

Military Resistance 9E12



Can't Find My Way Home

From: Dennis Serdel
To: Military Resistance
Sent: May 13, 2011
Subject: Can't Find My Way Home by Dennis

Written by Dennis Serdel for Military Resistance

[Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree.]

Can't Find My Way Home

Jenny is waiting for Bobby to come home
they married when he came back from Vietnam
their son is four years old now

he plays with plastic toy soldiers
on the living room floor
Bobby's dinner she made is getting cold
he's probably doing drugs and getting drunk
again with the crowd he hangs with
even though he looked the same
when he came back from Vietnam
they married and had their baby boy
bought a nice little house on the GI Bill
but now she waits all the time
for her Bobby to come home
just like she waited for him
to come home from Vietnam
it seems Bobby can't find his way home
he's somewhere in a jungle
somewhere in a rice paddy
with bullets all around
why did he come back he says
while others did not
so after dinner without him
she takes her boy out in the back yard
where he plays war in a sand box
as she swings on seat
that was made for two
the leaves from the tree
touch the nap of her neck

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Rocket Attack On Green Zone Kills One, Nine Wounded

May 15 (Reuters) & The Associated Press

BAGHDAD - One person was killed and nine others wounded when nine Katyusha rockets landed in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone, where the U.S. embassy and Iraqi government officials's; houses are located.

Police said the mortar rounds and rockets were fired from a scrap material yard in al-Nahda area in the eastern side of Baghdad where 11 other rockets were found.

More Resistance Action

05/13/11 Reuters & May 14 (Reuters) & May 15 (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - Insurgents using silenced weapons opened fire on a traffic police officer and wounded him in Baghdad's northern Shaab district, an Interior Ministry source said. The source said the officer shot back and killed one of the attackers.

BAGHDAD - Insurgents using silenced weapons wounded an intelligence officer in al-Nisour Square in central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - Insurgents using silenced weapons wounded a lieutenant colonel from the Interior Ministry in Baghdad's southern Doura district, an Interior Ministry source said.

A car bomb killed wounded three policemen when it went off in southern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, Kirkuk police operations room said.

A roadside bomb struck a police convoy and seriously wounded Lieutenant-Colonel Najat Hassan in southeastern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

TUZ KHURMATO - A roadside bomb went off near a police patrol and wounded five policemen on Saturday in the town of Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

MOSUL - A roadside bomb exploded and wounded an off-duty policeman south of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Marine From 42 Commando Killed In Loy Mandeh Wadi

15 May 11 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a Royal Marine from 42 Commando Royal Marines was killed in Afghanistan on Sunday 15 May 2011.

The marine was killed by an Improvised Explosive Device while involved in an operation to search a compound in the Loy Mandeh Wadi area of the Nad-e Ali (North) District of Helmand Province.

Canadian Copter Down In Panjwaii



A Canadian helicopter on it's side after it crashed in the Panjwaii District of Afghanistan on May 16, 2011. Four Canadian soldiers were injured, one of them seriously, when a Chinook helicopter crashed on landing under moonlight in a remote part of Panjwaii district in southern Afghanistan early this morning. THE CANADIAN PRESS/ Colin Perkel

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



May 8, 2011: A United States Marine wounded by an IED is carried through a dry river bed to a U.S. Army medevac helicopter as he is evacuated from an area north of Sangin District, in Helmand Province of southern Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)



May 11, 2011: United States Marines rush a wounded colleague, who was shot during an exchange of fire with insurgents, to a waiting medevac helicopter from the US Army's Task Force Lift 'Dust Off', Charlie Company 1-214 Aviation Regiment at a 'hot' landing zone north of Sangin, in Helmand Province of southern Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)

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/)

EXPERIENCE COUNTS:

**WE'VE BEEN MEETING AND GREETING
FOREIGN SOLDIERS FOR ABOUT 2000
YEARS NOW.**

[References on request.]



Taliban fighters at an undisclosed location in southern Afghanistan May 5, 2011
REUTERS/Stringer

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

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

**“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

MILITARY NEWS

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



The remains of Army Sgt. Kevin White at an airport in Jamestown, N.Y. May 11, 2011. White was killed in Kunar province in Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. (AP Photo/David Duprey)

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.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

“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

“The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.”

-- Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"

“The U.S. And Its Allies, So Eager To Defend Democracy In Libya, Are At The Same Time Staunch Sponsors Of Regimes In Bahrain And Yemen That Are Slaughtering Pro-Democracy Protesters”



Apr 24, 2011 By MIKE MARQUSEE, The Hindu [Excerpts]

It's been widely noted that the U.S. and its allies, so eager to defend democracy in Libya, are at the same time staunch sponsors of regimes in Bahrain and Yemen that are slaughtering pro-democracy protesters.

That they were at best indifferent to the millions of civilians who perished in the Congo as a result of wars sponsored by mineral-hungry Western corporations. That they never proposed a no-fly zone over Gaza when Israel killed more than 1,400 Palestinians, the majority of them civilians, in 2008-09.

That their puppet regime in Iraq is at this very moment detaining and torturing citizens for the crime of demanding basic democratic rights. That they continue their oil-lubricated love-in with the most repressive regime in the region, Saudi Arabia.

The inconsistencies and double standards are only surface deep. Underneath, U.S. and British policy is quite consistent. The Western powers do whatever they deem necessary to protect their own interests, which they see as coterminous with the interests of Western corporations.

In some places this means supporting tyrants, in some places opposing them, and in some places simply not caring one way or another.

In the case of Libya, the West has thrown caution aside and jumped into the fray with even less preparation than Iraq.

Here was an opportunity too tempting to pass up: the chance to renew Western presence in the region after a series of setbacks, to redeem the discredited doctrine of liberal interventionism, to insert a friendly government in an oil-producing nation and, not least, to divert the Arab popular movements from a course that was inimical to the West's entire geopolitical strategy.

THE U.S. does not keep military bases in more than 130 countries around the world as some kind of global public service. These are the garrisons of an empire.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

The Zionist State Terrorists Slaughter Unarmed Palestinian Demonstrators All Over Palestine



The body of a demonstrator killed by Israeli soldiers is carried by fellow protesters in the southern Lebanese village of Marun al-Ras. Israeli soldiers killed 10 people and wounded 110 here as thousands of unarmed mainly Palestinian refugees demonstrated along the tense frontier, medical sources said. (AFP/Mahmoud Zayat)

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

May 15, 2011 By ARON HELLER, Associated Press & By Ethan Bronner, The New York Times [Excerpts]

MAJDAL SHAMS, Golan Heights – Israeli troops clashed with Arab protesters Sunday along three hostile borders, including the frontier with Syria, leaving 16 people dead and dozens more wounded in an unprecedented wave of demonstrations marking a Palestinian day of mourning for their defeat at Israel's hands in 1948.

Thousands of Palestinians -- marching from Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank -- confronted Israeli troops to mark the anniversary when Arabs mourn Israel's creation in the unprecedented wave of coordinated protests.

Along Israel's border with Syria, thousands of protesters stormed the fence and hundreds burst through, and crowded into the village of Majdal Shams, waving Palestinian flags.

Troops fired on the crowd, killing four of them. Dozens were wounded.

The protesters who came from the Syrian side were believed to be Palestinians who live in refugee camps in Syria.

By late afternoon, Israeli military officials said about 100 people had been caught and were being sent back to Syria.

It was not known how many remained on the loose.

Sunday's unrest marked the first time the protest tactics that have swept the Arab world in recent months have been directed at Israel.

The unrest came as the Palestinians marked the "nakba," or "catastrophe," the term they use to describe their defeat and displacement in the war at the time of Israel's founding in 1948. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were uprooted, and the dispute over the fate of the refugees and their descendants, now numbering several million, remains a key issue in the Mideast conflict.

Every year in mid-May many Palestinians mark what they call Nakba, but this is the first year that Palestinian refugees in Syria and Lebanon tried to breach the Israeli military border in marches inspired by recent popular protests around the Arab world.

Here too, word about the rallies was spread on social media sites.

"The Palestinians are not less rebellious than other Arab peoples," said Ali Baraka, a Hamas representative in Lebanon.

In the deadliest incident, 10 people were killed when they marched from inside Lebanon toward the border with Israel, according to Lebanese security officials.

The clash with the Lebanese protesters occurred about 25 miles (40 kilometers) to the west. The shooting erupted at the tense border village of Maroun el-Rass, which saw some of the fiercest fighting in the monthlong war Israel fought with Hezbollah in 2006.

Thousands of Palestinian refugees had traveled to the village in buses adorned with posters that said: "We are returning."

Many came from the 12 crowded refugee camps in Lebanon where some 400,000 Palestinian refugees live.

They passed posters that had gone up the past week on highways in Lebanon. "People want to return to Palestine," they read, in a play on the slogan made famous in Egypt and Tunisia, "People want the fall of the regime."

Young Hezbollah supporters wearing yellow hats and carrying walkie-talkies organized the protesters and handed out Palestinian flags.

Though the Lebanese army tried to block them from arriving at the border, some managed to reach it.

Israeli troops shot at hundreds of Palestinians trying to cross, wounding dozens more, according to Lebanese officials.

They placed a Palestinian flag at the fence, and some threw rocks, witnesses said. Israeli soldiers opened fire and at least four were killed and 30 wounded.

In the Gaza Strip, Palestinian medics said one person was killed and 65 others were wounded by Israeli troops shooting into the crowd when demonstrators tried to approach a heavily fortified border crossing into Israel.

The Hamas police stopped buses carrying protesters near the main crossing into Israel, but dozens of demonstrators walked on foot and reached a point that they have not reached for nearly 10 years.

"This is war, we're defending our country," asserted Amjad Abu Taha, a 16-year-old from Bethlehem as he took part along with thousands in the West Bank city of Ramallah near the main military checkpoint to Israel. He held a cigarette in one hand and a rock in the other. Hundreds of Israeli troops using stun guns and tear gas roamed the area.

"Israel may be 63 years old today but its days are numbered," said Abbas Jomaa, 50, who was carrying his 4-year-old son on his shoulders and holding a Palestinian flag. "Sooner or later we will return."

In Jordan, police blocked a group of protesters trying to reach the border with Israel.

MORE:

Zionists Murder Palestinian Kid For Protesting Nakba In Jerusalem



Milad Ayiash 16 years old

May 14, 2011 Jerusalem – PNN –

Palestinian teenager died on Saturday morning after succumbing to wounds he sustained during clashes between local youth and Israeli soldiers that used live rounds to attack Nakba commemoration protests.

On Friday Israeli troops attacked a number of protests organized in several parts of east Jerusalem commemorating the 63 anniversary of the Nakba, the day Israel was created after killing hundreds of Palestinians and expelling 700,000 people from their homes.

Milad Ayiash, 16, was injured during Friday clashes, according to doctors at Makased hospital in Jerusalem the boy was shot in his abdomen and died on Saturday morning when two operations by doctors failed to save his life.

Protests in Jerusalem and a number of other west Bank areas in Friday were called for by a group on facebook calling for May 15, the day of Nakba, to be the start of the third Intifada (uprising).

Palestinian sources reported clashes in Jerusalem's old city, Shofat refugee camp, Damascus gate, and Al Salam neighborhood near the old city.

According to the sources the heaviest clashes took place near Qalndya checkpoint separating the central West Bank city of Ramallah from Jerusalem.

Since the early hours of Friday morning Israel bused more troops into the old city and looked down the old city fearing Nakba commemoration protests. Residents said that soldiers did not allow Palestinian men under the age of 45 to enter the old city.

[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."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Head of International Monetary Fund Arrested For Raping New York City Hotel Cleaning Woman



Strauss-Kahn in March: Getty Images

MAY 14, 2011 By TAMER EL-GHOBASHY, Wall St. Journal

A law enforcement official said Dominique Strauss-Kahn, head of the International Monetary Fund, was taken into police custody after being removed from an airplane at Kennedy Airport.

According to the official, Mr. Strauss-Kahn allegedly forced a cleaning woman onto his bed and sexually assaulted her at around 1 p.m. Saturday inside his room at the Sofitel Hotel near Times Square.

Mr. Strauss-Kahn allegedly allowed the woman to leave then departed for the airport, the official said.

The alleged victim informed co-workers who then alerted authorities, the official said.

Two detectives from the Port Authority Police Department removed Mr. Strauss-Kahn from the first-class section of a Paris-bound Air France flight minutes before the crew closed the door, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said.

"He was cooperative," said the spokesman, John Kelly.

The Port Authority police, which has jurisdiction over the city's airports, was acting at the request of the NYPD, Mr. Kelly said. The Port Authority turned Mr. Strauss-Kahn over to the NYPD after he was taken into custody.

Detectives from the Manhattan Special Victims squad, which handles allegations of sex crimes, are interviewing Mr. Strauss-Kahn.

The arrest of Mr. Strauss-Kahn, 62 years old, comes at a pivotal time for the fund. John Lipsky, Mr. Strauss-Kahn's deputy, said last week that he is resigning in August. Mr Lipsky, the Deputy Managing Director, helped Mr Strauss-Kahn usher the fund through the global financial crisis. He has agreed to stay on as a consultant through November.

Mr. Strauss-Kahn has shepherded the IMF through a period of expanding supervisory heft and power following the global economic crisis. In the past year, the fund has played a central role in the bailouts of ailing euro-zone nations Greece, Ireland and Portugal.

For some time, Mr Strauss-Kahn has been seen as harboring ambitions to the French presidency and was considered a leading contender in France's Socialist Party. He was dispatched to the helm of the IMF in Washington, some French political insiders say, because he was seen as a rival to President Nicholas Sarkozy.

The charges, if true, would strike a tremendous blow to France's current politics.

The Socialist Party is holding primaries this fall, but candidates have been requested to apply between June 28 and July 13.

Mr. Strauss-Kahn's decision regarding his candidacy has been much awaited as polls have constantly shown over the past few months that he would beat Mr. Sarkozy as soon as the first round. His decision was expected as soon as the end of May, a person close to him told Dow Jones Newswires.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“Social Discontent Spreading
Across Europe In Response To
A New Age Of Austerity”**

**“There Is A Sense Of General
Injustice, That The Government
Bailed Out Capitalism And The
Citizens Are Footing The Bill”**

Fallout “Has Extended Well Beyond Ordinary Civil Disobedience”

“I Don’t Support Violence For Violence’s Sake, But Violence Is A Response To The Violence The Government Is Committing Against Society,’ Galanos Said”

May 13 By Anthony Faiola, Washington Post [Excerpts]

Athens — Already struggling to avoid a debt default that could seal Greece’s fate as a financial pariah, this Mediterranean nation is also scrambling to contain another threat — a breakdown in the rule of law [translation: a breakdown in the law of the financial dictatorship of the capitalists, used to keep people down. T]

Thousands have joined an “I Won’t Pay” movement, refusing to cover highway tolls, bus fares, even fees at public hospitals.

To block a landfill project, an entire town south of Athens has risen up against the government, burning earth-moving equipment and destroying part of a main access road.

The protests are an emblem of social discontent spreading across Europe in response to a new age of austerity.

At a time when the United States is just beginning to consider deep spending cuts, countries such as Greece are coping with a fallout that has extended well beyond ordinary civil disobedience.

While militants have been disrupting life in Greece for years, authorities say that anger against the government has now given rise to dozens of new “amateur anarchist” groups, whose tactics include planting of gas canisters in mailboxes and destroying bank ATMs.

Defined narrowly, the movement includes groups of urban guerillas, radical youths and militant unionists. More broadly, it encompasses everything from punk rock to WikiLeaks.

The rolling back of social safety nets in Europe began more than a year ago, as countries from Britain to France to Greece moved to cut social benefits and slash public payrolls, to address mounting public debt.

At least in the short term, the cuts have held back economic growth and job creation, exacerbating the social pain.

And Greece is not the only place in which segments of society are pushing back.

Though unions and political movements have always used tough tactics in Europe, observers are particularly noting a surge in lower-grade militancy among a “lost generation” of young Europeans who have come of age in the aftermath of the global economic crisis.

In Britain, for instance, 10 activists formed the UK Uncut group in a North London pub late last year, spawning a national wave of civil disobedience against spending cuts, bankers’ bonuses and tax evasion by the rich.

During a March protest, they used Twitter and text messages to organize a “flash mob” that saw hundreds occupy and vandalize London’s famous Fortnum & Mason’s food store.

In recent months, other actions have forced at least 100 bank branches across Britain to temporarily close.

“There is a sense of general injustice, that the government bailed out capitalism and the citizens are footing the bill while the capitalist system is running like nothing ever happened,” said Bart Cammaerts, an expert in anarchist movements at the London School of Economics.

“And yet, things have happened. There are more taxes, less services, and anger is emerging from that tension.”

No country is under more pressure to roll back spending than near-bankrupt Greece, a once booming nation now saddled with 35 percent youth unemployment and facing the prospect of years of depressed growth.

[P]ensions have been cut, the retirement age extended and public sector pay slashed.

“In some countries, the rolling back is happening more gradually, but in Greece, with the nation at the edge of bankruptcy, it is happening like sudden death,” said Yannis Stournaras, an economist who negotiated Greece’s entry into the euro back in the late 1990s.

As in many countries in Europe, fascist and far-right parties are strengthening, engaging in an increasing number of attacks against immigrants.

More often, though, angry young Greeks, such as 19-year-old law student Nikolas Ganiaris, are signing up with left-wing youth groups.

After the government raised transit fares during the austerity drive, Ganiaris’s group began jumping aboard public buses, blocking customers from punching their tickets as part of the “I Won’t Pay” campaign.

Organizers of the movement claim 10,000 supporters are now just saying no to transit fares and highway tolls in protest.

The December 2008 killing of a 15-year anarchist by a police officer in the Exarchia neighborhood of Athens sparked days of riots and became the impetus for a series of fresh attacks.

Since then, experts say, the economic crisis has helped the movement thrive, with anarchists positioning themselves as society's new avengers.

Long a den of anarchists, the graffiti-blanketed Exarchia neighborhood is alive anew with dissent.

Nihilist youths are patrolling the local park, preventing police from entering and blocking authorities from building a parking lot on the site.

On one evening at a local cafe, an anarchist group was broadcasting anti-government messages via a clandestine radio station using a laptop and a few young recruits.

For some Greeks, like Nikos Galanos, a 20-year-old chain-smoking in an Exarchia cafe, the anarchist movement has become an outlet for anger.

Last year, during a wave of government cutbacks, Galanos's mother lost her job as a guard at the ancient Acropolis perched above Athens.

His father, also a government worker, saw his salary slashed by 15 percent and must now labor more years before meeting the retirement age, boosted last year to an average age of 63.

Galanos, an electrician, has few job prospects outside the massive black market economy in Greece. But with the nation's economy still contracting, even the off-the-books work he counted on to put himself through technical school has dried up.

Over the past two years, he has become more involved in the Anti-Establishment Movement, which, while it is among Greece's less militant anarchist groups, still wields firebombs during protests. The movement's rallies, which two years ago drew 2,000 to 3,000 young loyalists, now command small armies of 7,000 or more.

"I don't support violence for violence's sake, but violence is a response to the violence the government is committing against society," Galanos said.

He later added, "It is now hard for any of us to see a future here. I feel it's my duty to fight against the system."

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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

**“Syrians Protested In Cities
Across The Country Friday In
Defiance Of The Government’s
Broadest And Harshest Week Of
Crackdowns Yet”**

“‘We Are Now Many And So They Don’t Dare To Come Near Us,’ One Activist In Ain Arab”

“A Crowd Behind Him Could Be Heard Chanting ‘Freedom’ In English, Then In Arabic, Then In Kurdish”

“Antiregime Pressure Also Penetrated The Heart Of Damascus, Apparently The First Instance Of Protests Spreading Beyond Students In Syria’s Thus-Far- Quiet Capital”



Syrians protest Friday in Hama: Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

Activists, meanwhile, both those protesting in Syria and coordinating from abroad, said they felt they were becoming better organized, pointing to printed banners with the theme of this Friday’s protest in several cities as signs of cooperation.

MAY 14, 2011 By NOUR MALAS [Excerpts]

Thousands of Syrians protested in cities across the country Friday in defiance of the government's broadest and harshest week of crackdowns yet, a turnout that surprised activists who are now bracing for what they see as a drawn-out conflict.

Six people were killed by gunfire, activist said, including three in Homs, in spite of an apparent order by President Bashar al-Assad's government to show restraint toward protesters.

The toll on Friday—a traditional day of demonstrations in Syria and in other Mideast countries swept up in protests this year—was lower than that of previous days this week, as Syrian forces have blockaded several cities by tank, shelling throughout the night in some cases and arresting what human-rights groups say are as many as 3,000 people.

At least 45 people have been killed over the past week, various rights groups estimate.

Protesters streamed out of nine towns surrounding Deraa, the southern city where the protest movement against President Assad began eight weeks ago.

Sites of other marches, witnesses and activists said, included Kurdish areas in the northeast and Sunni-majority Banias on the Mediterranean coast.

A scuffle broke out between hundreds of mosque-goers and security forces in a wealthy neighborhood in the heart of Damascus, apparently the first instance of protests spreading beyond students in Syria's thus-far-quiet capital.

"Something huge happened today," said Wissam Tarif, head of the Syria-focused rights group Insan.

"The Syrian people who stepped out onto the street have proven to Assad and his regime: You can terrorize us. You have the tanks, and you have the weapons — go ahead and kill us. ... The wall of fear has been broken in Syria."

Activists said security forces outnumbered protesters in several places. The Syrian regime's broadly powerful military and security apparatus, they say, has helped prevent protests from gaining further momentum in part because security is heavily deployed in cities including Aleppo that haven't widely joined the protest movement.

"For the regime to fall in a dramatic way like it did in Egypt or Tunisia is impossible because of the makeup of Syria's security mechanism, and the way the security forces are set up is in complete loyalty to the regime," said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. "There will either be a real national dialogue, or people will stay on the streets until the regime kneels."

Louay Hussein, one of four opposition activists who met with Mr. Assad's adviser last week in an apparent regime outreach effort, said he hadn't been told of the dialogue initiative. "It is ineffective," he said by telephone from Damascus, saying it is premature to offer talks before granting Syrians freedom to "be able to conduct dialogue amongst each other first and choose who can represent them."

Mr. Hussein said he had been assured by Bouthaina Shaaban, the president's adviser, on the eve of Friday's protests that no shots would be fired. "She told me in a telephone

call that the president has issued decisive orders not to fire, and every member that defies these orders will be held accountable," he said.

Mr. Mahmoud, the information minister, also said army units had begun a gradual withdrawal from Baniyas and completed their withdrawal from Deraa.

Baniyas, where activists say hundreds have gone missing in home raids amid an almost week-long military campaign, was "loaded with army" on Friday, Mr. Tarif said. Some 200 people faced off with 400 security personnel in an attempt to protest, activists said.

In Deraa, a 60-year-old man was among those killed Friday.

"Our situation is very bad," said a resident, reached by telephone there for the first time in a week. "The detentions are continuing, the military is here. We heard gunfire at a checkpoint about half an hour ago," he said late Friday.

In Al Hara, a town near Deraa, activists also reported the killing of a local hospital owner's wife. They said the hospital had been burned by army forces during Deraa's 11-day siege and its owner has been missing since.

Activists said they didn't expect the no-fire order to be upheld, given that Mr. Assad had outlined similar promises earlier in the uprising.

But they said Friday's death toll of six reinforced their resolve to continue to protest.

They suggested the government's use of violence, punctuated by an offer of dialogue, shows increasing weakness.

Last Friday, at least 27 people were killed when security forces opened fire on throngs of protesters as Mr. Assad then scrambled to contain protests growing into new areas, including student-led demonstrations in Damascus and Aleppo.

Since then, the regime has broadened its campaign to stifle dissent, sending tanks and troops into the restive cities of Baniyas and Homs and killing dozens in an apparent replication of the military siege of Deraa.

In all, more than 700 people have been killed while 11,000 are missing or detained since mid-March, rights groups estimate.

"We can say officially that the detentions policy has failed because people are not afraid of going out on the streets," said Obeida Nahas, head of the London-based Syria think-tank Levant Institute, and an opposition activist affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

On Friday, large demonstrations also emerged in Homs and Hama north of Damascus, in the Kurdish areas of Qamishli in the northeast and Ain Arab in northeastern Aleppo—both near the border with Turkey—and across the suburbs of Damascus.

In Bab Amro in Homs, where tank shelling had killed 19 people on Wednesday, activists reported live ammunition fired on protesters.

Videos posted on YouTube show crowds in Homs chanting "Bashar, it's your turn," and, in an appeal to Turkey's prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan: "Erdogan please tell him, all of his people do not like him."

"We are now many and so they don't dare to come near us," one activist in Ain Arab, reached by telephone, said of the security forces deploying around a crowd of what he said was about 2,500 people. A crowd behind him could be heard chanting "freedom" in English, then in Arabic, then in Kurdish.

Antiregime pressure also penetrated the security-sealed heart of Damascus, where hundreds of people praying at the Grand Mosque in Mazzeh, a mid- to upscale neighborhood, started marching out after prayer but were quickly surrounded by security forces and pushed back into the mosque.

"It's a wealthy area, so no one was beaten," according to Insan's Mr. Tarif, who said he spoke to residents of the neighborhood. "They pushed people inside, they negotiated it quiet."

A bloodier incident took place in Qaboun, a district a couple miles north of central Damascus, where three witnesses described two people killed and 10 injured.

Men there were walking out of a mosque when they were attacked by what one resident described as a proregime rally orchestrated by Dunia TV, a private television station owned by Rami Makhlouf, the president's first cousin. Mr. Makhlouf is among the 13 people named this week in European Union sanctions against top Syrian officials it says share responsibility for the violent crackdown.

"About 30 people came out of a Dunia TV bus holding pictures of the president, right as prayer was ending and people were walking out," a person who witnessed the incident said by online telephone.

The proregime protesters attacked people with sticks, before three green Jeep Cherokees pulled up, letting out what this person said were plainclothed officers and anti-terror squad forces carrying machine guns and sniper-guns. Security forces took away the injured and others searched homes in the neighborhood, the witness said.

Syria has seen living standards stagnate, as unemployment in the country of 22 million grew and an extended drought in the northwest forced tens of thousands of Syrians off their land and into destitute migrant encampments surrounding the capital.

Mr. Assad, taking over power from his father in 2000, struggled to balance promises of reform with the hard line that secured his country's stability both internally—with a minority Alawite regime ruling over the Sunni majority and a patchwork of other sects—and with its neighbors. Syria sits at the crossroads of most of the Middle East's geopolitical struggles, maneuvering mainly between its ally, Iran, and the West.

Faced suddenly with an Arab Spring uprising in his strategic corner of the Levant, Mr. Assad at first pushed through reforms quickly, including introducing a new government, ending a decades-old emergency law and giving nationality to thousands of ethnic Kurds, a particularly restive anti-regime constituency.

He swung back to repression with the April 25 military deployment in Deraa, with violence against protesters broadening and escalating since.

"They think they can finish this and then grant whatever they want of reform, but this is not convincing for the people on the ground," said Mr. Nahas of the Levant Institute. "The government is not realizing yet how grave the problem is politically."

He called the government's outreach to Mr. Hussein, Mr. Dalila and others—some of the best-known antiregime figures still inside Syria and out of jail—"a dialogue of hostages" and said Mr. Assad's regime faced a serious problem after decades of stifling dissent and organized opposition.

"They now want to talk to people, but if they insist on that, they'll end up having to talk to 20 million people, because they're not allowing anyone to represent them," he said.

Activists, meanwhile, both those protesting in Syria and coordinating from abroad, said they felt they were becoming better organized, pointing to printed banners with the theme of this Friday's protest in several cities as signs of cooperation.

Dubbed by activists "Friday of the Free Women," the day's demonstrations were dedicated to women who have been killed or detained, and the many more awaiting the release of detained husbands, brothers and sons.

MORE:

**“Essentially, The U.S. And Israel
Are Walking A Tightrope”**

**“They Want Syria’s Regional Role
Weakened, But They Don’t Want
The Collapse Of Bashar Al-Assad”**

**“The United States Prefers A
Predictable Stable Dictatorship --
Even If It Is An Occasional Obstacle
To U.S. Hegemony”**

**“It Fears A Successful Syrian Revolution
That It Has No Control Over”**



May 9, 2011, By Yusef Khalil and Lee Sustar, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE U.S. has imposed sanctions on three Syrian leaders, but excluded Bashar al-Assad. The new sanctions will have little impact in any case, since existing ones ban almost all economic contact between the two countries. Germany, France, and Britain are working on getting the European Union to enforce targeted sanctions as well, which could include asset freezes and travel bans.

Essentially, the U.S. and Israel are walking a tightrope.

They want Syria's regional role weakened, but they don't want the collapse of Bashar Al-Assad.

The Syrian regime has guaranteed a de facto peace with Israel along the Golan Heights since 1973.

Syria, although formally opposed to U.S. interests in the region, has been susceptible to U.S. pressure (through Saudi Arabian financial support) and is a cornerstone of the Middle East power structure.

In 1991, it supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq and was rewarded with a green light for its own continued occupation of Lebanon, which remained under Syrian tutelage until massive protests ousted them in 2005.

The United States prefers a predictable stable dictatorship -- even if it is an occasional obstacle to U.S. hegemony.

It fears a successful Syrian revolution that it has no control over.

Such a revolution would provide new momentum to the unfolding Arab revolutions and seriously challenge U.S. client regimes in the area.

Many international and regional powers have interests in the direction of Syria's events. They will inevitably attempt to insert themselves into the process.

That was--and is--also true of most major progressive struggles anywhere in the world.

Unfortunately, some on the left see the historic U.S. hostility to Syria as a reason to back the regime and endorse its savage crackdown.

In order to win the rest of the Syrian population to its side, the opposition needs to be very clear in its stand against sectarianism.

For this, the people of Syria do not need to wait for a UN Security Council resolution.

They have written their own resolutions on banners across the country: "We want Freedom," "The Syrian people are one" and "Arabs, Kurds, Assyrians, Syriacs, we are all Syrian."

**First Blood:
Wednesday, Major Ali Mohsen's
Opposition Forces Fight A "Four
Hour Battle" In The Capital With A
Republican Guard Force Headed By
The Dictators' Son:
"An Estimated Half A Million
Antigovernment Protesters" In Yemen
Rally Against The Tyrant Saleh**

MAY 14, 2011 By TOM FINN, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

SAN'A, Yemen—President Ali Abdullah Saleh rejected calls to step down Friday as hundreds of thousands of protesters, backed by army defectors, demonstrated in the Arab world's poorest country and security forces killed at least three people.

Mr. Saleh's defiance came as Qatar announced it was pulling out of efforts to mediate a solution to the crisis, blaming Yemen's president for intransigence. Qatar is one of the members of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, which is trying to persuade Mr. Saleh to honor a prior deal to step down.

The council is fearful that Yemen's growing instability poses risks to the region and could embolden the powerful Yemeni affiliate of al Qaeda.

Addressing thousands of flag-waving supporters at a Friday prayer sermon in central San'a, Mr. Saleh described protesters as "saboteurs" and advised the political opposition who are seeking his ouster to use the ballot box and "stop playing with fire."

"We will defend ourselves with all our forces and by all means," he said.

Minutes after his speech, security forces fired on a throng of protesters carrying out a burial ceremony in Ibb, a city south of San'a.

A local pediatrician said three people were killed and 29 wounded in the clash, bringing the reported overall protest death toll in Yemen to more than 145 people, says Amnesty International.

Two miles north of where Mr. Saleh was addressing his supporters, an estimated half a million antigovernment protesters at San'a University staged their biggest pro-democracy rally since unrest broke out three months ago, filling a four-mile stretch of road with tents, banners and makeshift restaurants.

Raising the specter of a broader conflict, they protested under the watchful eyes of soldiers and tanks sent by Maj. Gen. Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, a former Saleh confidant who has since joined the opposition.

On Wednesday, Major Ali Mohsen's forces clashed in San'a with the elite Republican Guard, a force headed by the president's son. The four-hour gun battle left at least ten protesters and one soldier dead.

The prolonged conflict is threatening to worsen Yemen's already crippled economy. Tribesmen blockading Yemen's oil- and gas-producing Marib province are creating a fuel crisis that is costing the country \$3 million a day in blocked exports.

Fuel shortages mean dry parts of the country have not received water shipments and even the capital San'a is grappling with power cuts that last up to 10 hours a day.

Food prices have skyrocketed and cooking gas quadrupled in a country where some 40% of the population of 23 million people live on less than \$2 a day and a third face chronic hunger.

Oil and Minerals Minister Amir al-Aydarous warned on Thursday that Yemen was on the verge of an "economic disaster."

"If the problem persists, the government will be unable to meet the minimum needs of the citizens. The situation will pose a catastrophe beyond imagination," Mr. Al-Aydarous said.

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