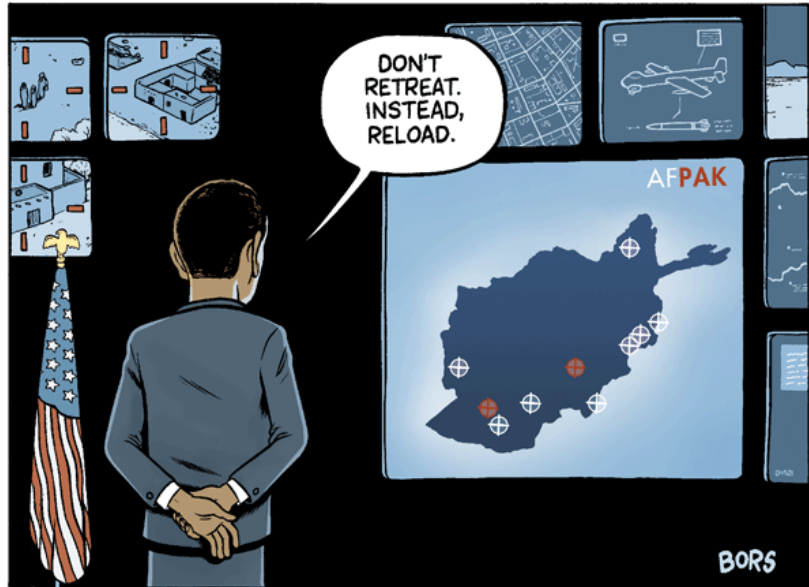


Military Resistance 9A13



**“They’re Always
Watching Us”**

“We’re Basically Fighting Blind”

**“We Don’t Know Who We’re
Fighting Over There, Who’s
Friendly And Who Isn’t”**

**“In Sangin, The Taliban Was Coming
After Them”**

**“In Four Months, 24 Marines With The
Camp Pendleton-Based Three-Five Have
Been Killed”**

January 22, 2011 By Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Camp Pendleton —

Marines tell of snipers who fire from “murder holes” cut into mud-walled compounds.

Fighters who lie in wait in trenches dug around rough farmhouses clustered together for protection.

Farmers who seem to tip the Taliban to the outsiders’ every movement, often with signals that sound like birdcalls.

When the Marines of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, deployed to the Sangin district of Afghanistan’s Helmand province in late September, the British soldiers who had preceded them warned the Americans that the Taliban would be waiting nearly everywhere for a chance to kill them.

But the Marines, ordered to be more aggressive than the British had been, quickly learned that the Taliban wasn’t simply waiting.

In Sangin, the Taliban was coming after them.

In four years there, the British had lost more than 100 soldiers, about a third of all their nation’s losses in the war.

In four months, 24 Marines with the Camp Pendleton-based Three-Five have been killed.

More than 140 others have been wounded, some of them catastrophically, losing limbs and the futures they had imagined for themselves.

The Marines’ families have been left devastated, or dreading the knock on the door.

The Three-Five had drawn a daunting task: Push into areas where the British had not gone, areas where Taliban dominance was uncontested, areas where the opium poppy crop whose profits help fuel the insurgency is grown, areas where bomb makers lash together explosives to kill and terrorize in Sangin and neighboring Kandahar province.

The result?

The battalion with the motto “Get Some” has been in more than 408 firefights and found 434 buried roadside bombs.

An additional 122 bombs exploded before they could be discovered, in many instances killing or injuring Afghan civilians who travel the same roads as the Marines.

Some enlisted personnel believe that the Taliban has developed a “Vietnam-like” capability to pick off a platoon commander or a squad or team leader. A

lieutenant assigned as a replacement for a downed colleague was shot in the neck on his first patrol.

At the confluence of two rivers in Helmand province in the country's south, Sangin is a mix of rocky desert and stretches of farmland where corn and pomegranates are grown. There are rolling hills, groves of trees and crisscrossing canals. Farmers work their fields and children play on dusty paths.

"Sangin is one of the prettier places in Helmand, but that's very deceiving," said Sgt. Dean Davis, a Marine combat correspondent.

"It's a very dangerous place, it's a danger you can feel."

Three men arrived in Sangin last fall knowing they would face the fight of their lives.

1st Lt. John Chase Barghusen, 26, of Madison, Wis., had asked to be transferred to the Three-Five so he could return to Afghanistan.

Cpl. Derek A. Wyatt, 25, of Akron, Ohio, an infantry squad leader, was excited about the mission but worried about his wife, pregnant with their first child.

Lance Cpl. Juan Dominguez, 26, of Deming, N.M., an infantry "grunt," had dreamed of going into combat as a Marine since he was barely out of grade school.

When Lance Cpl. Juan Dominguez slipped down a small embankment while out on patrol and landed on a buried bomb, the explosion could be heard for miles.

"It had to be a 30- to 40-pounder," Dominguez said from his bed at the military hospital in Bethesda, Md. "I remember crying out for my mother and then crying out for morphine. I remember them putting my legs on top of me."

His legs were severed above the knee, and his right arm was mangled and could not be saved. A Navy corpsman, risking sniper fire, rushed to Dominguez and stopped the bleeding. On the trip to the field hospital, Dominguez prayed.

"I figured this was God's will, so I told him: 'If you're going to take me, take me now,'" he said.

His memories of Sangin are vivid. "The part we were in, it's hell," he said. "It makes your stomach turn. The poor families there, they get conned into helping the Taliban."

Like many wounded Marines, Dominguez never saw a Taliban fighter.

"We don't know who we're fighting over there, who's friendly and who isn't," he said. "They're always watching us. We're basically fighting blind."

His mother, Martha Dominguez, was at home the night of Oct. 23 when a Marine came to her door to tell her that her son had been gravely injured. She left her job right away and rushed to his bedside in Bethesda. She's never been far away since.

When Dominguez's father, Reynaldo, first visited the hospital, he was overcome by emotion and had to leave.

"Mothers are stronger at times like this," Martha Dominguez said.

Juan Dominguez has since been fitted with prosthetic legs and a "bionic" arm and is undergoing daily therapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. He and his girlfriend have broken up.

"She wanted someone with legs," his mother said.

When he's discharged, Dominguez wants to return to Deming to be near his 8-year-old daughter, who lives with his ex-wife, and open a business painting and restoring cars.

But his immediate goal is to be at Camp Pendleton, in uniform and walking on his prosthetic legs, when the battalion returns in the spring.

By some accounts, no district in Afghanistan is outpacing Sangin in "kinetic activity," military jargon for combat.

"Sangin is a straight-up slug match. No winning of hearts and minds. No enlightened counterinsurgency projects to win affections," said Bing West, a Marine veteran who was an assistant secretary of Defense under President Reagan.

When the Marines of the Three-Five arrived in Sangin, many were on their first deployment, eager to live up to the legacy the battalion earned at the battles of Belleau Wood, Guadalcanal, Okinawa and the Chosin Reservoir.

Some were with the battalion during the 2004 fight in Fallouja, Iraq, the bloodiest single battle the U.S. Marine Corps had fought since Vietnam.

And now they were in Sangin, a place they called "the Fallouja of Afghanistan."

To get a sense of the intensity of the fighting that has killed the 24 Marines of the Three-Five, one might look at a recent deployment by another group of Marines.

When the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, was deployed for seven months last year in the Helmand district of Garmsir to the south, another Taliban stronghold, 14 were killed, about half as many casualties in almost twice the time.

Four Marines from battalions assigned to assist the Three-Five by clearing roads and detonating Taliban bombs have also been killed.

U.S. military hospitals in Landstuhl, Germany; Bethesda; and San Diego have seen a steady stream of wounded Marines and sailors from the Three-Five, including at least four triple-amputees.

Less severely wounded Marines have been sent to the Wounded Warrior Battalion West barracks at Camp Pendleton. Still others among the Three-Five injured have been transferred to the Veterans Affairs facility in Palo Alto, which specializes in traumatic brain injuries.

Fifty-six replacements have been rushed from Camp Pendleton to Afghanistan to take the places of the dead and severely wounded.

Priority was given to young lieutenants, who serve as platoon commanders, and Navy corpsmen.

1st Lt. John Chase Barghusen had served with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, when it was airlifted into the Nawa-i-Barakzayi district of Helmand province southwest of Sangin in the summer of 2009 on a mission to wrest control from the Taliban. The progress in Nawa has buoyed U.S. hopes for similar success in Sangin, Marine officials said.

A former football player at Iowa State and son of a retired Marine colonel, Barghusen transferred to the Three-Five so he could return to Helmand “to finish what we started in Nawa.”

Early one morning, Barghusen was reconnoitering, looking for places to establish a patrol base. The Marines and Afghan soldiers were walking “ranger style,” each man stepping in the footsteps of the man in front of him, in hope of avoiding buried bombs.

The Afghan soldier in front of Barghusen stepped on a hidden explosive and was blown apart.

Barghusen’s face, back, left arm and left leg were ripped by shrapnel and the hot blast of the explosion. He tried to apply a tourniquet to stop the bleeding but didn’t have the strength.

“I knew my face was messed up,” he said in Bethesda. “My jaw was broken so it was hard to shout. You try to shout and you can’t. Your jaw just hangs there.”

His father was hunting grouse in northern Wisconsin when he got the call that his son had been wounded and was being airlifted to the U.S.

“I didn’t know if he was going to have arms, legs or a face,” said John Clifford Barghusen, who served in Iraq as a helicopter pilot in 2003 and ‘04 and is now a pilot for American Airlines. “All I knew was that he was alive and not going to die in the next 72 hours. When I finally saw him, he had a face the size of a pumpkin.”

Before his injuries, 1st Lt. Barghusen had enjoyed weightlifting and martial arts. After skin grafts and surgery to restore hearing in his left ear, he is back in Southern California. His arm and leg are regaining strength, and his face shows few signs of the cuts inflicted by shards of metal and rock.

He hopes to return to active duty at Camp Pendleton, possibly to share the lessons of Sangin.

He sees a marked difference between Nawa and Sangin.

“In Nawa, they wait for you and then strike,” he said.

“In Sangin, they come after you.”

A month ago, a company of Marines with the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, was sent to Sangin. Within days, three of its members were killed.

On the day before he deployed to Afghanistan, Cpl. Derek Wyatt and his wife, Kait, walked on the beach near their home at Camp Pendleton, writing their names in the wet sand and the name they had selected for their unborn son.

Wyatt had had a good Marine career, including assignment to the security detail for President George W. Bush, the kind of job that goes to only the elite. The young couple had talked of moving to Ohio once his enlistment was finished. But first he was being deployed to a war zone and he was excited.

“He loved adventure,” said Kait, 22, a former Marine. “He hated sitting behind a desk.”

Still, she knew the dangers. She and Derek had been introduced by a Marine who was later killed in Iraq.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s the first day they’re gone, or the last day before they return home, you’re scared all the time,” she said. “You pretend to be happy, but you’re living in fear.”

One morning last month, the knock came at the Wyatt home.

“I automatically knew,” Kait said. “But then I had a split second where I thought: ‘Maybe he’s at Landstuhl, maybe he’s just injured, still alive.’ But when they asked to come in, I knew.”

Wyatt was killed Dec. 6 by a sniper while on patrol. Kait is convinced that he was targeted by the Taliban. It provides her with a measure of comfort that he died as a leader.

“Luckily, none of his Marines were hurt,” she said.

The night after she learned of her husband’s death, Kait gave birth to Michael Everett Wyatt, 7 pounds, 11 ounces, named after the patron saint of the military.

The pregnancy had been planned in case Wyatt didn’t return from Afghanistan.

“We wanted to have something tangible, a physical expression of our love,” she said, “just in case there wasn’t another opportunity.”

Wyatt had recorded passages of the Dr. Seuss book "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" During her pregnancy, Kait aimed her iPod speaker at her stomach; when she brought the baby home from the hospital, she played the recording softly to help him sleep.

Before Kait left the hospital with her baby, a casualty assistance officer decorated her home, including placing an "It's a Boy" sign on the front lawn.

"He made sure that Michael got the kind of homecoming that his father would have wanted," Kait said, her voice trembling. She paused, unable to speak.

Waiting at home was a receiving blanket for the baby, in Marine colors and with the Three-Five logo.

Under a bitterly cold sky, Cpl. Wyatt was buried Jan. 7 at Arlington National Cemetery in a section reserved for the fallen from Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the funeral service, Kait told of a conversation she and her husband had before he deployed about what she should do if he was killed in Afghanistan.

Kait said she told Derek that she would never remarry. He pulled the car to the side of the road, she said, looked directly at her and made her promise that she would again find love in her life.

"He told me the only thing he wanted in life was for me to be happy," Kait said.

As she spoke, there were tears in the eyes of the mourners, including Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, which is still fighting for a faraway place known as Sangin.



A United States Marine has a message written on his helmet as he refuels a Black Hawk helicopter, not seen, at Camp Dwyer, in Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan, Jan. 23, 2011. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)

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

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

Jan 22, 2011 DPA & Jan 23 (Reuters) & AP

Kabul - An roadside bomb striking a police vehicle in southern Afghanistan killed one Afghan policeman and injured nine others, official said Saturday. 'The blast took place in Nahr-e-Saraj district, where a joint operation of Afghan and NATO-led forces is going on,' provincial government spokesman Daud Ahmadi said.

A remote-controlled bomb attached to a bicycle exploded Friday as the vehicle of a provincial leader in southern Afghanistan drove by, killing two of his guards. Amanullah Hotak, the head of the provincial council in Uruzgan province, said he escaped injury but that two other bodyguards were injured in the blast as well. The explosion occurred in Dihrawud district, a dangerous area in the south of the province.

Two people were killed when the offices of the government sewage department in downtown Baghdad was bombed.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb went off near a police patrol in Baghdad's southern Ilaam district, killing two policeman and wounding four policemen, an Interior Ministry source said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Poles Killed During Patrol In Ghazni

23.01.2011 IAR

A Polish soldier and a civilian medic have been killed as a result of a mine blast during a routine patrol in Afghanistan's Ghazni province.

The explosion occurred as a Rosomak armoured vehicle drove over a mine in the south-eastern region of the Ghazni province during a joint patrol with Polish soldiers and Afghan police forces.

Private First Class Marcin Pastusiak and civilian medic Marcin Knap died in the blast, with two other servicemen in the Rosomak sustaining injuries.

Emergency helicopters were sent to the scene to evacuate the casualties, with the injured parties being taken to a field hospital in Sharan, and then onto the coalition forces medical centre in Bagram.

Marine From Camp Pendleton Is Killed In Sangin

January 21, 2011 Los Angeles Times

A Marine from the Camp Pendleton-based 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment was killed in combat Thursday in Afghanistan, the Pentagon announced Friday.

Marine Corps officials identified him as Sgt. Jason Amores, 29, of Lehigh Acres, Fla. A squad leader, Amores was on his fourth combat deployment including service in Iraq. Among his medals was the Combat Action Ribbon for having been under enemy fire and returned fire.

The 3rd Battalion 5th Regiment has been deployed to the Sangin district of Helmand province, long a Taliban stronghold.

Military Policewoman From Texarkana (TX) Killed On Third Deployment

January 17, 2011 By Greta Kreuz, ABC7

Sergeant Zainah Caye Creamer was on her third deployment - her first to Afghanistan - with her German Shepherd Jofa when tragedy struck.

Creamer, 28, who was based at Fort Belvoir, was killed Wednesday in Kandahar province. She was killed by insurgents who attacked her unit with explosives.

Creamer was in the military police. She and her working dog, Jofa, were assigned to check vehicles and buildings for explosives.

Her dog Jofa was unhurt in the incident.

It's a tough moment for other canine teams at Fort Belvoir.

“It was wonderful knowing her because she was professional and she always knew how to joke around,” said specialist Christopher Hines, a fellow dog handler.

Creamer, from Texarkana, Tex., was known for her warm smile and love of animals.

She’d done two tours in Iraq but this was her first deployment to Afghanistan. It was also her first as a dog handler.

Creamer and her dog had become inseparable. They trained together and lived together in the field.

“For a lot of people, it’s like ‘whoa’ that’s not a good idea,” said Sgt. Joshua Sharpe, a U.S. Army dog handler. “Creamer was one of those people (who say) ‘this is great! I’ve got a best friend that’s going to go wit me everywhere I want to go.’”

A candlelight vigil is planned for Tuesday night at Fort Belvoir.

Creamer’s dog, Jofa, is returning to the states is will be adopted by Creamer’s family.

Australian Soldier Wounded In The Chorah Valley

January 16, 2011 AAP

An Australian soldier has been wounded in Afghanistan after his patrol was hit by an improvised explosive device.

A local interpreter died and an Afghan soldier was also wounded in the blast that occurred in the Chorah Valley region of Uruzgan Province on Saturday.

The Australian soldier, a member of Mentoring Task Force Two, was evacuated to the ISAF medical facility at the multi-national base Tarin Kowt, a statement from the defence force said on Sunday.

He had surgery there before being flown to the ISAF medical facility at Kandahar for further treatment.

Joint Task Force 633 Commander, Major General Angus Campbell, said although the soldier’s wounds were considered serious; he was now in a satisfactory condition.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATIONS</p>
--

WELCOME TO THE LONELY SIDE OF HELL: ALL HOME NOW!



A convoy of United States military supply vehicles traveling in the desert near Lashkar Gah, in central Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Jan. 21, 2011. (AP Photo / Kevin Frayer)

MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?





Burial services for Marine Corporal Sean A. Osterman, Jan. 4, 2011, at Arlington National Cemetery. Osterman died Dec. 16, 2010, from wounds received in Helmand Province, Afghanistan on Dec. 14th. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

**What Else Could He Do?
“Merrimack Police Officers Arrested
Bakaian Last Saturday At His London
Court Apartment, Charging Him With
Desertion”
“I’m Not Saying What He Did Was Right.
I Hate It When My Soldiers Do It. But He
Wasn’t Getting The Help He Needed”**

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in, with the headline.]

Instead of help and support, however, Bakaian found mocking and ridicule, said friends and family. “They told him, ‘Stop being a (wimp). Stop crying,’” Jonathan Bakaian said from his station at Fort Hood.

“It got to the point I tried to go to my chain of command. ... They told me there was nothing I could do for him.”

January 23, 2011 By JAKE BERRY, The Nashua Telegraph [Excerpts]

MERRIMACK – For his service in Iraq, Jeremy Bakaian earned a pair of Purple Hearts.

But neither one could fill the aching hole in his chest.

By the end of 2007, 12 months in Iraq had left Bakaian, a sergeant in the Army, hurting and haunted, scarred by the death of several unit mates.

But when he approached his unit commanders for help, Bakaian, 22 at the time, found little support.

So, on a cold winter day, the Merrimack resident left New York’s Fort Drum Army base, never stopping to check with his superiors.

Three years later, Merrimack Police officers, acting on a federal warrant, arrested Bakaian last Saturday at his London Court apartment, charging him with desertion.

“He wasn’t getting any kind of help. ... It got to the point where his stress level got so high, he had to do something,” said Bakaian’s brother, Jonathan Bakaian, also an Army sergeant, who serves at Fort Hood in Texas.

“I’m not saying what he did was right. I hate it when my soldiers do it. But he wasn’t getting the help he needed.”

Army records show that more than 18,000 soldiers have deserted since the Iraq War began in 2003, which amounts to less than 1 percent of total enrollments.

To prevent desertions and protect soldiers’ well-being, the Army provides an array of mental health and spiritual services to help soldiers overcome death and other war-time traumas, officers said last week.

In addition to behavioral health specialists, the Army has stress control teams, made up of psychiatrists, social workers and nurses, among others, that rotate among units, providing counseling and clinical services.

The teams can work with soldiers at the operating base or remove the soldier from action, offering treatment at a remote location, said Rebecca Porter, chief of behavioral health for the Army surgeon general.

“Oftentimes, difficulties don’t become apparent to a soldier until they’ve been back for a couple months,” Porter said.

For Bakaian, however, his troubles were quickly apparent, and he approached his unit commanders after returning from Iraq in 2007.

Instead of help and support, however, Bakaian found mocking and ridicule, said friends and family.

“They told him, ‘Stop being a (wimp). Stop crying,’” Jonathan Bakaian said from his station at Fort Hood.

“It got to the point I tried to go to my chain of command. ... They told me there was nothing I could do for him.”

After departing the Army on a weekend leave, Jeremy Bakaian arrived in Waco, Texas, where he stayed with Lisa Adams, the mother of his closest Army friend and unit mate, Jeffrey Shaffer, who had been killed serving in Iraq.

Bakaian stayed in Texas for six months before returning in 2008 to Merrimack, where he found himself battling friends and family, still wearing the scars of his time in Iraq.

“I could just see all the anger in him,” Bakaian’s mother, Jennifer Burton, said last week. “He was so different.”

But in the two years since, Bakaian shed the anger and started to rebuild his life, working as a drywall installer and landscaper to support his fiancée and her son.

“He’s really gotten himself together,” Burton said.

But as of Friday, he remained at the Merrimack County House of Corrections in Boscawen, waiting for federal authorities to extradite him to the Army.

Commanding officers have a wide range of disciplinary options available concerning desertions, according to Army code.

They can retain the soldier, docking pay and reducing rank. Or, they could pursue judicial action in military court.

A maximum punishment for desertion can include dishonorable discharge, up to five years of confinement and forfeiture of all pay.

“AWOL and desertion are crimes that not only affect the soldier, but in a time of war, put others soldiers’ lives at risk,” said Wright, the Army spokesman. “Not only do these crimes go against Army values, they degrade unit readiness.”

But in some cases, desertions can also be crimes of survival, Jonathan Bakaian said.

“I don’t condone what he did, but I don’t blame him,” Jonathan Bakaian said. “It’s something he’s going to have to deal with the rest of his life.”

“Burma Soldier”

[Documentary Film Review]

“There Are So Many Soldiers Serving In The Military Who Secretly Support The Opposition But Cannot Expose Their Feelings”

January 21, 2011 By SETH MYDANS, The New York Times [Excerpts]

BANGKOK — It is the most vilified army in Southeast Asia, known for crushing pro-democracy demonstrations in Myanmar and for its brutal suppression of ethnic groups seeking self-rule in the region's longest-running civil war.

The 400,000-strong army in the former Burma is remarkable for its cohesion, cemented by a system of rewards and punishments, and military analysts have found little sign of dissent in its ranks.

But in its lower levels, at least, it is made up of men who come from a society that widely fears and distrusts the military and who join for the steady employment and status it offers, according to Myo Myint, 48, a former soldier who joined the democratic opposition led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Mr. Myo Myint is the central figure in a new documentary called “Burma Soldier,” a film that traces his life from the battlefield, where he lost a leg and an arm, to his 15 years in prison after joining the opposition and then his departure through a Thai refugee camp to the United States in 2008.

“While the top ranks control and repress people, most soldiers are like me. They join the military because they need to earn money for their daily survival,” he said in a telephone interview from Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he lives now.

In addition, he said, “There are so many soldiers serving in the military who secretly support the opposition but cannot expose their feelings. They will be sent to prison and a very heavy imprisonment.”

He added: “I hope that after watching the film, some soldiers will think about their actions and their treatment of civilians, whether it is good or bad, right or wrong, just or unjust.”

In quiet and measured tones in the film, broken at one point by tears, Mr. Myo Myint describes his journey, with interviews in the refugee camp interspersed with rare and sometimes horrifying footage of military maneuvers and attacks on ethnic minority villages. The film's director, Nic Dunlop, an Irish writer and photographer, said the extraordinary images were taken at great risk by dissident groups.

The film will be released next year on HBO, he said, but he and his producers have already made a Burmese-language version of the film and have begun smuggling it into Myanmar on DVDs and on the Internet.

"We are encouraging Burmese to make as many copies as they can and give people inside a chance to hear an alternative history, and hear it from a man who was part of the military," Mr. Dunlop said.

**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

**“The Israelis Tried To Dehumanize
The Palestinians, Just Like The
Nazis Tried To Dehumanize Me” --
Dr. Hajo Meyer, Holocaust
Survivor:**

**“We Stand With Those Who Resist
That Oppression -- Whether In
Warsaw 1943, Soweto 1976, Or Gaza
2011”**

**“As Jews Of Conscience, We Reject The
Claim That The Nazi Holocaust, Or The
Long History Of Jewish Persecution In**

Europe, Justifies The Systematized Oppression Of Palestinians”

In pursuit of this goal, Zionist leaders made “transfer” agreements with the Nazis, but only for Jews willing to settle in Palestine.

As part of this collaboration, Zionists refused to observe the international boycott of Nazi Germany initiated by Jewish labor groups, and even kept silent about impending plans to deport Jews into Nazi death camps.

January 19, 2011 Statement by the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network via New York City Labor Against The War

The Israelis tried to dehumanize the Palestinians, just like the Nazis tried to dehumanize me.” -- Dr. Hajo Meyer, Holocaust Survivor

“My grandmother was ill in bed when the Nazis came to her home town. A German soldier shot her dead in her bed. My grandmother did not die to provide cover for Israeli soldiers murdering Palestinian grandmothers in Gaza.” -- Sir Gerald Kaufman, MP

“The world said we would never allow that to happen again. The uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto -- the Intifada of the Jewish prisoners in Poland in 1943 -- actually inspires us here in Gaza.” -- Dr. Haidar Eid, Al-Aqsa University, Gaza

For more than six decades, Zionists have dominated global discussion of the Nazi genocide.

By their account, the Holocaust unleashed a level of suffering unmatched by any other event in history.

The lesson, they claim, is that Jews require a separate state in which they are a demographic majority and exercise legalized supremacy over the non-Jewish indigenous population.

This Zionist narrative withstands neither historical nor moral scrutiny.

Far from being the unique tragedy Zionists have proclaimed it, Jewish suffering under the Nazis has numerous historical parallels.

The Holocaust itself targeted and massacred not only Jews, but also millions of others whom Nazis likewise regarded as “subhuman,” including Roma, Slavs, gay people, and people with disabilities.

Rather than standing outside of history, Nazi crimes against these various populations reflect a much longer trajectory of violence, colonialism, dispossession, slavery, and genocide -- the systematic decimation of national, religious, racial, political or ethnic groups -- that accompanied the rise of Western imperialism.

Thus, it is no accident that, in pursuing lebensraum (“living space”) in the East, Hitler was inspired by the U.S. government’s extermination of Native Americans, even referring to Russians as “Redskins.”

Yet, Zionists have distorted or ignored this history, covering up the fact that their goal of a “Jewish state” in Palestine preceded the Nazi atrocities by decades.

Jewish statehood as a method of achieving political power was born out of the same nineteenth century European ideal of a “racially pure” nation and Western “civilization” of which Nazism was the most pernicious expression.

In pursuit of this goal, Zionist leaders made “transfer” agreements with the Nazis, but only for Jews willing to settle in Palestine.

As part of this collaboration, Zionists refused to observe the international boycott of Nazi Germany initiated by Jewish labor groups, and even kept silent about impending plans to deport Jews into Nazi death camps.

These decisions reflected the anti-Semitic premises at the core of the Zionist world-view: that landless life in the Jewish Diaspora led to physical, moral, and spiritual decline, and that the genocide was made possible by Jewish “weakness.”

However, the state they sought to redress this “problem” could only be achieved by forcibly expelling enough of the indigenous Palestinian population to ensure Jewish control over the land and its resources.

To this end, Zionism both exploited and hinged upon the rise of Nazism, and later, the Holocaust, to transform what had been a small nationalist movement with little support (even among Jews) into one capable of achieving statehood, based on support from the United States and other imperial powers.

The Zionist state that emerged from this project has been an ongoing catastrophe for the indigenous people of historic Palestine: driven from their land and refused their internationally recognized right to return, those allowed to remain in 1948 Occupied Palestine (“Israel”) are treated as third-class citizens on the basis they are the “wrong” ethnicity; those in the 1967 Occupied Territories of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza are living under brutal military rule.

As Jews of conscience, we reject the claim that the Nazi Holocaust, or the long history of Jewish persecution in Europe, justifies such a state and the systematized oppression of Palestinians necessary to establish and maintain it.

Self-segregation, political control and the persecution of others is never an answer to oppression and persecution.

“From Auschwitz came, symbolically, two peoples,” wrote Israeli academic Yehuda Elkana.

“A minority that proclaims this will never happen again and a scared and anxious majority who proclaims that this will never happen to us again.”

The Israeli state and its supporters assert the latter, claiming “special” status for Jewish victims of the Nazi Holocaust.

We assert the former, and, along with the majority of humanity, stand in solidarity with all communities that resist dispossession and genocide.

There is no hierarchy of suffering. Oppression based on any identity is wrong. We stand with those who resist that oppression -- whether in Warsaw 1943, Soweto 1976, or Gaza 2011.

Join us in declaring: Never Again for Anyone.

For details on the upcoming Never Again for Anyone tour, featuring Auschwitz survivor Dr. Hayo Meyer and Palestinian activist Dr. Hatem Bazian, please visit: www.neveragainforanyone.com.

The Farmer:

“According To Khaled, The Israeli Soldiers At The Watchtower That Is Close To Their Land Know Them Well, Yet, Khaled Says, They Shot His Father In Cold Blood”

“Why Did They Kill Him? Did He Shoot At Them With His 45-Year-Old Axe?”

“I Am His Youngest And I Never Felt Deprived Of Anything -- Tenderness, Food, Pocket Money Or Anything Else”



Palestinian mourners carry the body of farmer Shaban Qarmout, 65, during his funeral in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza Strip, 10 January 2011. (Mahmud Hams/AFP)

21 January 2011 Rami Almeghari writing from occupied Gaza Strip, Live from Palestine, The Electronic Intifada

Shaban Qarmout, a 65-year-old farmer from the Jabaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip, got up early on Monday, 10 January and headed out to his farmland as he usually did, accompanied by his 22-year-old son Khaled.

Their land is located about 500 meters from the boundary fence with Israel, near the Agriculture School in the town of Beit Hanoun.

At about midday, as the two were working, a bullet fired from an Israeli watchtower ripped through the elder Qarmout's chest, wounding him fatally.

Khaled Qarmout told The Electronic Intifada what happened: "My father and I were working normally, clearing some rocks from the land using a cart. At noon a number of people from a relief organization came to see my father. One of them wanted to take some pictures, but my father refused. He told them it might expose him to some danger from the Israeli military post nearby. Of course the area is dangerous, and my father was always keen to avoid any trouble with the Israelis."

After the visitors left, Shaban Qarmout resumed his work and Khaled moved about a hundred meters away.

"Suddenly I heard my father screaming, 'Khaled!' and I rushed to see what happened. I found him silent and blood began to drip from his mouth," Khaled recalled.

Asked if he had observed any trouble or activity near the boundary, Khaled replied: "I kept silent, and looked around to see what was going on, but saw nothing. Then with the

help of some neighboring farmers we carried my father on a bulldozer for a distance of about 300 meters until he was taken to a nearby hospital by ambulance.

“He died a few minutes after he was shot from the Israeli watchtower.”

At the Jabaliya refugee camp home of Shaban’s son Shaker, family members were gathered, including Shaban’s wife Umm Khaled, daughters Khulud (15), Rana (26), and daughter-in-law Umm Thaer.

Shaban Qarmout had a small house on his land, but the family left it two years ago during Israel’s winter 2008-2009 assault on Gaza and moved to Jabaliya refugee camp.

Despite this, Khaled told The Electronic Intifada that he and his father continued to work their land during the past two years from the early morning until evening.

According to Khaled, the Israeli soldiers at the watchtower that is close to their land know them well, yet, Khaled says, they shot his father in cold blood.

“Almost two weeks ago, my father received some financial assistance from a relief organization and he asked me to keep the small amount of money at the house on the farmland, telling me, ‘My son, maybe we will need this money some time in the future, so it is better that we keep it rather than spend it.’ He said these words as if he were aware that his destiny was awaiting him,” Khaled said, surrounded by family members in the home.

Umm Khaled spoke to The Electronic Intifada, her face pale, about what she called the “martyrdom” of her husband: “Let me tell you that my slain husband has been there in the same farmland for about 45 years and I personally spent almost half of this period with him along with our children. I am wondering why they killed him; I am sure they know him.”

One week after the Israeli assault started in December 2008, Umm Khaled recalled, the Israelis using loud speakers ordered them to leave the area, and that was when they moved to Jabaliya.

“Shaban, my husband, was a very kind-hearted father,” Umm Khaled said.

“He was so kind to his children and generous towards other people. When we used to live in the house on the farm, before the war broke out, Shaban used to welcome all the relatives who used to spend some time with us among the citrus trees, to the extent that he always insisted to serve them food. May God accepts him as martyr and believe me I wish I were martyred along with him.”

“My father was the kindest to me,” said 15-year-old Khulud. “I am his youngest and I never felt deprived of anything -- tenderness, food, pocket money or anything else. My father used to give me whatever I wanted and always cared for me.”

Reflecting on those who took her father away from her, Khulud added, “I don’t believe there is a chance for coexistence with such killers, the Israelis! Why did they kill him? Did he shoot at them with his 45-year-old axe?”

Rana spoke of her father as she held his infant grandchild in her arms and as neighbors and relatives came to offer condolences.

“My father used to be very generous with me and his grandsons despite the fact his economic situation was not that good,” Rana said. “Every now and then, he would give me some money to spend on my children, for he knew my husband is jobless. During Ramadan, he used to invite me and my children to iftar (the breaking of the fast), showing a great deal of kindness to us.”

Umm Thaer, Shaban Qarmout’s daughter-in-law and niece, said that her uncle was like a father to her.

His loss was not the first tragedy she has suffered.

On 29 December 2008, her 16-year-old son Thaer Shaker Qarmout was critically wounded in an Israeli missile strike. He died of his injuries on 4 January 2009. Two friends who were with Thaer, Muhammad Madi and Tareq Afani, were killed instantly.

On the terrible day her son died, Umm Thaer remembers her uncle Shaban telling her, “Dear daughter, Thaer has gone to the best place, to paradise, and believe me, may God take us the same way he took Thaer.”

It seems that God heard Shaban and in the same month in which Thaer went to paradise, his grandfather followed him two years later.

Zionist State Terrorism Against Palestinians Documented For 431 Pages:

**“A Group Of Israeli Ex-Soldiers
Reveal “The Routine, Daily Terror
And Humiliation Inflicted On An
Innocent Civilian Population”
“The Events Reported By The Soldiers—
In Straightforward, Unpretentious,
Searing Language—Are In No Sense
Unusual”**

January 9, 2011 By David Shulman. New York Review Of Books [Excerpts]

The publication in Jerusalem of *Occupation of the Territories: Israeli Soldiers' Testimonies 2000-2010* — unprecedented first-hand accounts by over one hundred Israeli soldiers of their experiences while serving in the ID — coincides with an appalling yet unsurprising incident I learned of only a few days ago.

On Tuesday, December 28, 2010, at 3:00 AM, Hajja Sara Nawaja, a Palestinian grandmother living in a tent with her family in the arid hills of south Hebron, on the occupied West Bank, woke to the sound of dogs barking.

She smelled smoke.

She discovered that two adjacent tents, which the family used as kitchens, were on fire. She woke her son Ahmad, who managed to remove the gas cylinders from the tents just in time, before they exploded. The two tents were burned to the ground.

A car was seen driving away from the scene in the direction of the nearby Israeli settlement of Susya.

Did the settlers who probably set the fire intend to kill Hajja Sara and her large family? It's quite possible.

Settlers regularly harass the family, whom I know well from previous visits to the area.

The previous week Hajja Sara's brother, Hajj Khalil, was severely beaten by some fifteen settler toughs at the tiny encampment of Wadi Gheish.

Will the culprits be arrested? No chance.

Settlers act with virtual impunity in the wilds of south Hebron; the police and the army units in the area usually show no interest in violence directed at Palestinians. Their primary goal is to secure the settlements and the Israelis who live in them.

In fact, such events are a natural and enduring part of Israel's military control of the West Bank, as *Occupation of the Territories* reveals in systematic and chilling detail.

The men and women whose accounts are gathered in its 431 pages have served in the territories over the past decade and have had the courage to come forward and report on what they saw and heard and did there.

The book is being published in Hebrew and English (the English edition, also published in Jerusalem, will be available later this month; a nearly final electronic version can be found online) by *Breaking the Silence*, a group of Israeli ex-soldiers with an established record of gathering first-person accounts of IDF operations.

To read them is to see the profound moral corruption of the occupation in all its starkness. They show us ordinary, decent young soldiers, caught up in an impossible

situation, sometimes trying desperately to make sense of that situation, but mostly following their orders without question. In a number of cases, those interviewed have clearly been psychologically and spiritually scarred by their participation in horrific events of which they had little understanding at the time.

Some of the testimonies date from the second Intifada (2000–2005).

Among the worst is the report of the cold-blooded revenge killing of four (possibly more) innocent Palestinian policemen at a checkpoint near Ramallah in 2001:

“All of a sudden our team commander comes ... and says, ‘listen, this is the briefing... we are doing ... the operation is a revenge operation. We are going to eliminate six Palestinian policemen from some checkpoint in revenge for the six they took from us.’ ... there are like four transfer posts ... those who are responsible for them are Palestinian police, and everyone from those posts they sent us ... to just eliminate all the police that are there. Right?

“It was defined to us like, revenge, and when I even hesitated at the moment, like I asked ... ‘What did they do? Who are they?’ they said to me,’ ... There is a suspicion that the terrorist who killed the six went through that checkpoint.’ There is a suspicion, like, but they don’t know for certain. And it could be that it’s one of those, but they said to me, ‘it doesn’t matter, they took six of ours, we are going to take six back.’

Were they armed?

“They didn’t fire back at us. They didn’t fire back. No, they didn’t.... We gave a fire strike from afar, we didn’t hit anything..we hit one and he ran, I took him down with another bullet. Another one ran into the thing, it was, like, burning, and we chased after another.... Now, the guy who I killed, who I took down, I shot a bullet at him, he was lying on the ground, we only saw ... like we only saw ... something was hiding him, and we were four or three people who just put ... we just kept shooting at the body.

To verify the killing?

“Not to verify the killing, from the hysteria of the excitement ... and then I got to him and he was, like, hacked to pieces ... And I tried, and I turned him over, like ... it was a 55-year-old, if not 60 year-old guy, very old, and he didn’t have a weapon.

Were they in uniform?

“They were in Palestinian police uniforms. They were in Palestinian police uniforms without weapons.”

But apart from atrocities like that one, what most shocks the reader of these testimonies is the routine, daily terror and humiliation inflicted on an innocent civilian population.

Consider, for example, the following report, from 2005, by a soldier stationed at one of the innumerable checkpoints, in this case again in the vicinity of Ramallah:

“The abuse at the checkpoint was severe ...

“It was December-January, it was a difficult winter, not like this winter. It’s cold in Ramallah, and it’s unnecessary to point out that it’s an exhausting checkpoint, you stand there for 12 hours on your feet, a bullet in the chamber, it’s considered a dangerous checkpoint.... You are freezing cold and you see them coming in their warm cars.

“We invented a hobby: the majority of the Palestinian cars were old and the trunk doesn’t open from inside the car, we would tell them to get out and open the trunk, so they would get out into the cold and the rain. It angered me seeing them in their cars until I forgot that they don’t want to see me there.

“One time a guy by the name of Amjad Jamal Nazer, I remember him well, I asked him to get out and open the trunk and he asked why, he said he could open it from the inside.

“There was hail, and I was a bit sick, and I told him to get out and open the trunk.

“He refused ... he said he wasn’t getting out, I confiscated his car, I took the car keys, I told him to step to the side. He mumbled a bit, I hit him in the face with the butt of my weapon, and like that I returned to the circle of violence. My soldiers couldn’t believe it, they were so excited. I was a deputy commander at the vehicular checkpoint and this was ‘a step up for us,’ this incident. The checkpoint became very violent.

Or another prototypical experience, this time from the northern West Bank in 2009:

“We did searches in Hares, that was the straw that broke the camel’s back. They said that there are 60 houses that need to be searched. I said that surely there was some warning from intelligence, I tried to justify it to myself ... It was a battalion operation, they spread out over the whole village, took control of the school, broke the locks, the classrooms.

“One room was the investigation room for the Shin Bet, one room for detentions, a room for the fighters to rest ...

“We went in house by house, knocking at 2 in the morning on the door of a family. They are dying of fear, girls pee in their pants from fear. We knock hard on the doors, there is an atmosphere of ‘We’ll bring them down,’ a fanatical atmosphere. We go into the house and turn the whole thing upside down.

“What’s the procedure?”

“Gather the family in a particular room, put a guard, say to the guard to aim the barrel of his gun at them, and check the whole house. Another order we received, everyone born after 1980 until ... an age range from 16-29, it doesn’t matter who, bring him in cuffed with plastic cuffs and a blindfold.

“They also yelled at old people, one of them had an epileptic seizure.

“They continue to yell at him more.

“He doesn’t speak Hebrew and they continue to yell at him. The medic treated him. We did the rounds. Every house they went into, they took everyone between 16-29 and from there brought them to the school, they sat tied up in the schoolyard.

“Did they tell you the purpose of this thing?”

“To locate weapons. And we didn’t find any weapons in the end.

“They confiscated kitchen knives.

“What shook me the most was that there were also thefts there.... People (soldiers) went into the houses and looked for things to steal.

“This was a village where the people are very poor.... There was also a thing where one Palestinian (who was known to be mentally ill) yelled at the soldiers, but the soldier decided that he was going to attack him, then they simply exploded at him with blows.

“They hit him in the head with the butt of a weapon, he bled and they brought him to the school, to assemble with the rest.

“There were a lot of arrest orders ready and signed by the battalion commander, with a blank area. They wrote that the person was detained on suspicion of disturbing the peace. So they just filled in the name and the reason for the arrest. I remember the people in plastic handcuffs, where they had put them on really close to the hands, I cut them off and put on freer ones.

“Was there something else you remember from that evening?”

“There was a thing that they came to a house and simply demolished it.... The mom watched from the side and cried, the kids sitting with her and stroking her. I’m seeing how my mom put so much effort into every corner of our house and suddenly they come and destroy it.

“What does it mean to wreck a house?”

“To break the floors, turn over sofas, throw plants and pictures, turn over beds, break closets, tiles.... The looks of people whose house you’ve gone into. It really hurt me to see. And after that, they left them for hours in the school tied up and blindfolded. At four in the afternoon the order came to free them. That was more than 12 hours. There were security services investigators who sat and went one by one and interrogated them.

“Was there a terrorist attack earlier in the area?”

“No. We didn’t even find any weapons.

Particularly ominous is the far-reaching interpenetration of the army units and the Israeli settlers who, in report after report, are said to give the soldiers their orders.

The editors of *Occupation in the Territories* describe the settlers' special status: they are "not merely Israeli citizens entitled to protection by the Israeli army and rule of law: in practice they are also partners in the military rule of the Palestinians." As a soldier says in one of the interviews, "You don't want to get into a confrontation with a Jewish settlement. They are the people that are closest to you, they are like your operations branch officer, that's how it works."

Any Israeli activist can confirm this fact from his or her own experience.

Countless times I have watched senior Israeli commanders in the south Hebron hills bow to the demands of local settlers by putting an end to attempts by Palestinian farmers to plow or tend to Palestinian fields, for example, or by agreeing to settlers' demands that the army drive Palestinian shepherds and Israeli peace activists off Palestinian grazing grounds (usually by declaring such lands a Closed Military Zone—in clear contravention of an explicit ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court).

Throughout the territories, young soldiers interviewed in the book often find themselves protecting rampaging settlers and covering up their violence.

For example:

"I was guarding, and I see in the middle of my shift, around the afternoon, an old man with a cane coming down, an Arab from Abu Sneina, the old man looked 60 plus, with a cane, he gets to the Abu Sneina intersection, to Gross square, and all of a sudden three 16-17 year-old (settler) kids jump on him, they take him down to the floor within a second.

"They take a stone, open up his head. They start kicking him on the floor, opening up his head. A 60 year-old man with a stream of blood from his head....

"An officer came on patrol, he didn't know what they did, so he didn't catch them. They just ran. And immediately the company medic came and started bandaging the old Palestinian, and we took him out in an ambulance.... It shocked me.

"Afterwards I went to the officer really with my eyes tearing.

"A soldier for 7 months in the army, I didn't understand what was going on here. I said to him that it can't be like this, that we can't protect them (the settlers), I didn't understand how it could be.

"I was very shocked by that incident, it destroyed everything for me.... The soldiers don't talk with each other about these things, there is no serious discussion in a company of combat soldiers. The male atmosphere, everything is jokes, and they treat everything with a lack of seriousness and all in all they try to get through the shit together. Because again, I told you, on the scale of unfortunate ones, you are pretty unfortunate as a soldier in Hebron. You are a sacrifice yourself.

"I understood that basically everything that goes on there, (Palestinian) kids, 14 years old, 8 years old who die for no reason, innocent, where settlers go into their homes and

shoot at them, and settlers go crazy in the streets and break store windows and beat up soldiers and throw eggs at soldiers and lynch the elderly, all of these things don't even make it to the media.

“There is a small and isolated world in Hebron, the Avraham Avinu (settler) neighborhood sits alone in Hebron, more soldiers protect it than people live there. The people who live in that neighborhood do whatever they want, the soldiers are forced to protect them ... “

“And it exists here in the State of Israel, and no one knows about it, and no one wants to know, and no one reports about it. People prefer not to know and not to understand that something terrible is happening not far from us, and really no one cares. And the soldiers there are unfortunate and the Palestinians are super-unfortunate. And no one helps them.”

So it goes, for 431 painful pages.

Most painful of all is the inescapable realization that the events reported by the soldiers—in straightforward, unpretentious, searing language—are in no sense unusual.

They describe the rule and the norm, the very stuff of the occupation, now forty-three-and-a-half years old and going strong.

No one involved in maintaining it gets away unscathed in heart or soul, including the ordinary soldiers who do what they're told, although only a small number are capable of the kind of articulate reflection on their experience that we find in this book.

As the Israeli philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz predicted forty-three years ago, the occupation has brutalized Israeli society as a whole and eroded the moral foundation of our very existence.

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

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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/)

Got an opinion? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Protesters From Tunisia's Poor Rural Heartlands Defied A Night-Time Curfew “To Demand That The Revolution They Started Should Now Sweep The Remnants Of The Fallen President's Old Guard From Power”



Inhabitants of the central Tunisia region of Sidi Bouzid demonstrate in front of the Government palace in Tunis. Protesters from Tunisia's poor rural heartlands defied a night-time curfew and camped out in front of Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi's office Sunday to demand that the revolution they started should now sweep the remnants of the fallen president's old guard from power. (AFP/Fethi Belaid)

March In Yemen Demands Release Of Arrested Freedom Activist



Some 200 journalists march in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, demanding the release of press freedom activist Tawakel Karman (poster) and other detainees. Karman, known to have been involved in anti-dictatorship protests on January 14, heads the rights group Women Journalists Without Chains. (AFP/Gamal Noman)

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