

## **Military Resistance 10A20**

### **“A DEJECTED ARMY SOLDIER BACKING ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTERS”**



A defected army soldier backing anti-government protesters secures a street where protesters marched to denounce a law granting immunity to Yemen's outgoing dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh in Sanaa January 22, 2012. Thousands of Yemenis protested in Sanaa against an immunity law protecting Saleh from prosecution and demanded he be put on trial for offences they say he committed during his 33-year rule. Saleh's immunity from prosecution, part of a deal put together to persuade him to resign, has angered protesters who have accused security forces controlled by Saleh and his aides of killing hundreds of demonstrators in the past year. REUTERS/Khaled Abdullah

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Arkansas Family Loses Second Son In Afghanistan**

1/19/2012 By TIM TALLEY, The Associated Press

The war in Afghanistan has claimed the lives of two sons of an Arkansas couple who also have a third son in the military.

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Wise, 34, of Little Rock, was on his fourth deployment overseas when he was injured during an insurgent attack on his unit last week. He died from his wounds Sunday at a hospital in Germany, the Department of Defense said in a statement Tuesday.

His brother, 35-year-old Jeremy Wise, was killed in a terrorist attack on a CIA outpost in Afghanistan in December 2009. He was a former Navy Seal working as a security contractor.

Their brother, Marine Corps Cpl. Matthew Wise, is based in Hawaii but was in Germany to be with his brother, his wife Amber said. She said she was at Benjamin's home in Washington state watching his children, but she declined further comment.

The Army Special Forces soldier is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

The men's parents, Dr. Jean and Mary Wise of Hope, Ark., and their sister did not return telephone messages seeking comment from The Associated Press. But the family released a statement thanking friends and Benjamin's fellow soldiers "for their sincere expressions of sympathy during this very difficult time."

His family described him as a loving husband, devoted father, caring son and selfless soldier.

"The Wise family is sincerely touched by the concern and interest all have taken in Ben's life, his career and his sacrifice for our country," they said in the statement. "Ben was proud of the career he built in the Army."

He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.

Benjamin Wise, who entered military service in 2000, discussed his work as a soldier in a September 2004 interview with the Hope Star newspaper in Arkansas.

"It's something I've wanted to do for a while now," he told the newspaper. "I was in college and I took a break from college and thought I'd do it now while I was relatively young. I wanted to serve my country, and do something that I found exciting."

Wise compared his work as a soldier to a job, noting that "there are a lot of frustrating things about being over there, about being with people from another culture and the special circumstances.

"But, at the end of the day, it's a job and we're specialists in the field. The troops are sent there to accomplish a mission," he said.

Members of Arkansas' congressional delegation released statements of condolence and described Benjamin Wise as a hero.

“His bravery, dedication and patriotism exemplified what it means to be an American soldier and I am eternally grateful for his selfless sacrifice,” said Democratic Rep. Mike Ross. Republican Rep. Tim Griffin added: “He dedicated his life to serving in defense of our country and has earned the deepest respect of a grateful nation.”

The Hope Star newspaper reports that Wise was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart and Meritorious Service Medal.

Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., said Wise served in Iraq as well as Afghanistan. “While Arkansas has lost a great patriot, the Wise family has paid an extraordinary price in service to our country,” Pryor said.

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## Hamlet Soldier Dies

January 9, 2012 Herald Argus

Four soldiers with an Indiana-based National Guard unit were killed in Afghanistan and a fifth was injured when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb as they were working to clear a supply route of the improvised bombs, guard officials said.

Indiana Adjutant General Martin Umbarger said the four members of the Valparaiso-based 713th Engineer Company died Thursday morning in southern Afghanistan. He said all of the men were combat engineers who specialized in clearing major supply routes.

The blast occurred as their vehicle traveled along a road, scouting for signs of roadside bombs and other potential problems convoys might encounter as the move supplies in the decade-long war in Afghanistan, Umbarger said.

“Their mission is to keep the major supply routes clear of all obstacles for the convoys. And what that means is they’re the first ones to go out to make sure the route can be used, so it’s a very important mission – but it’s also extremely dangerous,” he told The Associated Press.

The four men killed were identified as: Staff Sgt. Jonathan M. Metzger, 32, of Indianapolis, Spc. Brian J. Leonhardt, 21, of Merrillville, Spc. Robert J. Tauteris Jr., 44, of Hamlet, and Spc. Christopher A. Patterson, 20, of Aurora, Ill.

A fifth soldier injured in the blast, Pvt. Douglas Rachowicz, 29, of Hammond, was initially treated at a military base hospital in Kandahar before being airlifted to the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, Umbarger said.

Tauteris’ uncle, Ed Tauteris of North Judson, said the family has been devastated by the death.

He said his nephew, who grew up in rural northwestern Starke County and graduated from North Judson High School, was a loving, attentive father to his two sons, Robert Tauteris III and Matthew.

“He was great father who loved his kids, took very good care of them. He was a great provider. He’d work seven days a week, come home and take his kids fishing, hunting, to baseball, stuff like that,” he said.

Ed Tauteris, 69, said his nephew reenlisted in the National Guard after his 21-year-old son, Robert III, joined up and was sent to Afghanistan. He said his nephew had hoped he might be able to keep his son safe during his deployment.

He said Robert Tauteris III, who was still in Afghanistan when his father was killed, accompanied his father’s body back to the U.S.

“He flew home with his dad. That poor kid. I feel so bad for him,” he said.

Umbarger said the four soldiers’ deaths were the greatest number of Indiana guards since March 2005, when four members of the Indianapolis-based 76th Infantry Brigade died when a land mine exploded under their military vehicle about 30 miles south of the Afghan capital of Kabul.

Gov. Mitch Daniels said in a statement that Umbarger called him Saturday morning to tell him of the deaths. The governor said he’s praying for the soldiers’ families. “I received from the adjutant general the news a person in my job dreads the most, that we have lost soldiers in combat. I had begun to hope that I had received the last such phone call, and cannot convey the sadness which it instantly brought,” Daniels said. “My prayers are joined with those of millions of Hoosiers who will hear this terrible news with deep grief but also with gratitude for the courage of those we have lost, and pride that we come from a state that produces men such as these,” he said.

Umbarger said the four soldiers’ families were informed Friday of the deaths, and the last family members were told the news Friday night.

He said he’s “humbled and honored” by the courage of the nation’s service members and said the sacrifices of the four men won’t be forgotten. “I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of these brave citizen-soldiers,” he said in a statement. “We will honor their sacrifice and always remember them.”

The father-in-law of an Indiana National Guard commander says a robot swept a southern Afghanistan road for bombs before the blast that killed him and the three others.

Retired Indianapolis police Detective Patrick Lair’s daughter had married Metzger. Lair told the Indianapolis Star and WTHR-TV that military officials told the family that robots in front of the unit’s convoy didn’t find any bombs before one exploded.

Lair says Metzger was due to return to Indiana on leave in a few weeks.

“Jonathon got on the air and said, ‘I will take the lead,’” Lair told WTHR-TV.

“It was his squad, and just as soon as he took the lead, that is when the IED went off. ... It is just devastating. We all pray that none of us will ever get that knock at the door. My heart goes out to all the families of servicemen, all of them and the parents and the brothers and the sisters and the friends and the children.”

Metzger was a career military man who spent eight years in the Marine Corps. He planned on a military career and was studying for the rank of master sergeant.

He was on his second deployment, having served a year in Iraq, and was six weeks into a nine-month tour in Afghanistan, Lair said. "Jonathon was a hero, a true hero, and he still is in our hearts, because he lived by the creed to protect this country," Lair told WTHR. "God bless him and God rest his soul."

Leonhardt was the sixth of eight children and followed three brothers into the military, his father, Bob Leonhardt of Merrillville, told reporters.

His funeral will include a presence by firefighters, the Patriot Guard Riders and the Lake County Sheriff's Department Bagpipe and Drum Brigade, said Bob Leonhardt, who was a volunteer firefighter for 13 years. "It will be a good tribute and honor to a fallen soldier," he said.

Patterson was a student at Valparaiso University, The Times reported.

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

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

**Good News For The Afghan  
Resistance!!  
U.S. Raid Slaughters Civilian Men,  
Woman And Two Kids:  
U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid  
Terror Tactics Recruit Even More  
Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**

January 18, 2012 AP & January 19, 2012 AFP

KABUL — Hundreds of people took to the streets in a town in northeastern Afghanistan Thursday in protest over a night raid by Afghan and U.S. forces that killed six civilians, an official said.

A woman and two children were among the dead in the air and ground raid on Dewa Gul Vally, a Taliban stronghold in the Chawki district of Kunar province, on Monday night, provincial governor Fazlullah Wahidi told AFP.

“The raid was not coordinated with us. Those killed were civilians,” Wahidi said.

“Now the people are demanding justice.” **[For those unfamiliar with Afghan culture, this reference to “justice” doesn’t mean indictment by a grand jury, a trial and a conviction by a jury. This means old time justice: immediately organizing efforts to kill U.S. troops.]**

Angry protesters in Chawki chanted slogans condemning both U.S. forces and the Afghan government as they marched through the centre of the district, he added.

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# **Taliban Said They Had Recruited An Afghan Soldier Who Shot Dead Four French Soldiers: “Video Showing U.S. Marines Urinating On Corpses Were Boosting Support” “Our Missions Have Become Easier Because Of Incidents Like The Video”**



January 21, 2012 By Amie Ferris-Rotman and Mirwais Harooni, Reuters [Excerpts]

The Afghan Taliban said on Saturday they had recruited an Afghan soldier who shot dead four French soldiers a day earlier, raising fears the militant group had managed to deepen its infiltration of the country's struggling security forces.

The killings prompted France to threaten an early pullout from the NATO-led war.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has recruited people in important positions," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Reuters by telephone from an undisclosed location, using another name the Islamist group call themselves.

"Some of them have already accomplished their missions."

The four French soldiers died on the spot, he said.

A regional Taliban commander added that incidents such as a video showing U.S. Marines urinating on corpses were boosting support for the group among Afghans and threatened more attacks.

"Our missions have become easier because of incidents like the video," he said.

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

## **Resistance Action**

Jan 18, 2012 By Rahim Faiez, The Associated Press & January 22, 2012 By AFP

Five Afghan border police were killed in Afghanistan Saturday. The border guards died when their vehicle was ambushed in Gulran district of Hirat province in western Afghanistan, General Sulaiman, the commander of rapid reaction forces in the area, told AFP. "The vehicle first hit a roadside bomb and then the militants opened fire using grenade launchers and small arms," he said.

In Helmand province, an Afghan intelligence official in Nad Ali district and two of his bodyguards were killed Wednesday in an explosion, Ahmadi said. A remote-controlled bomb was detonated as the intelligence official, Wali Mohammad Khan, walked out of his house.

**He was the third local government official to be assassinated this week in southern Afghanistan, the birthplace of the Taliban insurgency.**

On Tuesday in neighboring Kandahar province, a member of the Dand district council was assassinated while praying in a mosque in Kandahar city, and a member of the district council in Panjwayi was killed by insurgents on a motorbike.

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## **How Bad Is It?: “Military Commanders In Afghanistan Have Stopped Making Public The Number Of Allied Troops Killed By Afghan Soldiers And Police”**

Jan. 17, 2012 By Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY [Excerpts]

Military commanders in Afghanistan have stopped making public the number of allied troops killed by Afghan soldiers and police, a measure of the trustworthiness of a force that is to take over security from U.S.-led forces.

The change in policy comes after at least three allied troops have been killed by the Afghan troops they trained in the past month and follows what appears to be the deadliest year of the war for NATO trainers at the hands of their Afghan counterparts.

The International Security Assistance Force in Kabul had responded to previous requests for details on cases where Afghan troops — screened and trained by ISAF and Afghan officials — have turned their weapons on NATO troops.

Navy Lt. Cdr. Brian Badura said ISAF has a new policy to release only limited information about casualties, leaving the responsibility for detail to the troops' home countries.

Anthony Cordesman, a military analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said information about the killing of U.S. troops by Afghan troops or police is important because it shows whether the U.S. withdrawal plan is realistic.

Infiltration of local forces is a common tactic among insurgents anywhere, said Seth Jones, an expert on Afghanistan at the RAND Corp.

“In general, they are part of a broader insurgent effort that involves assassination, intimidation and infiltration,” Jones said. “Insurgents have been doing it for decades - actually centuries - in Afghanistan and other wars.”

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## **[Ya Think?]**



# **“A Sign Of The Difficulties Faced By The Air Force In Finding Reliable Personnel”**

## **“An Afghan Military Pilot Opened Fire After An Argument At Kabul Airport, Killing Eight U.S. Trainers And Advisers And An American Civilian Contractor”**

Jan 18, 2012 Slobodan Lekic - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — Twenty years ago, Afghan Air Force pilot Maj. Abdul Aziz was streaking across the sky in the Soviet Union’s deadliest fighter-bomber. Now 45, his new task is less dramatic or flamboyant, yet perhaps even more important: Help build and train a new skilled air force that can keep the planes and helicopters in the air after Western mentors go home.

**In a sign of the difficulties faced by the air force in finding reliable personnel, an Afghan military pilot opened fire after an argument last April at Kabul airport, killing eight U.S. trainers and advisers and an American civilian contractor.**

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### **UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW**



The scene of an attack in Kandahar south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Jan. 19, 2012, at an entrance to a base for U.S. operations. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

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## **MILITARY NEWS**

### **HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?**



The body of Army Spc. Kurt Kern at the McCreery Aviation Co. hangar on Jan. 6, 2012 in McAllen, Texas. Kern, 24, died Dec. 27 in Paktia, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. (AP Photo/The Monitor, Gabe Hernandez)...

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## **Veterans Of Revolutionary War Storm New Libyan Regime's Headquarters In Benghazi: “Unhappy With Cash Compensations Promised By The Government, Saying It Does Not Cover Their Basic Needs”**

21st January 2012 Daily Mail

Protesters have forced their way inside the local headquarters of Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC).

The incident occurred in Benghazi, the birth-place of the revolt which forced out former leader Muammar Gaddafi, where people have been protesting for weeks to demand the sacking of Gaddafi-era officials and more transparency about how the NTC is spending Libyan assets.

The attack underscored growing public discontent over the way Libya's new rulers are running the North African country.

Earlier today hundreds of young men, many wounded from the war, rallied outside the NTC's headquarters.

When NTC chairman Abdul Jalil came out to address the crowd, some protesters hurled empty plastic bottles at him, prompting security forces to fire tear gas according to Reuters.

'Go away, go away,' they chanted as Abdul Jalil spoke.

Protesters then threw stones and metal bars at the building, breaking windows, before storming the headquarters.

It's reported that one protester left the building carrying a set of loudspeakers and screaming: 'Spoils of war!'

They also damaged a vehicle used by Abdul Jalil.

Many of those who fought in the nine-month civil war that ended with the capture and killing of Gaddafi in October are unhappy with cash compensations promised by the government, saying it does not cover their basic needs.

The NTC is currently grappling with a range of problems including efforts to disband dozens of powerful militias that effectively control the country.

Security officials want to integrate them into the military and police forces, but militia chiefs have shown little interest in surrendering their arms.

It's not the first time NTC officials have been targeted.

On Thursday, Abdul Hafiz Ghoga, Vice President of the NTC, was roughed up by university students in Benghazi.

He was surrounded by a crowd of angry protesters and jostled before he was pulled away to safety.

**Military Resistance Available In PDF Format**  
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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

### **Ethiopian Jews Protest Against Israeli Racism**

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

19 January 2012 BBC

Thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets of Jerusalem, in protest against what they say is discrimination against Jews of Ethiopian origin.

The protest came after a recent report in the Israeli media that landlords in southern Israel had agreed not to rent or sell their real estate to Jews of Ethiopian origin.

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### **Zionist Occupation Forces Kidnap Another Palestinian Legislator: 26 Elected Legislators Currently Imprisoned**



PLC Head Dr. Aziz Dweik - Image Palestine-Inf

January 21, 2012 by Saed Bannoura, IMEMC & Agencies

Palestinian Researcher, specialized in detainees' affairs, Riyadh Al-Ashqar, reported that the number of elected Palestinian legislators currently imprisoned by Israel arrived to 26 after Israel kidnapped on Friday the head of the Legislative Council, Dr. Aziz Dweik, and Legislator Khaled Tafesh.

Dweik was kidnapped after being held for two hours at an Israeli military roadblock, while Tafesh was kidnapped after the army broke into his home in Bethlehem, and violently searched it; soldiers also confiscated the personal computer and the mobile phone of Tafesh.

Al-Ashqar further stated that Israel has recently stepped-up its attacks against the elected Palestinian officials, especially when taken into consideration that most of the detained legislators were imprisoned, released, and re-arrested in 2011 without any charges as they are confined under administrative detention orders that are frequently renewed for several months each time without the need to file any charges against them under the so-called secret file that even the defense attorney cannot have access to.

He said that the kidnapping of the elected legislators, especially the head of the Legislative Council, is carried out under direct political decisions made by the office of Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and not by regional military commanders.

Al-Ashqar stated that arrests targeting legislators, including former and active ministers, prove that Israel disrespects international laws, especially laws and regulations regarding the protection of democratically elected officials.

The official concluded by stating that the arrest of Dweik comes at this sensitive time due to the fact that Israel aims at foiling, or at least delaying, the implementation of the Palestinian reconciliation and national unity agreement that would ensure a united Palestinian political leadership for the Palestinian Authority, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

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

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?**

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**Whether in Afghanistan or at 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**

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

**“We Support The Free Army  
Until Assad’s Brigades Are  
Eliminated”**

**“Men From The Free Syrian Army  
Are Posted Everywhere”**

**“In The Suburbs, There Are  
Demonstrations Every Evening That  
Sometimes End With Protesters  
Being Killed”**



# **“The Uprising Is Moving In On The Capital”**

## **[Eyewitness Report On The Revolutionary Movement Against The Loathsome Tyrants Of The Syrian Dictatorship]**



“We support the Free (Syrian) Army until Assad’s brigades are eliminated – signed Douma” (suburb of Damascus) Image by Layla al-Zubaidi

**I ask whether they think that civil war is unavoidable.**

**The student from Deraa says that they cannot tell how everything will turn out.**

**His comrade from Idlib disagrees: “Of course we do know which way things are going – it’s only that we do not want to picture it yet.”**

Jan 17 2012 by Layla Al-Zubaidi, Jadaliyya.com. The author has not used any real names in this piece.

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The normal pace of everyday life may surprise those who venture to visit Damascus these days. From the city center with its vibrant markets, the idea that observers from

the Arab League are visiting the city to investigate serious human rights abuses seems almost unreal.

Yet, something has changed.

In cafés and taxis people talk about politics, and though they do not do it at the top of their voices, such talk is no longer limited to hushed remarks.

Massive explosions are disrupting the illusion that the city will remain untouched.

And in the suburbs, there are demonstrations every evening that sometimes end with protesters being killed. The uprising is moving in on the capital.

We get a call – there is a “party” this evening in Harista, a Damascus suburb where people are taking to the streets because of unemployment and the humiliations that security forces have been dealing out for decades.

Activists pick us up and we proceed to a so-called “safe house.” Five young men receive us in a living room brightly lit by neon lamps; the curtains are drawn and the air is thick with cigarette smoke. An older man joins us and the others greet him respectfully.

Ahmad S. is one of the leaders of the protests in Harista.

**He explains that the recent attacks, which the regime blames on al-Qaeda and the protesters, have actually been staged by the regime itself. He asks why those attacks happened when they did, right when the Arab observers arrived, and why al-Qaeda never claimed responsibility. How was it that state television was on the scene of the crime right away?**

“They are trying to terrify the population and to portray us as Islamist terrorists.”

I ask him what he expects from the Arab League observers.

“What is there to expect?” he replies. “Shouldn’t the mission be aborted as soon as another bullet is fired? Every day twenty, thirty, forty people are being killed. The only reason the regime signed the agreement is to buy time.”

A young deserter from the Syrian army serves us tea.

Some activists only leave the apartment every evening to join the rallies; others do not go out for days. They have not seen their families for months and switch residences every couple of weeks.

The TV is tuned to “Orient News,” a Syrian Opposition channel broadcasting from Dubai.

### **“An Unfiltered View Of The Regime’s Brutality”**

**Here one can obtain an unfiltered view of the regime’s brutality. The coverage, filmed using mobile phones, is chilling: bones breaking under the boots of**



**security personnel, backs showing streaks from lashings, and children in pools of blood.**

The men smile when I ask whether the revolution can remain peaceful. One says that nobody was in favor of violence and that the revolution had remained peaceful for a long time. "But the regime kills our people. They shoot at women and children." Still, there is no money to fight back, to buy arms.

Ahmad S. takes an old revolver from a drawer beneath the TV; it is a Mauser. "How should we defend ourselves with guns like these?" he asks. He inserts a bullet in the cylinder, spins it, aims at the TV, and laughs. "This thing's good for nothing but Russian roulette."

We wait for a call from a driver who is supposed to get us to the rallies in Harista.

The deserter looks out the window and is reprimanded by Ahmad S.: Doesn't he know the curtains are supposed to stay drawn when it's dark outside and they have the lights on? Finally, the call comes in. Ahmad S. gets up and explains to me how to get there. I am supposed to walk ahead of him by 200 meters. When we arrive, a small white car is waiting for us and Ahmad S. and the driver exchange news: Who's been arrested today?

Are there more dead?

The driver knows his way around. Avoiding military checkpoints, he passes underneath empty bridges, down partially inundated tunnels, and along unlit country lanes.

Coming from Harista's central square, a crowd of people is already on the move.

### **"Men From The Free Syrian Army Are Posted Everywhere"**

**Men from the Free Syrian Army are posted everywhere. Although insurgents are trying increasingly to smuggle arms into the country, thus far only the men of the Free Syrian Army know how to use them, my escort says.**

As the only woman in the crowd, I am asked to stay close to him. Should demonstrators take me for an informer, I might be attacked.

**A young man is leading the march. Others carry him on their shoulders, and through a megaphone he chants: "Down with Bashar now! The Arab League's gift to us means slow death!" The march stops in front of Harista's small Christian church. The leader chants: "Christians listen! Christians listen! We wish you a blessed new year. The Syrian people are one, be they Muslim or Christian. We are one, we are one!"**

**So far, the Syrian churches are officially supporting the regime, out of fear that Islamic parties may take its place.**

**Nevertheless, many Christians have joined the opposition.**

**My escort explains how important it is to dispel their fears: “For decades the regime has told them that it alone will be able to protect them. In reality it is playing one religion against another and does everything to divide the people.”**

Just after the march gets moving again, a shot rings out.

The crowd scatters.

We are carried along into hiding behind a car. More shots. My escort draws me into a shoe shop and immediately the shutters go down. Sarcastically the salesman asks, “what size shoes do you need?” and offers us a drink of water to calm us down. On the streets all is silent, but there is light visible behind the shutters. Ten minutes later my escort receives a call.

Three demonstrators have been shot; six or seven have been arrested. The party is over.

We have to get out of the area, since it is beginning to swarm with security forces.

Down a side street, another car is waiting for us.

A member of the Free Syrian Army opens a small barricade consisting of nothing but an armchair and a traffic sign and shows us the way. Then he quickly disappears in a different direction.

### **“They Also Burned The Hand Of One Student On An Oven In Order To Make Him Admit That He Had Participated In A Rally”**

A man gets into the car with us and invites us to his house for tea. Mohammed U. is the leader of the Harista Coordination Committee.

As we arrive at his flat, the power goes out. “This is how they punish unruly districts,” he explains. Since the protests began, power has been cut for hours at a time, and telephone and internet lines are being disconnected. In the dark living room, his small daughter holds a flashlight above my notepad to enable me to write.

His sixteen-year-old son recounts how the security forces came to his school, arrested the director, and slapped a female teacher in the face.

**They also burned the hand of one student on an oven in order to make him admit that he had participated in a rally.**

Because of Mohammed U.’s activities, the son himself had been detained by officers and thrown into jail for a week.

**Was he tortured, I ask. “No, only beaten” he answers almost apologetically, as if beating does not qualify as torture.**

All of Mohammed U.'s brothers have been jailed as well. He asks, "Now, if a regime is really interested in dialogue and resolution, will it jail and torture innocent relatives and shoot peaceful demonstrators while an observer mission is in the country?"

The next day, we receive the news that a member of the Free Syrian Army will be buried in the Duma suburb of Damascus, and we decide to attend the funeral. Suleiman A., an activist from Duma, picks us up and instructs us: "I am being searched for, dead or alive. So should we get stopped, leave the talking to me."

I put on a headscarf, as Duma is known to be an especially conservative neighborhood, one where women even cover their faces.

Suleiman A. is the owner of a leather factory, and was a preacher until he was suspended in 2005 for speaking about democracy in the mosque. I ask him at what point he joined the revolution. "Right away, on the 15th," is his reply. Does that mean the beginning of the Syrian uprising in March? I inquire. "No," he laughs, "on the 15th of December, when the revolution in Tunisia broke out."

Right from the start, it had been clear to him that the democracy movement would take hold in Syria as well. Consequently, he closed down his leather factory and went underground. His wife and daughter moved in with her parents. In order to support the family, his wife sells some of her jewelry now and then.

While a part of Harasta's population still supports the regime, Duma is almost united with twice as many inhabitants.

Here, the first sit-in of the uprising took place, five days after protests started in Deraa. After a history of resistance against Ottoman and French rule, cursing the Baath Party has become a habit, Suleiman A. says.

Duma was one of the strongholds of the Muslim Brotherhood, and when Hama was bombed in 1982, security forces arrested hundreds of cadres there. The regime cracks down on Duma more relentlessly than other places, he believes, because here they do not have supporters to lose. And although the inhabitants of Duma are no paupers, underdevelopment and neglect by the government is all too plain to see.

"What did we get from Bashar's supposedly socialist reign apart from private universities?" he ponders, "What about schools and hospitals?" We pass through the illegal settlements where most of the protests take place.

The atmosphere at the funeral is somber. Shortly after our arrival, young men begin to form a funeral procession. They shout, "The people demand the proclamation of jihad!" Suleiman A. guesses my thoughts: "We do not want an Islamic Caliphate," he explains. "But the situation in Duma is much worse than in other places. Every day people are being killed. And this isn't a demonstration, it's a funeral."

Since the beginning of the uprising, the regime has become afraid of funeral processions.

Today, dozens of documents have to be obtained from the security forces for a funeral, and, officially, only four men are allowed to follow the coffin. Suleiman A. comments,

“Isn't it strange? We are burying a martyr who was shot and killed during the funeral of a martyr – who in turn was killed during a funeral.”

My clumsily arranged headscarf shows clearly that I am not from Duma, and quickly a crowd of men forms around me.

The father of the man killed tells how security forces abducted his son and how his lifeless body was dropped off at the house with a sutured wound lengthwise across the torso. One man draws up his sleeve, another bares his shoulder – both of them show burn marks from electroshock and stubbed-out cigarettes. Then more shots ring out and we have to run.

The men follow me running, shouting, “Do remember to write everything down! The observers don't come to us. You have to write everything down!”

It is night again and our escort wants to return to Damascus, as it would be too dangerous for him to stay in Duma. For months he has been hiding in the fields around Damascus or in the inner city. On the way back, he asks me to visit the hotel where the observers from the Arab League are staying in order to convince them to hear the stories of the activists from Duma -- there is only one phone number for the Arab League's mission and there is no getting through; as a woman I could easily pretend to be a tourist.

I point out that the hotel is guarded by heavily armed security forces and he sighs, laughing, “Observers being observed – so what is there for us to gain?”

In the city center we pass by shops and people sitting in cafés and restaurants smoking their hookahs.

I make one last visit with a group of activists and students who have gone into hiding in Damascus. From here, they provide food, medicine and clothes to the battered neighborhoods of the city.

**“It is not true that nothing is going on in Damascus”, one of them tells me, “It is only the center that is still calm. But Duma for example is almost as bad as Homs.”**

**A young, exhausted-looking man is a member of the Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Council in the city of Homs.**

**He commutes between his workplace in Damascus and Homs and has visited a number of Arab countries to garner support.**

**With its almost parastate structures, the Revolutionary Council is able to assist 10,000 families.**

Part of its support comes from Syria's Muslim Brotherhood, part from the business community and other donors. He pours us some wine. “We do need help urgently, otherwise we may become even more dependent on the Muslim Brotherhood. Now Salafi groups abroad are also beginning to offer us support but that is something we do not need.”

One member of the group is an Alawite student who has been expelled from university for her political activism. She is helping Alawite families from Homs, supporters of the uprising, who had to take shelter in Damascus. "Within the opposition Alawites are having an especially hard time," she explains. "For the regime they are traitors, and it deals with them harshly. They are also in trouble within their own community, and the others don't trust them either."

Among themselves, the activists discuss taking up arms, something that occupies them more than anything else at the moment.

**They think that, should the Arab League's mission be unable to stop the violence, more and more Syrians will be calling for armed resistance.**

"We do not like to talk about taking up arms, as we need international support. Yet, if such support is not forthcoming, we will be left to our own devices."

They admit that the current stalemate is making them bored. "I'm wearing the same jeans for months and I'm still walking in my summer shoes. The revolution has taken over our lives. How long can we continue like that?" asks a student from Deraa. The army has knocked down his parents' house in Deraa and his family has fled to Turkey.

**He remembers the first three months of the revolution as the most emotional and beautiful ones. "We are now entering the anxious phase," he says, "because the revolution is transforming into armed struggle."**

I ask whether they think that civil war is unavoidable.

The student from Deraa says that they cannot tell how everything will turn out.

His comrade from Idlib disagrees: "Of course we do know which way things are going – it's only that we do not want to picture it yet."

**MORE:**

**“The Capital, Damascus, Which Had Remained Calm For Months, Has Been Carved Up With Checkpoints”  
“The Government Losing Control Over Some Regions And Its Authority Ebbing In The Suburbs Of The Capital And Parts Of Major Cities”**

January 14, 2012 By ANTHONY SHADID, New York Times [Excerpts]

BEIRUT, Lebanon — The failure of an Arab League mission to stanch violence in Syria, an international community with little leverage and a government as defiant as its opposition is in disarray have left Syria descending into a protracted, chaotic and perhaps unnegotiable conflict.

The opposition speaks less of prospects for the fall of President Bashar al-Assad and more about a civil war that some argue has already begun, with the government losing control over some regions and its authority ebbing in the suburbs of the capital and parts of major cities like Homs and Hama.

Even the capital, Damascus, which had remained calm for months, has been carved up with checkpoints and its residents have been frightened by the sounds of gunfire.

In a town about a half-hour drive from Damascus, the police station was recently burned down and in retaliation electricity and water were cut off, diplomats say.

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## Thousands Of Romanian Opposition Supporters Organised By The Leftist Opposition Rallied In Bucharest To Demand The Government's Resignation



Demonstrators shout slogans while holding a banner mocking Romania's President Traian Basescu during a protest against the government in central Bucharest January 17, 2012. Riot police estimated that a total 13,000 protesters have hit the streets across the country since Friday and Bucharest suffered Romania's worst unrest in more than a decade at the weekend, when dozens were hurt. REUTERS/Bogdan Cristel





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## **Anti-Government Protesters React To The Departure Of Yemen's Dictator**



Anti-government protesters react to the departure of Yemen's outgoing dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh from the country, in Sanaa January 22, 2012. Saleh left for Oman on Sunday evening on his way to the United States for medical treatment, Yemeni officials said. REUTERS/Khaled Abdullah

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## **Deluge In Defense Of Unrestricted Internet Rocks Congress: Yesterday's Actions Generated A Massive Anti-SOPA Backlash, And Many Senators And Representatives Reneged Their Support**

Jan 19 2012 By Rebecca J. Rosen, The Atlantic [Excerpts]

Yesterday saw the biggest day of online protest in the English world in history, with thousands of websites temporarily dark and many more displaying prominent banners of



opposition to the anti-piracy bills now in Congress. Many of the most-visited sites participated -- Google and Wikipedia most prominently -- and more than 25,000 WordPress blogs did as well, with another 12,500 sporting a "Stop Censorship" ribbon.

The New York Times called the organization a sign of the tech industry's "coming of age." Today, as the Internet flits back to its normal operations, and the dust of the protests settles, here's an accounting of the day's effect.

When Wikipedia went back online, it announced an impressive figure: Its protest page had been viewed 162 million times -- that's more than five times the number of views English Wikipedia receives on a normal Wednesday.

In a thank-you note to supporters, the Wikimedia Foundation celebrated, "The Wikipedia blackout is over -- and you have spoken. More than 162 million people saw our message asking if you could imagine a world without free knowledge. You said no.

**"You shut down Congress's switchboards. You melted their servers. From all around the world your messages dominated social media and the news. Millions of people have spoken in defense of a free and open Internet."**

Throughout the day, lawmakers were hearing it from constituents.

More than 7 million people signed Google's petition. Wikipedia said that more than 8 million people used its tool to find the contact information of those who represent them in Congress.

**The Senate's website reportedly faced technical difficulties as people tried to contact their senators.**

**In response, seven co-sponsors of the Senate bill withdrew their support. PIPA continues to have more supporters than opponents (37 to 21 as of this writing), but neither constitutes a majority.**

The bill is still scheduled to be brought up for a vote next week.

**The House bill, SOPA, now has far more opponents than supporters, and was already on its deathbed before yesterday's protest.**

The loss in support for both bills has come mostly from Republicans.

**Mike Masnick at TechDirt writes that the Democrats are risking the support of "an entire generation of voters" with their intransigence on this issue.**

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## **Anonymous Strikes Back After Feds Shut Down Piracy Hub Megaupload:**

# **U.S. Department Of Justice Knocked Offline; Websites Of The Recording Industry Association Of America, Motion Picture Association Of America And Universal Music Also Went Down Thursday Afternoon**

January 20, 2012 By Laurie Segall, CNNMoney [Excerpts]

In one of the U.S. government's largest anti-piracy crackdowns ever, federal agents on Thursday arrested the leaders of and shut down Megaupload.com, a popular hub for illegal media downloads.

Hours later, Megaupload's fans turned the table on the feds. "Hactivist" collective Anonymous said it set its sights on the U.S. Department of Justice and apparently knocked the agency's website offline.

"We are having website problems, but we're not sure what it's from," a DOJ spokeswoman told CNNMoney.

The DOJ website glitches came soon after various Twitter accounts associated with Anonymous took aim at the agency.

Anonymous's favorite weapon for these attacks is what's called a "distributed denial of service" (DDoS) attack, which directs a flood of traffic to a website and temporarily crashes it by overwhelming its servers. It doesn't actually involve any hacking or security breaches.

"One thing is certain: EXPECT US! #Megaupload" read one tweet from AnonOps that went out mid-afternoon.

One hour later, the same account tweeted a victory message: "Tango down! <http://universalmusic.com> & <http://www.justice.gov/> #Megaupload"

It was the largest attack ever by Anonymous, according to an Anonymous representative, with 5,635 people using a networking tool called a "low orbit ion cannon." A LOIC is software tool that aims a massive flood of traffic at a targeted site.

Universal Music's website also went down Thursday afternoon. The music company had been locked in a legal battle with Megaupload over a YouTube video that featured many of Universal Music's signed artists promoting Megaupload's site.

The websites of the Recording Industry Association of America and Motion Picture Association of America went down Thursday afternoon as well. On Twitter, AnonOps -- one of the main communications channels for the leaderless Anonymous collective -- took credit for the crashes.

By Friday morning, all but one of the subjects of Anonymous' attack were back online -- including the FBI's website, Warner Music Group and the U.S. Copyright Office. Only Universal Music remained unavailable, as the company took the site down for "maintenance."

Yesterday's actions generated a massive anti-SOPA backlash, and many senators and representatives reneged their support.



## 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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

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Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

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