid expansion and inclusion of children in their parents' policies till the age of 24 are perhaps the only unambiguously positive aspects of the bill, and both these could have been passed through the House and Senate at any time since the end of 2006.

Supposedly, insurers can't refuse to insure anybody, or jack prices on the basis of pre-existing conditions, and can't revoke policies when people get sick enough to actually use them.

But so many loopholes and end runs have been written into the legislation that these and other widely ballyhooed provisions to safeguard the interests of patients are in fact meaningless.

The ban on pre-existing conditions for example is negated by allowing insurers to offer "wellness" discounts.

The older, the fatter, the less physically fit and the already sick need not apply for these discounts, and the fit will lose them when they gain a few pounds.

Insurance policies will continue to cherry pick their customers in the marketing, and like the credit card industry, insurers will now be able to evade already weak state regulators by selling policies across state lines. This will undoubtedly lead to concentrations of insurance companies in the least regulated states, and a race to the bottom.

Health coverage that many working Americans now get will be steeply taxed, and to evade this tax employers will simply offer policies worth less, provoking yet another downward stampede.

Big pharmaceutical companies are assured exclusive rights for even longer periods than before to new classes of drugs, and insurance companies are prohibited from paying for the re-importation of drugs originally manufactured here from Canada, or combining to negotiate drug prices downward.

The ban on selling low-cost health insurance to the nation's twelve or fifteen million undocumented means the border will now extend to every doctor's office and emergency room in the land. And insurance policies offered through "the exchange" are prohibited from covering abortions or a list of reproductive health services.

Private insurance companies will use their all-too-real death panels to continue to decide which procedures they will cover, and which ones they won't, and how much they will pay for them.

Health insurance premiums will be capped at just under ten percent of a family's income, but this will not include already high co-payments, or deductibles.

In Massachusetts, where a version of the president's plan has been law since 2006, sick people are forgoing treatment because they cannot afford the high co-payments and deductibles, and the flood of bankruptcies from unpayable medical bills is continuing.

The legislation is not a step toward single payer, as it removes none of the legal obstacles facing states which choose that path on their own.

It's almost a good thing that most of the bill's provisions don't take effect till 2014.

And of course the too big to fail private health insurers get a stream of compulsory customers, some of them paid for in part with government money.

The Fake Fight

The legislation just passed is a million miles away from anything Democrats campaigned on in the 2006-2008 run for the White House, and incomparably worse than anything House Democrats would have passed in the first months of the Obama administration.

The 2007-2008 class of House Democrats included 99 co-sponsors of HR 676, the Single Payer Medicare For All. All but one or two of these were sworn in for the current Congress.

What happened?

Persistent and single-minded interventions of the White House and its minions in the Senate and House Democratic leadership have relentlessly censored and excluded single payer viewpoints from the public conversation and pushed the actual legislation further and further in the directions the insurance companies, the drug companies, and the biggest medical providers desired.

The White House met continuously in early 2009 with representatives of pharmaceutical companies, and insisted that their super-profits be protected.

A former VP of WellPoint, one of the nation's top insurers was allowed to write large portions of the Senate version of the Obama bill.

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid handed the writing of its legislation over to a committee of senators who had more money from private insurers and Big Pharma than any of their fellows, and which gave its Republican members veto power over its final product.

To cover their own impotence, Democrats who had once supported single payer became outspoken advocates of a phantom policy called "the public option," which polled well because it sounded something like universal health care or single payer, but never in fact existed.

The president definitively stomped on their fake public option back in September 2009, when he said his version of it would only apply to five percent of the market at most, and was not essential to his proposal anyhow. House leaders balked a little, and corralled their members behind whatever the president wanted, and whatever the pea party fanatics declared they didn't want.

A much better health care bill could have been passed at mid-year 2009, and a less good, but still somewhat better one was possible at year's end. But the Obama administration was convinced that still more could be given to Big Insurance and Big Pharma, and so delayed the bill into 2010. Even as late as December a majority of Democratic senators were willing to pay lip service to the public option. For the Obama administration, that meant it was still too soon to pass its version of health care.

The Real Fight

The margin and distribution of votes last weekend reveals White House effort to blame Republican obstruction and Democratic progressives for the delay in passing health care to have been utter scams.

Not one Republican voted for the bill, and no Republican votes were ever needed.

While the White House allowed 26 of 58 Democratic Blue Dogs to vote against the bill, including Art Davis of Alabama and John Marshall and John Barrow of Georgia, it applied incredible pressure against Dennis Kucinich and other advocates of single payer to line up behind the pro-corporate, anti health care bill. They, and the movement for real universal health care, for single payer, were the White House's real foes.

It's Not Over.

For the next several years 18 or 20 thousand people will sicken and die each year who don't have to, thanks now to Barack Obama and his hand picked Democratic leaders in the House and Senate.

The most awful failures of this legislation will not be obvious for several years, as most of it does not even take effect till 2014.

More than six hundred thousand bankruptcies triggered by unpayable medical expenses will continue to happen yearly at least till then, with their numbers not greatly reduced on the other side.

The Single Payer Movement, among whose leading organizations are the National Nurses Union, HealthCare NOW, and Physicians For a National Health Care Plan are preparing for a long struggle. Not this year or the next, but in a decade or less, many predict, single payer will be enacted. California has passed single payer three times now, but has never had a governor with the guts to sign it. Pennsylvania and a few other states are thought to be close to passing single payer on their own. That's how it happened in Canada. One province did it, everybody saw how it worked, and it became national policy.

In health care, as in war and peace, as in the environment and education, as in the rights of women and immigrants, the First Black President's historic role is clear.

His job is to smile and speechify and neutralize the left on every front, while taking the country further to the right than his white Republican predecessor would ever have been able.

MILITARY RESISTANCE BY MAIL FREE FOR ACTIVE DUTY TROOPS

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A SELECTION OF GI SPECIALS MAILED TO YOU, EMAIL YOUR ADDRESS TO: CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG OR DROP A LINE TO: BOX 126, 2576 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025-5657 USA. 888.711.2550

Please say how many you wish sent.

NOTE WELL: They will all be different issues of GI Special to satisfy DOD regs that you may possess copies, *provided you don't have more than one of the same issue.*

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.



Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/wordpress/military-resistance-archives/> ;

news@uruknet.info; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qj_special/

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.