

Military Resistance 8F8



Stupid Stupid Stupid: Pentagon's Dumbest Fraud Of The Year, So Far: Wall St. Journal Article Ridicules Lame DoD Propaganda About "\$1 Trillion" In Afghan Mineral Wealth

JUNE 15, 2010 Liam Denning, The Wall Street Journal

Disclosures that Afghanistan may be sitting on \$1 trillion of untapped minerals pose a quandary straight out of the pages of "The Hobbit," of all things.

In J. R. R. Tolkien's fantasy, the eponymous hero overcomes multiple obstacles to reach a treasure hoard guarded by a dragon.

But the hobbit then almost succumbs to defeatism when the cunning monster asks him how, even if he gets his hands on the gold, he will actually carry it all home?

Useful as mineral wealth might someday prove to be for Afghanistan, commodities analysts needn't adjust their supply forecasts just yet.

Oil offers a lesson here.

The world has enough proven oil reserves to last about 46 years at current rates of consumption. Yet various barriers, chiefly political ones, mean actual production is constrained, keeping prices high. Iraq, for example, reckons it could quintuple output to 12.5 million barrels per day by 2020, which would truly transform the oil market. But Iraq's political divisions, decrepit infrastructure and violence mean few expect this goal to be achieved.

Now think of Afghanistan, a tribal land-locked country.

War-torn for much of the past three decades, it boasts such neighbors as Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan, through which any riches would have to transit to market.

If that sounds like a sure thing, you probably believe in fairy tales.

MORE:

“‘Sudan Will Host The Winter Olympics Before These Guys Get A Trillion Dollars Out Of The Ground,’ Said Luke Popovich Of The National Mining Assn.”

“Some Critics Argue That The Extent Of Un-Mined Deposits Is Being Inflated To Garner Support For The War”

“The Times Story Monday Looked To Many Observers Like Part Of An Effort To Strengthen The Case For Giving The Counterinsurgency Effort More Time”

14 June 2010 By Tom A. Peter, Correspondent, The Christian Science Monitor & By Jim Lobe (IPS) & Jun 15, 2010 By Robert H. Reid - The Associated Press

U.S. and Afghan officials claim to have discovered more than \$1 trillion in untapped copper, iron, and lithium deposits in Afghanistan, enough to significantly bolster the future development of the war ravaged country.

But there remains skepticism about Afghanistan's mineral wealth, as some critics argue that the extent of un-mined deposits is being inflated to garner support for the war.

Jill McGivering of the BBC cast suspicion on the timing of the announcement, saying that “at a time of growing despair about Afghanistan and its government, the portrayal of the country as a potential goldmine could help to bolster international resolve and paint the country as a prize worth fighting for.

The latest polling shows a noticeable erosion of support for Washington's commitment to the war compared to eight months ago, when President Barack Obama agreed to the Pentagon's recommendations to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan to bring the total U.S. military presence there to around 100,000 later this summer.

Moreover, what little support for the war remains among the publics of Washington's NATO allies - never as high as in the U.S. in any event - is also fading quickly. NATO and non-NATO countries, excluding the U.S., currently have about 34,000 troops deployed to Afghanistan.

In that respect, the appearance of the Times story Monday looked to many observers like part of an effort to strengthen the case for giving the counterinsurgency effort more time.

“Sudan will host the Winter Olympics before these guys get a trillion dollars out of the ground,” said Luke Popovich of the National Mining Assn., which represents U.S. mining companies.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

June 13 (Reuters) & 15 Jun 2010 & Jun 16, SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press
Writer & Reuters

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol wounded an army officer in southern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in Daquq, 200 km (125 miles) north of Baghdad on Tuesday, police said.

Guerrillas shot dead two policemen in a crowded market in eastern Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb exploded near an armoured vehicle carrying Nineveh province deputy governor Faisal al-Yawir in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. Yawir was unhurt.

A roadside bomb killed two Iraqi soldiers when it exploded near their patrol in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A mortar round wounded a policeman in eastern Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb killed two policemen including a lieutenant colonel and wounded four other policemen in Baghdad's southern district of Doura on Monday, police said.

Iraqi officials say a bomb attack has killed the leader of a government-backed Sunni militia west of Baghdad. The bomb that killed Awakening Council leader Mohammed al-Hamadani and wounded a bodyguard on Wednesday was attached to a car and exploded in Hamdaniya, a village in the Abu Ghraib district, police and hospital officials said.

A bomb attached to a civilian car driven by a police officer detonated, killing a beggar on the street and wounding four people, including the driver.

A bomb attached to a car wounded two off-duty traffic policemen in northern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Three policemen were wounded when a car bomb exploded near an Iraqi police patrol in eastern Mosul, police said.

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

2 U.S. Service Members Killed At Baghi Shirkat

Jun 16 AP

A roadside bombing killed two U.S. service members in northern Afghanistan on Wednesday, officials said, pushing the death toll among American troops so far this month to 30.

The attack occurred in the Baghi Shirkat area, about 19 miles (30 kilometers) west of Kunduz city, said Kunduz provincial government spokesman, Muhbobullah Sayedi. The troops were in a vehicle that hit a roadside bomb, he said.

Two Soldiers From 1 LANCS Killed In Nad 'Ali

15 Jun 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that two soldiers from 1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (1 LANCS), serving as part of Combined Force Nad 'Ali, were killed in southern Afghanistan earlier today, Tuesday 15 June 2010.

The two soldiers were killed in separate shooting incidents in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province.

U.S. Service Member Killed In Afghanistan

Jun 15, 2010 By Robert H. Reid - The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Five NATO troops including one American died Tuesday, continuing a grim trend that could make June among the deadliest months of the nearly 9-year-old Afghan war.

The American service member was killed in a gunbattle in eastern Afghanistan.

Polish Soldier Killed In Afghanistan;

Two More Wounded

15.06.2010 IAR/PAP

Lance Corporal Grzegorz Bukowski has become the 18th Polish soldier to die in Afghanistan after an insurgent attack, Tuesday morning, informs the army press office.

The 29 year-old soldier was mortally wounded by shrapnel from an exploding mortar shell. Two other soldiers who were injured in the attack on the Warrior base, one of four bases hosting 2,600 Polish soldiers stationed in Afghanistan, were transported to the nearby Ghazni base.

“A rapid reaction unit was sent to the site where the mortar was launched from immediately after the attack,” said Major Piotr Jaszczuk from the operational command of the Polish contingent. “We are examining the circumstances of this attack,” added Jaszczuk.

Lance Corporal Bukowski was single and served in the military police based in Minsk Mazowiecki, central Poland. In Afghanistan, he was involved in the training of local police and was on his second tour. He had previously served in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the weekend following the death of Corporal Gorka, Poland’s prime minister Donald Tusk said that the government will be looking into a timetable for the withdrawal of Polish troops at the NATO Lisbon summit in November.

Grzegorz Napieralski, the leftwing candidate in the June 20 presidential elections, accused the government of using the war in Afghanistan for electioneering purposes.

Royal Marine Dies From Wounds Sustained In Afghanistan

15 Jun 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a Royal Marine from 40 Commando Royal Marines died from wounds sustained in Afghanistan at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, yesterday, Monday 14 June 2010.

The Marine, part of Combined Force Sangin, died as a result of injuries sustained during an exchange of fire with insurgent forces in the Sangin district of Helmand province on the afternoon of Sunday 13 June 2010.

Services Set For Brandon Native Killed In Afghan Mine Blast

May 24, 2010 Justin Fritscher, Clarion Ledger.

Nearing the end of his tour of duty in Afghanistan, Marine Lance Cpl. Philip Clark was scheduled to return to the U.S. next month.

He had big plans ahead of him that were cut short when a mine killed the 19-year-old Brandon native May 18 while on patrol in Marjah.

"His wife was working two jobs to save up to get the house ready for him," Rosanne Horn, his grandmother, said. He married his wife, Ashton Gunther Clark, in October, a month before he was deployed.

"They had plans to move to North Carolina," she said. "He was due home in a couple of weeks. She was going to go there next week to get the house all set up."

Clark attended elementary schools in Oxford and then Jackson Preparatory School in Flowood for several years before moving to Gainesville, Fla. Much of his family still lives in the metro area, including his mother, Rosmari Clark Kruger, of Brandon, Horn said.

His services are scheduled for Friday in Gainesville, and his body is being transported to Jacksonville on Thursday. He will be buried with full military honors at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

The Blue Angels, the Navy's flight demonstration squadron, will fly overhead when Clark's body arrives in Jacksonville in the "Missing Man Formation," Horn said.

Clark's body arrived last week to Dover Air Force Base. A Mississippi Air National Guard plane is the one that carried him home, a unique coincidence for a long-time Mississippi boy, Horn said.

Clark was one of three soldiers killed and two injured by lateral shrapnel. Clark is a three-time Purple Heart recipient.

Horn described her grandson as an all-around athlete and outdoorsman, saying he enjoyed hunting, fishing, soccer and weightlifting.

His athleticism and perseverance are what led him to become a Marine, she said.

"He had this drive that he wanted to be a Marine," she said. "He was so motivated.

"He worked really hard, so that when he got to Parris Island, he would be able to meet the standards of training."

Clark's aunt, Andrea Lloyd, described her nephew as a sweet boy.

“He made everyone laugh, even if he was unhappy,” the Brandon resident said. “He definitely brightened a room when he came in.”

Lloyd said she visited with him in August, and she called him her “little man,” like she had for years. “He said, ‘You can’t call me that anymore. I’m not little anymore.’”

Lloyd said her nephew was at the happiest point of his life.

“He loved the Marines, and he was looking forward to the future he and his wife had together,” she said.

Horn asks that instead of flowers, people make donations to Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children in Jackson because of her grandson’s love for children.

“The military very strongly encouraged their soldiers to have no contact with civilians,” she said. “But Philip saw these children in the streets. He took some of his food from his meals and gave it to the children.

“That’s the kind of person he was. He was willing to put his life on the line. I felt it would be best to honor them this way to support a hospital for children.”

Marietta Ranger Killed In Afghanistan Hailed As Hero



Spc. Jonathan K. Peney, 22, died in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained when he was shot by enemy forces. Department of Defense

June 3, 2010 By Alexis Stevens and Mike Morris, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Long before he decided to join the Army, Jonathan K. Peney was a determined young man, according to his friends.

At a young age, the Marietta native began rock climbing. He eventually climbed at the elite level.

"He was pretty determined to do what regular people haven't done." Adrian Prelipcenau, a friend and fellow climber, told the AJC.

The 22-year-old Ranger was killed Tuesday in Afghanistan while trying to give medical aid to a fellow soldier who had been wounded. Peney, a highly trained medic, is being hailed as a hero for his actions. Peney died in Kandahar province from wounds sustained when he was shot by enemy forces, according to the Department of Defense.

Peney, who enlisted in the Army in 2005, had served as a combat medic for more than two years. He was on his fourth deployment to Afghanistan. Peney was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia, according to the Department of Defense.

"Spc. Peney was the epitome of our Ranger medics -- warrior first, expert in advanced medical treatment, and selflessly dedicated to the care of others," Col. Michael E. Kurilla, commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment, said in a statement released by the Army.

"Spc. Peney did not hesitate to move under heavy fire to the care of another wounded Ranger," Kurilla said. "He is a hero to our nation, the 75th Ranger Regiment and his family."

In between his military deployments, Peney found time to meet his future wife and fall in love, friends said. Peney met Kristin E. Felton in Savannah during an outing with mutual friends. The couple was married in Greece last summer, Felton's father, Michael Felton told the AJC.

"We didn't get to spend a lot of time with him," Michael Felton said. "But they were very happy, and that's the important thing."

Kristin Felton and Peney's mother, Sue L. Peney of LaGrange, traveled to Dover, Dela., for the arrival of Jonathan Peney's casket, Michael Felton said. The Army will keep the soldier's body for several days, he said.

The soldier had previously received numerous medals, including the Army Commendation Medal, and was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal and Meritorious Service Medal.

A climbing friend and a fellow Ranger told the AJC late Wednesday that Peney had recently graduated from Ranger school. Peney, the friend said, was the type of guy always willing to help. "That's in character," said the friend, who asked not to be named due to his military role.

Prelipcenau, of Norcross, recalled Peney years ago volunteering to help fellow climbing friends with a business venture. Peney, then a teenager, helped build a climbing wall in Suwanee, Prelipcenau said. Even then, Peney thought long and hard before making decisions, such as the one that sent him into the military, he said.

"He just wanted to help," Prelipcenau said. "He wanted to take life to the next level. He wasn't afraid of anything."

Sacramento-Area Marine Dies Defusing Bomb In Afghanistan



May. 23, 2010 By Phillip Reese, Modesto Bee

Staff Sgt. and bomb technician Adam Perkins knew that his job could lead to his death, so before the Marines redeployed him to Afghanistan last month, Perkins made sure his 9-month-old son would remember him.

“He videotaped himself reading a bunch of books to his son,” his mom, Laureen Myers, said Saturday.

Perkins, who grew up in Antelope and attended Center High School, died Monday while defusing a roadside bomb in Afghanistan's Helmand province, where at least nine Marines have been killed this month. He was 27.

Perkins' mom and stepdad said Saturday that they had received an outpouring of support from his friends and comrades. “Adam was a hero,” said stepdad Bill Myers. “What he did saved countless lives, both military and civilian.”

Perkins joined the Marines one week after Sept. 11, 2001, wanting to do something about what he saw on television. He chose to become a bomb technician, his mom said, because he thought it would be a challenge.

The Marines sent Perkins overseas three times. He volunteered for his second deployment to take the place of a fellow technician who was a new father, his mom recalled.

During the past nine years, Perkins earned a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, an Iraq Campaign Medal, a Combat Action Ribbon and a slew of other commendations.

Stationed at Camp Pendleton, Perkins was happiest when around his wife and son, whom the family did not want named.

A serious man, Perkins often would go long periods without cracking a smile – unless his son was in the room.

Perkins didn't talk much about his work. Still, he told his mom that he didn't care for the Oscar-winning movie "The Hurt Locker," with its protagonist casually disabling bombs.

"It's a Hollywood version," Laureen Myers said, recalling Perkins' views. "He was very big on safety. Don't think for a minute he was not cautious."

He was cautious to the end. Her voice shaking, Myers explained that it wasn't a mistake that caused her son's death.

"He was defusing a roadside bomb," she said, "and there was a second detonation."

Aussie Soldier Wounded In Afghanistan

June 16, 2010 AAP

An Australian special forces soldier was shot in the arm in a major two-day operation in Afghanistan's northern Kandahar province ahead of the coalition offensive to retake Kandahar city.

Defence said the unnamed soldier, plus another Afghan National Security Forces soldier shot in the side, were evacuated under Taliban fire and flown to Tarin Kowt for treatment.

Resistance Action



Dead body at the bomb blast which killed Afghan district chief of Arghandab, Abdul Jabar, in Kandahar city June 15, 2010. Abdu IJabar and two other passengers were killed when their car was struck by an explosive device on Tuesday, the governor's spokesman said. REUTERS/Ahmad Nadeem

15 Jun 2010 Reuters – AlertNet & Associated Press & Jun 16 AP

Four policemen were killed when their vehicle was struck by an explosive device on Monday in Maidan Wardak, west of Kabul, the interior ministry said.

Taliban insurgents attacked an Afghan police post, killed five officers and wounding one on Tuesday in Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, a provincial official said.

He said the attackers overran the checkpoint north of Ghazni city and made off with weapons.

Militants ambushed a convoy in eastern Nangarhar province. Two Afghan police were killed.

Three Afghans working for a private security company were killed when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in Muqar district of Ghazni province, according to the deputy provincial police chief, Nawroz Ali Nawroz.

Insurgents Kill Governor Of Arghandab

Jun 15, 2010 DPA

Kandahar, Afghanistan - A district governor, his son and his bodyguard were killed on Tuesday in an explosion in southern Afghanistan, police said.

Haji Abdul Jabar, the governor for Arghandab district of southern province of Kandahar was en route home on Tuesday afternoon when an explosives-packed vehicle parked by the side of the road was detonated by remote control, a police official said.

“If Anybody Thinks Kandahar Will Be Solved This Year They Are Kidding Themselves”

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

June 15, 2010 By Peter Baker and Mark Landler, The New York Times [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON - Six months after President Obama decided to send more forces to Afghanistan, the halting progress in the war has crystallized longstanding tensions within the government over the viability of his plan to turn around the country and begin pulling out by July 2011.

Within the administration, the troubles in clearing out the Taliban from a second-tier region and the elusive loyalties of the Afghan president have prompted anxious discussions about whether the policy can work on the timetable the president has set.

Other military officers, were more pessimistic. "If anybody thinks Kandahar will be solved this year," a senior military officer said, "they are kidding themselves."

TROOP NEWS

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



The remains of Spc. Wade A. Slack Saturday, May 8, 2010 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Slack, 21, of Waterville, Maine died May 6 in Jaghatu, Afghanistan of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with indirect fire. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

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

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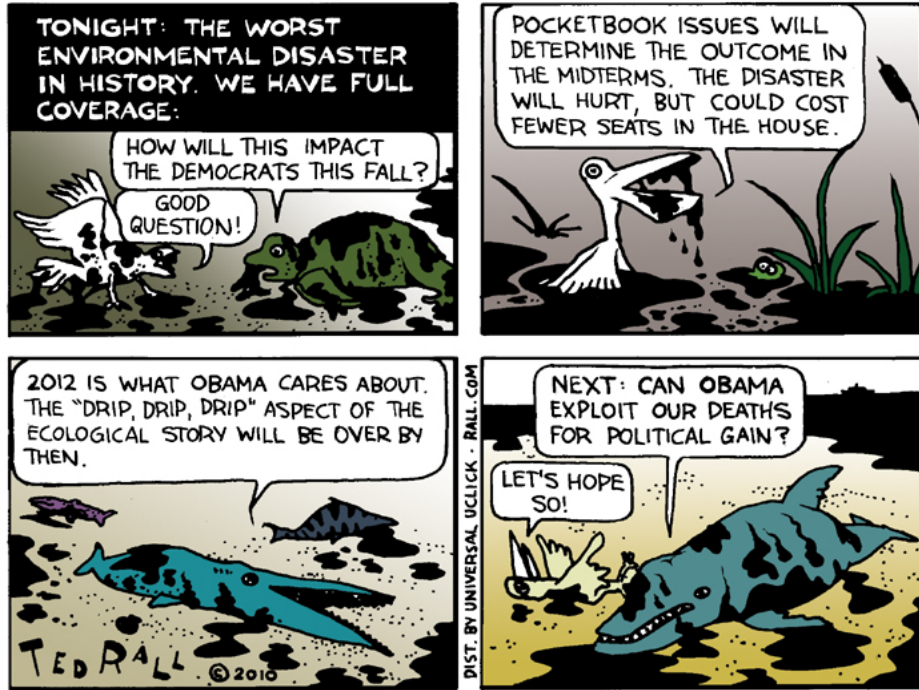
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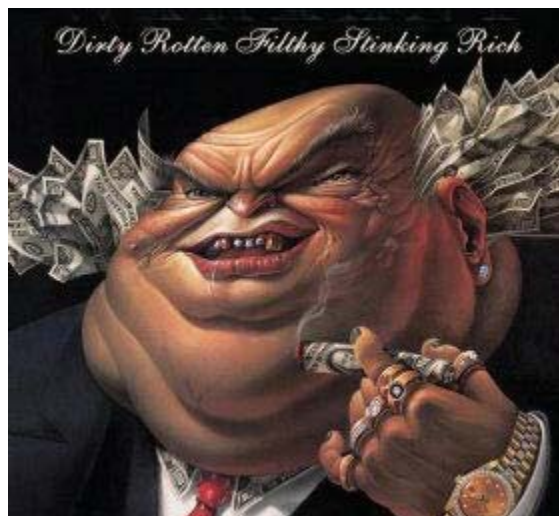
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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



China: #1

“Striking Workers Returned To Their Positions Monday, But ‘Many Of Them Are Still Sitting Inside The Plant, Refusing To Work’”

“They Started A Go-Slow Action To Press Their Demands For An Increase In Basic Pay”

“The Plant Is The Third Honda-Affiliated Parts Factory In Guangdong Province To Be Hit By A Strike In Recent Weeks”

JUNE 13, 2010 By NORIHIKO SHIROUZU, LORETTA CHAO And JASON DEAN, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

On Monday, many of the 1,400 workers at the Honda Lock (Guangdong) Co. plant in southeastern China filed through the factory gates in their crisp white uniforms, giving the appearance that the strike they began last Wednesday was over.

But workers said they showed up only because they feared they would be fired after the company posted notices saying it was looking for replacement workers—at far higher pay.

Once inside, they started a go-slow action to press their demands for an increase in basic pay to 1,600 yuan a month from 900 yuan.

The plant is the third Honda-affiliated parts factory in Guangdong province to be hit by a strike in recent weeks.

Koji Matsuyama, a senior general affairs manager of Honda Lock Manufacturing Co., the Honda unit that controls the Zhongshan plant, said a majority of striking workers returned to their positions Monday, but “many of them are still sitting inside the plant, refusing to work.”

The plant is producing locks and other components “only on a limited basis,” he said.

Interviews with Japanese managers and Chinese workers paint a picture of chaotic negotiations, with both sides operating in uncharted territory. There are no easy mechanisms for settling disputes, and no formal channels of communication between managers and workers.

Workers say managers have asked each department to elect a representative to participate in talks. Groups of workers are raising separate demands and grievances. For instance, spray painters are asking for a higher hardship allowance because they are exposed to chemicals.

Workers say managers have asked for three working days, starting Monday, to consider the demands. Wednesday is a holiday, so managers want Thursday to count as one of the three days.

Asked what would happen if the employees' demands aren't met, a worker named Lu, who was taking a stroll with his girlfriend near the plant, said, "Then I can't guarantee there won't be another strike."

In an ominous sign for Honda managers struggling to define new pay benchmarks, some workers said they are now comparing their pay with that of production-line workers in Japan, which has some of the highest-paid factory hands in the world.

The pay gap "is just too much," a worker said.

A senior Honda executive said the severity of the strikes is attributable to "communications gaps we had with the workers."

"Imagine 40-something, 50-something Japanese executives trying to find something in common to talk about with local workers here. Even local Chinese executives have trouble connecting with those young workers from rural China," he said.

MORE:

China: #2

“The Recent Spate Of Labor Unrest Is The Result Of Pent-Up Unhappiness Among China's Low-Wage Workers Bubbling Up To The Surface”

“Leaders Are Very Concerned About A Scenario Like That In Poland In The Late 1980s In Which An Independent Labor-Union Movement Led To The Overthrow Of The Polish Government”

“Workers At The Honda Parts Plant Are Openly Stating That The Official Trade Union In Their Factory Is Useless”



Striking workers walk outside the Honda Lock (Guangdong) Co. factory near Guangzhou Saturday amid efforts to elect their own labor leaders. Bloomberg News

Workers at the Honda parts plants in southern China decided, in the absence of help from the official union, to press the issues on their own, calling for higher wages, better work conditions and, in some cases, a new election to install their own leaders in the official unions.

JUNE 13, 2010 By NORIHIKO SHIROUZU, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

BEIJING—Some workers at a Honda Motor Co. plant in southern China pressed ahead with a strike Sunday as part of a wave of labor unrest that poses a political challenge for the Communist [translation: Capitalist] Party, whose authority in the workplace is being undermined by independent labor activists.

A number of workers at the plant agreed to a new wage-and-benefits package offered by the factory's management and returned to their jobs to resume some production Saturday, Honda spokesman Takayuki Fujii said.

But he said it was “far too early to declare an end” to the strike at Honda Lock (Guangdong) Co., which produces vehicle-key systems near the industrial city of Guangzhou. Many of the plant's more than 1,500 workers were still on strike.

All three strikes have been led by workers acting outside the state-sponsored All China Federation of Trade Unions, which, together with company managements, usually selects the leaders of state-controlled unions at such plants, according to labor experts.

Labor experts monitoring disputes in China said that one of the demands of workers at the key-systems factory is to elect their own leaders in their government-sanctioned union, according to Geoffrey Crothall, spokesman for China Labor Bulletin, a Hong Kong-based labor-rights group.

“Workers at the Honda parts plant are openly stating that the official trade union in their factory is useless,” said Mr. Crothall. “That's what workers have told us. It is in the Internet chat rooms. They are very open about it.”

Labor experts believe the party's leaders are very concerned about a scenario like that in Poland in the late 1980s in which an independent labor-union movement led to the overthrow of the Polish government and contributed to the dismantling of the entire Eastern bloc under the Soviet Union.

Labor experts say the question that the Communist Party needs to ask is whether suppressing the move toward allowing more independent labor unions also risks fanning more discontent.

“The recent spate of labor unrest is the result of pent-up unhappiness among China's low-wage workers bubbling up to the surface,” said Andreas Lauffs, head of law firm Baker & McKenzie's employment-law group in Hong Kong.

“The fact that workers reportedly have started demanding the right to set up independent labor unions adds a political dimension to the labor unrest.”

Last month, Honda gave striking workers at a gearbox supplier, who had paralyzed Honda's manufacturing operation in China for 10 days, a 24% increase in pay and benefits.

The wildcat strike was led by a group of leaders who rivaled the factory's official, state-led and management-friendly union, which took the side of the company's management and tried to persuade the striking workers to return to work.

Tan Guocheng, one of the strike leaders who was fired along with another worker May 22, said that one of the group's major demands was that “the work union's representatives should be elected by workers.”

Mr. Fujii, the Honda spokesman, said the two workers were let go for violating the plant's in-house work and contract rules but not for leading the walkout.

Encouraged by the success of the strike at the gearbox plant, workers at two additional Honda parts plants near Guangzhou walked off the job last week.

One strike was resolved midweek after the workers accepted a wage increase.

From the workers' point of view, “these state-controlled unions don't do anything. And where they exist, they are management-friendly and they don't really represent the employees,” said a Western expert who declined to be quoted because of the sensitive nature of his comment.

Workers at the Honda parts plants in southern China decided, in the absence of help from the official union, to press the issues on their own, calling for higher wages, better work conditions and, in some cases, a new election to install their own leaders in the official unions.

Many experts deem it highly unlikely that the government will allow workers such as those at the Honda Lock factory to install labor representatives of their choice. If China's workers were able to elect their union leaders democratically, it would mark a watershed in the country's labor movement.

Beijing is reluctant to clamp down too hard on strikes for fear of appearing unsympathetic to the tens of millions of migrant workers whose relatively cheap labor has made China a preferred place for global companies to produce consumer goods.

The share of national income going to Chinese households has been declining for a decade, meaning that the benefits of China's growth have gone mainly to corporations and the government [translation: to capitalists and the government bureaucrats in bed with them].

A growing issue for China's central government is the new sophistication of migrant workers.

They are clearly aware that the central government has let companies, both foreign-owned and domestic, get away with some illegal employment practices, according to Mr. Crothall and other labor experts.

One such issue is excessive overtime, especially since the Chinese economy started recovering last year from the global recession.

Under national labor law, China limits overtime to 36 hours per month, according to the Baker & McKenzie lawyer, Mr. Lauffs. But at companies across China, workers routinely put in 60 to 100 hours of overtime per month, and many companies are in clear violation of the law, Mr. Lauffs said.

“I wouldn't recommend any multinational company just to assume that all this call for better treatment at the workplace will somehow stop,” he said. “I think the workers have become so vocal that anything that is noncompliant will come out, and super-low wages will not be sustainable.”

MORE:

China: #3

People Who Nobody Has Ever Heard Of Before Can Amaze The World:

Factory Worker Tan Guocheng, 23, Launches “The Largest Industrial Action Ever Reported In China”

“I Only Led The Strike To Earn My Fellow Workers A Decent Reward”



Tan Guocheng, 23, helped start a strike against Honda last month.

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

June 13, 2010 By DAVID BARBOZA, New York Times [Excerpts]

SHANGHAI — Tan Guocheng is hardly a self-styled labor leader.

Age 23 and introverted, he grew up among rice paddies and orange groves far from China's big factory towns.

But last month, an hour into his shift at a Honda factory in the southern city of Foshan, Mr. Tan pressed an emergency button that shut down his production line.

"Let's go out on strike!" he shouted. Within minutes, hundreds of workers were abandoning their posts.

Colleagues described Mr. Tan's leadership as an uncharacteristic act of courage; Mr. Tan said he simply wanted a pay raise.

Regardless, he has helped touch off a wave of strikes at Honda plants and other workplaces in China that are still playing out in surprising and significant ways.

Though Mr. Tan has since been fired by Honda for "sabotage" and moved back to his village, striking workers at another Honda plant less than 100 miles away in Zhongshan marched in the streets on Friday and made a new demand: the right to form an independent labor union.

"This is a remarkable development," said Anita Chan, a labor expert at the University of Technology in Sydney.

"Most strikes in China tend to be about not being paid or being mistreated. This was different. The workers were demanding very high salaries. And they want to elect union leaders democratically."

The two-week strike at Mr. Tan's plant forced Honda to shut down its four assembly plants in China and to eventually offer 1,900 workers in Foshan a 24 to 32 percent pay raise. That got to the heart of Mr. Tan's complaint.

Leaving his home in central China four years ago, Mr. Tan had hoped that working on an assembly line for a global company like Honda would be his path to a middle-class future.

But the pay was meager, he says, and inflation ate away at his earnings.

And last January, when Honda offered to increase his \$175 monthly salary by a mere \$7, Mr. Tan, who planned to marry soon, was distraught. It was not enough money to buy a house or raise a child.

"I couldn't understand how they could give us so little," he said. So he decided to fight back.

Honda declined to offer details about the Foshan strike, where many of the workers were as young as 19.

But the walkout, like the Honda strike in Zhongshan, has touched off debate in this country about not only wages and labor conditions but also the rising expectations of a new generation of young workers.

For years, China's economic boom has been driven by young people from poor, interior provinces migrating to coastal factory towns to work long hours for little pay, often six or seven days a week, in steamy, high-pressure factories. But workers like Tan Guocheng say they want better jobs and a larger share of the fruits of China's economic miracle.

Mr. Tan's journey from migrant worker to labor organizer began in a small farming community near the city of Shaoyang, in central China's Hunan Province, where Mao Zedong was born.

His parents grow rice and manage an orange grove on a small plot of land that earns them about \$2,500 a year. But the family plot is too small for him and his older brother and younger sister to earn a living, Mr. Tan says.

And so all three of them struck out for the east, as migrant workers.

He moved in 2006. After high school, he had studied at a vocational school in Changsha, Hunan's capital city. A job placement agency allied with the school found work for him at a Honda factory nearly 500 miles away in Guangzhou.

The agency kept a percentage of his salary — a fairly common practice, Mr. Tan said. But he found that employees who were hired directly by Honda were making up to four times his monthly salary of \$175.

"We were doing basically the same thing, but this middleman agency was taking some of our money," he says.

Hoping for a better opportunity, he transferred to Honda's transmission factory, a short distance away, in Foshan. But the pay was essentially the same, he said, and the job a set of bleak and monotonous routines.

He left home every morning at 5:15 to commute 70 minutes by bus to a job that started at 6:55, and ended at 3:40 pm.

He said workers were often forced to switch their shifts — sometimes working days, sometimes nights — leaving many of them continually exhausted.

He saw the \$7 raise last January as the final insult.

"I came up with the idea of going on strike," he said. But it was not easy, he said, trying to recruit colleagues in secret talks on the factory floor during breaks. He says he tried to persuade five or six senior workers on his assembly line to strike, but, "They said they weren't brave enough."

"I said: 'I'll be the one to lead.' And they said, 'OK, we'll follow you.' "

A week before the strike, 15 or so workers from Mr. Tan's workshop had a meeting outside the factory one night to discuss the plan. "Before that," he said, "we'd had random talks on the shuttle bus to work." A 20-year-old worker named Xiao Lang, also from Hunan, agreed to help lead the strike — partly, the two now say, because they had decided to resign from the company regardless of the outcome.

By the morning of May 17, nearly 50 workers — many of them also from Hunan Province — were in on the plan.

By agreement, when Mr. Tan hit that emergency stop button at 7:50 a.m., Mr. Xiao was doing the same thing on a separate, nearby production line.

Within minutes, workers were marching through the factory rallying others to join the strike.

"There were hundreds of us going from door to door," Mr. Tan said "Several managers tried to stop us with verbal threats. But we ignored them."

Betting that their strike might create a ripple effect among the network of Honda suppliers and assembly plants in southern China, Mr. Tan's team alerted the Chinese news media, which gradually gave the strike national publicity.

The strikers were prepared to demand a doubling of their monthly wage to 2,000 renminbi — about \$293 — and nothing less, Mr. Tan said. Panicked, Honda persuaded the workers to return to work the next day, May 18, promising to consider the demands.

But when no deal was struck by May 21, the workers went back on strike, which China's English-language daily newspaper described as "the largest industrial action ever reported in China."

Before they were scheduled to formally resign at the end of May, Honda fired Mr. Tan and Mr. Xiao on May 22.

On June 4, after intense negotiations involving the local government in Foshan and Japanese executives, Honda agreed to a large pay raise, though short of the workers' demand for nearly doubling their salary.

Most of the workers returned to their jobs, satisfied with the raise and their victory over Honda, according to several workers.

Mr. Xiao is now taking driving lessons, hoping to get work operating a van in Hunan Province. Mr. Tan has also returned home to Hunan. He says his parents do not yet know about his leadership at Foshan. They think he came back home to find a better job.

Now, he is taking a three-month course to learn to operate excavation equipment. He hopes to find work somewhere in Hunan. His wife, whom he married in April, is still working in southern China.

And while he did not set out to be a labor organizer, he said he was proud of what he had accomplished in Foshan.

“I think we can call it a success,” he said.

“I only led the strike to earn my fellow workers a decent reward.”

MORE:

China: #4 Chinese Farmer Uses Home Made Canon To Defend His Land Against Eviction Teams Sent By Property Developers: “He Has Fended Off Two Eviction Attempts” “In May He Held Off 100 People By Firing From A Makeshift Watchtower”



Chinese farmer Yang Youde fires his homemade cannon near his farmland on the outskirts of Wuhan, Hubei province June 6, 2010. Yang's cannon, which is made out of a wheelbarrow, pipes and firing rockets, is used to defend his fields against eviction teams who wants his land. REUTERS/Stringer

Jun 8 (Reuters)

A Chinese farmer has declared war on property developers who want his land, building a cannon out of a wheelbarrow and pipes and firing rockets at would-be eviction teams, state media said on Tuesday.

Yang Youde, who lives on the outskirts of bustling Wuhan city, in central Hubei province, says he has fended off two eviction attempts with his improvised weapon, which uses ammunition made from locally sold fireworks.

"I shot only over their heads to frighten them," the China Daily quoted him saying of his attacks on demolition workers sent to move him off his land. "I didn't want to cause any injuries."

The rockets can travel over 100 meters, and exploded with a deafening bang, the official paper added. It did not say if anyone had been injured.

His approach is more aggressive than most, but Yang's problem is a common one.

Anger over property confiscation is one of the leading causes of unrest in China, with many people forced to give up homes and land to make way for anything from roads to luxury villas.

Construction ditches have already been dug across the land of less obstinate neighbors.

A first eviction team attacked him in February after his rockets ran out, but local police came to his rescue.

In May he held off 100 people by firing from a makeshift watchtower.

BP Develops Technology To Convert Lies Into Energy

June 15, 2010 The Borowitz Report

In what is being called a game-changer for the embattled oil company, British Petroleum announced today that it has developed a new technology to convert lies into energy.

At a press conference at corporate headquarters in London, BP CEO Tony Hayward said that environmentalists would embrace the new technology "because lies are a totally renewable resource."

Illustrating the impact of BP's new technology, Mr. Hayward told reporters, "Over the past month alone, my words could power the city of London for a year."

But the new technology has its skeptics, including the University of Minnesota's Davis Logsdon, who warns of the dangers of "lie spills."

“We have learned from recent BP press conferences that once the lie flow starts, it can be very hard to stop,” he says.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization.

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/)

POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

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