

Military Resistance 9L8



**“The Insurgents, Many Of Them
Drawn From Kandahar And Its
Surrounding Farm Districts, Are
Simply Lying Low, Sometimes In
Plain Sight”**

**“You Walk Down The Street And Say:
‘Oh, Yes, There Is That One, And That
One. And That One”**

December 6, 2011 By Laura King, Los Angeles Times

Reporting from Kandahar, Afghanistan—

The former Taliban commander was furious, chain-smoking, scowling and scattering ashes on a plastic mat spread on the dusty ground.

He deeply regretted, he said, that he had defected to the Afghan government side this year with nearly two dozen of his men, one of whom has already been hunted down and killed in revenge.

And he did not believe that his former comrades in arms in the insurgency were ready to give up the fight for their traditional heartland.

Longtime residents murmur uneasily that the insurgents, many of them drawn from Kandahar and its surrounding farm districts, are simply lying low, sometimes in plain sight.

“They are never really gone,” said Umar Sediq, a Kandahar merchant. “You walk down the street and say: ‘Oh, yes, there is that one, and that one. And that one.’”

One defector was Mullah Tor Jan, a disgruntled veteran field commander who spent the better part of a decade battling Western troops in Kandahar and neighboring provinces. Tiring of the fight, he turned himself in this year, hoping for a government job.

Now, he describes himself as a virtual prisoner in a garrison district of Kandahar where Afghan military families are housed.

He has no work; his large family lives in a squalid two-room structure.

The Taliban killed one of the 23 men who joined the reintegration program along with him.

“They send me messages,” he said of his former fellow fighters. “Sometimes they threaten me, but they also taunt me for being tricked. They know the government didn’t keep its promises to me and the others.”

Tor Jan’s relations are also rocky with the Afghan security forces, which he had once hoped to join, preferably in a position carrying something of the authority and prestige he had in the Taliban movement.

Recently, two of his relatives in nearby Arghandab district were arrested on suspicion of having links to the insurgency, a development he took as a grave personal affront.

“The lowest soldier here treats me with disrespect,” he said, fuming. “I destroyed my life for nothing.”

In Kandahar, even what is being characterized as a quiet year has been marked by explosions of violence. The Kandahar city mayor and provincial police chief were assassinated by the Taliban. Insurgents also staged a spectacular jailbreak and freed hundreds of fighters.

A former official in the Taliban government, Mullah Abdullah Akhund, predicted the movement would use the winter to try to regroup and rearm, then seek to exploit any

perceived opening in the south as U.S. attention shifts to the battlegrounds of eastern Afghanistan, close to Pakistan's tribal areas.

"That's why people here in Kandahar are just waiting to see what will happen, and not placing trust in the government," he said.

"They know that when the foreigners leave, the Taliban could be back in power again."

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Royal Engineer Dies From Wounds Sustained In Deh Adham Khan

8 Dec 11 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 35 Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers, has died in the UK today, Thursday 8 December 2011, as a result of wounds he sustained on operations in Afghanistan.

Serving with the Task Force Helmand Engineer Group, the soldier was a member of a team which was in the Deh Adham Khan region of Nahr-e Saraj (North) in central Helmand when he was caught in a blast from an improvised explosive device on Tuesday, 6 December 2011.

"He Wanted His Life To Matter" Danville Mourns A Young Marine Killed In Afghanistan

November 21, 2011 By Martha Ross, Patch

Hundreds turn out to pay respects to the family of Joshua Corral who was one of a group of San Ramon Valley graduates who enlisted in the Marines in 2010.

There were nine who went. The group of friends graduated from San Ramon Valley High School in June 2010, and then immediately enlisted in the Marines. They all had their own reasons for going.

Joshua Corral wanted to make a difference.

“He wanted his life to matter,” said Mike Dorrance, whose son Jordan was one of Corral’s friends who enlisted around the same time.

Joshua Corral definitely mattered — to the hundreds of people who lined the streets and cul-de-sac leading to his family’s Danville home Monday.

The teens, adults, military veterans and city officials were holding U.S. and Marine Corps flags to show their support for Corral’s parents and three brothers. The grieving family members were arriving home late Monday afternoon after traveling to Delaware to accept Corral’s remains.

The 19-year-old lance corporal, affectionately known by friends and family as “Chachi,” was killed Friday in Afghanistan.

“He loved being in the Marines,” said his good friend Brock Marcotte, a fellow 2010 San Ramon Valley High graduate who just returned home last week after completing his tour of duty in Afghanistan.

“Being in the Marines fit him perfectly,” Marcotte said. “He loved working hard. He was super tough. There are Marines and then there are Marines you want to be like. And he was definitely one of those Marines. He set the bar to excel.”

A machine gunner, Corral was fatally injured serving with the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment from the air-ground combat training base at Twentynine Palms.

Corral was on his first Afghanistan deployment, in Helmand province, since he began his Marine Corps service in July 2010. A U.S. Marines newsletter said Corral was promoted to lance corporal in June.

According to a iCasualties.org, two members of international security forces died in southern Afghanistan on Friday; one died following an attack by insurgents; the other was killed by a roadside bomb.

“Chachi died after accomplishing the things he wanted to do,” said Danville Mayor Karen Stepper who was among the crowd outside the Corral home Monday. “He signed up with his buddies and, in his own words, he wanted to make a difference.”

Corral was among seven Danville service people honored at an Operation Welcome Home event last December, but he was unable to attend.

Stepper expected that the Danville community would rally to support the family as they grieve. “Danville will circle these people with hugs and tears.”

The family was a fixture in the community, particularly Joshua Corral’s father, Arnie Corral, who had coached Little League teams in the Danville area for years. Joshua Corral and his brothers Zack, 22, Jordan, 16, and Christian, 10, have all been active in youth sports.

“Arnie coached I don’t know how many teams. Their story touches the entire community,” said Kelly Miller, a self-described football mom who knew Joshua from when he played freshman football for the San Ramon Valley High Wolves.

Despite being hard core about being a Marine, Corral was known as a friendly, fun-loving young man.

“He had a magnetic personality,” Miller said. “He just drew people to him. He was an amazing child from an amazing family.”

San Ramon Valley High classmate Diane Smith said she would “miss his smile. He cared about everyone so much.”

“He started all the parties,” Marcotte said. “He didn’t like to be bored. If we were sitting around, he said ‘let’s get something going.’ “

Marcotte described Corral’s patriotism and enthusiasm for enlisting as the reason he and their other friends signed up. In addition to Corral, Marcotte, and Mike Dorrance’s son, Jordan Dorrance, the other San Ramon Valley High graduates who are serving in the Marines are Erik Smith, Kyle Parrish, Sean and Matt Mahoney, and Justin Romans.

Corral’s death was announced to the crowd attending Friday night’s home game against Castro Valley.

“Everybody’s devastated here because he was a nice, nice, nice, nice boy,” Danville Councilman Mike Doyle said Saturday morning when reached by phone.

Corral’s death represents the second Bay Area war casualty in as many days.

Sean Walsh, a 21-year-old California National Guard soldier from San Jose, was killed Wednesday in Afghanistan’s Khost Province, the Department of Defense announced Friday.

Walsh died from injuries suffered when he encountered indirect fire during combat operations. He is the second California National Guardsman to be killed in action in Afghanistan.

Corral’s friends are also holding a candlelight prayer vigil Tuesday evening. The vigil will take place at 6 p.m. near the All Wars Memorial at Danville’s Oak Hill Park, 3005 Stone Valley Road. Tuesday’s vigil will be led by Don Busboom, an American government teacher at San Ramon Valley High. Plans for a memorial service are pending.

Friends have set up a bank account to collect funds to help the family with costs associated with the memorial service. The account is located at Bank of the West, 307 Diablo Road, Danville, 94526. Make checks payable to the memory of Joshua Corral. The number is 25916759.

Remembering The Life Of A Fallen Soldier

Nov 28, 2011 KWQC

We are learning more about a young area soldier killed in action. The community is mourning the loss of Pfc. Adam Dobereiner, a graduate of Moline High School.

He died Friday in Afghanistan, a victim of an improvised explosive device. His loss is still a shock to loved ones, but now many who knew Dobereiner are remembering his life.

A 2008 graduate of Moline, Dobereiner was active in football and wrestling. From the wrestling mat and football field he went to the battlefield. Moline wrestling coach James Ealy says Dobereiner had a leadership ability that suited him well for the military. "He was always that guy you could count on to battle, keep coming forward, keep working hard to motivate others," said Ealy.

Ealy coached Dobereiner his junior and senior year at Moline. He says he was a good student and came from a family with two other siblings serving in the military. Ealy and Dobereiner were messaging each other online just over a week ago. He says Dobereiner asked if, when he got home next month, he could stop by practice and talk to the team. "We left it at, I'll see you in December stay safe. He said, 'okay coach I will,' and we get that news and it was pretty hard," said Ealy.

A hard blow for family, friends and the entire community. But Ealy says Dobereiner can continue to be an inspiration. "He still is that leader even in death with what he did and sacrificing for his country and his service and his attitude."

While it's hard to cope with a tragic loss and a life cut short, the community can remember Dobereiner for not only making the ultimate sacrifice serving overseas, but for also making an impact here at home. "They say everybody dies, but not everybody lives. At 21 years Adam Dobereiner got a lot of life in. I'm going to do my part to make sure people remember him and what he did," added Ealy.

Pfc. Dobereiner was assigned to the 8th Engineer Battalion, 36th Engineer Brigade based out of Fort Hood, Texas. The Illinois National Guard is providing military assistance to the Dobereiner family. There has also been an outpouring of support from people online on a remembrance page for Dobereiner on Facebook.

POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

Afghanistan Supply Convoy Attacked: 23 Trucks Burn



Fuel trucks set ablaze in Quetta December 8, 2011. Militants fired a rocket-propelled grenade at trucks loaded with fuel and supplies for foreign troops in Afghanistan in the southwestern city of Quetta in Baluchistan province, setting fire to 25 vehicles.
REUTERS/Naseer Ahmed

[Thanks to Felicity Arbuthnot who sent this in.]

12.8.11 AP

QUETTA, Pakistan — Assailants torched more than 20 tankers in Pakistan carrying fuel for U.S. and NATO troops in neighboring Afghanistan on Thursday, the first reported attack since Islamabad closed the border to protest coalition airstrikes that killed 24 Pakistani troops last month.

The attack highlighted the vulnerability of the supply trucks that are waiting for the country's two border crossings into Afghanistan to reopen. Around 40 percent of the non-lethal supplies for U.S.-led troops in landlocked Afghanistan travel across Pakistani soil.

Police officer Hamid Shakil says unknown men fired rockets at a terminal for the tankers close to the southwestern city of Quetta. He said at least 23 tankers were set ablaze. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The closure has meant that several hundred trucks have been stranded at poorly guarded terminals around the country.

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



Foreign occupation troops from the USA publicly humiliate an Afghan citizen, who is forced to submit to fingerprinting to travel on a public highway in his own country at Gulruddin pass in Sar Hawza district of Paktika province, south of Kabul. (AP Photo/Heidi Vogt)

[Foreign occupation soldiers from the USA make a daily practice of publicly humiliating Afghan citizens.

[This encourages self-respecting honorable Afghans to kill them.

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 94,000 Afghan troops over here to the USA.

[They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, bomb and butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in a military prison endlessly without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.

[Those Afghans are sure a bunch of backward primitives.

[They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship killing them wholesale, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country.

[What a bunch of silly people.

[How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by Barack Obama. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Dec 7 (Reuters)

FALLUJA - Insurgents killed a police officer near his house in the city of Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

KIRKUK - A roadside bomb wounded a senior official at state-run Iraqi Railways Company, in central Kirkuk, police said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb went off near a police vehicle, killing one policeman and wounding three others in Baghdad's western outskirts of Abu Ghraib, an Interior Ministry source said.

JURF AL-SAKHAR - A sticky bomb attached to a car carrying an employee at the Ministry of National Security wounded him along with two others in the town of Jurf al-Sakhar, about 60 km (40 miles) south of Baghdad, police said. Another police source said only the employee was wounded in the attack.

JURF AL-SAKHAR - A roadside bomb went off near the house of a government-backed Sahwa militia leader, and wounded one man in the town of Jurf al-Sakhar, police said.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Fighting In Mogadishu

Dec. 6, 2011 UPI & 7 December 2011 Shabelle Media Network

Mogadishu — Al-shabab Islamist militants claimed the responsibility for the latest in a wave of deadly bomb struck at KM4 junction in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Tuesday, killing at least two people.

Spokesman for Al-shabab fighters, Sheik Abdi Aziz Abu Musab said in remarks broadcast on the media that One of their mujahedeen brigade martyrs blew himself up in the government and AU military compound at KM4 junction nearby former Egyptian embassy, a busy crossroads in the heart of the Somalia capital Mogadishu, killing a number of troops, he said.

“We have implemented a holy attack on the so-called Somali government military base and African union soldiers at KM4 junction on Tuesday, where they used to shell civilians as he put it” Sheikh Abdi Aziz Abu Musab said

A car exploded while being searched in Somalia’s capital Tuesday, killing at least five people, including two police officers, witnesses said.

The witnesses told the BBC police had stopped the car at the busy KM4 junction in Mogadishu.

It was reported smoke was seen rising from the city after the blast, which was followed by outbreaks of gunfire, the British network said.

MILITARY NEWS

“The Air Force Dumped The Incinerated Partial Remains Of At Least 274 American Troops In A Virginia Landfill”

“The Landfill Dumping Was Concealed From Families Who Had Authorized The Military To Dispose Of The Remains In A Dignified And Respectful Manner”

“They Have Known That They Were Doing Something Disgusting, And They Were Doing Everything They Could To Keep It From Us”

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, Felicity Arbuthnot & Dave Robinson, who sent this in.]

08 December 11 By Craig Whitlock, Mary Pat Flaherty, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

The Air Force dumped the incinerated partial remains of at least 274 American troops in a Virginia landfill, far more than the military had acknowledged, before halting the secretive practice three years ago, records show.

The landfill dumping was concealed from families who had authorized the military to dispose of the remains in a dignified and respectful manner, Air Force officials said. There are no plans, they said, to alert those families now.

The Air Force had maintained that it could not estimate how many troops might have had their remains sent to a landfill.

The new data, for the first time, show the scope of what has become an embarrassing episode for vaunted Dover Air Base, the main port of entry for America's war dead.

The landfill disposals were never formally authorized under military policies or regulations.

Air Force and Pentagon officials said last month that determining how many remains went to the landfill would require searching through the records of more than 6,300 troops whose remains have passed through the mortuary since 2001.

“It would require a massive effort and time to recall records and research individually,” Jo Ann Rooney, the Pentagon's acting undersecretary for personnel, wrote in a Nov. 22 letter to Rep. Rush D. Holt (D-N.J.).

Holt, who has pressed the Pentagon for answers on behalf of a constituent whose husband was killed in Iraq, accused the Air Force and Defense Department of hiding the truth.

“What the hell?” Holt said in a phone interview.

“We spent millions, tens of millions, to find any trace of soldiers killed, and they’re concerned about a ‘massive’ effort to go back and pull out the files and find out how many soldiers were disrespected this way?”

He added: “They just don’t want to ask questions or look very hard.”

Senior Air Force leaders said there was no intent to deceive. “Absolutely not,” said Lt. Gen. Darrell D. Jones, the Air Force’s deputy chief of staff for personnel.

This week, after The Post pressed for information contained in the Dover mortuary’s electronic database, the Air Force produced a tally based on those records.

It showed that 976 fragments from 274 military personnel were cremated, incinerated and taken to the landfill between 2004 and 2008.

A separate federal investigation of the mortuary last month, prompted by whistleblower complaints, uncovered “gross mismanagement” and documented how body parts recovered from bomb blasts stacked up in the morgue’s coolers for months or years before they were identified and disposed of.

The Air Force said it first cremated the remains and then included those ashes in larger loads of mortuary medical waste that were burned in an incinerator and taken to a landfill.

Incinerating medical waste is a common disposal practice but including cremated human ashes is not, according to funeral home directors, regulators and waste haulers.

Air Force officials said they do not know when the landfill disposals began. They said their first record of it is Feb. 23, 2004. The mortuary database became operational in late 2003.

Jones said the Air Force did not need to inform relatives of troops whose remains ended up in the landfill because they had signed forms stipulating that they did not wish to be notified if additional remains were identified.

The forms authorized the military to make “appropriate disposition” of those subsequent remains.

Asked if the landfill was a dignified final resting place, Jones said: “The way we’re doing it today is much better.”

Gari-Lynn Smith, the widow of an Army sergeant killed in Iraq, said she received an e-mail in July from Trevor Dean, the mortuary director, saying that incinerated remains had

been taken to landfills at least since he began working at Dover in 1996. Dean is one of the officials facing discipline for his role in the reported mismanagement at the mortuary.

Smith's husband, Sgt. 1st Class Scott R. Smith, a member of a bomb-disposal unit, was killed on July 17, 2006.

In 2007, she began asking the military what happened to some of his remains that were identified after his funeral.

After four years of letters, phone calls and records requests, she received a letter from the mortuary in April stating that the military cremated and incinerated those partial remains and disposed of them in the King George landfill.

"I hope this information brings some comfort to you during your time of loss," read the letter, signed by Dean.

Smith was infuriated. "They have known that they were doing something disgusting, and they were doing everything they could to keep it from us," she said in a phone interview.

In May 2008, then-Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates ordered a detailed review of policies at Dover after an Army officer complained that the mortuary had cremated a fallen comrade at a nearby funeral home that also cremated pets in a separate chamber.

The review team ordered changes, emphasizing the need to ensure the highest levels of dignity and honor.

The Pentagon would not release the report, which was overseen by David Chu, who was undersecretary of defense for personnel.

A copy obtained by The Post, however, shows that the landfill disposal practice was never reviewed or mentioned.

Chu, now president of the Institute for Defense Analyses in Alexandria, declined to comment.

Private contractors hired by the Air Force to handle the remains' incineration and disposal of the residue said they were unaware that they were transporting the ashes of dead troops. Records show that the Air Force hired the contractors to dispose of medical waste and did not specify that cremated body parts were included.

MedTrace Inc. of North East, Md., had Air Force disposal contracts between 2004 and 2007, records show. Don Holland, a manager for the company, said his employees picked up boxes of sealed containers from the Dover mortuary.

"They were certified as medical waste that had been properly treated - that's it," Holland said. "We don't go looking at what's in there. It's sealed."

MedTrace took the items to an incinerator in Baltimore, according to state records in Delaware, where the mortuary is located. Holland declined to discuss the incineration and which landfill his company used.

Lisa Kardell, a spokeswoman for Waste Management, which operates the King George landfill, said the firm has no record of a contract with MedTrace for the years 2003 through 2008.

She said that Air Force officials have not returned calls over the past two weeks from her company's attorneys, asking which haulers would have been handling the Dover materials and the disposition of the ashes.

"Obviously, we would be opposed to taking cremated remains of our servicemen and servicewomen and putting them in our landfill," Kardell said. "But it sounds like a lot of us were pulled in unknowingly to this unfortunate situation with the Air Force," she added.

"It's a moral thing," said Jeff Jenkins, the manager of the King George landfill. "Someone killed overseas fighting for our country, I wouldn't want them buried - any part of them - in the landfill."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy.

-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

Wearing The Uniform

From: SANFORD KELSON [Veteran]

To: Military Resistance Newsletter

Subject: Wearing the Uniform

Date: Dec 8, 2011

High ranking military, generals, admirals and all, whose mission is to obey the politicians and not to formulate or advocate policy nevertheless regularly appear in front of cameras and the press in full military regalia to pontificate and advocate policy.

If they can, why can't enlisted personnel?

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

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 and economic injustice, 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

**“Polls Only Confirm What We Hear In Detroit Workplaces”
“People Are Angry, And Happy That Someone Is Expressing That Anger”**

“The Wealth That Has Been Accumulated Over Decades In The Hands Of A Few Is What Really Weighs On Society”

“They Don’t Control Our Fate Consciously, Nor In A Kind Of Conspiracy, But As The Result Of What Their Position In The Economy Drives Them To Do – Accumulate Still More”

These austerity policies are not just the result of bad policy, or stupid politicians – these are choices the banks and other capitalists impose on the governments, and through them on the laboring population, as the only way the capitalists see to protect themselves right now.

But the very thing the capitalists do to protect themselves – that is, reduce the standard of living of the working class – quickly comes back to haunt the capitalists themselves. They destroy their own markets.

11.28.11 The Spark, Issue 905

The following is based on parts of a report given to the Spark Public Meeting in Detroit in November.

There obviously has been widespread popular support for the “Occupy Wall Street” movement.

Even the polls say it – and they always skew the reaction of ordinary people.

But those polls only confirm what we hear in Detroit workplaces. People are angry, and happy that someone is expressing that anger.

No wonder. Look at what has happened over the last few decades: the gap between the wealthy and everyone else has grown rapidly, even as the economy barely limps along.

In 2007, the wealthiest 1% raked in almost 24% of the total income produced in this country.

The last time those on top took in such a disproportionate share was 1928 – just before the last great crash, the one which produced the Great Depression, fascism and World War II.

This is not just an interesting coincidence.

Both times, the wealthiest people rapidly increased their share of the national income, at the expense of most of the population. And both times, this helped strangle the economy.

But annual income is only a small part of the story.

The wealth that has been accumulated over decades in the hands of a few is what really weighs on society.

Today, the wealthiest 1% own 43% of the nation's accumulated financial wealth.

Worse – the wealthiest 20% own 93% of the nation's wealth. What is left of the nation's wealth – only 7% – is divided up among the remaining 80% of the population.

But it gets worse still.

The ones who really COUNT are found, more or less, among the 400 richest families.

In 2008, these 400 families owned 1.57 TRILLION dollars.

Just by themselves, they could pay off a big share of the debt the government has accumulated over the years.

And they ought to, since their class has been the beneficiary of trillions of dollars in gifts from the government.

They are the very top of the capitalist class.

Their wealth, which has been accumulated from decades and decades of exploitation of all those who do the work, allows them to determine the fate of the whole population.

They don't control our fate consciously, nor in a kind of conspiracy, but as the result of what their position in the economy drives them to do – and what it drives them to do is to accumulate still more.

If not, they fall by the wayside, as Lehman Brothers did in early 2008 – or are gobbled up, as Bear Stearns was a few months later, or Chrysler was several times.

This capitalist drive to accumulate has created not only rapidly increasing inequality, but an economic crisis that has gotten worse by the decade, and more recently by the year.

From One Crisis To The Next

For the last 40 years, the capitalist economy has been stumbling from one financial crisis to the next.

And the capitalists – in order to protect themselves from the mess they created – have drastically increased the exploitation of the working class; that is, they have taken a bigger and bigger share of the wealth that labor produces.

If, over those decades, our income had increased in proportion to growing productivity, we would be earning twice as much today as we actually are: \$1200 a week, for example, instead of \$600.

But not only have we not gotten any of the benefit of this increased productivity, we have given up some of what we once had.

Today, we are earning less than we were in 1974, when inflation is taken into account.

And we are getting a smaller and smaller share of the value of what we produce.

That makes it harder for us to buy. And when we can't buy, the capitalist market shrinks.

The companies can't sell their goods and services – which cuts into the profits the corporations realize, and the bonuses the CEOs grab and the dividends shareholders get.

Yes, the capitalists themselves, and probably even most of that top 20%, can consume more. But there is a limit to how much they can consume. How many mansions can one family inhabit, how many vehicles can they drive, how many furs, jewelry, and latest style clothes can they wear?

The capitalists need a wider market than just themselves and a few other wealthy people.

But the very thing the capitalists do to protect themselves – that is, reduce the standard of living of the working class – quickly comes back to haunt the capitalists themselves. They destroy their own markets.

Blowing Credit Bubbles

For a whole period, the capitalist class tried to get out of this dilemma by artificially building up demand for goods and services, pushing credit on the population.

Mortgages went from 25 years, with one quarter down; to 30 years with 10% down; to 40 years, with practically nothing down. Car notes stretched out so far that when people went to trade in their car, they owed more than what the car was worth. People bought used cars, using their credit cards, with their 25% loan-shark interest rate. Credit-card debt piled up as people maxed out one card, then a second card, and then a third.

Growing credit-card debt made many people potential victims for the sub-prime-refinance-your-mortgage scam – “use your house as an ATM machine to pay off your credit cards.”

With states cutting funding to public universities, tuition jumped – and the banks jumped right in to push student loans. Student loans, which are one of the very few debts you cannot dump in a bankruptcy, mushroomed. The banks know they have you hooked for life.

It was an orgy of debt, presided over by the biggest banks in the country, which were pushing one debt after another, bundling them into various securities, selling them to unsuspecting pension funds and middle-class people seeking to save something for their retirement.

It worked for a while, this orgy of debt, keeping the economy limping along.

But credit brings its own problems.

People are spending more than they have; the banks are recording as current income what they don't have but pretend they will get in the future.

Financial wheeling and dealing opened the door for a vast amount of speculation.

Financial companies gobbled up houses, intending to flip them, selling them a few months later, making a quick profit as prices continued to shoot up.

The Governments Bail Out the Banks

The bubble in house prices burst in 2006.

Mortgages began to go into default. Many of the financial instruments based on mortgages became worthless, and the banks knew it. A number of financial companies faced bankruptcy.

By 2008, the collapse of the housing bubble had killed off two big Wall Street banks, and other banks were waiting to see who was next.

They practically refused to loan money – not only to people, not only to productive corporations; they refused to loan money to each other. The financial system froze up.

But free-running credit is the life-blood of the capitalist economy.

Governments stepped in, buying up the bad debt, handing over trillions of dollars to the big banks and, what was even more important, making many trillions more “available” to the banks. Neil Barofsky, who was appointed by Bush to audit the TARP – the first big bailout of the banks – says that the U.S. government today is on the hook for 23 trillion dollars it has either given, loaned or used to insure the banks’ bad debts.

What the U.S. government did, other governments did also.

But where did governments get the money they gave to the banks? They didn’t have it. So they borrowed it – and from the very banks to which they were handing the money.

Think about this: the banks ended up with the money.

The governments, who had given the money to the banks, ended up with the debts. And they had to pay interest on top of all that.

The Banks Squeeze The Governments

Over the past year, the loans governments took out have been coming due. Governments need to roll over those loans or refinance them.

What an opportunity for the banks: it lets them increase the interest rates they charge on money loaned out to governments, especially when rumors begin to fly that one or another government won’t be able to meet its debt payments.

This debt that the governments ran up bailing out the banks is the underlying cause of the so-called Euro crisis in Europe, and of the so-called budget deficit crisis in the U.S.

Eliminate from government budgets what the banks say is owed to them – money which the banks got from the governments and benefitted from already – and there would be no Euro crisis.

Eliminate from the U.S. budget the enormous amounts drained over the last decades in service of the wealthy, and there would be no U.S. debt crisis.

The Bush/Obama tax cuts cost 3.3 trillion dollars over 12 years.

The two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq will take four trillion dollars. The Pentagon’s budget for the next 10 years (not counting any wars) runs to 7.8 trillion.

And the Wall Street bailout – well, no one really knows, but remember what Bush’s man Barofsky estimated: 23 trillion dollars.

Just shut off these spigots, and the current 15-trillion-dollar government debt could disappear.

Governments Squeeze The Population

Instead, governments around the globe are demanding that the population pay. In

Ireland, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, they call it an austerity policy. Here they call it “reducing the debt.”

In the underdeveloped countries, it’s called “structural adjustment.” But whatever it’s called, the pain is imposed on the same classes: those who work to produce the goods and services needed by the whole society.

In the U.S., this year alone, more than one trillion dollars have been cut from federally funded public services, social programs and education. And 1.2 trillion more are to be “automatically” cut if Congress can’t agree on clever ways to cut Social Security and Medicare – without seeming to do it!

It’s absurd, even for the capitalists themselves, since these cuts by governments can only reduce the ability of the working masses to buy anything; that is, they reduce the capitalists’ own market still further.

Nonetheless, the U.S. and European governments impose these cuts on their own population, and above all on the poor masses in the underdeveloped countries – where “austerity” literally means starvation.

These austerity policies are not just the result of bad policy, or stupid politicians – these are choices the banks and other capitalists impose on the governments, and through them on the laboring population, as the only way the capitalists see to protect themselves right now.

They’ll worry about tomorrow tomorrow, or even the day after.

Needed: A Fight Against Capitalism Itself

One hundred and fifty-four years ago, Frederick Douglass, in a speech dealing with the fights the slaves were making against the slaveholding class, had this to say: “Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”

He could well be speaking to the working class today. There will be no let-up in this drive of the capitalists to protect themselves at our expense, so long as working people don’t gird themselves for a fight to take on the capitalists.

Concretely, all of us who work for our living must begin to fight over the most basic needs for human existence today: that is, the possibility for all of us – every single one –

to have a job, and the possibility for us all to have an income that supports a life appropriate to the level of technology that exists today.

It's happened before that people have fought for those things – the working class in the 30s, the black population in the 60s.

Those fights were able to push the capitalists back.

But what they didn't do was get rid of the underlying mechanisms of capitalism, which sprang right back to life when the movement receded.

We have every reason to believe there will be new struggles.

The Occupy protests are important, not because they have mobilized the working class – they haven't; and not because they offer a direction – they don't.

But they are a harbinger of people's wish to say NO MORE.

And many of the young people attracted to that movement could play a role in the fight for jobs and a decent standard of living.

It would be such a deadly mistake to go through another long fight, only to give up its rewards at the end.

What finally will count is whether enough people exist who understand that capitalism and its mechanisms are really in the center of this vicious assault on most of the world's population, and that capitalism and its basic mechanisms are the targets against which we have to aim.

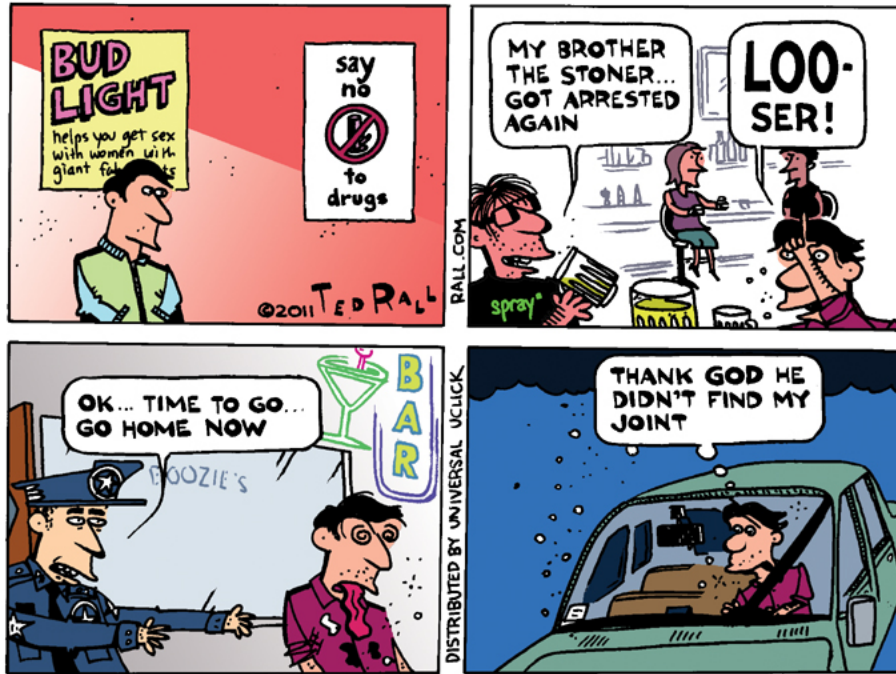
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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Down With The Police State” Russia -- A Dictatorship Trembles: “Up To 10,000 Protesters, Informed Mainly Through Social Media, Converged On The Downtown Chistye Prudhi Metro Station”

[Apologists for the Putin dictatorship are plastering the Internet with stupid claims it's all a plot by the U.S. government. Much like the claims by racists last century that the U.S. civil rights movement was a plot by Yankee agitators to stir up happy laughing musical “darkies” who just loved segregation in the South. Some fools believe anything. T

December 7, 2011 by Fred Weir, Correspondent, Christian Science Monitor [Excerpts]

Moscow was uncommonly tense Wednesday, with tens of thousands of riot police patrolling the streets and helicopters buzzing overhead, while opposition leaders promised more flash-mob-type demonstrations to protest alleged official vote-rigging in last weekend's bitterly contested Duma elections.

For more than a decade, Russians appear to have quietly accepted Vladimir Putin's system of “managed democracy.”

The system utilizes a toolbox full of official measures to ensure that only Kremlin-approved parties and candidates get elected, and that the decisive share of votes is always won by the ruling party, United Russia (UR), which has been headed by Mr. Putin for much of its existence.

But on Monday, after official returns showed UR winning almost 50 percent of the votes – down sharply from the 64 percent it won in 2007 polls – up to 10,000 protesters, informed mainly through social media, converged on the downtown Chistye Prudhi metro station.

They attempted to march to the Kremlin, shouting slogans like “down with the police state” and “Russia without Putin.”

About 300 were detained, and a few such as radical blogger Alexei Navalny and liberal opposition leader Ilya Yashin were subsequently handed 15-day prison sentences for “refusing to follow a lawful police order.”

The next evening, hundreds more jostled with thousands of heavily-armored riot police on Moscow's downtown Triumph Square, and another 250 were detained, including

former Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, a co-leader of the banned liberal PARNAS party, and Sergei Mitrokhin, leader of the liberal Yabloko party, which officially won about 3 percent of the votes in Sunday's election.

Protest rallies were also reported in other Russian cities Tuesday, including St. Petersburg, the Volga center of Samara, and the southern city of Rostov-on-Don.

“No one expected the public mood to snap like this; these rallies caught everyone by surprise,” says Alexander Konovalov, president of the independent Institute for Strategic Assessments in Moscow.

“What is most remarkable is that the people we are seeing in the streets now are not the usual handful of hard-core protesters,” who turn out for regular anti-Kremlin rallies on Triumph Square, he adds.

Opposition leaders say there will be more protests, including daily flash mobs and a big rally planned for Saturday in Revolution Square, which is adjacent to the Kremlin. That rally, planned weeks ago, has been granted an official permit – but only for a maximum of 300 participants, though organizers had asked to be allowed permission for 10,000 people – which the huge space could easily accommodate.

Most state media have not reported the anti-government protests, but have instead lavished coverage on the “Clean Victory” demonstrations that have been held each evening in downtown Moscow by members of the pro-Kremlin “Molodaya Gvardia” and “Nashi” youth groups.

These organizations were created in the wake of Ukraine's Orange Revolution several years ago to play precisely such a counterbalancing role if similar disturbances were to occur in Russia.

Not surprisingly, Russian social media such as Facebook, LiveJournal, and the Russian-language VKontakte have lit up with commentary, including first-hand witness accounts of official pressure and vote-rigging during the election, information about protest venues, and harrowing tales by arrested protesters of brutality at the hands of police.

One entry on the relatively new Openspace.ru, offers a wealth of helpful advice for first-time protesters, from what to bring with you, to how to behave at the rally, and how to get legal help when you need it:

“If you are detained, do not resist, relax and press your chin to breast, cover your head with hands,” it advises.

“If you are beaten, don't hesitate to shout, the louder the better.... Having found yourself inside the paddy wagon, immediately send a phone message. If you call, do it in secret, because they can seize your phone....”

Analysts say that the immediate response of the authorities, which has been to crack down hard, may be a symptom of weakness that is only likely to inflame the public mood.

“They say these protests are only happening in a few big cities, but that’s where trends usually start,” says Mikhail Vinogradov, chairman of Peterburskaya Politika, an independent St. Petersburg think-tank.

“The reaction from authorities has been incoherent, and Plan A appears to be to nip these rallies in the bud through overwhelming police force. After that, they may try to make a few concessions. We’ll see.”

Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, co-leader of the liberal PARNAS, which was banned from taking part in elections, says that Putin has virtually disappeared from public view as the protests have spread.

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 email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

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