

Military Resistance 9B1



Bread And Roses: Tahir Square, Cairo, January 31, 2011: Chris Hondros, Getty Images

[Classic: How It's Done]
**“Hundreds Of Young Men
Overwhelmed One Tank”**
**“When A Lieutenant In Sun
Glasses Began Firing Into The Air,
He Was Pushed Back Against His
Armoured Vehicle And Had To
Climb On Top To Avoid The Men”**

**“Yet The Crowd Quickly Became
Good Natured, Posed For Pictures
On The Tank And Handed The
Soldiers Fruit And Water”
“We Will Never Fire On Our People –
Even If We Are Ordered To Do So”**

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

31 January 2011 & 30 January 2011 By Robert Fisk, Independent.co.uk [Excerpts]

The old lady in the red scarf was standing inches from the front of an American-made M1 Abrams tank of the Egyptian Third Army, right on the edge of Tahrir Square. Its soldiers were paratroops, some in red berets, others in helmets, gun barrels pointed across the square, heavy machine guns mounted on the turrets.

“If they fire on the Egyptian people, Mubarak is finished,” she said.

“And if they don't fire on the Egyptian people, Mubarak is finished.”

Of such wisdom are Egyptians now possessed.

And those tanks, new to the square, 14 in all that arrived with no slogans painted on them, their soldiers sullen and apprehensive, had not come – as the protesters fondly believed – to protect them.

But then, when I talked to an officer on one of the tanks, he burst out with a smile. “We will never fire on our people – even if we are ordered to do so,” he shouted over the roar of his engine.

Anti-American sentiment was growing after Mr Obama's continued if tepid support for the Mubarak regime. “No, Obama, not Mubarak,” posters read.

And I noticed the lead tank's hull bore markings beginning “MFR” – at this point a soldier with a rifle and bayonet fixed was ordered to arrest me so I ran into the crowd and he retreated – but could “MFR” stand for the US Mobile Force Reserve, which keeps its tanks in Egypt? Was this tank column on loan from the Americans?

You don't need to work out what the Egyptians make of all this.

Yet there were extraordinary scenes earlier in the day between protesters and tank crews of another unit (this time, the machines were older American M-60 Pattons of Vietnam vintage), which appeared to be about to protect a unit of water cannons sent to clear the streets.

Hundreds of young men overwhelmed one tank, and when a lieutenant in sun glasses began firing into the air, he was pushed back against his armoured vehicle and had to climb on top to avoid the men.

Yet the crowd quickly became good natured, posed for pictures on the tank and handed the soldiers fruit and water.

When a long line of troops assembled across the road, a very old, hunch-backed man sought and gained permission to approach them. I followed him as he embraced the lieutenant and kissed him on both cheeks and said: "You are our sons. We are your people."

And then he walked down the row of troops and kissed each one and embraced each one and told each one that he was his son.

You need a heart of stone not to be moved by such scenes and yesterday was replete with them.

All day, an Egyptian Mi-25 helicopter – this time a relic of Soviet ordnance – circled the crowds, six rockets in the pods, but did nothing.

Later a French-built Gazelle of the Egyptian air force flew low over the crowds, and the people waved at the plane and the pilot could be seen waving back.

And all the time Egyptians walked up to foreigners – and a grey haired Englishman doesn't look very Egyptian – and insisted that a people who had lost their fear could never be reinjected with fear. "We will never be afraid again," a young woman shouted at me as the jets screamed over again.

And a former cop now claiming to be a liaison man between the demonstrators and the army said that "the army will be with us because they know Mubarak must go".

And the looting and burning go on.

The former policeman – who should know – told me that many of the looters are members of a group which belonged to the Mr Mubarak's National Democratic Party, whose previous role had been to bully Egyptians to go to polling stations and vote for their beloved leader.

Across Egypt, and on almost every street in Cairo, there are now vigilantes – not Mubarak men, but ordinary civilians who are tired of the semi-official gangs who are robbing their own people at night-time.

To get back to my hotel last night, I had to pass through eight checkpoints of men, young and old – one was stooped, with a walking stick in one hand and an old British .303 Lee Enfield rifle in the other – who are now attacking thieves and handing them to the army.

In the early hours of yesterday morning, a group of armed men turned up at the Children's Cancer Hospital near the old Roman aqueduct.

They wanted to take the medical equipment, but within minutes, local people ran down the road and threatened the men with knives.

They retreated at once. Dr Khaled el-Noury, the chief operating officer at the hospital, told me that the armed visitors were disorganised and apparently frightened of being harmed.

They were right.

The reception clerk at the children's hospital showed me the kitchen knife he kept on his desk for protection. Further proof of fighting power lay outside the gate where men appeared holding clubs and sticks and pokers.

A boy – perhaps eight years old – appeared brandishing an 18-inch butcher's knife, slightly more than half his height. Other men holding knives of equal length came to shake hands with the foreign journalist.

MORE:

“Asked How They Could Let Protesters Scrawl Anti-Mubarak Slogans On Their Vehicles, One Soldier Said: ‘These Are Written By The People, It’s The Views Of The People’”



Cairo, Tahir Square, January 30, 2011

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

January 31, 2011 The News International [Excerpts]

In surreal scenes, soldiers from Mubarak's army stood by tanks covered in anti-Mubarak graffiti: "Down with Mubarak. Down with the despot. Down with the traitor. Pharaoh out of Egypt."

Asked how they could let protesters scrawl anti-Mubarak slogans on their vehicles, one soldier said: "These are written by the people, it's the views of the people."

"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops."

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

**"Back Now To Cairo,
Thousands Of People In The
Square, More Of A Happening
Than A Political Event--A
Festival Atmosphere"
"Setting Up Tents To Be Ready At
8 In The Morning"
"Whole Families, With Children And
Old People"
"A Small Speech From One Of The
Heads Of The Army Saying They Would
Never Use Force Against The Egyptian
People"**



January 30, 2011: Photo via The Brigade [U.S. Military News]

The Day Before The Planned March Of One Million

From: June VI [Greece]
To: Military Resistance
Subject: RE: bits and pieces on the Egypt revolution
Date: Jan 31, 2011 2:27 PM

Glad you are getting those good pix.

Bits of news that you may have:

the Army (sic!) is putting up walls of concrete to cordon off Tahrir Square, the center for the protesters and rendez-vous for the one million "man" (lots of women participating) march.

So far these barricades are not a point of contention.

Security police are back on the streets, welcomed in more upper class neighborhood where people worried about looting, traffic control etc.

Not a cause of contention between middle to lower Egyptians who vent their anger on the presence of the police (who were off the streets for 2 days) not each other.

Verbal anger, understood, since police are armed and not protesters.

Exception, in some neighborhoods the youth (in teens mostly) have organized themselves into vigilantes, and have small knives, sticks etc.

Very interesting the development of self-organization, beyond the usual (in organized demos, also in West) street sweeping, traffic directing.

In northern cities (from Cairo, almost everything except Luxor and Assouan are “north”,) factory workers are keeping their factories going (may be true in Alexandria too).

Sounds like a Guide for a People's Revolution. Just a news item, no details unfortunately. Some figures: 500,000 in Army, with Mubarak Comm. in Chief. 360,000 in Police.

Many discussions on Al-J on role of Army in social hierarchy of Egypt. Some face-saving method must be found (one analyst) to enable Army to dump their commander despite their allegiance as soldiers.

Muslim Brotherhood had its first appearance as organizers and demonstrators today--in Shubra, mainly a Coptic neighborhood (Copts are pro-demonstrators--All Egyptians together.)

Tomorrow million man march starts at 8 a.m. same time zone as Greece.

When asked how much of a crimp would the lack of public transport put in tomorrow's march, a woman activist (who spends her nights too in Tahrir Square--pretty cold) said it doesn't matter that much if people can't get to Cairo, almost every city is planning a march in solidarity.

No news from Elbaradei since his appearance and speech in Tahrir Sq. last night.

All agree (the Zeitgeist and the Muslim Brotherhood, the only organization as such delineated among the protesters) on Elbaradei as “head” of a transitional gov't, in the sense of a mediator with the Mubarak military chiefs (i.e. his whole new cabinet, which flash on the TV screen via official Egyptian TV and look like something from Mme. Tussaud's), so I suppose all day El-B has been “mediating” and will appear again when he has something to offer.

Obama Admin. is considered by all analysts to have “missed the curve” and be improvising to figure out what to do.

Its call for dialogue is ludicrous.

The Al-J anchor man asked one of the State Dept. people interviewed why didn't they send someone to facilitate a dialogue, since obviously neither Mubarak nor the protester-revolutionaries had the slightest desire to “dialogue” with each other.

Usual answer: “we don't want to be seen as trying to tell the Egyptians what to do.”

As if they could!

Just saw that fool Press secretary (Gibbs?) “trying to articulate” the policy of the Administration.

Back now to Cairo, thousands of people in the Square, “more of a happening than a political event--a festival atmosphere,” setting up tents to be ready at 8 in the morning.

Whole families, with children and old people.

Fortunately (for my peace of mind) a small speech from one of the heads of the Army saying they would never use force against the Egyptian people. 'I hope Allah wills it.'

“As The Government Of Egypt Shakes From A Broad-Based Uprising, Long-Simmering Resentments Have Burst Into Open Class Warfare”

“On Friday Night, The Police Pulled Out Of Egypt’s Major Cities Abruptly, And Tensions Between Rich And Poor Exploded”

“‘It Is As If A Domestic War Is Declared,’ Said Sarah Elayashi, 33, From An Apartment In The Affluent Neighborhood Of Heliopolis”

“The Only People Who Wanted Mr. Mubarak To Stay In Power, He Argued, Were Rich People ‘Afraid For Their Money’”



Jan. 30, 2011 Cairo: Ahmed Ali, Associated Press

January 30, 2011 By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK and MONA EL-NAGGAR, The New York Times

CAIRO — As the government of Egypt shakes from a broad-based uprising, long-simmering resentments have burst into open class warfare.

Over the past several days, hundreds of thousands of Egyptians — from indigent fruit peddlers and doormen to students and engineers, even wealthy landlords — poured into the streets together to denounce President Hosni Mubarak and battle his omnipresent security police.

Then, on Friday night, the police pulled out of Egypt's major cities abruptly, and tensions between rich and poor exploded.

Looters from Cairo's vast shantytowns attacked gleaming suburban shopping malls, wild rumors swirled of gunfights at the bridges and gates to the most expensive neighborhoods and some of their residents turned wistful about Mr. Mubarak and his authoritarian rule.

"It is as if a domestic war is declared," said Sarah Elayashi, 33, from an apartment in the affluent neighborhood of Heliopolis, not far from Mr. Mubarak's palace. "And we have nothing to defend ourselves but kitchen knives and mop sticks."

"The protesters are against us," she added. "We hope President Mubarak stays because at least we have national security. I wish we could be like the United States with a democracy, but we cannot. We have to have a ruler with an iron hand."

Now some accuse the Mubarak government of deliberately fanning class tensions in order to create demands for the restoration of its brutal security state. But such resentments have built up here for nearly a decade outside of public view.

"These big guys are stealing all the money," said Mohamed Ibrahim, a 24-year-old textile worker standing at his second job as a fruit peddler in a hard-pressed neighborhood called Dar-al-Salam. "If they were giving us our rights, why would we protest? People are desperate."

He had little sympathy for those frightened by the specter of looting.

He complained that he could barely afford his rent and said the police routinely humiliated him by shaking him down for money, overturning his cart or stealing his fruit.

“And then we hear about how these big guys all have these new boats and the 100,000 pound villas. They are building housing, but not for us — for those people up high.”

The widening chasm between rich and poor in Cairo has been one of the conspicuous aspects of city life over the last decade — and especially the last five years. Though there were always extremes of wealth and poverty here, until recently the rich lived more or less among the poor — in grander apartments or more spacious apartments but mixed together in the same city.

But as the Mubarak administration has taken steps toward privatizing more government businesses, kicking off an economic boom for some, rich Egyptians have fled the city.

They have flocked to gated communities full of big American-style homes around country clubs, and the remoteness of their lives from those of average Egyptians has become starkly visible.

The new rich communities and older affluent enclaves closer to the city were seized with fear over the weekend after a rash of looting Friday night.

At the ravaged City Centre mall, looters had pulled bank A.T.M.'s from the walls, smashed in skylights and carted away televisions, and on Sunday a small crowd was inspecting the damage and debating the causes.

A group of men standing guard said they had watched the police abandon the mall as if on command Friday at 11 p.m., and the first looters arrived in cars shortly after.

They argued that the government had tried to create the impression of chaos.

Others blamed hordes who poured in from impoverished neighborhoods, or Bedouins who they said came in from the desert.

Ayman Adbel Al, 43, a civil engineer inspecting the damage with his two teenage sons, blamed Mr. Mubarak, arguing that he had allowed the growing class divisions in Egyptian society to build up for years until they exploded last week.

“I can say that I am well off, but I hate it, too. It is not humanitarian,” he said, showing a picture of himself with his family at the protests Saturday.

The only people who wanted Mr. Mubarak to stay in power, he argued, were rich people “afraid for their money.”

“In The Streets Of Cairo, Many Protesters Are Now Openly Denouncing The United States For Supporting President Hosni Mubarak”

“‘Tell America That We Get To Choose Our President,’ Manshawi Said”

“We Choose Him, Not Them”



Anti-government protesters carry posters in English referring to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and in arabic reading 'Down Omar Suleiman, Israel's man', referring to the recently-named Egyptian Vice-President, left, at the demonstration in Tahrir square in downtown Cairo, Egypt, Jan. 30, 2011. (AP Photo/Ben Curtis)

January 30, 2011 By Leila Fadel, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

CAIRO - In a dusty alleyway in downtown Cairo, Gamal Mohammed Manshawi held out a dirty plastic bag Saturday afternoon. Inside were smashed gas canisters and the casings of rubber bullets that he said Egyptian police had fired at anti-government demonstrators.

“You see,” the 50-year-old lawyer said, displaying the items. On the bottom of each were the words “Made in the USA.”

“They are attacking us with American weapons,” he yelled as men gathered around him.

In the streets of Cairo, many protesters are now openly denouncing the United States for supporting President Hosni Mubarak, saying the price has been their freedom. They say the Obama administration has offered only tepid criticism of a regime that has received billions of dollars in U.S. aid.

“Tell America that we get to choose our president,” Manshawi said. “We choose him, not them.”

U.S. officials “speak about their own interest, not ours,” said Ahmed Abu Dunia, who said he planned to demonstrate every day until Mubarak is gone. “The Egyptians love Egypt.”

In Tahrir Square, where the largest protests in Cairo have taken place, people said they thought Mubarak’s resignation might be near, not because of the United States but in spite of it.

“We believe America is against us,” said Emad Abdel Halim, 31. “Until now, Obama didn’t talk to the Egyptian people. He didn’t support the Egyptian people.”

“Tell Obama to forget about Mubarak,” said Islam Rashid, 26. “He is done.”

“Many Wonder Whether The Regime Is Creating A Security Panic — Even Directing Plainclothes Agents To Riot And Loot — In Order To Send Protesters Scurrying Back To Their Homes And Justify A Harsh Crackdown”

30 January 2011 By Jeffrey Fleishman and Borzou Daragahi, The Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Al Arabiya television also reported in urgent screen captions that thousands of Islamists held in prisons had escaped from the Wadi Natroun prison north of Cairo.

The Associated Press cited unnamed security officials as saying prisoners had escaped from four prisons.

But many wonder whether the regime is creating a security panic — even directing plainclothes agents to riot and loot — in order to send protesters scurrying back to their

homes and justify a harsh crackdown, a tactic used by the Iranian government to crush 2009 protests and Ben Ali in a failed attempt to halt protests earlier this month.

“This is an unwritten rule regarding the nature of urban war and uprisings, and it's meant to gain power over the street,” said Theodore Karasik, an analyst at the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis, a think tank in Dubai and Beirut.

“It backfires when others from other security or military units see what happens and try to mitigate or encourage it. I think its commonplace, more commonplace than we believe.”

MORE:

“Young Protesters Have Made A Human Shield Around The Historical Museum (With Everything From One Of The Only Copies Of Rosetta Stone To Töutankhamon's Jewels.) To Avoid Looting”

From: June VI [Greece]
To: Military Resistance
Subject: Egyptian Army?
Date: Jan 28, 2011 4:58 PM

So, the protesters (read Egyptian people) drove the security police off the streets and into limbo.

By 20h, the commentators were saying, We haven't seen a policecar or riot control anywhere for the last half hour!

Next came the President's military guard, about 20,000 men strong entering on scene in tanks, the soldiers carrying Egyptian flags, and personnel carriers. Warmly greeted by protesters.

In Suez, the tanks turned around and went back to the main police station (several police stations already torched by the citizens), the gov't idea being the army would take over from the police.

Every time it returned on stage, so to speak, warmly greeted.

Jane Dutton, an enthusiastic pro-revolutionaries (AlJazeera reporter) asked a protester why the enthusiasm since the army had not revealed which way it was going to jump. Demonstrators assumed on their side.

From info on AJ, both police and army are young conscripts.

Only the officers are making a career of it, like officers everywhere. Part of the elite.

Same question--will the army suddenly turn out to be for the regime?--dismissed by woman reporter in Suez who said, "why would they when they got such an enthusiastic welcome from the people, which they reciprocated."

Actually it does seem against army psychology that the tanks would drive around Cairo, for ex, for 5 hours or so and then suddenly come out brandishing machine guns (made in USA, like the stun guns, which have Made in USA stamped on them. To the amazement of the Egyptian people: why do they send these things against us? What have we done to them?

I never sleep the night through, so if there is a late night unpleasant surprise, I will inform you (Egypt and Greece same time zone).

PS. Aljazeera a pleasure to listen to, since all the reporters and anchor people in the studio (next to the Hilton Hotel, front courtyard open to protesters), were vocally on the side of the revolutionaries.

This is the only time I have ever seen a TV newscaster biting his nails (while waiting to hear the army's reaction on its first appearance.).

Extra good news: young protesters have made a human shield around The Historical Museum (with everything from one of the only copies of Rosetta Stone to Töutankhamon's Jewels.) to avoid looting.

Museum on same square with HQ of NDP [Mubarak's political party], which has been torched.

Ending: I never have found out how the protesters eat. Nothing like soup kitchens around. And I doubt the Hilton offered a snack (in May 68, bakers did give free loaves to demonstrators). Maybe they are restored by prayer. For the last 2 prayers of the day, about 200 or so men prayed in the street, or on the Oct 6 bridge, while the security police waited for them to finish. Police are also Muslims, but did not get down to pray. Hard in combat gear, of course.

MORE:

“Members Of The Police Wearing Civil Clothes - To Appear As If They Were Part Of The Protesters -

Engaged In Acts Of Stealing And Pillaging”

“The Youths Captured Them And Delivered Them To The Army Forces”

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

The young man who just made this post on facebook is an Egyptian living in this country, a friend of my family. He is presenting a very different view than U.S. media, which is no surprise.

Please circulate.

Mary Ann

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mary Ann

Date: Jan 29, 2011 10:33 AM

Subject: Ahmed's post on FB

Ahmed Abousamra:

I'm so proud of the Egyptian revolution currently going on!

With no police and only limited help from the army, the youths took it upon themselves to manage traffic and provide protection for banks and other public and private property.

This my family has seen firsthand in Alexandria!

Ahmed Abousamra Meanwhile:

members of the police wearing civil clothes - to appear as if they were part of the protesters - engaged in acts of stealing and pillaging wanting to give a negative image of this great civilized revolution, but the youths captured them and delivered them to the army forces.

Really great job!!!

14 minutes ago ·

MORE:

“There Are Growing Suspicions That Much Of The Looting And

**Arson Was Carried Out By
Plainclothes Cops”
“An Attempt To Destroy The Integrity
Of The Protesters”
“Obama's Own Response – About The
Need For Reforms And An End To Such
Violence – Was An Exact Copy Of All The
Lies Mubarak Has Been Using To Defend
His Regime For Three Decades”**

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

30 January 2011 By Robert Fisk, Independent.co.uk [Excerpts]

Mubarak's feeble attempts to claim that he must end violence on behalf of the Egyptian people – when his own security police have been responsible for most of the cruelty of the past five days – has elicited even further fury from those who have spent 30 years under his sometimes vicious dictatorship.

For there are growing suspicions that much of the looting and arson was carried out by plainclothes cops – including the murder of 11 men in a rural village in the past 24 hours – in an attempt to destroy the integrity of the protesters campaigning to throw Mubarak out of power.

The destruction of a number of communications centres by masked men – which must have been co-ordinated by some form of institution – has also raised suspicions that the plainclothes thugs who beat many of the demonstrators were to blame.

In my night journey from 6th October City to the capital, I had to slow down when darkened vehicles loomed out of the darkness. They were smashed, glass scattered across the road, slovenly policemen pointing rifles at my headlights. One jeep was half burned out.

They were the wreckage of the anti-riot police force which the protesters forced out of Cairo on Friday.

And there are also calls for revenge.

An al-Jazeera television crew found 23 bodies in the Alexandria mortuary, apparently shot by the police.

Several had horrifically mutilated faces. Eleven more bodies were discovered in a Cairo mortuary, relatives gathering around their bloody remains and screaming for retaliation against the police.

Mubarak's allegation that these demonstrations and arson – this combination was a theme of his speech refusing to leave Egypt – were part of a “sinister plan” is clearly at the centre of his claim to continued world recognition.

Indeed, Obama's own response – about the need for reforms and an end to such violence – was an exact copy of all the lies Mubarak has been using to defend his regime for three decades.

“Mubarak Out – Get Out” and “Your regime is over, Mubarak” have now been plastered on almost every Egyptian tank on the streets of Cairo.

On one of the tanks circling Freedom Square was a senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Beltagi.

Earlier, I had walked beside a convoy of tanks near the suburb of Garden City as crowds scrambled on to the machines to hand oranges to the crews, applauding them as Egyptian patriots.

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: Nationality Not Announced

January 31, 2010 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following an improvised explosive device attack in eastern Afghanistan today.

Candlelight Vigil Held For Fallen Soldier

01/28/2011 By: News 14 Carolina Web Staff

WHITEVILLE, N.C. – Family and friends gathered to remember a North Carolina soldier killed in Afghanistan last week.

Pfc. Amy Sinkler, of Chadbourn, died last Thursday from wounds she received when her unit was attacked by insurgents using a rocket-propelled grenade. Loved ones held a candlelight vigil in the 23-year-old's honor Thursday evening in Whiteville.

Neighbors said she will be missed.

“Amy was a beautiful young lady. She was my next-door neighbor, she was always trying to do something to help herself and she was always trying to do something that she thought at the time that she thought was patriotic and working for her country,” said neighbor Eloise Faulk.

Thursday morning, Sinkler's body arrived at the Columbus County and was escorted by Fort Bragg soldiers. Sinkler was assigned to the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Fort Richardson, Alaska.

Funeral services will be held this Saturday afternoon at 1 p.m. at the West Columbus High School auditorium. Burial with full military honors will follow in Butler Branch cemetery in Fair Bluff.

As U.S. Troops Die:

**Collapse Of Bank Looted Of
\$900 Million By Afghan
Government Thieves Could
Destroy Nation's Financial
System:**

“Kabul Bank Has Extensive Links To Senior People In The Afghan Government”

“President Karzai’s Brother Is ‘A Prominent Investor In The Kabul Bank’”

“Afghan Officials Said The Bank Poured Millions Into President Karzai’s Election Campaign”

It is the loans and personal grants made by the bank to powerful people, including government ministers, that could prove the most explosive, Western and Afghan officials said.

“If people who are thought to be clean and who were held up as ‘good’ by Western countries suddenly are caught with their fingers in the till, it will cause questions from donors,” said a Western official in Kabul. “They will say, ‘Why are we here?’”

January 30, 2011 By ALISSA J. RUBIN and JAMES RISEN, The New York Times
[Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — Fraud and mismanagement at Afghanistan’s largest bank have resulted in potential losses of as much as \$900 million — three times previous estimates — heightening concerns that the bank could collapse and trigger a broad financial panic in Afghanistan, according to American, European and Afghan officials.

The extent of these losses make it clear that keeping the bank afloat — something the government has said it is determined to do — would require large infusions of cash from an already strained budget.

Banking specialists, businessmen and government officials now fear that word of Kabul Bank’s troubles could prompt a run on solvent banks, destroying the country’s nascent banking system and shaking the confidence of Western donors already questioning the level of their commitment to Afghanistan.

The scandal has severe political and security implications.

Investigators and Afghan businessmen believe that much of the money has gone into the pockets of a small group of privileged and politically connected Afghans, preventing earlier scrutiny of the bank’s dealings.

The spotlight on how political and economic interests in Afghanistan are intertwined threatens to further undermine President Hamid Karzai's government.

The bank is also the prime conduit for paying Afghan security forces, leaving the American military, which pays the majority of the salaries, looking for new banks to process the \$1.5 billion payroll.

As Afghan regulators struggle to find out where the money went, many officials and international monitors concede that the missing millions may never be recovered, raising questions of how the losses could be replaced to keep the bank from failing.

Afghan officials and businessmen have said the money was invested in a real estate bubble that has since burst in Dubai, as well as in dubious projects and donations to politicians in Afghanistan.

Millions of dollars have yet to be traced, and some of the money seems to have gone to front companies or individuals and then disappeared.

The Afghan Central Bank and American officials are conducting their own parallel investigations, but the problems are so serious that the International Monetary Fund has not yet renewed an assistance program to Afghanistan that expired in September, threatening an essential pillar of support to a government reliant on international largess as it battles a nine-year insurgency.

Many donor countries may have to delay aid to Afghanistan because of their own requirements that money go only to countries with I.M.F. programs in good standing, Western diplomats said.

Several officials described the bank as "too big to fail," referring to its role in paying the salaries of hundreds of thousands of government employees.

While Afghan and American officials depict a crisis far worse than has been made public, State Department cables released by WikiLeaks show that Afghan and Western regulators were aware of many of the problems, but were most focused on the problem of terrorist financing, rather than the fraud scheme that was the main problem at Kabul Bank.

A stream of complaints about the bank's practices — many of them the problems that now threaten the bank's survival — are dutifully recorded in the cables, but diplomats, at least in 2009 and early 2010, seemed not to have realized the profound effect they could have on the financial system as a whole.

Although other banks here have had questionable loan practices, so far it is only Kabul Bank — where what amounts to an enormous fraud scheme was conducted over a period of years — whose troubles are sending tremors through the Afghan business community and worrying Western donors.

In an interview this weekend, Mahmoud Karzai, President Karzai's brother and a prominent investor in the Kabul Bank, said that the new president of Kabul Bank,

Masood Musa Ghazi, told him in the last several days that there were approximately \$800 million in loans still outstanding. These are potentially unrecoverable.

Kabul Bank has extensive links to senior people in the Afghan government. In addition to Mahmoud Karzai, other shareholders included Haseen Fahim, the brother of the first vice president, and several associates of the family from the north of Afghanistan.

Afghan officials said the bank poured millions into President Karzai's election campaign.

It is the loans and personal grants made by the bank to powerful people, including government ministers, that could prove the most explosive, Western and Afghan officials said. "If people who are thought to be clean and who were held up as 'good' by Western countries suddenly are caught with their fingers in the till, it will cause questions from donors," said a Western official in Kabul. "They will say, 'Why are we here?'"

Mahmoud Karzai said that he believed the bank's former chairman, Sherkhan Farnood, was responsible for the problems at the bank, saying that he often moved large amounts of money out of the bank on his own, with no oversight.

While he was in charge, Mr. Farnood had total control over what loans were made and what money was moved out of Kabul Bank, Mr. Karzai said.

Mr. Karzai said that Mr. Farnood had been given space at Kabul Bank, where he was supposed to be helping the new management find the bank's missing money.

"The situation of Kabul Bank is extremely serious," said a Western diplomat in Kabul. "What you can observe is that the loans were either to fictive operators who did not exist or they were for investments outside the country."

"Some were loans or personal grants to people linked to one shareholder or another shareholder," the diplomat said.

According to businessmen in Kabul, loans were made to people who were fronts for the real beneficiaries.

"Sometimes they would bring a loan document to someone who was a gardener or a cleaner and just ask them to sign it, and they would pay him 500 Afghanis and the person could not read or write more than his name," said a prominent businessman here with ties to the banking community.

"Then, when the new bank managers go to look for the money, they go to the gardener's house and they look around and they see there is nothing worth \$100, and they have no idea where the money went."

In Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand Province, a Kabul bank branch has been shut down for a week because employees transferred \$1.3 million to Mr. Farnood, who was removed last fall for mismanagement.

A WikiLeaks cable from last February suggested that payments were often delayed so the bank could make money on the overnight interest rates.

In a Feb. 13, 2010, cable, Kabul Bank is described as “the least liquid bank operating in Afghanistan” and its difficulty in raising cash was so great that it took “more than two days to process withdrawals and has delayed paying government employee salaries by two weeks in order to place those funds in overnight accounts to collect interest.”

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



Jan. 27, 2011: U.S. Marines' military vehicles as seen from a medevac helicopter of the U.S. Army's Task Force Shadow 'Dust Off near Marjah in Helmand Province, Southern Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)

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

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

MILITARY NEWS

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THEM HOME: ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The remains of U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Robert Pharris, 48, of Seymour, Mo., Jan. 28, 2011, at Arlington National Cemetery. Pharris died Jan. 5 in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan when insurgents attacked with an IED. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

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/>)

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

**Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies.
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace**

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

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

**It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers**

Honorable Anniversary: February 1, 1960 Sit-Ins Against Segregation Begin



Peace History: Carl Bunin

Four black college students sat down at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, and were refused service because of their race. To protest the

segregation of the eating facilities, they remained and sat-in at the lunch counter until the store closed.

Four students returned the next day, and the same thing happened. Similar protests subsequently took place all over the South and in some northern communities. By September 1961, more than 70,000 students, both white and black, had participated, with many arrested, during sit-ins.

February 1, 1961:

On the first anniversary of the Greensboro sit-in, there were demonstrations all across the south, including a Nashville movie theater desegregation campaign (which sparked similar tactics in 10 other cities). Nine students were arrested at a lunch counter in Rock Hill, South Carolina, and chose to take 30 days hard labor on a road gang. The next week, four other students repeated the sit-in, also chose jail.

Dishonorable Anniversary: February 1, 1968



General Nguyen Ngoc Loan executes Nguyen Van Lem, turning more Americans against the war in Vietnam

Peace History: Carl Bunin

General Nguyen Ngoc Loan executes Nguyen Van Lem a NLF officer.

Saigon police chief Nguyen Ngoc Loan summarily executed Nguyen Van Lem, suspected leader of a Viet Cong assassination platoon, with a pistol shot to the head on the street.

AP photojournalist Eddie Adams's Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph of the incident became one of the most famous, ubiquitous and lasting images of the war in Vietnam, affecting international and American public opinion regarding the war.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Highly Intelligent U.S. Public Rejects Politicians Lying Bullshit: Opposes Cuts In Social Security, Medicare And Education

January 29, 2011 By FRANK RICH, The New York Times [Excerpts]

A CNN poll this month found that just one American in five regards deficit reduction as pressing enough to justify cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

Only one in four would choose balancing the budget if it meant reducing education programs.

Incredible as it sounds, even current government outlays to science, the arts, farmers and antipoverty programs still enjoy 50 percent-plus support.

But only 18 percent of Americans chose the deficit as a top priority for Washington in the most recent NBC/Journal survey and only 14 percent did in the New York Times/CBS News poll.

Job creation was by far the top choice — at 43 percent (Times/CBS) and 34 percent (NBC/Journal).

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.

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

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

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



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

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATIONS

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