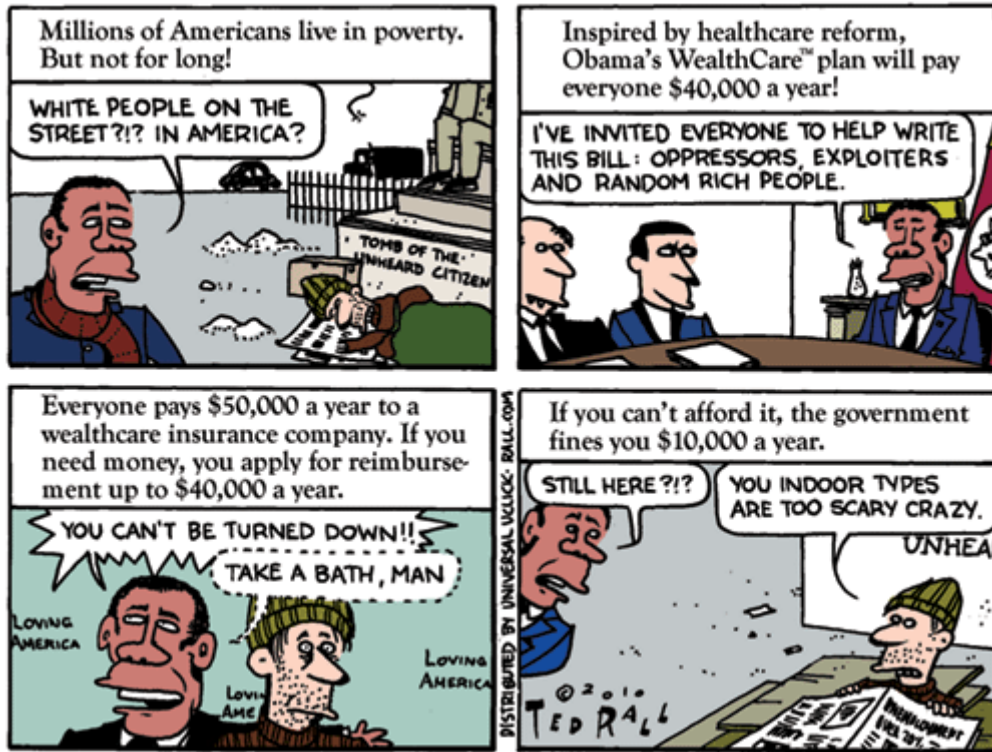


Military Resistance 8A13



“Within Minutes, Three Squads Of The Marines’ 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment’s Alpha Company Are Pinned Down”

**Taliban Fighters Hidden In Farming Communities Open Fire On Marines:
“Some 20 Minutes Later It’s The Forward Operating Base Calling Them To Pull Back”**



US Marines run for cover after hearing bullets whizzing during a patrol in the outskirts of Marjah in central Helmand on 19 January. (AFP/Christophe Simon)

Jan 22 by Jason Gutierrez, AFP [Excerpts]

SOUTHEAST OF MARJAH, Afghanistan

The crisp crackling of AK-47s breaks the morning silence as US Marines inch towards the outskirts of a Taliban stronghold in Afghanistan's southern province of Helmand.

Within minutes, three squads of the Marines' 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment's Alpha company are pinned down in an open, dried-out poppy field by gunfire from unseen Taliban militants hiding in mud houses metres away.

"Stay down, stay down. Get me an eye on these guys," Staff Sergeant Stephen Vallejo barks as he directs his men into an embankment facing the gunfire.

At least two suspected Taliban militants are sighted, one of them lighting up a haystack as a signal for reinforcement. More gunfire ensues, the smell of gunpowder wafts in the cold air, and then silence.

In the distance, women and children are in the firing line of the Marines -- either forced by the Taliban to stay there as human shields or they are unperturbed by the fighting.

"We can't engage them because there are civilians in the direct path," Vallejo says, calling in the unit's position to base and asking for exact coordinates to pin down the enemy fire.

His men positioned in the embankment let off a volley of machine gunfire, sending fragments of the mud house flying into the air. Nearby, an elderly man herds his family away to safety.

Young Marines in their early 20s are visibly shaken.

For some among them, this is their first time out in the field waging a battle against the Taliban, the Islamist regime ousted in a US-led invasion in 2001 but who have since been waging a festering insurgency from the south.

One interpreter props himself down on the earth and begins to pray during a lull in the fighting.

The Marines are on one of the patrol missions to inch closer to Marjah in Helmand province, which produces the bulk of the world's opium poppies, the main ingredient in the production of heroin.

Marjah is described as one of the last bastions of the Taliban in southern Afghanistan, and dislodging them from this area is part of the US government's overall strategy to push them away from population centres.

Some 10,000 Marines have already poured into the region, and an all-out push into Marjah is on the drawing board.

The initial push into Marjah, however, has met resistance. Taliban fighters hidden in farming communities take potshots at advancing Marines.

Heavy sporadic fighting over the past few days has left at least three Taliban fighters dead. Forces also arrested an elderly man whose shed yielded over 500 kilograms (1,200 pounds) of processed ammonium nitrate and other materials used in making bombs.

One US sergeant was killed during an earlier patrol after stepping on an improvised explosive device (IED) planted in an open field.

"Watch out for disturbed earth, these are clever fighters, they plant IEDs where they know we may be going," Vallejo says.

The radio crackles into life some 20 minutes later. It's the forward operating base calling them to pull back. For now, the operation ends.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

2 US Service Members Killed By IED Saturday Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan

1/23/2010 AP

KABUL (AP) — NATO says a roadside bomb has killed two U.S. service members in southern Afghanistan.

A statement says the Americans were killed Saturday but gives no further details.

North of the capital, a NATO helicopter was damaged Saturday when its front rotor blade accidentally struck the ground upon landing in Parwan province. There were no injuries and no hostile action was involved, the international force said.

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed, Five Wounded Tuesday Near Kandahar

Jan. 21, 2010 The Canadian Press

Two American soldiers serving under Canadian command in Afghanistan were killed by a roadside bomb Tuesday in the second such incident this month.

The pair were on a foot patrol with Afghan soldiers, looking for an ammunition cache in the dangerous Arghandab district, just north of Kandahar city.

Canadian Brig.-Gen. Daniel Menard, who heads coalition forces in Kandahar province, identified them on Wednesday as Capt. Paul Pena, 27, and Tech Sgt. Adam Ginett, 29.

Five other soldiers were injured.

Both soldiers were working with the 2nd Battalion, 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Tech Sft. Ginett of Knightdale, N.C., was a counter-IED specialist.

About 2,000 American soldiers are serving under Brig.-Gen. Menard, who is trying to subdue an active insurgency in the two districts.

The districts are critical Taliban staging and transit points into Kandahar city — and fertile ground for insurgents to attack coalition forces and civilian convoys on the all-important Highway 1.

Soldier From 4 RIFLES Killed Near Sangin

22 Jan 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death in Afghanistan of a soldier from A Company 4 RIFLES, serving as part of 3 RIFLES Battle Group.

The soldier died as a result of an explosion that happened near Sangin, in central Helmand Province, during the afternoon of Friday 22 January 2010.

Occupation Troops Slaughter More Civilians: Cell Phone Worker And His Two Children “Below The Age Of Seven” Along With A Neighbor Killed Even Though They Weren’t Armed: “They Had No Weapons, No Grenades, Not Even One Single Bullet Was Found In Their Home”



Afghans escort coffins of four people killed in a NATO overnight raid in Qara Bagh district through the Ghazni city, southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, Jan. 21, 2010. (AP / Rahmatullah Naikzad)

Protesters dressed in traditional Afghan clothing raised their fists and chanted anti-U.S. and government slogans as they marched from Baram, carrying the wooden coffins holding the bodies

More people joined the procession as the procession reached Ghazni.

Jan 21 AFP & The Associated Press & Jan. 23, 2010 By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press Writer

Protesters have taken to the streets for three straight days and have blocked traffic on a highway that links the major cities of Kabul and Kandahar, forcing trucks and vehicles to wait for hours.

On Thursday, about 500 angry demonstrators chanted slogans against the United States and the Afghan government after four people were killed in a raid the night before in a village southwest of Kabul.

NATO said the four killed were insurgents but villagers insisted they were civilians.

Witnesses said foreign troops descended the Qara Bagh district of Ghazni province in helicopters and stormed two houses at about 10 p.m. Wednesday.

They killed a father and his two children below the age of seven along with a neighbor even though they weren't armed, according to Musa Jalali and other residents of the Baram village.

"Doctors told me that there were two children among the bodies brought to hospital," said Mohammad Ismail Ibrahimzai, head of the provincial hospital where the bodies were initially taken.

"They had no weapons, no grenades, not even one single bullet was found in their home," Abdul Samad, the victims' relative, told Associated Press Television News.

"All those killed were innocent people ... We are asking government officials to think about us all the time and not only today. If there is any matter of concern, they should discuss it with our elders."

Jalali said the slain father worked for a cell phone company and everybody knew him to be a good man. He said he believed a tipster had lied to NATO to provoke the raid against the man, a common complaint among Afghans who believe people use foreign forces to carry out grudges.

"Nobody cares about us ... even the governor can't help," he said. "We are finally raising our voices."

He and other protesters dressed in traditional Afghan clothing raised their fists and chanted anti-U.S. and government slogans as they marched from Baram, carrying the wooden coffins holding the bodies on vehicles, to the provincial capital of Ghazni.

More people joined the procession as the procession reached Ghazni.

"Please we are not Talib. But one day maybe we will join with the Taliban because this is the third time this has happened and nobody is listening to us," said another protester, Habibulah Azizi.

Kandahar: “International Forces Find Homemade Bombs Almost Daily As They Patrol The City Streets” “Armed Taliban Bands Control Villages Around The City, And Taliban Agents Move Through The City At Night”

Jan 23 By HEIDI VOGT, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

On the surface, Kandahar hardly looks like a city at war. Trucks rumble through its crowded streets overloaded with produce and consumer goods from Pakistan. Fruit and vegetable sellers clog busy avenues, competing for space with pedestrians and taxicabs stuffed with riders.

Yet the Taliban presence is never far in this city where the movement was born in the early 1990s and whose population is overwhelmingly Pashtun - the same ethnic group as the Taliban.

Armed Taliban bands control villages around the city, and Taliban agents move through the city at night, delivering letters warning people against cooperating with the U.S.-backed government.

International forces find homemade bombs almost daily as they patrol the city streets.

Traditionally, however, the police are among the least-trusted people in Kandahar.

“All the militia fighters and drug users are in the police department,” said Ilyasuddin Agha, a middle-aged grocer in the west of the city. “People won’t go to the police if they have a problem. They’ll just demand money.”

In one volatile neighborhood on the city’s western outskirts, soldiers from the 293rd Military Police Company from Fort Stewart, Georgia, must prod the Afghans to venture out of their stations and go on patrols.

All too often, Afghan police wave cars through checkpoints rather than search them for weapons and explosives, said Sgt. John Hunt.

Resistance Action

Jan. 23, 2010 By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press Writer & Reuters & AFP

The governor of Wardak province escaped an assassination attempt when his convoy struck a roadside bomb in Maidan Wardak province southwest of Kabul on Friday, killing four Afghan soldiers and wounding another. Gov. Halim Fidai, who was unharmed, was on his way to inspect a school after meeting with elders in Jagatu district.

“The bomb struck an Afghan army vehicle which was part of the convoy, killing four army soldiers and wounded another one,” provincial spokesman Shahidullah Shahid told AFP.

The governor’s vehicle was driving behind the army vehicle which was overturned by the impact of the blast.

Militants opened fire on the convoy after the blast but there were no further casualties.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, claimed responsibility for the attack and said they had killed eight soldiers.

Saturday, militants captured a district police chief, Jamtullah Khan, and two other officers on a nighttime foot patrol near the eastern border with Pakistan - the latest in a series of attacks against Afghan officials. Gen. Khalilullah Zaiyie said reinforcements had been sent to help with a search for the three men, who were seized in the Shigal district of Kunar province just after 1 a.m.

A search was under way for Jamtullah Khan and two of his men after they were seized in the Shigal district of Kunar province just after 1 a.m., according to the provincial police chief.

A policeman was killed and another wounded in a gunbattle after suspected Taliban militants ambushed a checkpoint in Baghlan province, according to the provincial government.

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

Israeli Drones Take Over Skies Of Afghanistan

Jan 22, 2010 The Jerusalem Post

While Israeli soldiers can't fight in the war in Afghanistan, Israeli drones can. Starting next week, five NATO member countries will be operating unmanned aerial vehicles

produced in the Jewish [translation: Zionist] state in anti-Taliban operations in the Central Asian country.

Next week, officials from the German military will arrive to take delivery of an undisclosed number of Heron UAVs, made by Israel Aerospace Industries.

Germany is the fifth country to operate Israel Aerospace Industries UAVs in Afghanistan. In December, the Royal Australian Air Force took delivery of several Heron systems, joining Spain, France and Canada that already operate the platform.

Number Of Mercenaries In Afghanistan Rises To 10,712: “90% Of The DoD Private Security Contractors In Afghanistan Are Afghan Nationals”

January 21, 2010 Justin Elliott, TPM Media LLC

The military is increasingly relying on private security contractors as President Obama ramps up the war in Afghanistan, with contractors now making up as much as 30% of the armed force in the country, a just-released congressional report shows.

In the period roughly tracking with President Obama's first nine months in office, the number of Defense Department armed security contractors soared 236% -- from 3,184 to 10,712 between December 2008 to September 2009. The number roughly doubled between June and September 2009 alone.

The new Congressional Research Service report also calculates that contractors in Afghanistan make up between 22% and 30% of the armed U.S. force in Afghanistan.

The news of the surge in private security contractors comes as the total number of contractors -- including those who do construction, cook meals, etc -- is also soaring, with over 100,000 already in Afghanistan.

It's worth noting two points here to clarify the role and makeup of the contractor army: first, 90% of the DOD private security contractors in Afghanistan are Afghan nationals, according to the report.

Second, contractors are barred by DOD regulations from taking part in “offensive” operations.

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME



U.S. Marines from 4th Marines, walk from base Delaram in Nimroz province, southern Afghanistan January 11, 2010. REUTERS/Marko Djurica

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Somalia Insurgents Capture Central Town

Jan 22, 2010 GAROWE ONLINE & Reuters

Somalia's main insurgents groups of Al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam have reportedly captured the strategic central town of Beledweyne, the capital of Hiiraan region after battling out with pro-government militia Ahul Sunnah Wal Jama'a.

The clashes erupted on Friday morning in villages near the town with Hizbul Islam and Ahlu Sunnah engaging in heavy gun battle.

The battle in the villages have allowed Al-Shabaab fighters to attack the town and chase away the few remaining pro-government militia, who have since retreated to a El Gal village, located some 15 km from Beledweyne.

The clashes have since claimed the lives of at least five combatants from both sides, according to witnesses.

On the other hand, militias loyal to Hizbul Islam have reportedly looted The offices of the United Nations health agency WHO and Save the Children in Beledweyne.

According to witnesses, the incident happened shortly after the town's take over with Hizbul Islam militia disarming the guards and chasing away the local agencies workers before looting the valuables in the offices.

"The armed militia entered the offices and took the equipments and weapons. We have also seen the workers, who were blindfolded, being evicted," said an eyewitness who requested not to be named.

Al-Shabaab has banned several aid agencies from working in areas under its control with the UN food agency WFP being the latest casualty after being forced to halt its food distributions in the southern Somalia due to threats and extortion by Al-Shabaab.

"I also saw them taking a car. Islamists are now in the town but the clan militia may return any time. Most of the residents fled days ago except a few poor ones like me," she said.

WFP said this month it was suspending much of its work in parts of the conflict-torn country.

The fighting in Beledweyne, which strategically connects the capital Mogadishu to central Somalia, comes barely two weeks after bloody battle between same armed groups which claimed the lives of hundreds and displaced thousands others.

MORE:

Re: Resistance Attacks On NGOs

World Vision and Human Rights Watch argued for military intervention against Serbia to protect Muslims in Srebrenica. Oxfam argued for the NATO attack against Serbia to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

The United States has been happy to incorporate such NGOs into military planning, operations, and postwar occupations.

U.S. Secretary of State Cohn Powell declared that humanitarian NGOs in Afghanistan were a "force multiplier for us, an important part of our combat team."

-- Ashley Smith in "Humanitarian Imperialism And Its Apologists," International Socialist Review September-October 2009.

**"If American Troops Are Ever Sent To
Somalia They Will End Up Dead"**

Al-Shabab's message is one of unremitting hostility to Somalia's government and any form of Western involvement in the country.

"We are on that road, and we will be on that road for the rest of our lives," said the sheikh.

17 January 2010 By Martin Plaut, BBC Africa analyst [Excerpts]

A radical Somali Islamist group fighting to overthrow the government in Somalia says it is exchanging fighters with rebels in Yemen.

An al-Shabab spokesman told the BBC the group was sending forces to Yemen and receiving fighters in return because of its close links with the country.

Al-Shabab controls swathes of southern and central Somalia.

Al-Shabab spokesman Sheikh Ali Mohamud Raage portrayed al-Shabab as no more than the organised arm of Islamic resistance to Western oppression.

Sheikh Raage rules out talking to Somalia's Western-backed government, saying this can only take place when African Union forces present in the country leave.

He also warned that if American troops are ever sent to Somalia they will end up dead.

"They will suffer the same fate they did in 1993, when they were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu," he said.

Al-Shabab's message is one of unremitting hostility to Somalia's government and any form of Western involvement in the country.

"We are on that road, and we will be on that road for the rest of our lives," said the sheikh.

Occupation Soldiers And Troops From Their Pro-U.S. Government Shoot Each Other

1/17/2010 MOGADISHU (Sh. M. Network)

Bitter confrontation between the security forces of the Transitional government and African Union troops MISOM has broken out at Aden Adde international airport in the Somali capital Mogadishu, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Sunday.

Reports say that the fighting between the two sides came as a Ugandan soldier who was keeping guard at the airport suspected another military vehicle of the TFG that mounted

a heavy gun which caused the two sides to exchange heavy gunfire injuring Somali government soldiers.

It is unclear what casualties reached the AU troops and there is no comment from both sides about today's fighting so far. Residents around that airport said told Shabelle radio that the fighting between the two sides continued for a while saying that they knew nothing about the real casualties of their conflict.

It is the first such confrontation between the transitional government and African Union troops AMISOM since their arrival of AMISOM in Mogadishu in 2007

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



Mourners attend the funeral of Spc. Joseph Lewis on Nov. 28, 2009, in Terrell, Texas, killed Nov. 17, 2009 in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Mike Fuentes)

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.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

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

**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a

so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

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

Firearms are second only to the Constitution in importance; they are the peoples' liberty's teeth.
-- George Washington

People Are Hurting, They Are Scared, They Are Angry, And Obama's Cool Customer Routine Has Worn Thin Fast:

“The Populist Anger Is Still Very Real, But They Have Ceded It To The Right”

“Though They Lapped Up His Best Seller, ‘Audacity Of Hope,’ They Are Not Lining Up For Pre-Orders On The Sequel, ‘The Audacity Of Bombing The Crap Out Of Everyone For Their Own Damn Good’”

January 19, 2010 By Daniel Patrick Welch, OpEdNews [Excerpts]

The Democratic Party is so convinced of its rightful place at what it likes to peg as the center-left of the US electorate that it is completely tone deaf, out of touch, and self-congratulatory in its assumptions that its once core constituencies will follow it into the dustbin of history.

A party that seems unable either to oppose in opposition nor lead when in power is one that shouldn't be allowed to play with matches, as long as there are any adults around to stop them.

People. Are. Pissed.

There really isn't much more to it than that.

And the more you try to schmooze them into believing things are better when they're not, the more they will turn on you.

Judas said it best (or at least Anthony Lloyd Weber): "You have set them all on fire/ They think they've found the new messiah/ And they'll hurt you when they think you've lied."

Obama's handlers in particular seem unaware of the anger seething at the grassroots.

People are hurting, they are scared, they are angry, and Obama's cool customer routine has worn thin fast.

It doesn't take a year to figure out that the same neoliberal crap won't work, and it doesn't help that he has kept on some of the same flunkies, signed on to the same domestic as well as foreign policies, and just plain been too cautious even in a symbolic way.

As far as the grassroots progressives, whose vaunted people power supposedly catapulted Obama into office?

Though they lapped up his best seller, Audacity of Hope, they are not lining up for pre-orders on the sequel, The Audacity of Bombing the Crap Out of Everyone for their Own Damn Good.

The populist anger is still very real, but they have ceded it to the right in one of the worst performances in modern politically history.

MORE:

What Is Barack Obama's Agenda? "Obama's Core Agenda Is The Same As Bush's: Maintaining The Elitist, Militarist, Corporatist System"

**“With Such An Egregiously Stupid
And Destructive Agenda At Work In
The White House, Opponents Need
Only Say That They Are Against It,
And They Are Guaranteed A Wide
Following”**

**“It Also Provides A Fertile Breeding
Ground For The Willful, Belligerent
Ignorance Of The Right To Thrive”**

But as we’ve already noted above, it is the Democratic agenda itself that is opening the door for extremist opponents, who then exploit the genuine dissatisfaction and genuine suffering caused by that agenda.

The Republicans and Democrats are now simply two factions of the same party – the party of war and greed.

20 January 2010 By Chris Floyd, Critical Mass [Excerpts]

Democrats and progressives are crying doom over the party’s defeat in Massachusetts. The loss, we’re told, is a blow to Barack Obama’s political agenda, and so it is.

But it is precisely that agenda that led to the loss, and the shame. It is that agenda which has resurrected a rightwing party that was dead in the water, and empowered its most extreme elements.

And what is Barack Obama’s agenda? What is his political program?

It breaks down into three main elements: unwinnable wars, unconscionable bailouts, and unworkable, unwanted health care “reform” that forces people to further enrich some of the most despised conglomerates in the land.

It is, in every way, a recipe for moral, economic and political disaster.

It is a gigantic anchor tied around the neck of the Democratic Party, and it will drag the whole lumbering wreck back to the bottom in short order.

It also provides a fertile breeding ground for the willful, belligerent ignorance of the Right to thrive.

With such an egregiously stupid and destructive agenda at work in the White House, opponents need only say that they are against it, and they are guaranteed a wide following.

Who would not be against unwinnable war, unconscionable bailouts and unworkable boondoggles serving rapacious elites?

The actual positions held by these opponents – the actual policies they will pursue once in power – are given little scrutiny in such circumstances.

Where have we seen this dynamic at work before?

Oh yes, it was way back in November 2008. Barack Obama represented change from the hated status quo, from the agenda of the ruling Republican party.

And what was that agenda? Why, unwinnable wars, unconscionable bailouts and the assiduous service of rapacious elites.

The actual positions held by Obama – the actual policies that he would pursue once in power – were given little scrutiny. Except by a precious few – such as Arthur Silber, who long ago warned that Obama's election would be ruinous for genuine progressive change, that he would merely put a new gloss on the old corruption while disarming dissent from 'progressives,' who would feel bound to support the president against his rightwing enemies – even if it meant "holding their noses" and supporting bad policies like the health care reform bill or the Afghan surge.

Now it is obvious to all that Obama's core agenda is the same as Bush's: maintaining the elitist, militarist, corporatist system in all its essential elements.

The "War on Terror" goes on, expanding into new lands.

Torture and murder are still countenanced and concealed, in concentration camps and secret sites that are still in operation. All of Bush's most egregious assertions of authoritarian power are embraced and defended in court.

Wall Street is rewarded, not regulated for its vast crimes.

A grotesquely expensive, unjust and dysfunctional health care system is not only left intact by "reform," it is given millions of new, captive customers, and more public money to guarantee its profits.

It is not just Obama's agenda, of course.

It is the agenda of the Democratic Party: war, empire, and corporate profit über alles.

Is this really worth defending, even with a held nose? Yet progressives and liberals will continue to insist that, bad as it is, we've got to keep supporting the Democratic Party – because there is no alternative, because otherwise, Tea Party torture mavens like Scott Brown or Sarah Palin will get elected.

But as we've already noted above, it is the Democratic agenda itself that is opening the door for extremist opponents, who then exploit the genuine dissatisfaction and genuine suffering caused by that agenda.

The Republicans and Democrats are now simply two factions of the same party – the party of war and greed.

To support one faction, no matter what, with held noses or open arms, in such a locked system only perpetuates and exacerbates its worst elements.

Oh, but there's no choice, we are told, with earnest handwringing, by our leading progressives. Third parties are not viable in our system, we are informed by our savvy progressive realists; there can be no effective political movement outside the two main parties.

Indeed, no less than Digby herself has declared that the only alternative to working with this closed system (which means, in practice, supporting the Democratic Party) is violent revolution: "Pick up your muskets, kids, or STFU."

And so this is what we've come to.

This is the "progressive" answer to any genuine, non-violent rejection of the Democratic faction's agenda of war and greed: "Shut the fuck up." My, wouldn't Martin Luther King Jr. be delighted with that? Wouldn't Thomas Jefferson revel in such delicious eloquence, such deep thought?

Look, I know it's not easy.

I was born and raised a Yellow Dawg Democrat myself, and remained one for most of my life. I know what it's like to be hardwired for supporting Democrats, come hell or high water, giving them every benefit of the doubt, turning a blind eye here, making a furious rationalization there.

These tribal loyalties are very difficult to lay down; it really can feel like turning your back on your family. And of course the belligerent, bellicose, willfully ignorant Republicans are loathsome and dangerous.

But there comes a time when you must face the truth – or be lost to truth forever.

There comes a time to recognize that the Democratic Party and Republican Party are part of the same corrupted entity.

There comes a time to recognize that the Democratic Party's agenda is not only ruinous in itself, unworthy of the support of anyone who cares about justice, peace, liberty and the pursuit of happiness – it is also empowering those very same loathsome and dangerous Republicans.

There comes a time for even the most partisan tribalist (and I have been one) to accept the hard judgment of reality: that the Democratic Party is part of the problem, not the solution.

To say that there is no alternative to supporting this locked-in, closed-off, two-faction system of war and greed is an act of craven surrender to that system.

It condemns us, and the world, to yet another generation of violence, chaos and corruption, another long, long journey away from the light. It is, as noted above, a recipe for disaster in every way.

But if you want more Scott Browns in power, then by all means, keep pushing that Democratic agenda.

You'll soon have Scott Browns and Sarah Palins running out of your ears.

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 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

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

OCCUPATION HAITI

“The Noble ‘International Community’ Which Is Currently Scrambling To Send Its ‘Humanitarian Aid’ To Haiti Is Largely Responsible For The Extent Of The Suffering It Now Aims To Reduce”



Peter Hallward, Guardian Unlimited [Excerpts]

Haiti is routinely described as the “poorest country in the western hemisphere”. This poverty is the direct legacy of perhaps the most brutal system of colonial exploitation in world history, compounded by decades of systematic postcolonial oppression.

The noble “international community” which is currently scrambling to send its “humanitarian aid” to Haiti is largely responsible for the extent of the suffering it now aims to reduce.

Ever since the US invaded and occupied the country in 1915, every serious political attempt to allow Haiti’s people to move (in former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s phrase) ‘from absolute misery to a dignified poverty’ has been violently and deliberately blocked by the US government and some of its allies.

Aristide's own government (elected by some 75% of the electorate) was the latest victim of such interference, when it was overthrown by an internationally sponsored coup in 2004 that killed several thousand people and left much of the population smoldering in resentment.

The UN has subsequently maintained a large and enormously expensive stabilization and pacification force in the country.

Since the late 1970s, relentless neoliberal assault on Haiti's agrarian economy has forced tens of thousands of small farmers into overcrowded urban slums.

Although there are no reliable statistics, hundreds of thousands of Port-au-Prince residents now live in desperately sub-standard informal housing, often perched precariously on the side of deforested ravines. The selection of the people living in such places and conditions is itself no more "natural" or accidental than the extent of the injuries they have suffered.

As Brian Concannon, the director of the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, points out: "Those people got there because they or their parents were intentionally pushed out of the countryside by aid and trade policies specifically designed to create a large captive and therefore exploitable labour force in the cities; by definition they are people who would not be able to afford to build earthquake resistant houses."

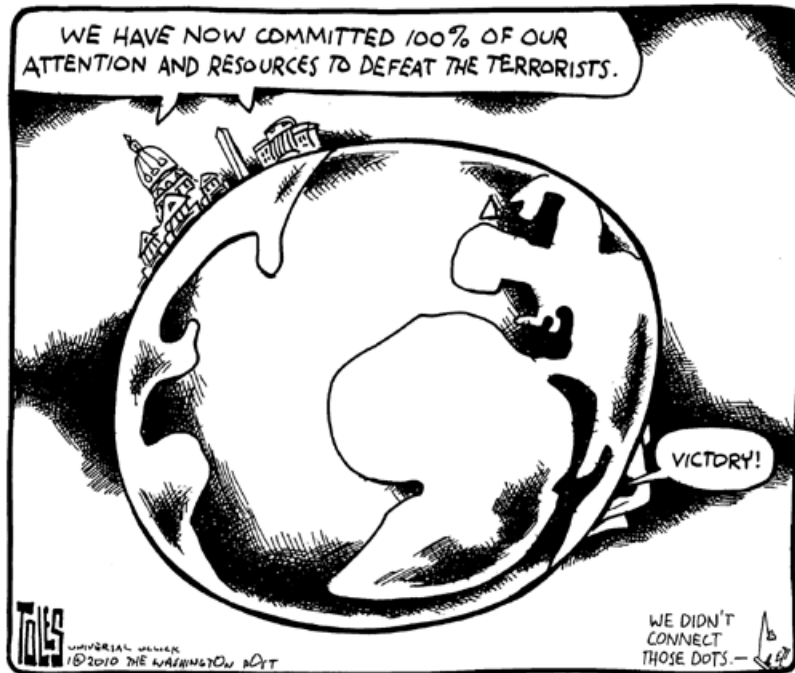
OCCUPATION PALESTINE



Pravda.ru

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Airport Full Body Scans To Double As Annual Checkups



January 7, 2010 The Borowitz Report

WASHINGTON: In what some in the White House are calling a “win/win” solution to the nation’s airport security and health care reform problems, starting next month U.S. airports will begin conducting full body scans that will double as annual physical checkups.

President Obama announced the breakthrough solution, telling reporters, “With this all-purpose exam, we will be able to find everything from a hidden weapon to a spot on your lung.”

After scanning a passenger, Mr. Obama said, “We will either give you a clean bill of health or wrestle you to the ground.”

The President added that instituting the body scan/checkup could ward off some terrorists right from the start, “because a lot of them will balk at the \$25 co-pay.”

But according to Davis Logsdon, who studies terrorism and health care reform at the University of Minnesota, the body scans may attract more terrorists than they deter: “If there’s one complaint that terrorists have about al-Qaeda it’s that they have lousy benefits.”

Unhealthy Care

January 20, 2010 By Robert Scheer, Truthdig [Excerpts]

A mere seven months ago, The New York Times/CBS poll found that 72% of Americans “supported a government-administered insurance plan-something like Medicare for those under 65-that would compete for customers with private insurers.”

Even half of those identified as Republican said they would back such a public plan, as would three out of four independents and 90% of Democrats.

Instead of heeding that call by endorsing a serious extension of Medicare, along with increased subsidies for those who could not afford it, Obama played to the conservatives in Congress - and they rolled him.

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. Phone: 888.711.2550

CLASS WAR REPORTS



How Bad Is It?

January 04, 2010 Frontline

The economy is so bad, George W. Bush appeared in a flight suit and declared economic recovery was complete.

The economy is so bad Dick Cheney took his stockbroker hunting.

The economy is so bad Dr. Seuss rose from the grave to write a new book: Green Eggs and Spam.

The economy is so bad that I went to my bank to get a loan, they said, "What a coincidence! That's just what we were going to ask you!"

The economy is so bad, rapper 50 Cent had to change his name to 10 Cent.

The economy is so bad that the highest-paying job in town is jury duty.

The economy is so bad I saw a man in Costco buying one roll of toilet paper.

The economy is so bad that parents in Beverly Hills are considering raising their own children.

The economy is so bad that even people who aren't in Barack Obama's cabinet aren't paying taxes.

The economy is so bad I saw a polygamist with only one wife.

The economy is so bad that I saw someone using the sun to get a tan!

The economy is so bad, Hot Wheels stock is trading higher than GM.

The economy is so bad, Obama met with three small businesses to discuss his Stimulus Plan: GM, Pfizer, and Citigroup.

It's so bad, McDonalds is introducing the 1/4-Ouncer.

The economy's so bad, Exxon-Mobil laid off 25 Congressmen.

The economy is so bad, that Martha Stewart did a show on creative uses for food stamps.

The economy is so bad, my sister had an exorcism but couldn't afford to pay for it, and got re-possessed.

The economy is so bad, that I bought a toaster oven and my free gift with purchase was a bank.

It's so bad I got a pre-declined credit card in the mail.

It's so bad, I ordered a burger at McDonalds and the kid behind the counter asked, "Can you afford fries with that?"

The economy is so bad people are standing behind George Bush wherever he goes hoping for free shoes.

The economy is so bad that when Bill and Hillary travel together, they now have to share a room.

The economy is so bad a certain celebute changed her name to "Paris Holiday Inn."

The economy is so bad that 7 of 10 houses on Sesame Street are in foreclosure.

The economy is so bad Angelina had to adopt a highway

The economy is so bad President Barack Obama promised to 'detect and pursue' American tax evaders, as opposed to his first 100 days, in which he detected and nominated American tax evaders."

The economy is so bad that the President is changing his slogan to "Hope and Spare Change!"

The economy is so bad that the President is running a small business on the side. It's called GM.

The economy is so bad that Al Gore is selling carbon credits on late night television.

The economy is so bad that the airlines are installing pay toilets in coach.

The economy is so bad that you can order checks pre-marked "Insufficient Funds."

The economy is so bad that the Chicago mob is laying off judges.

The economy is so bad that Motel Six won't leave the light on for you anymore.

The economy is so bad that McDonald's has a layaway plan.

How Bad Is It? [For Real]

[Thanks to Nancy Fulton, who sent this in. She writes: "Who knew you couldn't have 2.5 wars for 7-10 years without hosing your own economy?"]

December 15, 2009, Tom Freedman, Spotlight on Poverty [Excerpts]

As we approach the end of 2009, it's a reasonable time to take a brief look at the state of poverty amidst the worst recession since the Great Depression and at how the political process has dealt with it.

An obvious fact is that the recession's impact has been severe.

The official unemployment rate has reached 10.2 percent—the highest it's been since the recession of the 1980s, when the high was 10.8 percent.

A broader measure including discouraged workers and those forced into part-time jobs is at 17.5 percent, the highest it's been since the Great Depression.

More workers than ever have been forced into part-time work.

According to the New York Times, 20,000 people a day are signing up for food stamps, and almost nine out of ten people who benefit from the program are below the poverty line.

More than one in ten Americans already rely on food stamps, including half of those under 20 and 90 percent of African-American children.

“\$10 Billion Worth Of Food To U.S. Troops And Other Government Personnel Serving In Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait And Jordan” [While Millions Of Unemployed Americans Barely Survive On Food Stamps]

January 11, 2010 By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

One of the least publicized elements of the cost of the fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq is the need to truck into Iraq and landlocked Afghanistan almost all the perishable and non-perishable food items consumed by U.S. forces and civilian personnel.

The Defense Logistics Agency is preparing to contract out delivery of more than \$10 billion worth of food to U.S. troops and other government personnel serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and Jordan.

The list of items is extensive. The prime vendor, according to the bid solicitation, “must be capable of supplying all chilled products, semi-perishable food stuffs, frozen fish, meat and poultry, other frozen foods (fruits, vegetables, prepared foods, etc.), dairy and ice cream products, fresh and frozen bakery products, beverage base & juices (for dispensers), beverages & juices (nondispenser), fresh fruits and vegetables, non-food items.”

In addition, the vendor will deliver government-furnished food products such as “Unitized Group Rations, Meals Ready to Eat, Health and Comfort packs and other operational rations items (either currently in existence or to be introduced during the term of this award).”

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/gispecial/index-2009.html>; news@uruknet.info;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/

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

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS



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