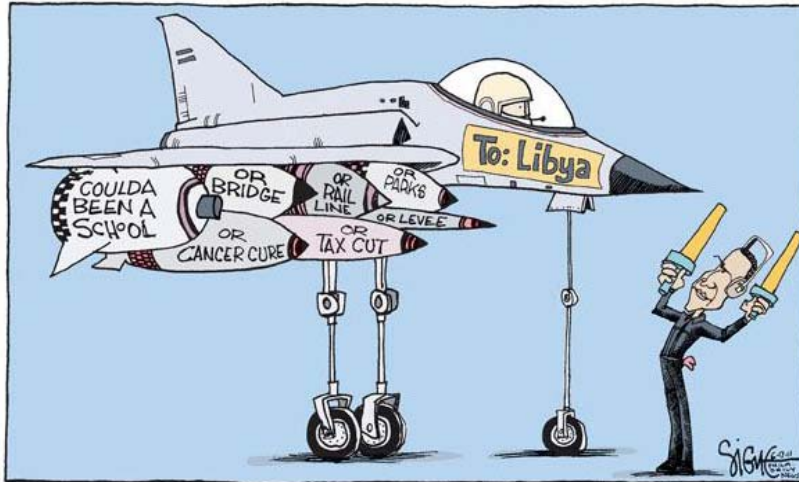


Military Resistance 9F13



Accused Sit In Jail As Military Courts Refuse Act On Appeals:

“Gunnery Sgt. Brian W. Foster Served Nearly A Decade In Leavenworth For A Crime He Didn’t Commit”

“Other Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen And Marines Have Likewise Languished In Appellate Limbo”

The Defense Department Office Of Inspector General Noted Last December “Consistent Failures In Leadership, Supervision And Oversight”

June 9, 2011 By Michael Doyle, McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Brian W. Foster served nearly a decade in Leavenworth for a crime he didn't commit.

Foster is now free and serving his country once more.

The military appeals system that failed him, meanwhile, is still trying to right itself.

"It's a terrible system," Foster said. "The judges and attorneys who had the opportunity to stand up and say 'this isn't right,' they didn't do that."

The court that finally freed Foster in 2009 called him a victim of "judicial negligence" and "intolerable" errors.

The nine-year delay between conviction and appeal was "unacceptable," the U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals acknowledged.

While Foster's experiences were extreme, they were not entirely unique. Other soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have likewise languished in appellate limbo.

A McClatchy review of thousands of pages of court and military documents reveals persistent delays that have long frustrated repeated reform efforts. These appellate delays can interfere with the ability of veterans to find jobs, secure benefits and, sometimes, regain their freedom.

The delays happen at every stage. Records can get lost. Simple tasks, like trial transcriptions, can lag.

Attorneys get distracted or are sent off to a war zone. Some judges have been indifferent or out of their depth.

"Serious post-trial processing problems persisted for at least the last two decades," the Defense Department Office of Inspector General noted last December, citing "consistent failures in leadership, supervision and oversight at all organizational levels."

And when the seemingly inevitable post-trial delays do recur, a McClatchy review shows, there's no guarantee judges will do anything about it.

But the McClatchy review also finds that the long-troubled military appeals system shows signs of getting better. Court backlogs are shrinking. New software tracks cases more efficiently. Supervision has improved. The Navy, which with the Marine Corps handles a majority of all courts-martial, has a new judicial oversight council and chief judge.

Backsliding would be easy since budgets are tight, attorneys are stretched thin and the memory of courtroom catastrophes, like Brian Foster's, fade over time.

In theory, post-trial delays can spur judges to offer relief, which can range from lower sentences to upgrades of dishonorable or bad conduct discharges to something less serious. In practice, this rarely happens.

“What merits relief and what doesn’t, doesn’t always make sense to me,” said Michelle McCluer, the executive director of the National Institute of Military Justice.

Consider:

Navy Machinist’s Mate Third Class Jacob N. Lavoy was convicted of smuggling immigrants in March 2006. It took 1,601 days for his appeal to reach the appellate court docket. Judges called the delay unreasonable. It didn’t matter. In March, he was denied relief, which can be a reduced sentence or other compensation to make up for the delay.

Marine Lance Cpl. Robin A. Stagner was convicted of aggravated assault in July 2006. It took 1,459 days for his paperwork to reach the appellate court docket. Judges called the delay unreasonable. It didn’t matter. In February, he was denied relief.

Marine Corps Cpl. Marshall L. Magincalda Jr., of Manteca, Calif., was convicted of conspiracy to murder an Iraqi civilian in August 2007. He was acquitted of murder. It took 857 days for superior officers to complete a formal review. Judges called the delay unreasonable. It didn’t matter. Last August, he was denied relief.

“He’s a little upset over things, which is understandable,” said Magincalda’s mother, Wendy Magincalda, of Fair Oaks, Calif.

Like clockwork, such post-trial delays have periodically infuriated the nation’s highest military appeals court, now called the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

In 1997, the court said “we continue to be troubled” by post-trial delays. Three years later, the court insisted “this attitude has to change.” Three years later, judges declared “we reject any suggestion that continued delay...should be tolerated.” Three years later, noting that delays had become “the norm,” the court spoke emphatically.

“Unreasonable delays that adversely impact an appellant’s due process rights will no longer be tolerated,” the court stated in May 2006.

The last straw came that month in a case involving rape allegations against Marine Corps Cpl. Javier A. Moreno Jr. Moreno waited four years, seven months and 14 days for the U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals to decide his appeal.

“He served years in prison before getting a chance to challenge his conviction,” Moreno’s attorney, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Brian L. Mizer said. “It was a pretty glaring error.”

During the long delay, Mizer said, Navy investigators destroyed the evidence used against Moreno and thereby undermined his defense in the November 2007 retrial. The second trial also ended in a conviction, meaning Moreno must still register as a sex offender.

“It wasn’t fair,” Mizer said.

Still, the Moreno decision put the military appellate system on notice.

Deadlines were serious. The supervising officer, who is technically called the convening authority, has 120 days after the trial to approve the verdict and sentence. The initial appellate courts would finish their decisions within 18 months of getting an appeal.

If the government slacked off, defendants would get relief. The pivotal question, though, isn’t simply whether there’s an unreasonable delay, but whether judges think a delay merits action. Usually, judges don’t.

A McClatchy review of U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces cases decided since Moreno’s identified at least 24 dealing with excessive post-trial delay. In 19 cases, judges denied relief even for unreasonable delay.

A McClatchy review of lower-level appellate courts serving the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard identified at least 45 decisions dealing with post-trial appellate delays since May 2006. These cases didn’t receive a full review by the higher court.

In 34 of the 45 cases, the lower-level appellate courts said the defendants would receive no relief even for unreasonable delay. The military considers this a sign of success, as relatively few delays are deemed so outrageous that they require relief.

Skeptics fear it’s evidence that foot-dragging is still countenanced.

“Post-trial delays have certainly gotten a lot more high-level attention, but it doesn’t seem as if we have gotten rid of all the issues,” noted McCluer, of the National Institute of Military Justice.

Senior Airman Alfredo Preciado, for instance, was convicted of indecent acts in September 2004. At one point, prosecutors took 793 days to return the case to the U.S. Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals.

The delay was “definitely outrageous and cannot be tolerated,” the Air Force appellate court concluded in 2008.

Nonetheless, judges tolerated it. Citing his crime, among other reasons, they denied Preciado relief.

Manpower shortages contribute to delays. An independent review committee concluded in 2010 that the Navy needed 950 active-duty judge advocates. There are currently about 811, posing what the committee called an “unacceptable legal risk.”

Moreover, judges have sometimes faltered.

Appointment to the U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals was “not viewed as an appointment based on expertise in military justice, litigation expertise, and judicial temperament,” the Navy noted in a 2009 assessment. Instead, the Washington-based court sometimes became a pre-retirement transition or a lifestyle choice.

“This detailing process did not produce a bench of highly qualified judges,” the Navy’s 2009 study noted.

It helps that fewer courts-martial are taking place, decongesting the appeals pipeline. In Fiscal 2002, the military conducted 8,100 courts-martial. By 2009, this fell to 5,841.

But for all the improvements, the Brian Foster debacle reminds everyone of what can go wrong.

Everything moved slowly after Foster’s 1999 conviction for spousal rape. It took a year for Foster’s commanding officer to sign off on the court martial. Another 291 days passed before authorities placed Foster’s appeal on the docket. The case bounced from judge to judge. Attorneys kept asking for time extensions.

Foster’s appeal languished until he was finally exonerated in 2009. The Pentagon, stung by the judicial negligence, then undertook the studies and reforms whose consequences are still unfolding.

“Change sometimes comes about from something like this,” Foster said. “All this might bring about a change that helps the military.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Soldier With Local Ties Killed In Iraq On 27th Birthday

June 9, 2011 New Hampshire Union Leader

A former Butler County resident is one of five American soldiers who were killed in a Monday rocket attack in central Iraq.

On Tuesday, the Air Force listed Pfc. Michael B. Cook Jr. as one of several soldiers whose bodies were to arrive at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

Cook, who lived in Liberty Twp. from July 2003 to June 2010, was killed on his 27th birthday. He had been stationed in Iraq since November, and his wife, Samantha, is in Fort Riley, Kan. They have two children, Hailee, 7, and Michael B. Cook III, 3.

A 2003 graduate of Salem High School in New Hampshire, Cook’s father and mother — Michael B. and Patti Cook — live in Salem, as do his siblings, Lucas and Kimberly Cook.

The rocket attack was the deadliest attack on U.S. troops in a year, according to the Los Angeles Times wire service. The five had been serving as advisers for Iraqi national police at a base in eastern Baghdad.

“There was just this certain spark about him,” said David Conte, who was in Cook’s wedding party in 2004. “You couldn’t quite put a finger on it. It’s hitting me pretty hard right now.”

“Mike left behind a lot,” said Susan Bahrakis, the wife of a cousin of Cook’s father. “He was a very devoted father and a loving brother and he loved his parents so much.”

Cook enlisted in the Army about a year ago, said Bahrakis, who said the young family lived in New Hampshire and Ohio before moving to Kansas.

Resistance Action: Bomb Hits French Embassy Convoy In Baghdad



A damaged armored SUV belonging to the French Embassy is towed away by Iraqi security forces following a roadside blast in Baghdad, Iraq, June 20, 2011. A roadside bomb exploded Monday morning next to a French Embassy convoy traveling through downtown Baghdad. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

June 18 (Reuters) & June 20 (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - Seven people were wounded on Monday when a French embassy convoy was hit by a make-shift bomb in Baghdad in the second attack on the mission’s vehicles in a month, an embassy official and local police said.

Iraqi security sources said seven people were wounded in the attack, but an embassy spokesman said no French diplomatic or security personnel were hurt though one of the convoy’s vehicles was badly damaged. **[A miracle? Or a lie? See photo above.]**

KIRKUK - Insurgents in a speeding car shot dead a government-backed Sahwa militia member in southern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

BAQUBA - A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded three policemen when it went off in central Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) northeast of Baghdad.

BAGHDAD - Armed men opened fire on a policeman and seriously wounded him in Baghdad's central Karrada district, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - Armed men using silenced weapons killed an Iraqi army colonel in Palestine Street in northeastern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAQUBA - Insurgents raided the house of a local council leader and killed him late on Sunday near Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) northeast of Baghdad, police said.

BAGHDAD - Insurgents using silenced weapons shot dead a policeman at a checkpoint in the Amil district of southern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - A parked car bomb went off, wounding two policemen in the Shaab district of northern Baghdad, a security source said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb went off and wounded a policeman in the Mansour district of west-central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Saginaw Soldier Killed In Kandahar



June 20, 2011: Army Pfc. Brian J. Backus of Saginaw County's Saginaw Township died in Afghanistan's Kandahar province when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire. (AP Photo/U.S. Defense Department)

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

June 20, 2011 AP

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

Wainwright Soldier Killed By IED In Kandahar; Two Wounded

Jun 16, 2011 Army Times

An Alaska-based soldier was killed Wednesday in Afghanistan, according to the Defense Department.

Pvt. Ryan J. Larson, 19, of Friendship, Wis., died in Kandahar province of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with an IED. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, out of Fort Wainwright.

According to The Associated Press, two other soldiers were wounded in the blast.

French Soldier Killed in Kapisa

18 juin 2011 Zone Militaire

The soldier of the 1st Regiment of Chasseurs Paratrooper who was fatally injured during Operation Endurance in Kapisa (Afghanistan), this June 18, is the first class paratrooper Florian Morillon.

Born October 7, 1989 in Grenoble, the young man decides to commit to five years in the first RCP Pamiers in June 2008.

After his initial training period, he was assigned to the 1st company of combat as a light infantry grenadier. Described as “strong and robust” and of an “excellent spirit”, he was raised to distinction 1st class in January 2009.

In three years of service, first class paratrooper Morillon was deployed in Gabon, from January to June 2009 to temporarily strengthen the 6th Marine Infantry Battalion (BIMA) and the Central African Republic (Operation Boali, from March to May 2010).

He arrived in Afghanistan last May, his regiment being the backbone of the battle group Raptor.

Single, the first class paratrooper Morillon was awarded the Medal with Overseas clasp “Central African Republic” and the bronze medal of National Defence, clip “airborne”.

Granby Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Remembered, Mourned By Family



June 15, 2011 By SCOT ALLYN, Register Citizen

NORTH GRANBY — As Janice Hogan prepared for the ordeal of holding a memorial for her fallen son, she recalled a happy boy who always wanted to be in the Army.

U.S. Army Specialist Richard C. “Richie” Emmons III, 22, of North Granby, formerly of Woodstown, New Jersey, died Tuesday, May 31 in Afghanistan from injuries sustained in an enemy attack.

A memorial will be held in his honor Monday, June 20 at Granby Memorial High School, 315 Salmon Brook Street, Granby, from 4 to 7:30 p.m.

Richard was named for his father, who died when Richard was only 10 years old, according to Hogan.

“We all called him Richie, ever since he was a little boy,” she said. “Richie was always the kid who was the peacekeeper. When two others were fighting, Richie protected the little kid.”

Richie’s grandmother, Carol Tighe, of Pedricktown, New Jersey, said he spent a lot of time on the 280-acre vegetable farm she runs with her husband Ralph.

“He went hunting from an early age, and he also went fishing with his father in the Delaware River,” said Tighe. “One time he caught a really big fish, and we kept it in the freezer so we could get it mounted. It was a striper, about 30 or 40 pounds, and after it was mounted he had it in his bedroom.”

Tighe said her grandson was a cute little boy with a glint of mischief in his eye.

“When he was in the third grade, he got in trouble in class, and was sent to the principal,” Tighe said. “But he was so cute she let him stay in her office and work on the computer. He got sent there three or four more times before she realized he was misbehaving so he could see her.”

Tighe also recalled a frightening afternoon at the Salem County Fair, when Richie was about 3 years old.

“I realized we lost him and I panicked,” she said. “Then one of my friends found him. They found him where the pigs were displayed, and he was in the pig pen with the pigs. He was a fun kid to have around, and when he got to be a teenager, he still liked to have fun.”

Janice Hogan said her son had a beautiful soul.

“He was kind and sweet, and his smile was contagious,” she said. “He’d come into a room, and leave it a better place. He always worked hard for what he did.”

As an illustration of his hard work, she mentioned Richie playing baseball his first year at Granby Memorial High School, but getting cut the second year, and working out to get on the wrestling team for two years. After graduating from Granby Memorial High School in 2006, he went to Penn Technical College. After that he earned an electrical degree at Porter College and did landscaping around Granby, Hogan said.

“When he was 20, he came home one day and said ‘I did it. I signed up.’” she said. “He always wanted to be in the Army. And when he was in the Army, he thrived.”

Richie went to Fort Gordon, Georgia for training to join the Signal Corps, where he operated and fixed radio equipment, Hogan said.

“Then he was assigned to Fort Polk, Louisiana, for training in the heat to prepare for the heat of Afghanistan,” she said. “They had to run outside in 110-degree heat, fully dressed — all the soldiers did. They called it combat readiness.”

She said he was proud to be in the Army, and proud to be assigned to Afghanistan.

“But he didn’t want to worry his mother, so he didn’t tell me much,” she said.

Richie was a sometimes chubby little boy, according to his grandmother.

“But he grew into a wonderful physical specimen of a man,” she said, about six-feet-two inches or six-feet-three inches. “I loved Richie with all my heart. He hugged me and never teased me.”

When he was thinking of re-enlisting and making a career in the Army, he sent private Facebook messages to Tighe to ask her opinion, she said.

“I told him it was an honorable profession,” she said. “He was a good soldier.”

Richard Emmons was buried in Woodstown, New Jersey June 11, after a funeral with full military honors.

Sally Rider, a friend of the family, is coordinating the June 20 memorial in Granby.

The memorial will include a reception line from 4 to 6 p.m., followed by a memorial service from 6 to 7:15 p.m. Dignitaries from the State of Connecticut and the U.S. military will speak, Rider said.

In addition, there will be comments from family, friends and teachers. Rev. Denny P. Moon, of South Congregational Church, in Granby, will speak, and Miss Connecticut, Brittany Decker, will sing the National Anthem. U.S. military personnel will post and retire the colors, and remembrance videos of Richie Emmons will be shown.

Two German Soldiers Wounded, Two Vehicles Damaged In Kunduz

June 20, 2011 PakTribune

KUNDUZ: An attacker blew up his explosives-laden car next to a German military convoy in northern Afghanistan on Sunday, killing three Afghan civilians, officials and witnesses said.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack. The bomber detonated his vehicle shortly before 10am local time on a busy road on the edge of Kunduz city, near the airport, the Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement.

A reporter at the scene saw at least one overturned armoured vehicle and what appeared to be a civilian car that was mangled in the blast.

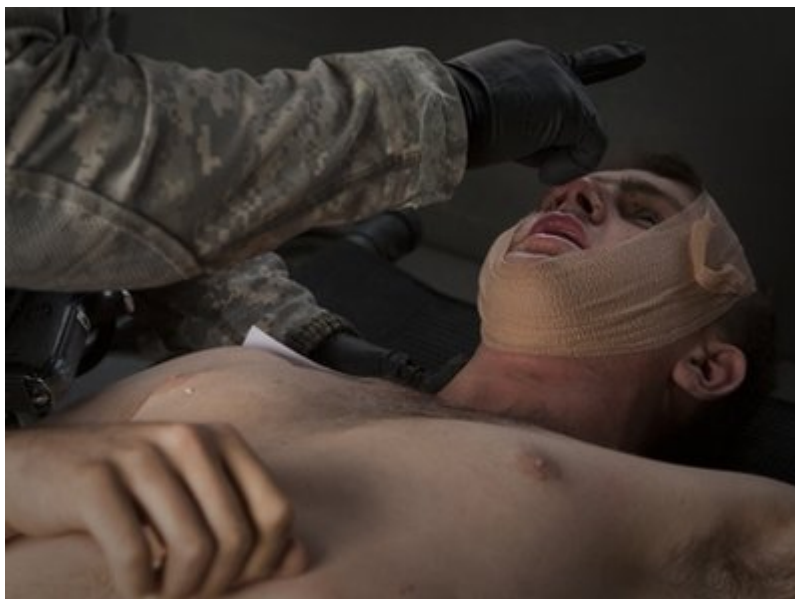
Germany’s military said two German soldiers were lightly wounded and treated at a nearby base. Two vehicles were damaged, according to a German military spokesman, who declined to be named in line with department policy.

The spokesman said the military could not immediately confirm whether the attack was a suicide assault or a roadside bomb.

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; ALL HOME, NOW



United States Marines carry injured U.S. Marine to a waiting medevac helicopter from the U.S. Army's 1-214 Aviation Regiment after he got shot in the foot outside Sangin, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, June 10, 2011. (AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)



US Army flight medic Sgt. Jose Rivera checks the reflexes of a wounded Marines on a medevac helicopter from the US Army's 214 Aviation Regiment, outside Sangin, Helmand Province, Afghanistan June 12, 2011. (AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)



A U.S. soldier of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division based in Fort Wainwright, Alaska, gives the thumbs-up to members of his unit as he is evacuated after being injured by a roadside bomb in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, June 17, 2011. Williams was transported to the military hospital at Kandahar Airfield for treatment. REUTERS/U.S. Navy Lt. j.g. Haraz N. Ghanbari/Handout

MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The remains of Spc. Adam S. Hamilton May 31, 2011 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Hamilton, 22, of Kent, Ohio, died May 28, 2011 in Haji Ruf, Afghanistan of wounds from an improvised explosive device. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

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

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

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

Athenians Teach A New Lesson In (Workers) Democracy: June 15 — The Battle Of Syntagma Square:

**“The Event Was A Spectacular
Success For The Workers, As The
Square Filled With 50-100,000
Protestors And Uncounted More
Lined Up On All The Avenues And
Side Streets”**

**“We Do Not Owe, We Do Not Sell, And
We Do Not Pay! Cancellation Of The
Debt, This Debt Is Not Ours!”**

Just as defeat disoriented the rulers, victory made the workers decisive.

At the Popular Assembly on Thursday, the Assembly's Economic Commission put forward their answer to the key question — what, other than the defeat of the new austerity plan, did the protestors want, what was their alternative?

The answer, adopted overwhelmingly by the Assembly as a whole, was clear. “We do not owe, we do not sell, and we do not pay! Cancellation of the Debt, this debt is not ours!”

Jun 18, 2011 By Eric Lerner, International Luxemburgist Forum

The Greek working class has won a victory in the past three days not just for themselves but for all the world's workers.

In the latest step forward in the mass strike wave that began last December in Tunisia, 50-100,000 workers—young and old, employed, students, and unemployed—turned back on Wednesday, June 15, a police attempt to end the occupation of Syntagma Square, leading the Greek government to collapse into parliamentary paralysis.

This has, for now, defeated the latest austerity plan of mass layoffs and privatizations. While not yet a final victory, this was the first time in the current period (outside of tiny Iceland) that mass protests in a parliamentary democracy have turned back austerity attacks.

Equally important, on Thursday the Popular Assembly that has been meeting every night in the Square adopted a sweeping set of economic demands that form the core of an alternative to austerity: cancellation of the debt, nationalization of all banks, no privatization, taxation of the rich and capital, popular democratic control over the economy and production. Here, now democratically adopted in open mass meeting, is a clear call that not only can rally Greeks, but can mobilize masses in every part of the world.

Cairo To Madrid To Athens

The occupation of Syntagma (Constitution) Square in front of the Hellenic parliament building began May 25, inspired in part by the occupations of squares in Spain begun ten days earlier, which in turn were inspired by the occupation of Tahrir Square and the other occupations of the Egyptian Revolution.

Greeks were enraged by the austerity measures imposed last year that had already sent unemployment soaring to 16%, and now the government, pressured by the European Union and the IMF, was proposing a second huge round of austerity, with layoffs of more than 100,000 state workers and the sale of major state-owned companies.

As in Spain, the occupiers turned their rage against all the parliamentary parties, who all sought to steal for the banks every penny they wanted.

Initially, the protests were loosely organized. Nationalist and outright fascists tried to exploit them, forming a loud, Greek-flag-waving contingent near Parliament, on the upper end of the square.

But rapidly broad masses of leftist youth, some from Marxist groups, but most not, organized the Popular Assembly in the lower part of the square, individually confronted rightists who were harassing immigrants and isolated the nationalists increasingly into one corner.

Occupations and popular assemblies rapidly sprang up in nearly all the other Greek cities.

On Sunday, June 5, gigantic demonstrations, called by the popular assemblies, reinforced the occupations, with the crowd in Athens estimated as high as 500,000—a

tenth of the population. Attacks by the police with tear gas and truncheons left one demonstrator critically injured.

June 15—The Battle Of Syntagma Square

With the occupation continuing and growing and with the government about to introduce the new austerity plan to Parliament, the major trade union confederations, under tremendous pressure from their base, called for a one-day General Strike on June 15 and marches that would converge on the occupations.

There had been 10 previous general strikes but now this one was not just a one-day blow off of steam, but instead fed directly into the open-ended occupations.

It is the open-ended nature of the occupations, together with their democratic organization that makes them dangerous to the government and to the ruling class.

The Popular Assembly had called for a blockade of the Parliamentary building to prevent the parliamentary representatives from getting in. Predictably, the police thwarted such well-publicized plans by getting the politicians in early and counter-blockading a single passageway.

Nonetheless, the event was a spectacular success for the workers, as the square filled with 50-100,000 protestors and uncounted more lined up on all the avenues and side streets around the square.

By 3:00 PM, the square was a festive scene of peacefully milling demonstrators.

But the police had laid their own plans.

Suddenly, there were the loud bangs of noise grenades and tear gas started to pour into the center of the occupation at the bottom of the square.

What were the police, who numbered not more than five or six hundred, trying to do against a crowd hundreds of times larger?

As my Greek comrade George cogently explained later, the police obviously figured that such a huge crowd would consist mainly of those new to demonstrations and that a whiff of tear gas would be all that was needed to send them home.

The police were afraid to try again with their truncheons for fear that this time someone would die and the cycle of mass funerals and mass protests would too plainly mirror the revolutionary cycle of the Arab countries. So just tear gas would do—and leave no embarrassing corpses behind.

The police badly misjudged the crowd — they could have seen that from the start.

Because although the protestors ranged in age from 17 to eighties, there were no children—no baby strollers, practically no one who was not fully grown.

The kids had been left behind because the protestors were prepared for trouble—not to make trouble but prepared for trouble from the police.

And they were determined to stay.

So when the tear gas swept over the square, the crowd retreated slowly—walking, not running.

When the gas dispersed, the demonstrators surged forward again, until the next round of tear gas brought a new retreat. And the retreats were not far—people moved onto the side streets or into cafes with closed doors and waited for the gas to blow away. We pulled out surgical masks, or napkins or—some of the veteran protestors—full gas masks and poured water or soda pop over each other's faces.

Gradually, thousands of demonstrators realized that the wind was steadily blowing the gas up the square.

They moved through the side streets to the area upwind and below the square, where tear gas would blow away from the demonstrators, not towards them.

(By the way, no “petrol bombs” were thrown, contrary to press reports. Garbage fires were set in the middle of streets—a silly but harmless prank.) By 4:30 small groups of police found themselves sandwiched between enormously larger groups of protestors on all the streets and avenues.

Drummers beat a furious and (to the cops) threatening tattoo on the streets, while in the square itself a lyre-player led the occupiers in a Cretan dance.

Although the protestors were mostly young, men and women clearly up in their '80's stood firmly in the belief that they had every right to demonstrate against the thieves in parliament and the banks.

Around 5:00 the police began to give up, blocking off streets but leaving sidewalks leading to the square open, and they stopped firing tear gas.

The square was in the hands of the occupiers and the police were outside.

The Battle of Syntagma Square had ended in complete victory of the workers.

By nightfall, tremendous crowds poured into the square, making it almost impossible to move about.

Three thousand participated patiently in the Popular Assembly while the rest celebrated.

The Rulers Panic

As the protestors reorganized and started collectively cleaning the tear gas off the pavement of the square with bucket brigades, the government of Prime Minister Papandreou dissolved in panic.

Faced with the loss of control of the central square to a determined, growing and open-ended movement, the ruling class politicians acted the way trade union officers all too often do — indecisively switching from one thing to another, unable to mobilize their resources or to take decisive action.

First Papandreou offered to resign to pave the way for a “grand coalition” of his own “Socialist” Party and the opposition parties.

But the opposition parties actually wanted no part of governing just now, thank you anyway, with the impossible task of imposing austerity on the mass strike movement being the first thing on the agenda.

So the task of governing became a hot potato thrown back and forth among the politicians until Papandreou withdrew his offer to resign and, in a clearly decisive move, slightly reshuffled his cabinet.

With no one wanting to govern Greece, the EU, IMF and the banks that stood behind them suddenly started to view Greek default on the debt as inevitable, something that was baldly stated by no less a capitalist icon than former US Fed chairman Alan Greenspan.

But Greek default would trigger chain reaction bankruptcies among the banks, so all of a sudden the EU decided that it could give Greece the next bailout with only “promises” of austerity in return rather than the actual austerity the EU had previously been demanding.

Faced with working class determination, the banks took a big step back from the new austerity plan, without formally abandoning it yet.

The Workers Decide

Just as defeat disoriented the rulers, victory made the workers decisive.

At the Popular Assembly on Thursday, the Assembly’s Economic Commission put forward their answer to the key question — what, other than the defeat of the new austerity plan, did the protestors want, what was their alternative?

The answer, adopted overwhelmingly by the Assembly as a whole, was clear. “We do not owe, we do not sell, and we do not pay! Cancellation of the Debt, this debt is not ours!”

Not negotiation but cancellation of the whole debt is the alternative of the protestors.

The rest of the program is equally clear and unequivocal — No Privatizations — none! Nationalization of all banks. “A radical redistribution of income, and changes in taxation in the benefit of the workers. Let those that have, pay. The big owners, the bankers, Capital and the Church.”

Finally, popular control over the economy and production.

This program is a significant advance over the program widely circulated in Spain by the Democratic Real –Ya! group (which was itself a big step forward).

First, it is the democratically-adopted program of the central occupation in Greece, not the product of an anonymous group of protestors, as in Spain.

That is of key importance.

Second, it is much more determined and consistent — the Spanish program demanded nationalization only of failed banks, not a state monopoly as in the Athens demands, and was silent on the debt and on privatizations.

The steps demanded by the Athens Popular Assembly are the first steps that, not only in Greece, but practically everywhere, can stop the downwards spiral of working class economic life.

The program, to be sure, is not yet complete.

It needs to include the positive steps the government must take with the money liberated from the banks and other capitalists. The demands raised in Spain for a massive expansion of health, education and public transport, should be added to the program. In addition, such expansion of services is only possible with a giant program of public works as well, with direct government jobs to rebuild housing, schools, hospitals and mass transit.

With these additions, the Popular Assembly can make clear to all the unemployed that the program will mean Jobs for All, immigrant and native-born, cutting at the root of anti-immigrant hostility.

The Popular Assembly at Syntagma has been able to go beyond democratic discussion to democratic decisions.

Again, the construction of real workers democracy is still under way.

While thousands take part in the assembly, there are five million living in Athens and millions more in the rest of Greece.

To democratically include all these millions requires a system of delegation, in which delegates from neighborhoods and workplaces attend city-wide assemblies and delegates from these attend a nationwide assembly.

As workers' experience since the Paris Commune has shown, there is a huge difference between a workers' delegate, elected for a specific meeting, often bearing a mandate on a specific topic, responsible back to an organized assembly on the one hand and on the other hand a representative entrusted with power for years, as in a parliamentary democracy.

Already, neighborhood assemblies are beginning in Athens and in time no doubt workplace assemblies and a National Assembly of Popular Assemblies will follow.

Right now, the Popular Assembly of Athens, with its direct democracy, is an echo of the Assembly of Ancient Athens — without the latter's limits of excluding slaves, immigrants and women!

Set up in opposition to the false capitalist democracy of Parliament across the square the Popular Assembly marks a new step on the route to Workers Democracy.

As workers learn of the Greek example others will follow them in Portugal, Spain, France, the United States and the world.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**“Last Week, Images From Maroun
Al-Ras Took Me Back To My
Youth, When After Learning
Exactly What Happened Since
1948, My Solidarity Crossed All
The Way Over To The ‘Other’ Side”**

**“Hassan Hijazi Reminded Israelis
That He Is Not Going To Give Up His
Hometown Of Jaffa”**

“Welcome Home To Jaffa, Hassan Hijazi — The First Returning Refugee!”



Israeli soldiers patrol the fence between Syria and the occupied Golan Heights town of Majdal Shams. (Oren Ziv/ ActiveStills)

28 May 2011 by Rahela Mizrahi, The Electronic Intifada, Tel Aviv

I spent a part of my youth in a kibbutz very close to southern Lebanese village Maroun al-Ras, where the historic march of return of Palestinian refugees took place earlier this month.

The kibbutz was surrounded by fences and more fences.

Every night in the children's house, another member of the kibbutz was guarding us, sleeping with an Uzi gun nearby his bed. In this house, away from our parents, boys were raised Spartan tough to be the next pilots and elite unit warriors of the Israeli army, and the girls were raised very freely, in order to supply the needs of the future warriors.

Growing up in such an unorthodox environment appears to be natural if you do not know any other type of life.

Living on the lands of the Palestinian village Kafr Birim, some information about its expelled inhabitants was leaked to us through the demonstrations that demanded the right of return.

Hanna and Atallah, expelled from the village, actually built the kibbutz.

Atallah's handsome sons, who worked with him, were transparent to us. We were raised not to see them. I noticed the elder because he looked exactly like my cousin from Jerusalem.

As a teenager I was distressed by the Ikrith and Birim expulsions.

The Israeli military occupied the two villages toward the end of 1948 and asked the inhabitants to leave for a period of two weeks only, and then come back. They left their villages and were never allowed to return.

It was obvious to me that the villages' residents should be allowed to return.

Meanwhile, nothing was mentioned about the other refugees, the vast majority who were expelled during the Nakba — the expulsion of approximately 750,000 Palestinians in 1948.

Some said that Birim and Ikrith residents could return, for they are Christians. But what about the "legal precedent?"

Precedent for what? That was not a question to ask. Ikrith and Birim functioned as a perfect camouflage over the entire story: the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

Last week, images from Maroun al-Ras took me back to my youth, when after learning exactly what happened since 1948, my solidarity crossed all the way over to the "other" side.

Visiting my remaining family in the kibbutz, I am now met by electric fences, and the automatic gates no longer look natural.

By committing the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, the kibbutz's founders predestined their grandchildren to live behind fences forever.

According to an Arabic proverb, a thief does not sleep at night, and will not allow anyone else to sleep.

Last week, behind the fence of my childhood, Palestinian refugees gathered to demand return.

They protesters looked and sounded exactly like the revolutionaries of Cairo's Tahrir square.

As with the uprising that began in Egypt on 25 January, I could not stop watching the exciting events in Maroun al-Ras, Majdal Shams, Qalandiya and Gaza, wishing I was part of it.

Just take down the fences, I thought.

The refugees will one day return, but I am afraid that rivers of blood will be flooded by then. Declaring the immediate return of all refugees and replacing the apartheid state with a democratic state looks to me the most reasonable thing to do right now.

But the supremacist will never give up his privileges voluntarily.

And that is exactly what one of the bravest refugees that we saw this month, Hassan Hijazi, told the Israeli press: Palestine will return to its owners only by force.

Hassan Hijazi crossed the Syrian border to the heart of the Zionist project: the white city of Tel Aviv.

For a day he wandered around his hometown, Jaffa, a few years before its expected complete Judaization (gentrification) by demolition, expulsions, kicking out its Arab residents — most of them already displaced from the neighboring villages that Israel demolished in 1948.

The new residents are liberal Ashkenazi Jewish Israelis. Fake co-existence projects were the first steps of this latest invasion, serving the new white inhabitants of Jaffa. Now these new residents complain about the voices of the mosque muezzin and the Orthodox church band.

Hassan Hijazi reminded Israelis that he is not going to give up his hometown of Jaffa.

For now, Tel Aviv exists as a European colonial bubble protected by the human shield of Sderot, the violent settlers in the West Bank and Jewish-Arab Mizrahim pushed by white gentrification to settlements such as Maale Adumin and Pisgat Zeev.

But that bubble, surrounded by fences and more fences, is soon to pop.

Welcome home to Jaffa, Hassan Hijazi — the first returning refugee!

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

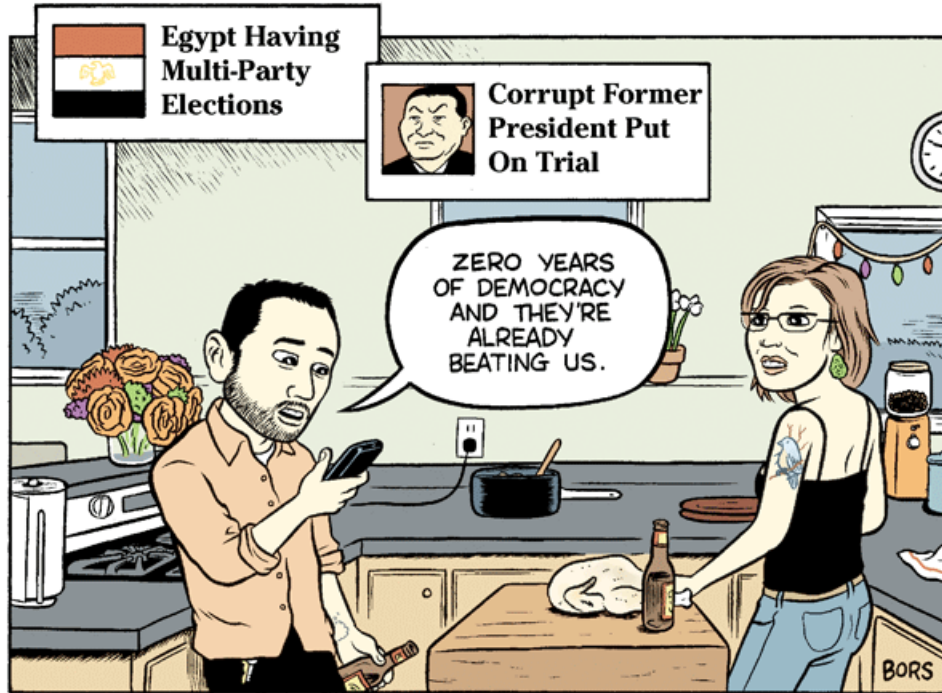
Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Obama Wins Nobel War Prize “The President Will Begin By Thanking Congressional Democrats ‘For Campaigning In 2006 On The Antiwar Agenda, And Then Turning Around Once In Office And Funding The War They Claimed To Oppose’”

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

6.17.11 by Jake Horowitz, Mic Network Inc. [Excerpts]

As the July 2011 deadline for Afghan troop withdrawal nears, President Barack Obama is gearing up for another significant milestone, the Nobel War Prize awards ceremony, which will be held in Oslo next month.

Obama has been selected as this year's winner of the first inaugural prize to commemorate the world leader who has "best advanced the goals of war and militarization across the globe," amongst a notable cast of runners-up that includes NATO's head Anders Fogh Rasmussen, China's premier Wen Jiabao, and former President George W. Bush.

The selection committee includes a host of venerable war-makers in their own right, including Syria's Bashar al-Assad, Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh, and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi — each of whom will be honored in a special category celebrating the "Leaders that Wage War on Their Own People."

Among Obama's list of war accomplishments, the committee highlighted Obama's decision to double the number of troops and expand the number of private contractors in Afghanistan, as well as his dramatic escalation of drone strikes and targeted assassinations in Yemen and Pakistan.

According to one committee member, "Two years ago, we worried that President Obama would rollback Bush administration policies and pursue a peace agenda, but in fact he's expanded the militaristic Bush approach to counterterrorism. He's managed to get the U.S. involved in three wars in the Middle East, keep Guantanamo open, and dramatically expand the use of covert CIA capture/kill operations across the globe. We could not think of a more worthy candidate for this award."

News this week that the CIA is building a secret military base in the Middle East had the committee buzzing with excitement.

One judge noted, "We applaud Obama for presiding over 865 military bases abroad at a cost of over \$102 billion annually. At a time when the country is faltering from the economic crisis, Obama's decision to approve the construction of more bases deserves praise."

Obama's speechwriters are hard at work preparing his acceptance remarks, and PolicyMic managed to obtain a preview of the speech from a source inside the White House.

The president will begin by thanking congressional Democrats "for campaigning in 2006 on the antiwar agenda, and then turning around once in office and funding the war they claimed to oppose."

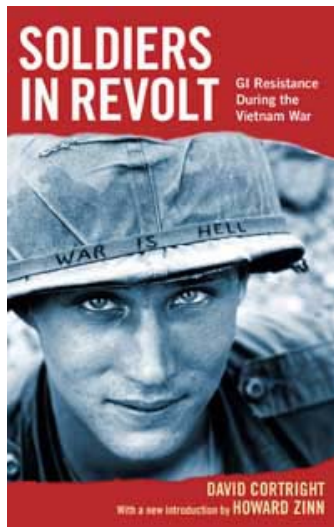
He will also thank Congress for "stepping aside and allowing me to go to war in Libya without Congressional approval and once again approving the Patriot Act despite years of supposed opposition."

Ceremony organizers carefully timed the event in order to nudge Obama toward breaking his pledge to begin a significant troop withdrawal in July — a course the president is strongly considering.

They are urging the president to permanently take the Nobel Peace Prize down from his bookshelf and replace it with the war prize next month.

A Vietnam Soldier Wrote The Book All About How An Armed Forces Rebellion Stopped An Imperial War

**First 10 Active Duty who want one:
Free with APO/FPO/DPO or base mail
address!**



SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York

**Civilians: \$16 including postage:
Buy one for a friend/relative in the service.
Checks, money orders payable to: The Military Project**

**Orders/requests to:
Military Resistance
Box 126
2576 Broadway
New York, N.Y.
10025-5657**

**“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**

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/)



**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATIONS**

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/wordpress/category/military-resistance/> ;

news@uruknet.info; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.