

Military Resistance 9A2



Why We Fight:
For “A Strengthened Dialogue --
That’s It! That’ll Bring Better
Balance And Integration”
“Who Writes This Stuff That Gets
People Killed?”
“So Welcome To Afghanistan, G.I.,
And Play Your Part In Big-Power
Chess”

“It Has Nothing To Do With Al Qaeda Which Is But A Minor Distraction Compared To The Big-Power Strategies That Involve The Us, India And China, And Natural Gas”

From: Don Bacon
To: Military Resistance
Sent: December 18, 2010
Subject: Why We Fight

**By Don Bacon, Lt Col, US Army (Ret), Vietnam & Smedley Butler Society:
<http://www.warisaracket.org/>**

President Obama, March 27, 2009: "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."

And on December 1, 2009: "We must deny al Qaeda a safe haven. We must reverse the Taliban's momentum and deny it the ability to overthrow the government."

The December 2010 assessment stated: "And in Afghanistan, the momentum achieved by the Taliban in recent years has been arrested in much of the country and reversed in some key areas, although these gains remain fragile and reversible."

And: "This review also underscores the importance of a sustained long-term commitment to the region – in Pakistan, by way of our growing strategic partnership . . . Progress in our relationship with Pakistan over the last year has been substantial, but also uneven. We worked jointly in the last year to disrupt the threat posed by al-Qa'ida, and Pakistan has made progress against extremist safe havens, taking action in six of seven agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas."

Ooops -- an "uneven" patnership with Pakistan.

"However, better balance and integration of the various components of our strategy will be required to reach our objectives. For instance, the denial of extremist safe havens will require greater cooperation with Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan."

Better balance and integration. What to do?

"In 2011, we must strengthen our dialogue with both Pakistan and Afghanistan on regional stability."

A strengthened dialogue -- that's it! That'll bring better balance and integration.

Who writes this stuff that gets people killed?

In the meantime US troops are being killed and injured by elements including the Taliban which are supported by Pakistan.

As General McChrystal assessed in 2009: "Afghanistan's insurgency is clearly supported from Pakistan. . .and are reportedly aided by some elements of Pakistan's ISI (Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence)."

That accounts for the "uneven" partnership with Pakistan.

But why is Pakistan supporting elements who are killing US troops?

General McChrystal again: "Indian political and economic influence is increasing in Afghanistan, including significant efforts and financial investment. In addition, the current Afghan government is perceived by Islamabad to be pro-Indian. While Indian activities largely benefit the Afghan people, increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan is likely to exacerbate regional tensions and encourage Pakistani countermeasures in Afghanistan or India."

That accounts for it.

Pakistan's arch-enemy India's influence is increasing in Afghanistan, and Pakistan doesn't like it.

Pakistan doesn't want a government allied with India -- like the present government of Afghanistan -- on its western border. India is much larger and stronger than Pakistan as it is, and if Pakistan were surrounded its security would be in great danger.

This explains why the US relationship with Pakistan is "uneven," and why the US partner Pakistan is supporting the killing of US troops.

Well send in the Marines!

We did.

The Marines are now in Delaram, located in rural southwest Afghanistan.

Are the Marines involved in counter-insurgency nation-building? No. The Marines are securing a highway junction.

The US Marines are in far-off Delaram because the town sits at one end of a new road connecting Afghanistan's main highway to Zaranj near the Iranian border.

The Zaranj - Delaram road, which has been built by India's Border Roads Organization, is part of a larger Indo-Iranian project that will connect Kandahar and Herat to Iran's Chahbahar Port on the Persian Gulf.

The project will provide Afghanistan a supply route to lucrative markets while reducing the country's utter dependence on Pakistan (and the new route is 434 miles shorter than the route through Pakistan). The road/rail project is also a vital supply line for Indian troops operating in Afghanistan.

Reducing the country's utter dependence on Pakistan! That's good! Good for India, but bad for Pakistan.

There were about 4,000 Indians engaged in such projects -- being implemented as part of India's development assistance to the tune of \$1.3 billion to Afghanistan. This is being done with the support of the US.

What the United States wants is to establish India as a great power in the region to counterbalance China, and at the same time try to beat Pakistan into an obedient lesser partner. The overall goal is to continue instability thus favoring a continuing military presence.

Dr Maria Sultan, head of the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, said in an interview in Jang:

"The United States wants to assign more roles to India in Afghanistan. However, instead of proving helpful, the Indian role has become a cause in further deepening the crisis. The terrorism spread by the Indian intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) in Pakistan through Afghanistan continues in the name of India-US cooperation in war on terror."

George Perkovitch:

"Pakistan is willing to fight until the last Taliban or coalition foot soldier falls in order to pursue its interests in Afghanistan, while India is willing to fight to the last American to keep Pakistan from exerting indirect control over a future Afghan government. Neither position serves American interests."

Nicholas Burns, US State Department: "India has a major role to play in Afghanistan... I think the Indian role in helping Afghan villagers and helping the Afghan government has been very positive. I don't think we (can) say India cannot participate in rebuilding of Afghanistan because of differences with Pakistan."

"US Ambassador Holbrooke assured (India FM) Rao that he is in favor of Indian assistance programs in Afghanistan and is not influenced by what he hears in Islamabad." -- wikileaks

President Hamid Karzai has said Kabul would continue to build on the relations with New Delhi which were in the interest of the war-ravaged country. Stating that Afghanistan is a sovereign state, he added that his Government has the right to decide what is in the best national interest of the country and no one can and none so far have been able to dictate those terms to its people.

So welcome to Afghanistan, GI, and play your part in big-power chess.

Remember: "Neither position serves American interests."

Another factor is the TAPI gas pipeline. On December 13, 2010 the presidents of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, along with India's petroleum minister, signed an

inter-governmental agreement pledging to construct a 1,735-kilometer natural gas pipeline connecting all four states.

The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline would supply 33 billion cubic meters of Turkmen gas a year from the Dauletabad gas fields to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan's volatile southern provinces, according to the semi-official Turkmenistan.ru website. In doing so, Kabul could reap billions.

The TAPI Turkmenistan-India pipeline, by the way, will parallel the Herat - Kandahar highway which goes through Delaram, where the US Marines have a new base! How thoughtful. All of the area must "be controlled" for the benefit of India while elsewhere in Afghanistan US troops are mixing it up with Pakistan-supported resistance fighters.

That's why we fight, and it has nothing to do with al Qaeda which is but a minor distraction compared to the big-power strategies that involve the US, India and China, and natural gas.

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation "Servicemember" Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Saturday: Nationality Not Announced

Jan. 1, 2010 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

Another Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Saturday: Nationality Not Announced

Jan. 1, 2010 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

Local Marine Dies In Combat



Staff Sgt. Stacy A. Green

December 13, 2010 The Alexander City Outlook

Marine Staff Sgt. Stacy Andrew Green of Alexander City was killed Friday, Dec. 10, while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan, the Department of Defense announced Monday.

Green, 34, was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C. He was deployed to Afghanistan in August in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He was the son of Gloria Jean and Stanley Eugene Green of Alexander City.

“He was a marine full-time. It was his career,” his brother, Tony Green, said.

Tony Green said his brother joined the Marines 10 years ago and was deployed to Iraq three times before his deployment to Afghanistan. “He enjoyed it,” Tony Green said of his brother’s career as a Marine. “It changed his life.”

Green's close friend, Richard Vaughan, said he met Green about two years ago and described the marine as a very outspoken individual who loved his life and lived it to the fullest.

"You know that one dude that made everyone laugh? That was him," Vaughan shared. "He was the life of the party."

Vaughan added that Green loved his mother as well as his two Alaskan huskies, Joker and Ace.

"You would just click with him instantly," Vaughan said. "He never met a stranger. He was a real good person."

Tony Green described his brother, who lived in Jacksonville, S.C. but came home to Alexander City for holidays and vacations, as very cheerful and said he loved playing online military games.

Tony Green said that before his brother's deployment in August, he gave him his Facebook account password so he would have it should anything happen to him.

"I got on (Facebook) Friday and let his friends know," Tony Green said.

Since then, there has been an outpouring of support for Green's family on his Facebook page from many of his friends.

"Hadn't seen Stacy in years. Can truly say he was one of the best men I've ever known. Thanks for always having my back," David Asbill posted.

Green's classmates from Daleville High School also showed their support and shared how much they would miss Green.

"Stacy was my friend and fellow Warhawk on the O-line at Daleville. He was a friend to anyone he met, regardless of their social standing. He will be missed. Thank you Stacy for your service to our country. In time, we will all see you again!," Daven Davenport posted.

Finally, a number of Green's fellow marines offered their condolences.

"I can't believe it was you who had to go. One of the few, who could talk to like a man, and get an honest opinion, and always had our backs. The Marine Corps needs more guys like you. I am proud to have served with you, and my condolences go to your family," Nathaniel Elliott Ffokinok posted.

Green said the family appreciates all the support.

"He was a great brother," Tony Green said.

Green's remains arrived on U.S. soil Sunday, when transported by a U.S. Marine Corps carry team at Dover Air Force Base, Del., Tony Green said.

His remains are expected to arrive in Alexander City Wednesday between 1 and 2 p.m. Funeral honors and arrangements are being handled by Radney Funeral Home and had yet to be finalized as of press time Monday.

“There will be a 21-gun salute and ‘Taps’ will be playing at the grave site,” Tony Green said.

Remembering Eric Torbert Jr.



Corporal Eric Torbert Jr. courtesy of Lancaster Newspapers

December 23, 2010 by Jessen Smith, Penn Points Online

A former Penn Manor student, remembered fondly here, died recently in combat during his service in Afghanistan.

Eric Torbert Jr., was a marine corporal and former graduate of Penn Manor High in 2003. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2007.

He died December 18 during combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

He was a combat engineer. His unit was based at Camp Pendleton, California.

He was recently married to Marcelle L. Sebastian Torbert on June 12, 2010.

He was remembered by former Penn Manor High Principal Janice Mindish.

“He wasn’t very outgoing, but he was a nice kid. He never got in any trouble,” said Mindish. “You have to be proud that he was brave enough to do what he did.”

Librarian assistant for Penn Manor Pamela Yarnell said, “The whole thing with Eric definitely makes me worry about my son who’s over there now.”

“When you’re a teenager, you feel invincible. Until you go over seas and do what they do.”

Yarnell’s son, a graduate of Penn Manor in 1998, is a flight engineer for KC10s.

“Don’t forget to worry and think about those guys when they’re not here,” Yarnell said.

Torbert always enjoyed music and playing guitar, as well as playing in a local band, Whyte Lightning, according to a report in Lancaster Newspapers.

“I remember trying to get him to play basketball for the high school team back when I coached,” said John Erisman, a history teacher at Penn Manor.

Torbert worked as a newspaper carrier for the Lancaster Newspapers, and worked for BP Gas on Centerville Rd., as well as Just-4-Kids Furniture Store, according to Lancaster Newspapers.

Dr. Leichter, Superintendent of Penn Manor School District, said the family is thankful for all the notes of condolences and is looking for ways to give back to the community in remembrance of Eric.

A memorial scholarship fund is being set up in Torbert’s name that will help high school students further their musical career.

Anyone interested in donating to Cpl. Eric Torbert Jr. memorial scholarship fund please send to: Cpl. Eric Torbert Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund. Susquehanna Bank; 536 Park City Center; Lancaster, PA 17601.

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



PFC Craig Eicher center, from Montgomery, Alabama, of 2nd Platoon Bravo Company 2-327 Infantry takes cover during battle with insurgents in Chowkay district near the Pakistani border in Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Dec 20, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



A U.S. soldier takes cover during a sudden attack by Taliban at Combat Out Post Badel in eastern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border Dec. 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

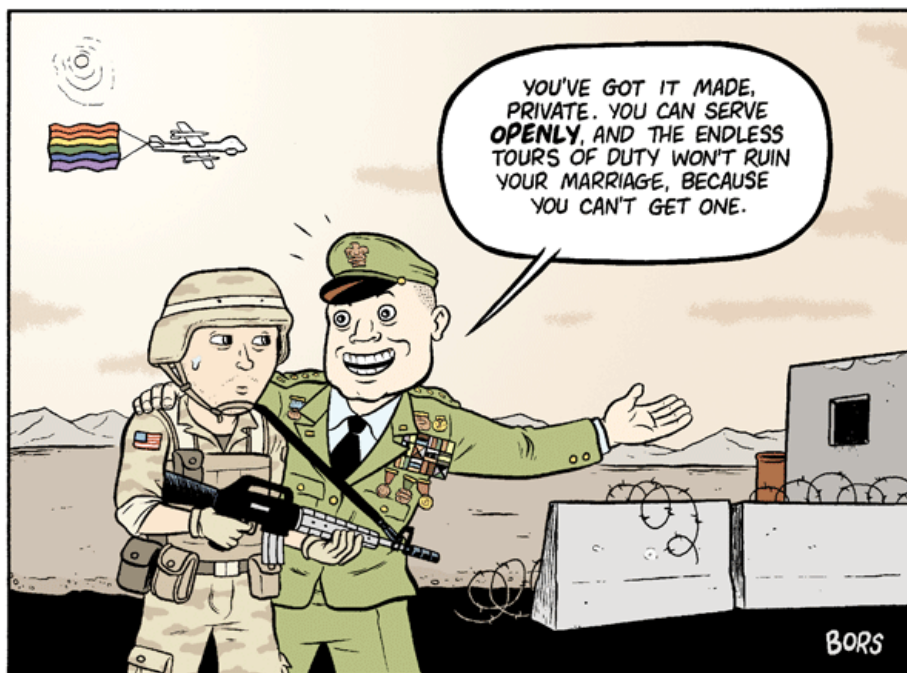


Bullet shells are seen on the ground after a sudden attack by Taliban on Combat Out Post Badel in eastern Afghanistan near Pakistan border on Dec 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



Spc. Charles Moore, left, of Angleton Texas, Pfc. Nikolai Starr, center, of San Antonio Texas, along with Spc. Andrew Vanderhaeghen of Rochester, MN., of 2nd Platoon Bravo Company 2-327, return fire during a sudden attack by Taliban on Combat Out Post Badel in eastern Afghanistan near Pakistan border, Dec 25, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

MILITARY NEWS



“The Message Of The U.S. Government To Its Citizens In This Activity Is Clear: Blow The Whistle And Your Brain Will Be Mutilated Before You Even Have A Trial”



www.bradleymanning

12/23/2010 by Lynn Parramore, New Deal 2.0 [Excerpt]

As Salon’s Glenn Greenwald and several other courageous journalists have documented, Bradley Manning, the 22-year-old U.S. Army Private accused of leaking classified documents to WikiLeaks, has been detained in solitary confinement for the last seven months, despite not having been convicted of any crime, having been a model detainee, and having evidenced no signs of violence or even disciplinary misdemeanors. Manning has been kept alone in a cell for 23 hours a day, barred from exercising in that cell, deprived of sleep, and denied even a pillow or sheets for his bed.

As Greenwald reports, “the brig’s medical personnel now administer regular doses of anti-depressants to Manning to prevent his brain from snapping from the effects of this isolation.” A court hearing has not been set.

The message of the U.S. government to its citizens in this activity is clear: blow the whistle and your brain will be mutilated before you even have a trial.

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format
If you prefer PDF to Word format, email contact@militaryproject.org

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

“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

**Pakistan Political Parties
Demand Stop To Obama
Regime Drone Attacks On
Pakistan Territory:**

**“U.S. Is Fighting Against Taliban
Which Are Not An Ideological
Group But Their Fight Against
Americans Has Been Changed Into
A Pashtoon Resistance”**

**“This Shows Us Is Fighting Against A
Population Which Simply Means That
It Is A Never-Ending-War”**

**“Obama’s Policy Is Headed For A
Disaster”**

Comment: T

This reaction by the leading political parties in Pakistan is a tepid accommodation to the rage of the population against Obama’s campaign of mass murder by drone of thousands of Pakistani citizens. Their politicians, like ours, posture, proclaim and lie, fearing above all mass movements from below against their power, wealth and privilege.

December 28, 2010 By Ahmad Noorani, The News International

ISLAMABAD: As another drone attack killed more than 20 people on North Waziristan on Monday, all leading political parties of the country unanimously declared that these attacks were tantamount to compromising the sovereignty of Pakistan and the government and the Pakistan Army should take immediate measures to stop them.

Leaders of these parties said the government and authorities should sort out the matter in accordance with parliament’s unanimous resolutions and take action against the extremists by itself wherever it is needed.

Senior leaders of these leading political forces say that compromising the sovereignty of the country would lead to making Pakistan a banana republic and foreign forces will keep on extending their targeted areas of attacks which consequently will damage the unity of the already troubled nation.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Pervaiz Rashid while talking to The News said that PML-N chief has taken up the issue of drone attacks with every visiting US official in last two years and made it clear to them that these attacks are hurting Pakistan's sovereignty.

He said that each and every press release issued after any such meeting contains reflection of this PML-N protest. "The most important thing is that what we are saying while speaking to press is the same what we ask the Americans. You will never find that we will issue a public statement on an issue and will tell exactly the opposite to the Americans," Pervaiz said apparently pointing towards a WikiLeaks cable according to which Gilani was found telling a US diplomat that we will oppose drone attacks only in parliament and will remain quiet outside the parliament.

Pervaiz Rashid said that government and defence establishment should devise a clear policy to get rid of drone attacks. "PML-N will be standing behind the federal government and armed forces of Pakistan on whatever strategy they adopt against the drone attacks," said the spokesman for the second biggest political party of the country. "We are not suggesting any strategy at our own as some points of the issue are technical," Pervaiz said and added: "Like if we say that Pakistan Army and Pakistan Air Force (PAF) should shoot down any drone which came in their radar range, we don't know whether radar of PAF have the capability to see these drones."

Professor Khursheed Ahmad, senior leader of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), while talking to The News gave a complete strategy for the government and Pakistan Army to tackle the issue of drone attacks. He said sovereignty cannot be compromised and his party has stated from the very first day that drone attacks by US CIA, either from Afghanistan or from bases within Pakistan, are against the sovereignty of the country.

Prof Khursheed suggested a three-phase strategy saying that first thing is to adopt a firm resolve by the government as well as Pakistan Army that drone attacks are unacceptable. He pointed out that this resolve is not there and instead there is collaboration and assistance. Air chief and chief of army staff is on record that they were following orders of the political leadership so the whole responsibility will fall on the government.

Prof Khursheed said that the final step would be to shoot the drones if the attacks continue. "I don't think so that there will ever be need of this final steps as I believe that US will accept the sovereignty of Pakistan if we follow initial two steps," he said.

The Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan gave detailed insight of US war on Afghanistan and its repercussions in Pakistan. Imran said Pakistan's rulers are unable to understand that US needs Pakistan's help. He said: "US is stuck up in Afghanistan. Obama's policy is headed for a disaster. This was purely a military policy and nine years of military action in Afghanistan has deteriorated the situation." "It is because, US is fighting against Taliban which are not an ideological group but their fight against Americans has been changed into a Pashtoon resistance. And this shows US is fighting against a population which simply means that it is a never-ending-war. So US is fully stuck in Afghanistan," the PTI chief said.

Another major problem with us, Imran said, is that Pakistan is having the duplicity at home and its government is deceiving the people. He said that Bob

**Woodward's book Obama Wars has quoted Zardari as telling CIA director:
"Collateral damage worries you Americans. It does not worry me."**

Senior MQM leader Mustafa Azizabadi while talking to The News from London said that MQM considers drone attacks as attacks on Pakistan's sovereignty and believe that the government should take immediate actions to stop this. Mustafa, however, was of the view that political parties could do nothing on this count as some institutions can play key role for stopping these attacks.

Haji Adeel, senior leader of the Awami National Party (ANP), told The News that his party was against drone attacks. He said that either these are Americans or Arabs or Chechens, every one should come to Pakistan or take any action inside Pakistan with our permission and not doing so will be directly hurting our sovereignty. Adeel, however, was of the view that economic and defence independence is a must to live like respectable nations in the world. He said: "If we are taking financial and military aid from US, it is very difficult to protest them for such kind of attacks."

Spokesman for the JUI-F Maulana Amjad told The News that his party was against the drone attacks and has always pushed the government to take a strict stance against US to stop these drone attacks which directly hurt the country's sovereignty.

Senior PML-Q leader Mushahid Hussain Syed while terming drone attacks as attacks on Pakistan's sovereignty said that these attacks are tested, tried and failed thing and never produced any results. He said that drone attacks have so far been failed to hit top al-Qaeda leadership and Osama bin Laden and Dr Ayman Al-Zawahiri are still alive.

He said that ground situation is same and there is no decrease in militancy and rather it is increasing day by day. He said that drone attacks are killing civilians at large scale, hurting Pakistan's sovereignty and Pakistani government is lying with its own people.

He said that General Kayani in his written response to Obama has clarified that only political solution of the situation could be viable. He said that there should be only two-point strategy; stop lying and stop the US in firm words.

Resistance Anniversary: January 1, 1781: Captain Killed By "Soldiers Disgruntled Because They Felt They Should Have Been Discharged After Serving For Three Years"

1.1.11 By Dave Blalock, GI Café Kaiserslautern, Facebook, Open Group

PAST NEW YEARS DAY IN THE GI RESISTANCE MOVEMENT
FIRST RECORDED FRAGGING & MUTINY!!!

Vietnam wasn't the first war in which disgruntled US troops murdered their own officers. This tradition goes back to the American Revolution.

The first incident of "fragging" was recorded in the Revolutionary War diary of a 9th Pennsylvania troop officer named Captain Joseph McClellan, who wrote that drunken troops turned on their superiors on January 1, 1781.

These soldiers were disgruntled because they felt they should have been discharged after serving for three years. In describing the casualties of this fragging he wrote that, "Captain Bitting was shot through the body and soon died," and that "Captain Tolbert was badly wounded."

Later in the month the Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops of the Army wage a mutiny.

In order to crush their rebellion General George Washington tricked the troops into disarming. He then had their leaders shot by a firing squad made up of some of their fellow mutineers.

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.

Traveling Soldier:

Posted At:

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/ci.php>

THIS ISSUE FEATURING:

"A WAR WITH NO CLEAR OBJECTIVE"

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.war.php>

"WE SHOULD JUST END IT. BRING THE TROOPS HOME"

"I never wanted my son to be a little old obituary in the paper"

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.troops.php>

THE POLITICIANS WON'T TALK ABOUT THE WAR:

"But for the Olechnys, avoidance is not an option"

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.avoidance.php>

[And More.....]

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/>

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Rights Group Slams Zionist Treatment Of Palestinian Prisoners:

**“Abysmal Detention Conditions
And Torture”**

**“In Many Of The Cases, They Were
Only Granted A Meeting With A
Lawyer After They Agreed To
Confess”**

**“Security Violations Are Defined Widely
And Include ‘Hostile Propaganda’”**

Dec 29, 2010 By Vita Bekker, The National [Excerpts]

TEL AVIV: Israel's Shin Bet internal security service prevents as many as 90 per cent of its Palestinian prisoners from consulting a lawyer during their

interrogation and exposes them to abysmal detention conditions and torture, an Israeli human rights group claimed in a report.

The document, jointly issued this week by The Public Committee Against Torture and the Palestinian Prisoners' Society, said the inmates were often shackled to a chair for prolonged periods, deprived of sleep, isolated in foul-smelling cells and repeatedly threatened that they and their families would be harmed.

"This is all aimed at getting the detainee to reach his breaking point as fast as possible and make a confession," said Maya Rosenfeld, a sociologist at Jerusalem's Hebrew University, who wrote the document for the human rights groups. "He is put under massive pressure - physical, mental and emotional."

Data collected by the groups showed that denial of legal access to Palestinian detainees was the rule rather than the exception. Between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of the 11,790 Palestinian detainees from the West Bank who were questioned by the Shin Bet between 2000 and 2007 were denied access to a lawyer for part or the entire time of their interrogation, the report said. About half of them went for two weeks or more without seeing an attorney, it added.

The trend has changed little since then and is unlikely to abate because such detentions are not subject to external reviews and the Shin Bet is exempt from making public its data on Palestinian prisoners, Ms Rosenfeld said.

The report's conclusions were based on partial statistics released by the Shin Bet, known as the General Security Service, in 2007 on the number of Palestinians that it has detained as well as on the testimonies of former inmates and lawyers.

According to Ms Rosenfeld, the Shin Bet's statistics have since been eliminated from the organisation's website.

The detainees who spoke to the rights groups testified of the rampant use of violent methods and psychological abuse meant to pressure them to confess to the crimes with which they were accused.

Indeed, support of such a claim is that in many of the cases, they were only granted a meeting with a lawyer after they agreed to confess, the report said.

The Shin Bet uses a clause in the Israeli military's legal code for the West Bank that allows them to prevent an inmate suspected of "security" violations from speaking to a lawyer for as many as 90 days if it obtains a judge's approval.

Security violations are defined widely and include membership in a "hostile" group, damaging the Israeli army's property, holding weapons and spreading "hostile propaganda", the report said. "The military code imposed in Palestinian territory ... associates security violations with every attempt to undermine its control" of the area, it added.

One case that the report cites as questioning the Shin Bet's policy of forbidding legal aid to detainees is that of Ziad Shanti, a 32-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank city of

Qalqilya. Mr Shanti was arrested in 2006 when Shin Bet agents shot him with live bullets from a civilian car as he walked down the street with his friends.

He was loaded into the vehicle and taken to an Israeli hospital because two bullets had hit his leg, and was informed that he would not be allowed to meet a lawyer.

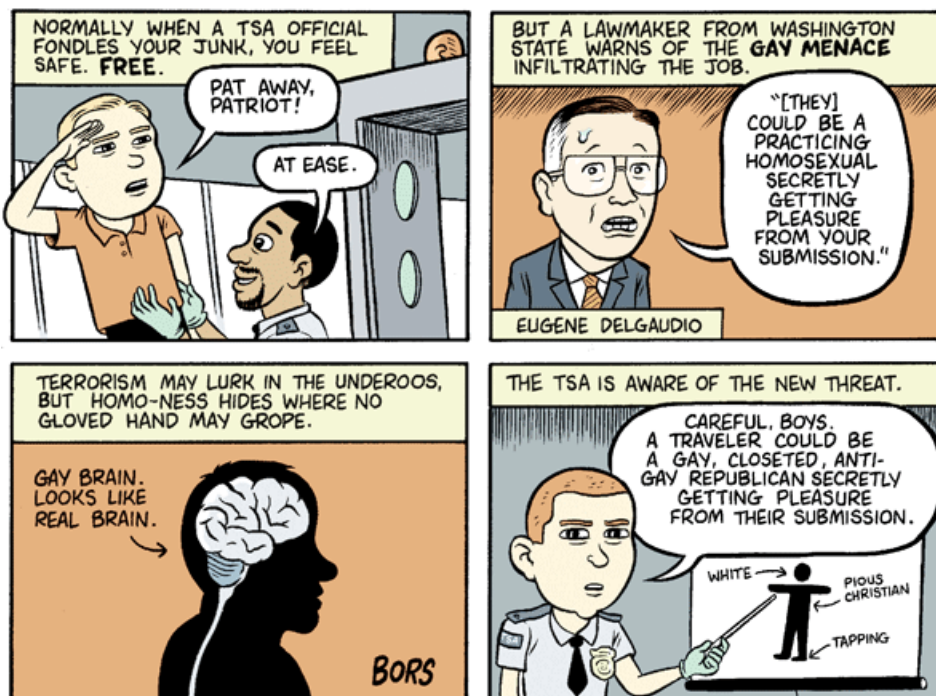
Mr Shanti was detained for 40 days, during which he was held in solitary confinement, and at times forced to sit with his hands tied behind his chair for a whole day despite his wounded leg. He was forbidden from speaking to an attorney and his pleas to have his family informed that he was alive were rejected. "The interrogator said he would allow this only after I confess," Mr Shanti wrote in an affidavit to his lawyer.

"The indictment and ruling raise grave questions about the use of incommunicado detention in this case," the report said.

"How could a meeting between Shanti and his attorney regarding Shanti's 'harbouring' of an unidentified person in 2002 to 2003 endanger the security in 2006?"

[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



CLASS WAR REPORTS



Class War Tunisia: Police Kill Protesters As A Spreading Movement Against Unemployment Frightens The Ben Ali Dictatorship: "A Population That Is Rising Up In The Face Of Massive Repression"

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

31 Dec 2010 By Yasmine Ryan, Al Jazeera and agencies [Excerpts]

A Tunisian protester has died of his injuries after police shot him in the town of Menzel Bouzaiene, according to the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

Chawki Belhoussine El Hadri, a 44-year-old man, was shot during protest on December 24. He died on Thursday, the FIDH said in a statement.

Mohamed Ammari, a Tunisian teenager, had been killed by police bullets the same day that El Hadri was injured. Another young man, Houcine Falhi, committed suicide by electrocuting himself in the midst of another demonstration on December 22, after shouting out that he was tired of being unemployed.

Security forces broke up a demonstration in Monastir peacefully on Thursday, but used violence in Sbikha on Thursday, the FIDH said. The same happened in Chebba, where one protester had to be hospitalised.

Protests entered their twelfth day on Friday.

"The FIDH again firmly condemns the use of firearms by the Tunisian security forces, and calls for an independent inquiry to cast light on these events, to hold those responsible accountable and to guarantee the right to peaceful protest," the organisation said.

Mokhtar Trifi, president of the Tunisian Human Rights League (LTDH), told Al Jazeera that lawyers across Tunisia have been "savagely beaten" on Friday morning.

Lawyers gathered in central Tunis, while others assembled in the capital's suburbs, the town of Monastir and elsewhere in the country, after the national lawyers' order called on them to speak out against the government's repression.

"It was to demand the release of lawyers arrested over the past two days, and to express solidarity with the wider protests in Sidi Bouzid," Trifi, who has participated in the gathering outside the courthouse in Tunis, said.

"There was a savage attack on the lawyers, who were protesting extremely peacefully," he said. He said many people have been injured, some severely, when police beat the lawyers with clubs and punched and kicked them, arresting some and breaking up the meeting. The repression was the most violent in Tunis, he said.

The police also confiscated cell phones to prevent people from filming the incident in the capital.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali sacked the governor of the region of Sidi Bouzid where the protests had begun.

Mourad Ben Jalloul was dismissed on Thursday, as Ben Ali's government struggles to respond to the political crisis the protests have provoked.

Three ministers and two governors have now been removed for reasons relating to the popular uprising, including Oussama Romdhani, the communications minister.

But Khadija Cherif, the secretary-general of the FIDH, told Al Jazeera that Ben Ali's response to the crisis hasn't taken into account the major reforms the protesters are calling for. Neither has it allowed for the debate to be opened, she said, noting the Tunisian media's failure to report accurately on the events.

Most Western governments have stayed silent over the violent repression of the protests, in a marked contrast to the international outcry over popular protests in Iran in 2009.

By keeping silent over what is happening in Tunisia, Cherif said the world is "showing indifference to a population that is rising up in the face of massive repression".

"We can clearly see that it's self-interest that counts, not values like democracy or freedom," she said. "This discredits European and Western countries."

She condemned the tendency to describe Tunisia as an economic miracle.

"Just look at what this 'miracle' has led to," she said, referring to those marginalised by the liberalising economic path the government has taken.

The unemployment rate is 14.7 per cent, according to the World Bank.

Nouredinne Miladi of the University of Northampton points to unemployment figures from non-governmental sources. In the town of Sidi Bouzid, where the protests started, around 25 per cent of male university graduates are jobless, as are 44 per cent of female graduates.

He said the simmering resentments that led to the recent protests are rooted in years of systematic marginalisation of not only the young, but of significant parts of the country.

Flourishing coastal cities receive the bulk of the government's attention, he told Al Jazeera, while much of the rest of Tunisia goes overlooked.

The World Bank may have recently praised Tunisia's weathering of the global economic crisis, but the economic reality within the country is very different from how it is typically viewed abroad, he explained.

"What is promoted around the world is this lovely picture of tourism and so forth," he said.

But the problem lies in the type of sectors that have been developed in Tunisia, which offer mostly low-skilled employment.

"We have much more investment coming from Europe ... just looking for cheap labour," Achy said.

Beyond the employment dilemma, Miladi said there is a need to allow for greater freedom of expression. "There has to be new initiatives with regards to opening up the media in the country," Miladi suggested.

Government has controlled television, radio and print media for decades.

"Only the internet remains probably the only source of opportunity for young people and others to voice their opinion," he said.

International media face many barriers in reporting from Tunisia.

The government has banned Al Jazeera completely.

The main source of information on the protests is coming from information Tunisians are posting to YouTube and Twitter.

Many of those tweeting about the popular uprising are beginning to question what they see as the failure of international media to cover the protests, compared to the outcry over pro-democracy protests in Iran in 2009.

MORE:

Tunisian Unrest Stirs Arab World:

“Tunisians, With A Reputation Of Passivity, Rise Up In Unprecedented Street Protests And Sits-In Against The Police State Of President Ben Ali”

“Arabs Were Applauding The Protestors, Often Calling Them ‘Heroes’”

“The Unrest Was Prompted By High Prices And Unemployment But Now Has Turned Political With Some Demonstrators Calling On President Ben Ali To Step Down”

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

Dec 31, 2010 By Emad Mekay, Inter Press Service via Uruknet [Excerpts]

CAIRO

As Western countries were busy celebrating Christmas and dealing with air traffic holiday delays because of snow blizzards, the tranquil North African country of Tunisia was going through events that would have been thought unthinkable just three weeks ago - public unrest that saw thousands demonstrate against the regime of President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali.

While the media and policy makers went heads over heels in the United States and Europe during similar protests against the disputed presidential elections in Iran in 2009, the unexpected events went largely ignored in the Western media.

Tunisian bloggers and twitter posts are now the main source for minute by minute development of the unrest.

Arabs across the Middle East Watched in awe as online video posts and sporadic coverage on Al-Jazeera TV station showed Tunisians, with a reputation of passivity, rise up in unprecedented street protests and sits-in against the police state of President Ben Ali.

The Ben Ali regime exemplifies the "moderate" pro-Western Arab regimes that boast strict control of their population while toeing the line of Western powers in the Middle East.

The spark of the unrest, now about to end its second week, came when a 26- year-old unemployed university graduate, Mohammed Buazizi, set himself ablaze in the central town Sidi Buzeid to protest the confiscation of his fruits and vegetables cart.

Buaziz's suicide attempt was copied by at least two other young university graduates in protest against poor economic conditions in the Arab country.

Similar to previous unrests in many Western-backed Arab countries, the police responded with overwhelming force.

There were reports of use of live ammunition, house-to-house raids to chase activists, mass arrests and torture of prisoners.

The police initially crushed the demonstrations in Sidi Buzeid after cutting all communication and roads to the town, only to be faced with more demonstrations in several neighboring towns.

Egypt had followed the same tactics against unrest by factory workers in the industrial city Al-Mahal El Kobra on April 16, 2007, and killed the unrest in just four days after the regime managed to control media reports from inside the town, and major Western media outlets either ignored the events or belittled them as ineffectual.

But unlike the unrest in Egypt, there are reports of demonstrations and clashes spreading in Tunisia to the towns Gandouba, Qabes and Genyana among others.

The Ben Ali regime blamed "radical elements", "chaos mongers" and "a minority of mercenaries" for incitement, all typical accusations by Arab rulers in face of signs of fidgeting among their oppressed publics.

So far, according to press reports and Web posts, at least two protestors have died, with many injured in the protests.

On Thursday, human rights activist and blogger Lina Ben Mhenni reported a third death and said that police was conducting house-to-house raids to chase activists (<http://twitter.com/benmhennilina>). The report has not been independently verified.

The Tunisian Journalists' Syndicate issued a statement last week decrying official attempts "to hinder media coverage and stop reporters from doing their job."

A blogger wrote: "They are clamping down on the Internet too, blocking some sites and Facebook accounts. I might not be able to post any longer. If I disappear suddenly, please pray for me."

Comments from across the Arab countries followed in support.

"Thank Allah the peoples of the region are finally waking up and are protesting against the tyrants who spread injustice and corruption all over the face of the earth," a post from Dubai said.

"The end of the Arab regimes looks so near," another post from Egypt said.

Other Arabs are seeing the demonstration as an inspiration.

In chat forums and social media, Arabs were applauding the protestors, often calling them "heroes".

The Egyptian opposition leader Hamadeen Sabahi called for a demonstration on Sunday in solidarity with the "Tunisian Intifadah".

The fear of similar spillover into Arab countries pushed at least one Arab ruler to rush to aid Ben Ali.

Libya's maverick leader Muammar Qaddafi said he was immediately dropping all restrictions on the entry of Tunisian labour into Libya. Tunisians were free to travel to his oil-rich country for work, he said.

Opposition says the unrest was prompted by high prices and unemployment but now has turned political with some demonstrators calling on President Ben Ali to step down.

Tunisia, like other non-oil producing Arab countries has implemented a Western-inspired privatization programme and gradual cut to state subsidies to staple goods without offering alternative sources of income.

Yet as the Tunisians waited impatiently, the fruits of the alleged economic reforms never came.

Pictures and video on social media showed protestors holding bread loaves, a sign of hunger and poverty.

Tunisia's protests caught the region by surprise as the Ben Ali regime, like other rulers, had often trumpeted his country as an oasis of stability.

Trying to absorb the shock, Ben Ali announced a small cabinet reshuffle but left the interior ministry intact. He vowed a clampdown on the protestors.



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