

Military Resistance 8H13

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



The casket of Missouri Army National Guard Sgt. Robert Wayne Crow July 19, 2010 in Liberty, Mo. Crow, 42, of Kansas City, Mo., died July 10 in Paktika, Afghanistan, when insurgents attacked his vehicle with an IED. He was a combat engineer with the 203rd Engineer Battalion headquartered in Joplin, Mo. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)

**Guantanamo = Onionville
“Taking Pictures Of The Books Is
Fine As Long As They Do Not
Reveal The Code The Librarian
Uses To File Them”**

“But Don’t Ask About The Brand Of Hot Sauce The Detainees Use”

“Pictures Of Occupied Guard Towers Will Get Through The Censors. Pictures Of Empty Guard Towers Will Not”

Any photo or video that catches the slightest outline of a water tower or an antenna will be deleted, even though some of those objects are so large that they are visible by satellite or to anyone looking at the base from the other side of the fence that separates American land from Cuba.

August 11, 2010 By JEREMY W. PETERS, New York Times [Excerpts]

GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba — Welcome to Guantánamo Bay, where your tour guide will never leave your side but may not be able to answer any of your questions.

Several times a month, the military parades groups of journalists through the detention camps at the naval station here in an effort to clear up what it says are “common misrepresentations” about the way the camps’ 176 detainees are treated.

The tours — part of a package deal complete with lodging, ground transportation and three meals a day from the Navy mess hall — offer what the Pentagon promotes as a behind-the-scenes peek into one of the government’s most secretive missions in the campaign against terror.

For now, though, the journalists covering the trial of Omar Khadr, who was captured on the battlefield in Afghanistan at age 15 in 2002, operate in an environment where access to the most basic information about the identities of the detainees and details of the legal proceedings against them are kept from the public.

But so, too, are even innocuous-seeming details about daily life inside the Guantánamo detention camps — the military’s slogan for the operation, “Safe, Humane, Legal, Transparent,” notwithstanding.

Over the course of the two-day tours, journalists are shown reading materials from the detainee library, where Harry Potter and other novels are available in Arabic.

Taking pictures of the books is fine as long as they do not reveal the code the librarian uses to file them.

Pictures of sailboats and pieces of fruit drawn by the detainees, however, are off limits. The military is concerned that detainees might have hidden messages in them.

“But at this time you are free to enjoy them,” a military guide told journalists passing through last week.

Journalists can taste baklava from the kitchen where detainees’ meals are prepared and photograph “comfort items” the detainees receive, like prayer rugs and Sudoku games.

But don’t ask about the brand of hot sauce the detainees use.

The distinctions between what is an acceptable photo and what is not can seem contradictory.

Pictures of occupied guard towers will get through the censors. Pictures of empty guard towers will not. The military says this is so that enemies of the United States cannot identify which towers are manned and which are not, even though guards are constantly rotated in and out of towers.

Pictures of parts of the detention facilities where there are no guard towers are generally acceptable, as are pictures of signs that say “No Photography.”

Any photo or video that catches the slightest outline of a water tower or an antenna will be deleted, even though some of those objects are so large that they are visible by satellite or to anyone looking at the base from the other side of the fence that separates American land from Cuba.

Video journalists often bear the brunt of the censoring. A crew from RTV Slovenia watched in dismay last week as a portion of its video was deleted; a gust of wind had lifted a sheet drying on a clothesline outside one of the detention camps, revealing the face of a detainee for a second.

Conversations between journalists and their military minders can veer into semantic disagreements.

A discussion between a reporter and military physicians about how many detainees had attempted suicide became an argument over the difference between a suicide attempt and a suicide gesture. No matter. The doctors would not divulge either figure, nor would they say how many detainees were in the psychiatric hospital, which they would not allow reporters to see.

The government also will not say exactly how many detainees are on hunger strikes and being force-fed by military doctors.

During a tour of the kitchen, a reporter asked the food manager what kind of hot sauce detainees were given. Petty Officer Blanchard interjected, “We try not to get into name brands.”

When the reporter pointed out to her that she had just encouraged journalists to inspect and take pictures of a tray filled with Yoplait yogurt, Kellogg’s cereal and Smucker’s jam, she explained that the kitchen staff would display different brand names for the next group of journalists, so the military would not appear to be favoring one product over another.

Most of the camp guards and personnel have scripts for the visiting media and largely stick to them. On a tour of Camp 5, a maximum-security camp for detainees the military deems “noncompliant,” the commanding officer rattled off statistics about the building. It was modeled after a prison in Terre Haute, Ind. It was shipped in pieces to the naval base on a barge, then assembled.

As he wrapped up his presentation, which he conducted with his back to the Slovenian television camera to conceal his identity, he said flatly:

“This concludes my tour. Do you guys have any questions?”

MORE:

Guantanamo: The Enemy In Command: Twisted Military Judge Says Confession Extracted By Threat To Gang-Rape A 15- Year Old “To Death” Can Be Used Against Him In Trial

Aug 11th, 2010 By Ian Millhiser, Think Progress

In the first full war crimes tribunal of the Obama administration, a military judge held that a detainee who confessed to killing an American soldier after he was threatened with being gang-raped to death if he did not cooperate may nonetheless have that confession used against him at trial:

In May hearings, a man identified as Interrogator 1 said in testimony that he threatened Mr. Khadr with being gang-raped to death if he did not co-operate. That interrogator was later identified as former U.S. Army Sergeant Joshua Claus.

He has also been convicted of abusing a different detainee and has left the military.

Mr. Khadr’s military-appointed lawyer, Lieutenant-Colonel Jon Jackson, argued this instance, as well as other alleged instances of torture and coercion, are enough to render any future confessions – even those in so-called “clean” interrogations – inadmissible in court.

“The well was poisoned: The government can’t cleanse the well by saying, ‘Well, someone else came in and was nice to him,’” Col. Jackson said.

Not so, the prosecution countered: All the confessions and testimony it plans to bring forward were freely offered by Mr. Khadr to people who treated him well.

Military judge Colonel Patrick Parrish sided with the prosecution

Khadr was only 15 years old at the time of his capture and confession, earning his tribunal a strong condemnation from the United Nations.

In the words of the UN, “Juvenile justice standards are clear. Children should not be tried before military tribunals.”

The military judge’s decision to admit a coerced confession raises even more troubling questions about whether this particular tribunal will reach accurate results.

As the Supreme Court recognized almost 75 years ago, confessions extracted by “brutality and violence” are akin to “deliberate deception” of the court because they reveal little about a suspect’s guilt or innocence and everything about their very human desire to avoid or end torture.

This principle obviously applies to Khadr.

A prisoner who is convinced that they will be raped and murdered if they do not confess has nothing to lose — and what remains of their personal dignity to gain — by doing so.

A member of Khadr’s legal team called the judge’s decision a “disgrace,” and that lawyer is right.

Coerced confessions are not simply inhumane — and not simply un-American — they produce wholly unreliable evidence.

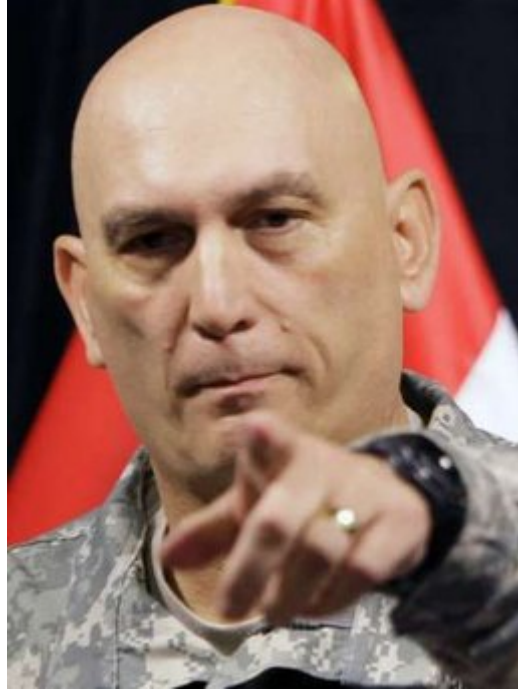
Mr. Khadr may actually be guilty, but a confession extracted by a rape threat does nothing to prove this point.

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Odierno Says U.S. Occupation Troops Will Stay In Iraq Until Iraq Strong Enough To Defeat U.S. Occupation Troops



Odierno November 18, 2009: REUTERS/Saad Shalash

August 08, 2010Politico.com [Excerpt]

U.S. forces are staying in Iraq to prevent foreign powers from meddling with the new government, Gen. Ray Odierno said Sunday.

"A strong Iraq will defend itself against interference from outside countries, and I think as we build a strong Iraq and as we continue to build a strong security mechanism and as we continue to help them economically and diplomatically, that will make it less likely of others from the outside being able to interfere," he told ABC's Christiane Amanpour on "This Week."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier From 21 Engineer Regiment Killed In Sangin

08/13/10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 21 Engineer Regiment was killed in Afghanistan on Friday 13 August 2010.

The soldier, serving as part of Combined Force Sangin, was killed by small arms fire in the Sangin district of Helmand province.

Soldier From 1 MERCIAN Dies Of Wounds Sustained In Helicopter Incident

08/13/10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from the Gurkha Reinforcement Company, 1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment (Cheshire) [1 MERCIAN], died yesterday of wounds sustained in Afghanistan.

The soldier was wounded in a helicopter incident whilst in a patrol base in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province on Tuesday 10 August 2010. He was treated at the scene and at Camp Bastion, before being flown to the UK for further treatment.

Fallen Officer Jarod Newlove, Chief Sealth Grad, Beloved By Many

July 31, 2010 By Steve Shay, West Seattle Herald

A gathering was organized in San Diego for Saturday night, July 31, for friends to honor West Seattle resident, and Officer and Culinary Specialist Second Class, Jarod Newlove, a sailor killed while serving his last 40 days of duty in Kabul, Afghanistan. The theme is "Fair Winds and Following Seas," a popular mariner toast and salutation.

Officer Newlove died July 23 in a Taliban stronghold, Logar Province, 60 miles from the capital, where he drove with Officer Justin McNeley of Colorado who was also killed.

While it is currently a mystery why the two left their base, Camp Julian, there seems to be no mystery that Newlove was cherished not only by his family, including his wife, high school sweetheart Kim, and their son and daughter, but also by those he served with and those he came of age with at Chief Sealth High School near where he was raised, and where his parents still reside.

As a chef onboard he served a lot of people. There seems to be a consensus that barbecue was his specialty. "We served together on the USS New Orleans," said Melinda Manciu, Culinary Specialist First Class, his supervisor. "Everybody enjoyed his food."

She said he began his culinary training during boot camp at Great Lakes Naval Base north of Chicago.

Now a civilian, she helped organized the gathering and told the West Seattle Herald that Newlove's friends would fly in from all over the country to honor him. "He affected a lot of people," added Manciu. "It's amazing that everybody's coming together for him.

"He had a heart of gold, and he'd always be there, it was an automatic given," recalled Manciu. "He would always be upbeat. I don't even remember him having a bad day at all. He was only 21 when I met him. He was always careful, never got in trouble. He was family."

Manciu pointed out that while some civilians might wonder why there are sailors in landlocked Afghanistan and deep in the desert interior of Iraq, the ships carry jets, explosives, and other equipment used by the other branches to support the war, and their services are also depended upon on the ground.

Sam Svarny, also 25, was close to Officer Newlove at Chief Sealth. The two boys delivered the West Seattle Herald together as Freshman. Svarny lives near the high school, and the neighborhood where they were raised. He said Jarod's father also attended Chief Sealth.

Svarny, a diesel mechanic, believed that being a sailor would, to a degree, keep Newlove out of harms way, and sees irony in the inland fiasco that led to his pal's death.

"He wasn't a 'Rambo type," said Svarny. "I mean, he was a cook, a cook," he repeated with dismay, eyes tearing up. "He liked to cook and that's what he wanted to do. He made great barbecue."

Svarny seemed confused and yes, bitter by the loss of his friend.

Svarny voted for Obama, is against the war, and said that "World War II was the last war that meant something.

"My kids are never going into the military, never," Svarny said. He and his girlfriend are raising a five year-old daughter and are expecting a second child. Sam's younger brother, Jason, considered Jarod a role model.

"I didn't even know what to say to Jason when I heard Jarod was killed. Jason said, 'I looked up to him like a big brother.'

"I don't understand our government, how people can leave base in a vehicle and they don't know what he was doing. There might be something more there. I am sure Jarod was doing what he was supposed to do but they're not telling."

There were those few days when Newlove was reported missing and some reports suggested he was taken hostage.

"I was definitely hopeful," said Svarny. "He was always a strong kid."

Svarny recalled an incident where, as kids, he, Newlove, and several other friends in high school were goofing off.

"We used to jump off the Arboretum Bridge by U.W. from the old, closed on-ramp to 520. One time Jarod jumped off wrong and bellyflopped and his chest was all red. He didn't care. He was laughing. He was a fun guy. Always made other people happy. He was responsible too. That's why my little brother looked up to him. Chief Sealth was like a big family back then. We were all cool with each other."

Svarny's thoughts of his Chief Sealth days turned sarcastic when he recalled the military recruiters on campus.

"They were at our school all the time," he said. "They'd have booths and hand out stuff at lunch. They'd learn your name, and were like, "Hi Sam! How you doing?"

Gill McLynne, who operates the Alki Tavern his family has owned and run for 35 years, graduated a year apart from Newlove at Chief Sealth and remembers him well.

"We had history class together," said Gill. "I liked him a lot. He was just kind of a good guy to know."

Some Alki Tavern employees and regulars were friends of Newlove, and Gill said that he wants to organize a memorial party there to honor Jarod, but said he wants to be respectful of the family and may wait a bit.

WELCOME TO AFBAGHVIETISTAN: HAVE A NICE DAY



A Pararescueman at the door of a Pave Hawk helicopter, over Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan, July 29, 2010. The U.S. Air Force's 451st Air Expeditionary Wing is based at Kandahar Air Field. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

MILITARY NEWS

V.A. Drug Pushers At It Again: “Doctors Are Quick To Hand Out A Drug Like Ambien Rather Than Look Further Into A Veterans’ Problems”

Aug 11, 2010 By Rick Maze - Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

A working group of current and former service members looking at veterans health care issues raised concerns that women may have a harder time than men being seen by their primary care physicians because of a policy that restricts women to being seen only when those physicians rotate through the women’s health clinics, said Ryan Gallucci, an AmVets’ spokesman, said.

Another health care issue raised by working groups involves a belief by some veterans that VA doctors are quick to prescribe medications instead of trying to diagnose and treat more complicated service-connected issues, Gallucci said.

“A specific complaint is that doctors are quick to hand out a drug like Ambien rather than look further into a veterans’ problems,” he said.

“One veteran said he was handed Ambien and told to just go relax.”

Ambien is a widely prescribed sedative often used for minor sleep disorders.

[Remember This Story? Think About How Quickly Follow-Up Coverage Has Vanished]

Insurance Companies Keeping KIA Death Benefits In Accounts With NO FDIC Insurance Protection: “The Potential Exists For A Catastrophe”.

“If One Insurer Is Unable To Meet Its Obligations On Retained-Asset Accounts, People Could Lose Faith In Other Companies And Demand Immediate Payment, Triggering A Panic”

“I can’t imagine why bank regulators haven’t been requiring a prominent ‘no FDIC insurance’ disclosure,” says Goldschmid, who’s now a law professor at Columbia University in New York.

Jul 28, 2010 By David Evans, Bloomberg [Excerpts]

The package arrived at Cindy Lohman’s home in Great Mills, Maryland, just two weeks after she learned that her son, Ryan, a 24-year-old Army sergeant, had been killed by a bomb in Afghanistan. It was a thick, 9-inch-by- 12-inch envelope from Prudential Financial Inc., which handles life insurance for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Inside was a letter from Prudential about Ryan’s \$400,000 policy.

And there was something else, which looked like a checkbook. The letter told Lohman that the full amount of her payout would be placed in a convenient interest-bearing account, allowing her time to decide how to use the benefit.

“You can hold the money in the account for safekeeping for as long as you like,” the letter said.

In tiny print, in a disclaimer that Lohman says she didn’t notice, Prudential disclosed that what it called its Alliance Account was not guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., Bloomberg Markets magazine reports in its September issue.

That money -- like \$28 billion in 1 million death-benefit accounts managed by insurers -- wasn’t actually sitting in a bank.

It was being held in Prudential's general corporate account, earning investment income for the insurer. Prudential paid survivors like Lohman 1 percent interest in 2008 on their Alliance Accounts, while it earned a 4.8 percent return on its corporate funds, according to regulatory filings.

In the past decade, these so-called retained-asset accounts have become standard operating procedure in an industry that touches virtually every American: There are more than 300 million active life insurance policies in the U.S., and the industry holds \$4.6 trillion in assets, according to the American Council of Life Insurers.

Insurance companies tell survivors that their money is put in a secure account.

Neither Prudential nor MetLife Inc., the largest life insurer in the U.S., segregates death benefits into a separate fund.

Newark, New Jersey-based Prudential, the second-largest life insurer, holds payouts in its own general account, according to regulatory filings.

New York-based MetLife has told survivors in a standard letter: "To help you through what can be a very difficult, emotional and confusing time, we created a settlement option, the Total Control Account Money Market Option. It is guaranteed by MetLife."

The company's letter omits that the money is in MetLife's corporate investment account, isn't in a bank and has no FDIC insurance.

"All guarantees are subject to the financial strength and claims-paying ability of MetLife," it says.

Both MetLife, which handles insurance for nonmilitary federal employees, and Prudential paid 0.5 percent interest in July to survivors of government workers and soldiers.

That's less than half of the rate available at some banks with accounts insured by the FDIC up to \$250,000.

The "checkbook" system cheats the families of those who die, says Jeffrey Stempel, an insurance law professor at the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, who wrote 'Stempel on Insurance Contracts' (Aspen Publishers, 2009).

"It's institutionalized bad faith," he says.

"In my view, this is a scheme to defraud by inducing the policyholder's beneficiary to let the life insurance company retain assets they're not entitled to. It's turning death claims into a profit center."

Insurers are holding onto at least \$28 billion owed to survivors, according to three firms that handle retained-asset accounts for about 130 life insurance companies.

There are no public records showing how much companies are holding in these accounts.

Insurance companies -- in addition to holding onto the money of survivors, paying them uncompetitive interest rates and giving them misleading guarantees -- may be violating a federal bank law.

A 1933 statute makes it a felony for any company to accept deposits without state or federal authorization.

That means only banks or credit unions can accept deposits, says Arthur Wilmarth, a professor at George Washington University Law School in Washington who has testified before Congress about banking regulations.

If a prosecutor pressed an insurance company, retained-asset accounts could be outlawed because insurers say they deposit money into these accounts and don't have bank charters or banking regulation, Wilmarth says. MetLife also offers its own version of certificates of deposit.

"If it swims, quacks and flies like a duck, the court could decide that it is indeed a duck," he says. "You then potentially could have a criminal violation."

This unregulated quasi-banking system operated by insurers has none of the protections of the actual banking system. Lawrence Baxter, a professor at Duke University School of Law in Durham, North Carolina, says the potential exists for a catastrophe.

If one insurer is unable to meet its obligations on retained-asset accounts, people could lose faith in other companies and demand immediate payment, triggering a panic, says Baxter, who has consulted with federal agencies on financial regulation.

The government established the FDIC in 1933 after frantic depositors tried to pull their money from banks.

The federal government has no such program for death-benefit accounts.

"There's more than \$25 billion out there in these accounts," Baxter says. "A run could be triggered immediately by one insurance company not being able to honor its payout. The whole point of creating the FDIC was to put an end to bank runs."

An industry with \$19.1 trillion in potential liabilities will remain unregulated by the federal government.

This lack of disclosure is unconscionable, says Harvey Goldschmid, a commissioner of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission from 2002 to 2005.

"I can't imagine why bank regulators haven't been requiring a prominent 'no FDIC insurance' disclosure," says Goldschmid, who's now a law professor at Columbia University in New York.

"This system works very badly for the bereaved. It takes unfair advantage of people at their time of weakness."

The closest relative to retained-asset accounts may be money-market mutual funds, which are pools of cash invested in short-term debt securities.

The SEC requires fund companies to warn investors that money market funds don't have FDIC insurance. It also mandates that fund managers provide a prospectus, that they invest in specific types of safe debt and that they post a detailed schedule of their investments monthly on their websites.

Insurers' retained-asset accounts have none of those regulatory protections.

"The assets backing the Total Control Accounts are maintained in MetLife's general account and are subject to MetLife's creditors," the agreement says.

No retained-asset accounts have FDIC coverage.

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

**“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**

**“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**

**“There Is Outrage In The Land,
Revolution In The Air, Insurrection
In The Wind”**

**“The Epic Political Question Of Our
Times Is Who Will Lead It”**

**“The Political Ground Is Shaking From
Gale-Force Winds Of A National Demand
For Powerful Change In The Way Our
Corrupted And Tone-Deaf Capital Does
Business”**

08/09/10 By Brent Budowsky, The Hill [Excerpts]

Budowsky was an aide to former Sen. Lloyd Bentsen and Bill Alexander, then chief deputy majority whip of the House.

Time is short. The stakes are enormous.

The nation is angry. The jobs are dying. The mood is depressed.

The president has gone rogue. And Democrats. And Republicans.

And everyone in this capital with eyes that don't see and ears that don't hear what an unhappy nation is telling them. Voters pray for action, but all they hear is self-praise from those who don't listen, and all they see is vanity and self-indulgence from those who don't care.

The American economy is becoming a factory of economic unfairness.

Those whose greed almost caused a depression make giant fortunes, demand gargantuan bailouts and gorge on gluttonous bonuses paid for by hard-hit Americans who find their jobs destroyed, their hopes crushed, their dignity insulted and their voices silenced.

In this audacity of greed, the few with the most demand even more, while the many who pay the bills and suffer the pain are sold the great big lie of our times: that the cruel and unusual economy that is a factory of pain for patriots is "the new normal." The Federal Reserve Board rewards massive hoarding of money from bailed-out banks that refuse to lend, while Mount Olympus from Washington to Wall Street tells Americans to downsize the dream.

Throughout the nation there is outrage in the land, revolution in the air, insurrection in the wind from the left, right and center.

The political ground is shaking from gale-force winds of a national demand for powerful change in the way our corrupted and tone-deaf capital does business.

There is revolution in the air.

The epic political question of our times is who will lead it.

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 Afghanistan, 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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Triumphant Zionism Cleanses The Desert:

“In The Eyes Of The State, The Arabs Of The Negev Are At Best Quasi-Human”

08.11.10 By Max Blumenthal ,Maxblumenthal.com

“The Negev affords me the pleasure of watching a wasteland develop into the most fruitful portion of Israel by a totally Jewish act of creation.” –David Ben Gurion, Memoirs

In the middle of the night on August 10, residents of the unrecognized Bedouin village of al-Arakib sent a panicked text message to Israeli activists in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Israeli police helicopters were buzzing overhead, surveying the scene ahead of what was likely to be a new round of demolitions.

Three activists staying in the village had been nabbed during a night raid.

Having already witnessed the razing of their homes twice in the past two weeks, the residents of Al-Arakib expected the third round of demolitions to arrive tonight, on the eve of Ramadan. During Ramadan, when the villagers fasted all day, the police and Israeli Land Administration reasoned they would be too weakened to rebuild — it was prime time for destruction.

I arrived in Al-Arakib at 3 AM with a handful of Jerusalem-based activists. A local couple hauled out mattresses and blankets and poured us small cups of coffee. “I’ve had enough of sleeping,” the man grumbled as he reclined next to his wife. He seemed grateful to have company.

I laid down and stared at the desert sky, listening to the man describe in a lulled tone the experience of watching his neighbors’ homes crumple under the teeth of bulldozers again and again. As he trailed off, I heard a low droning sound in the distance. Were they here already? I looked around at the others. No one to register the slightest sign of concern. Finally, I slipped into a light slumber.

Two hours later I was torn from my sleep.

“They’re here!” someone shouted in Hebrew. I leapt from my mattress and scrambled up a dune until I reached the center of the village.

A phalanx of one hundred riot cops had assembled in a tight formation. They were bristling with assault weapons and centurion shields.

Flanked by bulldozers, the police quickly ringed the activists and journalists, who numbered about two dozen, and began forcibly pushing them away from the site of the demolitions. Their intention seemed to be to prevent any brave souls from standing between the bulldozers and the homes they sought to destroy. Dispatched by a faceless

network of clerks and engineers in air-conditioned offices to do the dirty work of the state, the police performed their duty with cold efficiency.

As the bulldozers trundled around the village, tearing tarps from plywood pylons, crushing tin roofs, and dragging the shattered structures into hulking piles, the villagers watched with resignation.

Seated on her bed in the naked desert, a girl wiped a few tears from her eyes, grimacing at the sight before her.

On a nearby hill, a man quizzed his daughter on surahs from the Quran before sending her to collect mattresses from beneath the dusty waste of what used to be their sleeping quarters.

An old woman stood impassively by a flock of birds perched on the collapsed remains of her house.

Dispossession and homelessness have become nearly mundane in Al-Arakib.

The villagers remain devoted to the nomadic Bedouin tradition. (Why else would they resist with such tenacity the Israeli government's plan to resettle them in one of the Indian reservation-style "development communities" the state has created for them?)

However, they have established a permanent presence in the areas around their village that pre-dates the foundation of Israel. Al-Arakib's cemetery, for example, contains the graves dating back to the end of the 19th century. Yet the Bedouins' historical claim to the Negev has not convinced the state that they deserve legal recognition.

Nor have their attempts to demonstrate their loyalty by serving as front-line combat soldiers in the Israeli Army.

In the eyes of the state, the Arabs of the Negev are at best quasi-human.

In 1953, the first Prime Minister of Israel David Ben Gurion (original name: David Gryn) moved to Sde Boker, a kibbutz in the Negev. A self-described messianist who rejected the existence of God while simultaneously describing the Torah as his political guidebook, Ben Gurion saw the Negev as a blank slate for realizing his revolutionary fever dreams. In his memoirs, he fantasized about evacuating Tel Aviv and settling five million Jews in small settlements throughout the Negev.

Just as he disdained the cosmopolitan spirit of Tel Aviv's urbanists, Ben Gurion was disgusted by the sight of the open desert, describing it as "a criminal waste." In the place of sand dunes, he imagined a Jewish replica of Northern Europe.

"When I look out of my window and see a tree standing [in the Negev]," Ben Gurion wrote, "that tree gives me a greater sense of beauty and personal delight than all the vast forests I have seen in Switzerland or Scandinavia... Not only because I helped to grow them but because they constitute a gift of man to Nature, and a gift of the Jews to the cradle of their culture."

With the ethnocentric Ashkenazi outlook of Labor Zionism, Ben Gurion held deep contempt for non-European cultures. He denigrated the Jews who had immigrated to Israel from Arab countries as “savage” and as “a primitive community” that reveres pimps and thieves.

But he at least acknowledged their existence in Israeli society.

In his writings about the Negev, Ben Gurion did not once mention the presence of the tens of thousands of Arab Bedouins whose villages abutted his kibbutz. To him, their culture was void; they lived in a “wasteland.” They were obstacles to his utopian vision, not human beings.

Today the Israeli government remains committed to fulfilling Ben Gurion’s fantasies even though the Israeli public has completely turned its back on the Negev. “It seems that the fantasies grow stronger especially when the Jews do not move to live in the desert,” the Israeli blogger Eyal Niv wrote.

“The more the Jews back away from the desert, the more their leaders toughen the force, frequency, and cruelty of the expulsion of its other residents.”

In the areas in and around Al-Arakib, just 5 km north of the city of Beersheva, the Jewish National Fund is in the process of planting the “Ambassador Forest.” The forest will cover the land inhabited for over 100 years by the residents of Al-Arakib and prevent them from ever returning.

The “Blueprint Negev” plan of the Jewish National Fund, an organization that claims to be acting “on behalf of Jewish people everywhere,” can only be realized through harsh military force, the razing of villages, and ultimately, ethnic cleansing.

After the Israeli Police completed their third demolition of Al-Arakib, the villagers collected the remains of their homes and, with the assistance of a few international and Jewish Israeli activists, began rebuilding again.

Without any recourse from the state or its courts, they have no other option but to start over from scratch. And they have nowhere else to go.

**WE DO NOT OBEY:
Israeli Women Defy Racist Regime
And Take Palestinian Women And
Kids To The Beach:
“The State Of Israel Is Transgressing,
Spinning Us All Into The Void”**



We cannot assent to the legality of the “Entry into Israel Law”, which allows every Israeli and every Jew to move freely in all regions between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River while depriving Palestinians of this same right.

August 6th, 2010 Haaretz [Israel]

Women in the footsteps of Ilana Hammerman: not obeying illegal and immoral laws:

On Friday, July 23rd, a dozen Jewish women, a dozen Palestinian women, one baby, and three Palestinian children took a trip from the West Bank in six private cars.

We crossed several checkpoints, drove to Israel's coastal plain, and toured Tel-Aviv and Jaffa together. We ate in a restaurant, swam in the sea, and played on the beach. We ended our day in Jerusalem.

Most of our Palestinian guests had never seen the sea. Most had not, in their entire lives, prayed at their sacred places: they looked upon them longingly from the heights of Mount Scopus.

None of our guests had an entry permit from the Israeli authorities. We are announcing here publicly that we deliberately violated the Law of Entry into Israel.

We did this in the footsteps of Ilana Hammerman, after the state lodged a complaint against her with the Israeli police. She had written an article published in Haaretz on May 7th reporting on a similar excursion.

We cannot assent to the legality of the “Entry into Israel Law”, which allows every Israeli and every Jew to move freely in all regions between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River while depriving Palestinians of this same right.

They are not permitted free movement within the occupied territories nor are they allowed to enter the towns and cities across the green line, where their families, nation, and traditions are deeply rooted.

They and we, all ordinary citizens, took this step with a clear and resolute mind.

In this way we were privileged to experience one of the most beautiful and moving days of our lives, to meet and befriend our brave Palestinian neighbors, and together with them, to be free women, if only for one day.

We did not go with “terrorists” or enemies, but with human beings.

The authorities separate us from these women with fences and roadblocks, laws and regulations, often claimed to protect our safety. In fact, the barriers are only designed to perpetuate mutual enmity and the control of Palestinian land seized illegally in contravention of international laws and the values of justice and humanity.

It is not we who are violating the law: the State of Israel has been violating it for decades.

It is not we—women with a democratic conscience—who have transgressed: the State of Israel is transgressing, spinning us all into the void.

Henry David Thoreau, in his famous essay “Civil Disobedience” (1845) wrote: *“...when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.”*

Listen to these words, see how aptly they describe our situation here and now — and do as we have done.

Signed (in alphabetical order): Annelien Kisch, Ramat Hasharon; Daphne Banai, Tel Aviv; Esti Tsal, Jaffa; Ilana Hammerman, Jerusalem; Irit Gal, Jerusalem; Klil Zisapel, Tel Aviv; Michal Pundak Sagie, Herzlia; Nitza Aminov, Jerusalem; Ofra Yeshua-Lyth, Tel Aviv; Roni Eilat, Kfar Sava; Ronit Marian-Kadishay, Ramat Hasharon; Ruti Kantor, Tel Aviv

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Demorats And Republicans Agree To Cut Off Health Care Help For Laid-Off Workers

11 August 2010 By Joel Schectman, Newsweek

Congress declined to help laid-off workers stay on employers' health-insurance rolls in the Medicare package passed yesterday.

Democrats managed to push through \$16 billion in extra Medicaid assistance to states, despite strenuous Republican resistance.

But to do so, they had to leave COBRA subsidies out of the package NPR reported. The aid, authorized in last summer's stimulus bill, had helped laid-off workers stay on employer health-insurance rolls by paying up to 65 percent of the premium, but it expired in June.

Workers have the option of staying on an employer's plan up to 18 months after losing a job. But without the employer paying part of the cost, the price of staying insured is often far too high for most.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi roused Democrats from their August break to pass the Medicare package, which included \$10 billion for teachers' salaries. Her move came after the Senate had a surprise breakthrough last week.

But in dropping efforts to extend COBRA aid, Democrats have paid a high price.

The party has made access to health care a centerpiece of its platform.

And with 131,000 jobs lost just last month, the failure to help sacked workers remain insured is a significant retreat.

The Bankrupt, Dying Empire Spends Itself Into The Grave: “Of The World’s Military Expenditures, The U.S. Accounts For 46.5%”

August 2010 By Wilson Powell, Veterans For Peace; Eureka-Pacific Current News Magazine [Excerpt]

Consider this: The Department of Defense is budgeted in 2010 for a whopping 663.7 billions - not counting the \$30 billion being requested of Congress right now to expand the war in Afghanistan.

That is what it costs to maintain approximately 800 bases in 135 countries around the world and conduct two wars, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Of the world's military expenditures, the U.S. accounts for 46.5%.

The next ten countries account for 20.7%. China, 6.6%, Russia, 3.5%.

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

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

**Welcome To The Occupied USA:
“The Picture That Emerges From The
Post Series Is That We Have A Secret
Government Of 854,000 People, So
Vast And So Secret That Nobody
Knows What It Does Or What It Is”
“It Builds The Wall Of Secrecy Behind
Which It Operates Higher And More
Impenetrable, Which Means It Constantly
Knows More About The Actions Of
Citizens, While Citizens Constantly Know
Less About It”**

We chirp endlessly about the Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, the Democrats and Republicans, but this is the Real U.S. Government: a massive Surveillance State functioning in darkness, beyond elections and parties, so secret, vast and powerful that it evades the control or knowledge of any one person or even any organization.

August 9th, 2010 by Glenn Greenwald, Cato Unbound [Excerpts]

Last month's three-part Washington Post series, entitled "Top Secret America," provided a detailed picture of what has long been clear: we live under a surveillance system so

vast and secretive that nobody — not even those within the system — knows what it does or how it functions.

Among the Post's more illustrative revelations: "Every day, collection systems at the National Security Agency intercept and store 1.7 billion e-mails, phone calls and other types of communications." To call that an out-of-control, privacy-destroying Surveillance State is to understate the case.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of our mammoth Surveillance State is that the bulk of its actions are carried out not by shadowy government agencies, but by large private corporations which are beyond the reach of democratic accountability.

At this point, perhaps it's more accurate to view the U.S. Government and these huge industry interests as one gigantic, amalgamated, inseparable entity — with a public division and a private one.

In every way that matters, the separation between government and corporations is nonexistent, especially (though not only) when it comes to the Surveillance State. Indeed, so extreme is this overlap that when Michael McConnell was nominated to be Bush's Director of National Intelligence after serving for a decade as Vice President of Booz Allen (prior to which he was head of the NSA under Bush 41 and Clinton), he told The New York Times that his ten years of working "outside the government," for Booz Allen, would not impede his ability to run the nation's intelligence functions.

That's because his Booz Allen work was indistinguishable from working for the government, and therefore — as he put it — being at Booz Allen "has allowed me to stay focused on national security and intelligence communities as a strategist and as a consultant. Therefore, in many respects, I never left."

As the NSA scandal revealed, private telecom giants and other corporations now occupy the central role in carrying out the government's domestic surveillance and intelligence activities — almost always in the dark, beyond the reach of oversight or the law.

As Tim Shorrock explained in his definitive 2007 Salon piece on the relationship between McConnell, Booz Allen, and the intelligence community, in which (to no avail) he urged Senate Democrats to examine these relationships before confirming McConnell as Bush's DNI: "(Booz Allen's) website states that the Booz Allen team 'employs more than 10,000 TS/SCI cleared personnel.'

TS/SCI stands for top secret-sensitive compartmentalized intelligence, the highest possible security ratings. This would make Booz Allen one of the largest employers of cleared personnel in the United States."

As the Post series documented, private contractors in America's Surveillance State are so numerous and unaccountably embedded in secret government functions that they are literally "countless":

Making it more difficult to replace contractors with federal employees: The government doesn't know how many are on the federal payroll. Gates said he wants to reduce the number of defense contractors by about 13 percent, to pre-9/11 levels, but he's having a hard time even getting a basic head count.

“This is a terrible confession,” he said. “I can’t get a number on how many contractors work for the Office of the Secretary of Defense,” referring to the department’s civilian leadership.

In sum, the picture that emerges from the Post series is that we have a Secret Government of 854,000 people, so vast and so secret that nobody knows what it does or what it is.

That there is a virtually complete government/corporate merger when it comes to the National Security and Surveillance State is indisputable: “Private firms have become so thoroughly entwined with the government’s most sensitive activities that without them important military and intelligence missions would have to cease or would be jeopardized.”

As little oversight as Surveillance State officials have, corporate officials engaged in these activities have even less.

Relying upon profit-driven industry for the intelligence community’s “core mission” is to ensure that we have Endless War and an always-expanding Surveillance State.

After all, the very people providing us with the “intelligence” that we use to make decisions are the ones who are duty-bound to keep this Endless War and Surveillance Machine alive and expanding because, as the Post put it, they are “obligated to shareholders rather than the public interest.”

The Surveillance State thus provides its own fuel and own rationale to ensure its endless expansion, all while resisting any efforts to impose transparency or accountability on it.

And as we acquiesce to more and more sacrifices of our privacy to the omnipotent Surveillance State, it builds the wall of secrecy behind which it operates higher and more impenetrable, which means it constantly knows more about the actions of citizens, while citizens constantly know less about it.

We chirp endlessly about the Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, the Democrats and Republicans, but this is the Real U.S. Government: a massive Surveillance State functioning in darkness, beyond elections and parties, so secret, vast and powerful that it evades the control or knowledge of any one person or even any organization.

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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Rich Use Their Government To Grab It All:

**“From 9% In 1980, The Top 1
Percent's Take Has Increased To
23.5% In 2007”**

**“As Income And Wealth Have Risen To
The Top, So Has The Power To
Manipulate The System In Order To
Acquire Even More Money And More
Influence”**

11 August 2010 By Robert Reich, Robert Reichs Blog [Excerpts]

Even as late as 1980, the richest 1 percent of Americans received only about 9 percent of the nation's total income.

But starting in the 1980s - and increasingly since then - the economy has made the rich far richer without doing squat for the vast middle.

And health-care and pension benefits have declined; we've gone from defined-benefit pensions to do-it-yourself pensions, while health insurance premiums, deductibles, and co-payments have skyrocketed.

Meanwhile, the rich have been getting a larger and larger portion of total income.

From 9 percent in 1980, the top 1 percent's take has increased to 23.5 percent in 2007.

CEOs who in the 1970s took home 40 times the compensation of average workers now rake in 350 times. Financiers who forty years ago made only modest fortunes today, even after the Great Recession they helped bring on, routinely earn seven and eight-figures.

In 2009, when most of the nation's middle class was deep in recession, the 25 best-paid hedge-fund managers took in an average of \$1 billion each.

(Their marginal income tax, by the way, was barely over 17 percent, while the typical family paid a marginal tax far higher.)

What happened? It wasn't just greed.

It was also the systematic and ever cleverer manipulation of laws and rules by those able to pay lobbyists, legislators, lawyers, accountants to do their bidding.

As income and wealth have risen to the top, so has the power to manipulate the system in order to acquire even more money and more influence.

**“Big Business Has Found A Way
To Make Big Money Without
Restoring The Jobs It Cut”
“46% Of The Unemployed Have Been
Without Work For Six Months Or
More -- The Highest Level Since The
Bureau Of Labor Statistics Began
Measuring Such Things In 1947”
“Profits Soared By A Stunning 42.3%”**

July 28, 2010 By Harold Meyerson, The Washington Post Company [Excerpts]

Ain't no hiring. And ain't likely to be any for a good long time.

The problem isn't merely the greatest downturn since the Great Depression.

It's also that big business has found a way to make big money without restoring the jobs it cut the past two years, or increasing its investments or even its sales, at least domestically.

In the mildly halcyon days before the 2008 crash, the one economic outlier was wages. Profit, revenue and GDP all increased; only ordinary Americans' incomes lagged behind. Today, wages are still down, employment remains low and sales revenue isn't up much, either.

But profits are the outlier. They're positively soaring.

Among the 175 companies in the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index that have released their second-quarter reports, the New York Times reported Sunday, revenue rose by a tidy 6.9 percent, but profits soared by a stunning 42.3 percent.

Fully 46 percent of the unemployed have been without work for six months or more -- the highest level since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began measuring such things in 1947.

Two years ago, just 18 percent of the unemployed were jobless for more than six months.

There are now roughly five unemployed Americans for every open job, according to the Economic Policy Institute's most recent calculations, and that ratio isn't likely to decline much if we leave it to the corporate sector to resume hiring. Corporations have figured out a way to make money without resuming hiring. Their model is premised on not resuming hiring.

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/)

Capitalists At Work:

Top Executives At Health Insurance Giants Stuff Hundreds Of Millions In Their Pockets As Firms Plan Fee Hikes:

“In The First Two Quarters Of This Year, Profits For Many Insurers Have Continued To Soar More Than 20%”

Leaders of Cigna, Humana, UnitedHealth, WellPoint and Aetna received nearly \$200 million in compensation in 2009, according to a report, while the companies sought rate increases as high as 39%.

August 11, 2010 By Noam N. Levey, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Washington —

The top executives at the nation's five largest for-profit health insurance companies pulled in nearly \$200 million in compensation last year — while their businesses prepared to hit ratepayers with double-digit premium increases, according to a new analysis conducted by healthcare activists.

The leaders of Cigna Corp., Humana Inc., UnitedHealth Group and WellPoint Inc. each in effect received raises in 2009, the report concluded, based on an analysis of company reports filed with the Security and Exchange Commission.

H. Edward Hanway, former chief executive of Philadelphia-based Cigna, topped the list of high-paid executives, thanks to a retirement package worth \$110.9 million. Cigna paid Hanway and his successor, David Cordani, a total of \$136.3 million last year.

“Most families are struggling to hang on. Employers are struggling to stay in business. And these guys were giving themselves huge raises,” said Ethan Rome, executive director of Health Care for America Now, a coalition of advocacy groups that prepared the report.

Last year was highly profitable for most of the country's big publicly traded insurers. In the first two quarters of this year, profits for many insurers have continued to soar more than 20%.

Aetna's net income jumped more than 40% in the second quarter of 2010 compared with a year earlier. Indianapolis-based WellPoint recorded a 51% increase in its profit in the first quarter compared with the same period in 2009.

At the same time, the companies have sought major premium hikes. In Rhode Island, UnitedHealth of Minnetonka, Minn., this spring sought increases of up to 15.5%. In Utah, some customers of Humana of Louisville, Ky., reported increases of 29%.

After UnitedHealth CEO Stephen Hemsley cashed in nearly \$99 million worth of stock options last year, a group of shareholders launched a bid to expand shareholder input on executive pay.

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