

Military Resistance 9E27



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Ontario Soldier Remembered

05/25/2011 Liset Márquez, Staff Writer; The Sun

ONTARIO - Pfc. Ramon Mora Jr. was a natural leader who carried with him a sense of self-discipline.

That's what Carole Hodnick remembers the most about the 19-year-old soldier who was killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

Mora, an Ontario resident, was one of two soldiers who died Sunday, the military reported late Tuesday.

"He had a charisma about him, and the students just fell in line with him," said Hodnick, Mora's former English teacher.

A bomb exploded near Mora, killing him and Sgt. 1st Class Clifford E. Beattie, 37, of Medical Lake, Wash., Department of Defense officials said.

The men were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kan., according to the military.

A family member of Mora's did not want to comment on Wednesday.

Army officials at Fort Riley, where Mora was stationed, could not provide further details.

But on Wednesday afternoon, Hodnick, an English teacher at Valley View Continuation High School, had high praise for her former student.

"He was a very serious student, and education was very important to him," she said.

Hodnick, who also was Mora's adviser, learned of her former student's death on Tuesday night from another former student. For the year that Mora was at Valley View, Hodnick said she got to see him mature into a strong young man.

"He had a very strong core and was very disciplined," she said.

The two never really spoke about his decision to join the military, but Hodnick said that was something Mora felt like he wanted to do.

"He knew before I met him that we was going to go enlist in the Army," she said. "He was very proud of himself."

In the classroom, Mora was dependable and serious about his classwork. And when the students participated in outdoor activities, Mora always helped his fellow classmates and gave them positive feedback, Hodnick said.

"He had an easy laugh," she recalled.

When Mayor Paul Leon first learned of Mora's death, he immediately inquired with city staff about getting in contact with the fallen soldier's family. Leon said he is hoping he can help the family, whether it be through prayer or emotional support. "I think we need to be there for the family who has paid the ultimate price of sacrifice for our freedom," he said.

The news of war casualties often doesn't "become real" until it hits close to home, Leon said. "There's nothing like the shock of losing a loved one in the line of duty," he said. "I want to be there to assist the family."

In memorial, Gov. Jerry Brown ordered that flags be flown at half-staff over the State Capitol on Wednesday. Mora's family will receive a letter of condolence from the governor.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Czech Soldier Killed By IED, Two More Wounded In Wardak

5.31.11 Ministry of Defence, Czech Republic

Incident in Afghanistan - a soldier's death

On Tuesday 31 May 2011 shortly after nine pm Afghan time, were moving in operating performance the second task Unit Training and Advisory Team SALARY OMLT at the village in the Afghan province of Wardak. There was injury of three OMLT an Afghan interpreter and two of them - Sergeant RV (1980) and an Afghan interpreter have succumbed to their injuries.

IVECO vehicle in which the four people ran an improvised explosive device.

Result of the explosion suffered one soldier Sergeant RH (1980), fatal injuries, another soldier, Staff Sergeant IV (1968) and an Afghan interpreter was badly wounded and one soldier, Lieutenant Colonel MC (1967) slightly.

After initial treatment at the incident site were all transported to the nearest military base Carwile, wounds were then airlifted by helicopter for further treatment on the basis Shank in Logar province. From here, Staff Sergeant I.V. after stabilization transported by helicopter to a military hospital in Kabul, where he is subjected to further treatment. Afghan interpreter died of his injuries base Shank.

Families of soldiers have been informed. Chief of General Staff Army General Vlastimil Picek gave the order to secure the transport of wounded soldiers and the remains of deceased soldiers to the Czech Republic at the earliest possible date.

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

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

Rocket Misses Korean Base

05-31-2011 Korean Times

Another rocket fell outside a base for South Korea's aid workers and troops in Afghanistan late Monday, but no casualties were reported, Seoul's foreign ministry said.

The rocket landed south of the base in the city of Charika in northern Afghanistan at 11:27 p.m. (local time), the ministry said, in the ninth attack on the base this year. It is the fourth attack since terrorist leader Osama bin Laden was killed by U.S. troops in Pakistan on May 1.

“There were no casualties or damage to facilities,” said a ministry official on the condition of anonymity. “It appears that the rocket was fired from behind the base, not from the village nearby, and we will work with the Afghan police to determine the details as soon as day breaks there.

No casualties were reported in any of the previous attacks, but they prompted the South Korean government to reassess security risks for the hundreds of South Koreans working there to reconstruct the region. South Korea has stationed some 90 aid workers and police officers as well as about 270 troops to protect them.

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

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

War Is A Racket



Portland Rose Festival, Portland, Oregon 2004. Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: May 30, 2011 10:42 PM
Subject: War Is A Racket

War Is A Racket

“I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during

that time I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in.

I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927, I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested. Looking back on it, I might have given Al Capone a few hints.

The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents”

-- General Smedley Butler
United States Marine Corps
Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient

When I think of what I saw during the Vietnam War, every facet of American Big Business was there 24 hours of the day. I was indeed a part of this gangster gravy train that went unmolested for the Wall Street boys to collect unfathomable revenues.

I certainly helped in the raping of three countries in Southeast Asia. I saw every facet of war racketeering while I was in Vietnam. I was part of that muscle man mentality that inflicted massive firepower onto the people of Vietnam.

I saw American soldiers die for American corporate greed. I saw Vietnamese die for American corporate greed. I saw American soldiers shoot heroin, and then shoot themselves in the head.

Yes, I was a high class cog in the American machinery that brought utter destruction to the Vietnamese people, and helped purify American Capitalist interests around the world.

In looking back now, it was a horrifying racket that put millions of people in millions of graves.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic

Vietnam 1970-71
May 30, 2011

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

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

U.S. Senator Calls For Military Defeat Of Invading U.S. Army: Supporting Resistance, Corwin Says “If I Were A Mexican I Would Tell You, ‘Have You Not Room In Your Own Country To Bury Your Dead Men? If You Come Into Mine We Will Greet You With Bloody Hands, And Welcome You To Hospitable Graves”

[Corwin, along with many others, understood the war on Mexico was initiated by slaveholders controlling the U.S. government to grab more territory for slavery. Therefore, he, along with many others, made very clear which side he was on, as in this speech. The biographical information below is based on data from Wikipedia. He and this speech deserve to be well remembered.

[Thanks to Fabian Bouthillette, Iraq Veterans Against The War & Military Resistance Organization, for copying from a very old book. T]

By THOMAS CORWIN, of Ohio. Speech opposing the U.S. war on Mexico delivered February 11, 1847.

Corwin served in the U.S. Senate from March 4, 1845 to July 20, 1850. He was again elected to the House of Representatives in 1858, and returned to that body as a Republican and served from March 4, 1859 to March 12, 1861.

He resigned only a few days into the 37th Congress after being appointed by the newly inaugurated President Abraham Lincoln to become Minister to Mexico, where he served until 1864.

Corwin, well-regarded among the Mexican public for his opposition to the Mexican War while in the Senate, helped keep relations with the Mexicans friendly throughout the course of the Civil War, despite Confederate efforts to sway their allegiances.

Born 1794. Died 1865.

What is the territory, Mr. President, which you propose to wrest from Mexico?

It is consecrated to the heart of the Mexican by many a well-fought battle, with his old Castilian master.

His Bunker Hills, and Saratogas, and Yorktowns are there. The Mexican can say, "There I bled for liberty! and shall I surrender that consecrated home of my affections to the Anglo-Saxon invaders?"

What do they want with it? They have Texas already. They have possessed themselves of the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande.

What else do they want? To what shall I point my children as memorials, of that independence which I bequeath to them, when those battlefields shall have passed from my possession?

Sir, had one come and demanded Bunker Hill of the people of Massachusetts, had England's lion ever showed himself there, is there a man over thirteen, and under ninety, who would not have been ready to meet him — is there a river on this continent that would not have run red with blood — is there a field but would have been piled high with the unburied bones of slaughtered Americans before these consecrated battlefields of liberty should have been wrested from us?

But this same American goes into a sister republic, and says to poor, weak Mexico, "Give up your territory — you are unworthy to possess it — I have got one-half already — all I ask you is to give up the other!"

England might as well, in the circumstances I have described, have come and demanded of us "Give up the Atlantic slope — give up this trifling territory from the Allegheny mountains to the sea; it is only from Maine to St. Mary's — only about one-third of your Republic, and the least interesting portion of it."

What would be the response?

They would say, "We must give this up to John Bull." Why?

"He wants room."

The Senator from Michigan says he must have this. Why, my worthy Christian brother, on what principle of justice?

"I want room!"

Sir, look at this pretense of want of room.

With twenty millions of people, you have about one thousand millions of acres of land, inviting settlement by every conceivable argument — bringing them down to a quarter of a dollar an acre, and allowing every man to squat where he pleases. But the Senator from Michigan says we will be two hundred millions in a few years, and we want room.

If I were a Mexican I would tell you, "Have you not room in your own country to bury your dead men? If you come into mine we will greet you with bloody hands, and welcome you to hospitable graves."

Why, says the chairman of this Committee of Foreign Relations, it is the most reasonable thing in the world! We ought to have the Bay of San Francisco. Why? Because it is the best harbor on the Pacific!

It has been my fortune, Mr. President, to have practiced a good deal in criminal courts in the course of my life, but I never yet heard a thief, arraigned for stealing a horse, plead that it was the best horse that he could find in the country!

We want California. What for? "Why," says the Senator from Michigan, "we will have it;" and the Senator from South Carolina, with a very mistaken view, I think, of policy, says, "You can't keep our people from going there." I don't desire to prevent them. Let them go and seek their happiness in whatever country or clime it pleases them.

All I ask of them is, not to require this Government to protect them with that banner consecrated to war waged for principles — eternal, enduring truth.

Sir, it is not meet that our old flag should throw its protecting folds over expeditions for lucre or for land.

But you still say, you want room for your people. This has been the plea of every robber-chief from Nimrod to the present hour.

I dare say, when Tamerlane descended from his throne built of seventy thousand human skulls, and marched his ferocious battalions to further slaughter, I dare say he said, "I want room." Bajazet was another gentleman of kindred tastes and wants with us Anglo-Saxons — he "wanted room."

Alexander, too, the mighty “Macedonian madman,” when he wandered with his Greeks to the plains of India, and fought a bloody battle on the very ground where recently England and the Sikhs engaged in strife for “room,” was, no doubt, in quest of some California there. Many a Monterey had he to storm to get “room.”

Sir, he made quite as much of that sort of history as you ever will.

Mr. President, do you remember the last chapter in that history? It is soon read. Oh! I wish we could but understand its moral. Ammon’s son (so was Alexander named), after all his victories, died drunk in Babylon!

The vast empire he conquered to “get room” became the prey of the generals he had trained; it was disparted, torn to pieces, and so ended. Sir, there is a very significant appendix; it is this: the descendants of the Greeks — of Alexander’s Greeks — are now governed by a descendant of Attila!

Mr. President, while we are fighting for room, let us ponder deeply this appendix. I was somewhat amazed, the other day, to hear the Senator from Michigan declare that Europe had quite forgotten us till these battles waked them up. I suppose the Senator feels grateful to the President for “waking up” Europe.

Does the President, who is, I hope, read in civic as well as military lore, remember the saying of one who had pondered upon history long — long, too, upon man, his nature and true destiny? Montesquieu did not think highly of this way of “waking up.” “Happy,” says he, “is that nation whose annals are tiresome.”

The Senator from Michigan has a different view of this.

He thinks that a nation is not distinguished until it is distinguished in war; he fears that the slumbering faculties of Europe have not been able to ascertain that there are twenty millions of Anglo-Saxons here, making railroads and canals, and speeding all the arts of peace to the utmost accomplishment of the most refined civilization. They do not know it!

And what is the wonderful expedient which this democratic method of making history would adopt in order to make us known? Storming cities, desolating peaceful, happy homes, shooting men — aye, sir, such is war — and shooting women, too!

Sir, I have read, in some account of your battle of Monterery, of a lovely Mexican girl, who, with the benevolence of an angel in her bosom, and the robust courage of a hero in her heart, was busily engaged, during the bloody conflict, amid the crash of falling houses, the groans of the dying, and the wild shriek of battle, in carrying water to slake the burning thirst of the wounded of either host.

While bending over a wounded American soldier, a cannon ball struck her and blew her to atoms!

Sir, I do not charge my brave, generous-hearted countrymen who fought that fight with this.

No, no! We who send them — we who know that scenes like this, which might send tears of sorrow “down Pluto’s iron cheek,” are the invariable, inevitable attendants on war— we are accountable for this.

And this — *this* is the way we are to be made known to Europe.

This — this is to be the undying renown of free, republican America!

“She has stormed a city — killed many of its inhabitants of both sexes — she has room!”

So it will read.

Sir, if this were our only history, then may God of his mercy grant that its volume may speedily come to a close.

Why is it, sir, that we of the United States, a people of yesterday, compared with the older nations of the world, should be waging war for territory — for “room?” Look at your country, extending from the Allegheny mountains to the Pacific ocean, capable itself of sustaining, in comfort, a larger population than will be in the whole Union for one hundred years to come. Over this vast expanse of territory, your population is now so sparse that I believe we provided, at the last session, a regiment of mounted men to guard the mail, from the frontier of Missouri to the mouth of the Columbia; and yet you persist in the ridiculous assertion, “I want room.” One would imagine, from the frequent reiteration of the complaint, that you had a bursting, teeming population, whose energy was paralyzed, whose enterprise was crushed, for want of space.

Why should we be so weak or wicked as to offer this idle apology for ravaging a neighboring republic? It will impose on no one at home or abroad.

Do we not know, Mr. President, that it is a law never to be repealed, that falsehood shall be short-lived?

Was it not ordained of old that truth only shall abide forever?

Whatever we may say to-day, or whatever we may write in our books, the stern tribunal of history will review it all, detect falsehood, and bring us to judgment before that posterity which shall bless or curse us, as we may act *now*, wisely or otherwise:

We may hide in the grave (which awaits us all), in vain; we may hope there, like the foolish bird that hides its head in the sand, in the vain belief that its body is not seen, yet even there, this preposterous excuse of want of “room,” shall be laid bare, and the quick-coming future will decide that it was a hypocritical pretense, under which we sought to conceal the avarice, which prompted us to covet and to seize by force that which was not ours.

Mr. President, this uneasy desire to augment our territory has depraved the moral sense, and blunted the otherwise keen sagacity of our people.

What has been the fate of all nations who have acted upon the idea that they must advance?

Our young orators cherish this notion with a fervid, but fatally mistaken zeal. They call it by the mysterious name of "destiny."
"Our destiny," they say, is "onward," and hence they argue, with ready sophistry, the propriety of seizing upon any territory and any people that may lie in the way of our "fated" advance.

Recently, these progressives have grown classical; some assiduous student of antiquities has helped them to a patron saint. They have wandered back into the desolated Pantheon, and there, among the Polytheistic relics of that "pale mother of dead empires," they have found a god whom these Romans, centuries gone by, baptized "Terminus."

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

THE STUPID REPORT

May 28, 2011 From the Internet [Excerpt]

"Present-day Americans, few of them directly affected by events in Iraq or Afghanistan, find war tolerable. They accept it."

Comment: T

As every poll has shown for years, the majority of Americans are opposed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The writer, a well known public figure, has to deny that reality or admit that the Imperial government is a dictatorship of money imposed by a ruling class for itself through the political parties and politicians they buy.

He would have to admit that the Imperial government, through both political parties, keeps the wars and occupations going to preserve the Empire, and what the American public wants will not determine what the Imperial government does without a massive movement from below by citizens and soldiers against the government.

The upper class are this mans' milieu.

So he blinds himself to the truth about how things really are, and certainly won't call for the overthrow of his friends and associates.

Instead, he turns on, shits on, and sneers at the people.

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/)

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**The Ruined Village Palestinians
Will Never Forget:
“‘We Still Dream Of Coming Back’
Says Odeh. ‘I’m Sure The Time
Will Come To Return To Lifta, To
My Home’”**

The Ruins Of Lifta Are The Final Remains Of The Palestinian Hamlets That Fringed Jerusalem Until 1948; Now Plans To Bulldoze Them Are Causing Outrage



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

29 May 2011 Harriet Sherwood, Guardian News and Media Limited

In the soft golden light of a late spring evening, as yellow flowers are beginning to bloom on giant cacti, Yacoub Odeh climbs up through knee-high grass to the ruin that was his childhood home.

For a man in his eighth decade, he is surprisingly nimble as he navigates ancient stones that litter the ground. But behind his light step is the weight of painful memories of a lost youth and a fading history.

“Here is my house,” he says, sitting on the remains of a stone wall in whose crevices wild flowers and saplings cling. “Now only the corners remain. Here is the taboun (outdoor oven) where my mother used to bake bread. The smell!”

With distant eyes, he describes an idyllic childhood in a place he calls paradise, where families helped one another and children played freely amid almond and fig trees and on the rocks around the village’s natural spring.

The place is Lifta, an Arab village on the north-western fringes of Jerusalem, for centuries a prosperous, bustling community built around agriculture, traditional embroidery, trade and mutual support.

But since 1948, shortly before the state of Israel was declared, it has been deserted. The population, according to the Palestinian narrative of that momentous year, was expelled by advancing Jewish soldiers; the people abandoned their homes, say the Israeli history books.

Lifta was one of hundreds of Arab villages taken over by the embryonic Jewish state.

But it is the only one not to have been subsequently covered in the concrete and tarmac of Israeli towns and roads, or planted over with trees and shrubs to create forests, parks and picnic areas, or transformed into Israeli artists' colonies. Some argue that Israel set out to erase any vestige of Palestinian roots in the new country.

Now, 63 years on, the ruins of Lifta are finally facing the threat of bulldozers and concrete mixers.

A long-term proposal to sell the state-owned land for the construction of luxury housing units and a boutique hotel on the site is awaiting the authorities' final approval. It has caused a furore. Opponents of the plan include those who believe Lifta should be preserved as a monument to history; those who want to retain its charming environs as a rambling spot; and those – Odeh among them – who insist that one day they will return and reclaim their homes.

For many Palestinians, Lifta is a symbol of the Nakba, literally the “catastrophe”, of 1948 in which 700,000 people were dispossessed. It embodies their longing for their land, and their bitterness at their continued refugee status.

It is, wrote Palestinian author Ghada Karmi in a letter to the Los Angeles Times, “a physical memory of injustice and survival”.

The development plan was approved by the Jerusalem municipality five years ago, but earlier this year the Israel Lands Administration – the state agency that took ownership of Lifta's land under the Israeli law governing property deemed to be abandoned – began marketing the plot to private developers.

A legal challenge stayed the tender process, but a decision is due any day on whether to proceed.

The proposal is for 212 luxury housing units, expected to be advertised to wealthy expatriate Jews, a chic hotel and shops, and a museum. It suggests that some of the ruins be restored. But Lifta as a sanctuary and de facto heritage site will be lost.

Shmuel Groag, one of the architects of the original proposal, has since reversed his position and has backed the campaign to preserve the ruined village. “I have changed my mind about conservation in general, and about Lifta in particular,” he says. The site, he argues, should be “frozen”.

Others have appealed to Unesco to declare Lifta a world heritage site, saying that work must begin to halt further decay and the theft of valuable stones from the ruins.

Alongside the ramblers, drug-users and illicit lovers frequent the ruins. Crowds of ultra-orthodox Jewish teenage boys, stripped to their underwear, swim in the spring, and light barbecues on the rocks. Graffiti scars many of the fragmented walls.

For Odeh, this is distressing. "Why should they have free access to my home when I am stopped by security guards and questioned about my right to be here," he asks. "When I see these people coming here, I feel sorrow and anger."

The remains of the village are bounded by roads, along which traffic rumbles to and from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem's suburbs and settlements. On the ridge above Lifta, concrete mixers and diggers are at work on a high-speed rail link to Tel Aviv; deep in the valley below is a guarded complex, said to be the site of the Israeli government's underground nuclear bunker.

Out of sight of Lifta's ruins, but built on its former farmlands are the Knesset (Israel's parliament), the supreme court, the Hadassah hospital, the Hebrew University and the city's central bus station.

In 1948, the village owned 1,200 hectares but they have long gone, along with olive, fig, apricot, almond, plum, pomegranate and citrus trees plus the fields of spinach, cauliflower, peas and beans that gave Lifta its prosperity.

"Life was rich," recalls Odeh. "The spring watered the village gardens. We had more olives than we needed so we sold them and the oil in Jerusalem."

As we walk amid the ruins, Odeh points out the old landmarks. "Here was the mosque. This was the sheriff's house. Here was the olive press.

"There is the house where I was born, and where my father was born. Over there is the cemetery. This was the sahn (courtyard) where people shared happy occasions and sorrowful occasions. Here I breathed my first breath. The first water I drank, I drank here." It is painful, he says.

He points out what is remaining of the beautiful architecture of the houses, with arched windows, columns and graceful balconies.

Over a door, a lintel is inscribed with Arabic writing. Enter in safety, it says; the owner of this house is God. "The people of the village cut the stones and built their houses themselves. They were proud of that. They helped each other build and harvest the olives. The village lived as a family, one family."

But in 1948, when Odeh was eight years old, the bucolic life of Lifta came to an end. At the gateway to Jerusalem, Lifta was strategically important to the advancing Jewish troops.

A series of violent skirmishes caused fear and panic, he recalls. There was firing and attacks from both sides. And then came the day his family left.

“My mother was preparing a fire to warm the house. I was with my little brother. The gangs began to shoot in the direction of Lifta. My brother was shouting: ‘Mama! Mama! They’re shooting us.’ My mother took us inside and put us in a corner. The people of Lifta were crying to one another.”

Odeh’s father, then 33, carried the youngest of the eight children, and the family crossed the valley and climbed up to the main road to Jerusalem.

His mother took the key to the house but they left everything they owned.

“We had nothing but the clothes we were wearing. We had everything – and in one moment we had nothing. We became beggars.”

As the villagers left, Jewish soldiers blew holes in the roofs of the houses to make them uninhabitable.

Odeh’s father stayed in Lifta for a few more days. After boarding a truck heading away from the village, the rest of the family slept under fig trees.

They spent the following two years in Ramallah before moving to Jerusalem’s Old City. His father, a broken man, developed stomach problems and died at the age of 35. His mother suffered from asthma from the time she left Lifta until her death. Many of the 3,000 residents of Lifta scattered across the West Bank and beyond to Jordan, but a core still live in East Jerusalem within a few kilometres of their former homes.

Odeh himself later joined the armed resistance against Israel and spent 17 years in prison.

Now, in his twilight years, he is as impassioned as ever about his home. “We will never forget nor forgive the destruction of our village. Lifta is in our memory and in our history.

“It is our fathers’ and grandfathers’ graveyard. The spring, the trees, the land – we will never forget it.”

He is unshakeable in his belief in the Palestinians’ right to return to their homes – something that cannot be countenanced by Israel because it would threaten the state’s Jewish majority and hence its Jewish nature.

“We still dream of coming back,” says Odeh. “I’m sure the time will come to return to Lifta, to my home.”

There can be no lasting peace until the refugee issue is resolved, he adds. But he knows time may be running out. “Lifta is an eyewitness to history, to what happened in the Nakba. If we can’t come back, then leave the village to this history.”

[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



5-20-11 THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. UNIVERSAL UCLICK.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Armed Resistance To The Dictatorship Spreading: “Street Fighting Raged Across The Yemeni Capital Tuesday”

May 31, 2011 By Mohamed Sudam, Reuters [Excerpts]

SANAA: Street fighting raged across the Yemeni capital Tuesday after a tenuous truce broke down between tribal groups and forces loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, edging the impoverished Arab country closer to civil war.

U.N. human rights chief Navi Pillay said his office had received as yet not fully confirmed reports that more than 50 people had been killed by Yemeni government forces since Sunday.

"The ceasefire agreement has ended," a government official said Tuesday, adding that tribal groups had gained control of a government building.

Overnight battles in the capital brought an end to the truce brokered at the weekend. More than 115 people were killed last week in urban battles with machine guns, mortars and rocket propelled grenades in the bloodiest fighting since anti-government protests began months ago.

In Sanaa, several explosions were heard over the staccato of automatic gun fire in the district of Hasaba, the scene of nearly a week of fighting between Saleh's forces and tribesmen.

The fighting was too heavy for officials to bring bodies off the street or provide casualty figures.

"Last night's clashes were the fiercest so far," Mohammed al-Quraiti, a Hasaba resident, told Reuters.

The fighting last week between members of the powerful Hashed tribe led by Sadeq al-Ahmar and Saleh's security forces widened to areas outside the capital where tribesmen squared off against Saleh's elite Republican Guard.

Saleh's forces fired on hundreds of protesters in Taiz, about 200 km (120 miles) south of the capital, who were trying to gather at the focal point of rallies dubbed "Freedom Square", witnesses and a Reuters cameraman in the city said.

At least three people have been killed and scores wounded in the latest fighting, medical sources said.

U.N. human rights chief Navi Pillay said dozens may have been killed since Sunday when troops using bulldozers and assault rifles began a violent crackdown on protesters.

"The UN human rights office has received reports, which remain to be fully verified, that more than 50 people have been killed since Sunday in Taiz by Yemeni Army, Republican Guards and other government-affiliated elements," Pillay said in an internet posting.

More protests are planned for later Tuesday across the country.

Further south, government troops and locals have been trying to force Islamist militants from the coastal city of Zinjibar after they seized the town at the weekend.

Residents said bodies were strewn on the streets, the national bank building was burned and explosions rocked the city from which most people have fled.

"Explosions lit the sky," a resident said.

Yemen's military said in an internet posting that 21 soldiers have been killed and dozens wounded in fighting over the last three days.

Separately, residents said another five soldiers were killed when their military convoy was ambushed by Islamist militants en route to Zinjibar.

The rest of the convoy then pulled back.

Armed Residents Put Up Resistance To Assad Regime: “Army Vehicles, Including Armored Personnel Carriers, Were Burnt” The Army “Is Not Able To Enter The Two Towns”

May 30 By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press [Excerpts]

BEIRUT – Syrian troops shelled a town in the center of the country Monday, and for the first time in the two-month-old revolt against the president, residents armed with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades put up fierce resistance, activists said. State media said four soldiers were killed.

Two activists in the area said residents of two towns under attack in central Homs province since Sunday had taken up arms against troops and members of the security forces and that there were new casualties, though they did not know how many.

“The army is facing armed resistance and is not able to enter the two towns,” said a Homs resident who has wide connections in the province. “The army is still outside the towns and I was told that army vehicles, including armored personnel carriers, were burnt.”

The other activist said the army “is being subjected to stiff resistance” by residents using automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades in the two towns, Tabliseh and Rastan. He said many people are armed in Syria and over the past years weapons have been smuggled into the country from Lebanon and Iraq.

Syria has barred foreign journalists from entering the country and prevented coverage of the revolt, making it nearly impossible to independently verify accounts coming out of the country.

Monday’s accounts by the two activists, however, were the first credible reports of serious resistance by people who have taken up arms. It is not clear how widespread such resistance might be elsewhere in the country, but the government has claimed that more than 150 soldiers and policemen have been killed since the unrest began.

The Local Coordination Committees in Syria said military forces hit Tabliseh with artillery early Monday and that snipers were deployed on roofs of mosques.

Syrian troops, backed by tanks, have been conducting operations in Tabliseh and the nearby town of Rastan Teir Maaleh since Sunday.

Syria's state-run news agency said four soldiers were killed and 14 wounded in Tabliseh.

Rights activist Mustafa Osso said troops have entered several towns in the restive Homs province and detained hundreds of people since Sunday. He added that since Sunday night, Rastan and Tabliseh have been subjected to heavy machine gun fire.

Residents of the Homs towns have held anti-regime protests since the start of the uprising. Those protests have increased recently, with crowds taking to the streets day and night to call for the fall of Assad's regime, an activist said.

Osso said there were several demonstrations in different parts of Syria overnight, adding that there were no reports of security forces opening fire.

In recent days, many Assad opponents have been holding protests and candlelight vigils at times of the night when the security presence has thinned out.

“Cut Several Times With A Scalpel In What He Believes Was A Syrian Military Hospital, He Says, He Was Stitched Up Without Anesthetic, Then Hit On The Wounds”

“A Doctor At A Different Military Hospital, In Damascus, Said He Had Witnessed Similar Scenes”

“This Doctor Said His Hospital Has An ‘Alternative ER’ Where People Are Tortured, With Methods That Include Inflicting Cuts”

“We have had enough of oppression,” he said. “We felt like we lived in a small prison, but we needed something to move us. After Tunisia and Egypt, we saw we could do something.”

He added: “My wife and children don’t want me to, but as soon as I get better, I will go out again.”

MAY 28, 2011 Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

HOMS, Syria—A Syrian shopworker limped to a chair, removed his shirt and revealed three bright red scars: Cut several times with a scalpel in what he believes was a Syrian military hospital, he says, he was stitched up without anesthetic, then hit on the wounds.

Recounting what he believes was at least 10 days spent in the hands of Syria’s military intelligence service, the man said he was beaten and shocked, kept naked and blindfolded in a room packed with detainees and excrement, and listened as his 17-year-old cousin was burned with a poker. He was asked to kneel in prayer to a portrait of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

The 32-year-old father of two provides one of a new flood of accounts of torture, reported by activists and rights organizations and detainees, that have emerged amid the country’s ten-week uprising against Mr. Assad.

Interviews with a Syrian woman and two men who said they were detained—as well as accounts from activists, human-rights organizations and others—suggest security forces are arresting not only protesters but others, including men ages 15 to 40, professionals, women and older Syrians.

Detainees are held in several cities, these people say, in schools, soccer stadiums, security-force facilities and military hospitals, and subjected to various forms of physical and psychological abuse.

Allegations of torture were a flashpoint in Syria’s uprising and have remained at the core of the battle over its future. Activists and rights workers say the widening use is meant to spread terror not only among protesters, but also those who may consider joining them.

But the practice instead appears to have enraged some Syrians into mobilizing against the government.

“I went out to protest...because of corruption,” said one 22-year-old from a rural village. “But then I saw the shots being fired and heard from friends what happens in detention, and I started to shout for the toppling of the regime.”

Any torture would signal a weakness in the Assad government, said David Lesch, a Syria expert at Trinity University in San Antonio. He suggested that Mr. Assad’s security forces — which as a pillar of the regime has enjoyed a free hand in recent years — may have essentially moved beyond his control.

“The leeway granted to the security forces will come back to haunt them,” Mr. Lesch said. “The falling barrier of fear, and the new technology, doesn’t allow the regime to control the situation.”

Syria’s government has blamed this spring’s uprising on armed gangs, radical Islamists and foreign agents. In late April, the country’s official news agency, SANA, characterized a U.N. Human Rights Council special session on Syria as using “fabricated motives” to detract attention from the Palestinian cause.

Syria’s uprising appears to have been fueled in part by the alleged torture of a group of schoolchildren from Deraa, who were accused of writing graffiti critical of the ruling Baath party.

When released, the children, who were as young as 10, bore burn marks from cigarettes and had fingernails torn out, said human-rights activists and a Deraa resident who said he saw some of them after their release.

The allegations spread, enraging Syrians including the shopworker in Homs, Syria’s third-largest city. “It was so violent to pull nails from children’s hands,” the man said. “We have had enough of oppression.”

He said his own detention began after he left an antiregime protest in a Homs neighborhood on April 17. He, his brother and two cousins got into a taxi, he said. They identified the driver by his accent as an Alawite, a member of the same religious minority as Mr. Assad and the majority of top government and security-service officials.

The driver took them to what the man said was an Alawite gang, who he said beat them, stuffed a rifle butt in his mouth and fired shots close to him.

The four were then taken to the Homs military hospital, he said, where they were held five or six days. They spent the first three or so days, he said, naked and blindfolded with what he believed was medical tape or plaster.

“There were around 15 of us in a room and three beds,” he said. They were given no food or water and denied access to a toilet. From a gap in his blindfold, the man said, he saw a bag of saline solution that he opened with his teeth and shared around.

Every 10 minutes, he said, people he believed were security agents, nurses or doctors came in and beat them. He said he passed out at times from pain. It was here, he said, that he was slit with a scalpel three times on his back and again on his leg.

It wasn’t possible to locate the relatives to corroborate the account. However, two civilian doctors who accompanied the man to the home in Homs where he was interviewed last week say his partially healed wounds were consistent with his description. Rough skin on his palms match his account of his hands being tied with rope behind his back.

A doctor at a different military hospital, in Damascus, said he had witnessed similar scenes.

This doctor said his hospital has an “alternative ER” where people are tortured, with methods that include inflicting cuts and giving patients morphine for several days and then withdrawing it.

Doctors at the Damascus facility were pushed by security officers to take part in torture, this person said, adding he hoped that publicizing the practice would discourage it.

The four Homs protesters were moved to what they believed was a military-intelligence facility for an additional five or six days, and put in a three-by-six-foot cell with nine or 10 others.

They were taken out, he said, to be interrogated—at which time he was beaten, suspended by his hands and poked with electric batons—about who was backing the protests.

They were accused of working for Syrian foes including former Lebanese prime minister Saad al-Hariri and Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the man said, echoing accounts of other detainees.

Some detainees were asked to pray to a picture of the president, he said, with those who did gaining their release. “I refused,” he said. “I pray only to God.”

He was eventually moved to a police station, made to affix his thumbprint to a statement he couldn’t read because he was blindfolded, and sent to a central prison for three days. A military judge released him and some other detainees.

The man said he isn’t done protesting.

“We have had enough of oppression,” he said. “We felt like we lived in a small prison, but we needed something to move us. After Tunisia and Egypt, we saw we could do something.”

He added: “My wife and children don’t want me to, but as soon as I get better, I will go out again.”

**“I Used To Receive Food From
Your Organization. I Don’t
Anymore”**

**“I Am Ex-Homeless And Fully
Disabled”**

**“I Have Gone Hungry Because Of
Your Group’s Choice To Withhold
Your Food”**

**“Because Your Organization Began
Implementing A Policy Requiring Photo
Identification, I Cannot Get Food From
Your Organization Anymore”**

From: Mike H
To: [Various]
Subject: [NOLA_C3_Discussion] FW: Your policy regarding ID cards
Date: May 11, 2011

From: C B
Subject: FW: Your policy regarding ID cards
To: [Various]
Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2011, 4:33 PM

I sent this to United Churches of Algiers - in regard to ID policy

From: J
To: unitedchurches.org@netzero.com
Subject: Your policy regarding ID cards
Date: 11 May 2011

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

Attention: Board of directors
P.O. Box 742260
United Churches of Algiers
New Orleans, La 70174

To United Churches of Algiers;

I used to receive food from your organization.

I don't anymore.

I was turned away (a few months ago- I've been ill and unable to follow up until now).

I am ex-homeless and fully disabled.

That food was important to me.

I have gone hungry because of your group's choice to withhold your food from me. –

During bad months (when my electric and gas is higher), your food often meant the difference between my having three full meals a day or just one or two.

Because your organization began implementing a policy requiring photo identification, I cannot get food from your organization anymore.

It is not as if I chose to throw away my photo ID. You see, my wallet was stolen months ago, and because of that your organization chooses not to help me.

I am not alone in this situation of not being able to receive food from you.

I personally know of at least 6 homeless people without ID living along the banks of the Mississippi here in Algiers, 4 of whom used to receive food from your organization and now cannot get it.

(I think that the 2 others just haven't bothered to try as word gets around in the homeless community and it is known you won't help them. Others live there on the river bank and in the old train lot but I don't know their situation. They may have ID or they may not get food from you guys: I haven't talked to them- yet.)

I am fairly sure that they are not the only ones.

And I know of 2 different housed people who have lost their ID recently. (One will be getting his driver's license replaced soon so he will only have missed 2 months of food, but the other one is in the same boat as I am.)

We are not able to replace our ID easily. And in my case your organization's requirements for ID is the ONLY reason for me to try to spend money I don't have to replace what was stolen. That money could be better spent for me: To keep my electric on. To pay for medical expenses that not covered by my Medicaid. To purchase basic cleaning supplies, soap, personal hygiene supplies. To purchase poison against the cockroaches and mice. To pay for my phone bill.]

When we (3 of the homeless and I) were turned away, we were not told that your organization has been known to help get ID!

I just found out from speaking to one of your board members!

I am writing to you in the hopes you will change your policies.

We (the others in this situation and I) are asking that United Churches of Algiers change it's policy back to one that does not require identification in order to get food.

However if United churches of Algiers chooses to ignore this letter and my plea for help, I feel that I should inform your group that I will protest that decision, arrange for articles in the news, and I will appeal in your local churches directly to your parishioners.

I am providing you here with a study that was done by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty [http://www.nhchc.org/2008conference/workshops/32docs/Photo_ID_Barriers_for_the_Homeless.pdf] that explains some of the reasons why homeless people (and in my case ex-homeless) find it hard to keep their ID cards and why, once those cards are lost or stolen, it is hard for us to get new photo ID cards.

Since 9/11, new restrictive ID laws make it almost impossible for many homeless people to acquire or reacquire an ID.

It was hard before but now the requirements are far stricter; they are virtually impossible.

It's bad enough that people can't get medical treatment without identification cards, many shelters will not allow people access to a place to sleep without those cards, and now your group wants to withhold food.

I know your group is not alone in withholding services to those without ID but I hope to persuade as many service organizations in the city as I can to allow access to services in regard to basic human needs.

Federal law is clear that a photo ID is not needed to receive food stamps, yet food stamps are often denied anyway (more than 30% of the time).

Now your organization withholds food too!

I find it shameful.

Ironically I had intended to write a letter asking you to change your policy this before my wallet was stolen, back when I could get food from you and often did. But now I'm writing it for myself in addition to other poor and homeless people who are affected and going hungry.

There are alternative ways to confirm identity then just photo ID. For example, you can verify identity through a series of questions.

When someone lacks any identity documentation, the National Consumer Law Center and others have proposed the idea of "logical verification" as one model for verifying identity in the banking and consumer context.

Logical verification is a system that uses information that a bank already has about someone from a credit report or some other database to verify identity.

To illustrate, consumers attempting to open a bank account may be asked to name the bank at which they have a car loan or to name the city where they last lived.

Logical verification in that instance protects against identity theft because the bank or other institution asks about personal information that is not readily available, and yet allows the client to use the banking system without requiring excessive documentation.

Service providers could use something similar if there is such a concern about identity.

Please, please reconsider this policy!

It is hurting me, and it is hurting my friends, and frankly, it also harms your organization! It puts you in a bad light and it shows that you have hardened your hearts- something that no group that truly wants to help others should ever do.

sincerely
Jamie B L
New Orleans
La 70114

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.



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