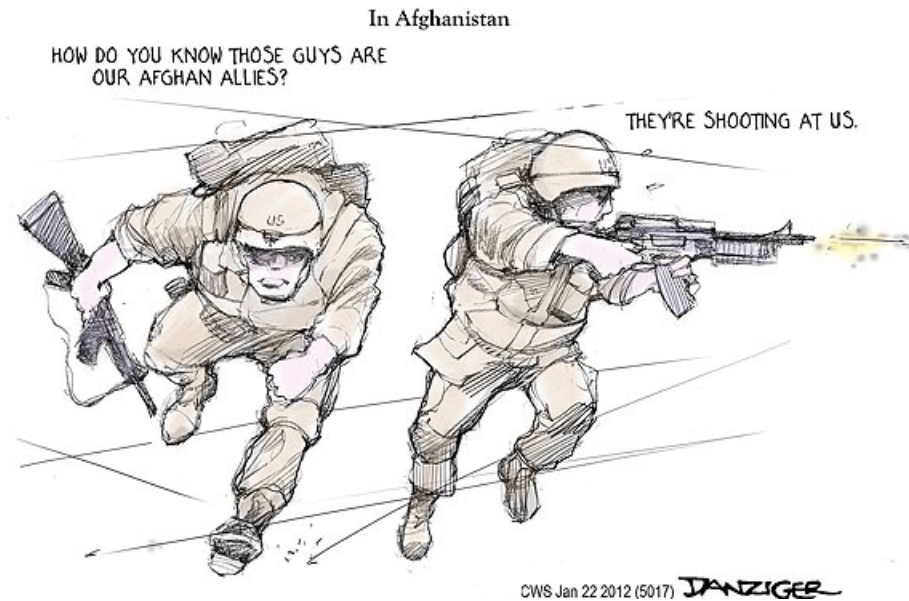


Military Resistance 10A25



“Thousands Of Pilots, Mechanics And Intelligence Officers From Yemen’s Air Force Marched Through The Capital On Saturday And Sunday To Demand The Ouster Of Their Commander”

“Chanting Angry Slogans Such As ‘Mohammed Saleh Is A Killer,’ The Units Held Up Banners Identifying Them From At Least Five Separate Divisions And Two Separate Bases”

“The Crowd Jeered The Commander, And A Lieutenant Shocked The Crowd By Throwing His Shoe At Him, A Sign Of Extreme Disrespect”



Troops on Saturday in San'a marched to demand the dismissal of the Yemeni air force's commander. Reuters

Last week, Mohammed Saleh called a meeting of commanders and junior officers at Dulaimi to berate them for speaking out against him, according to people who attended the meeting.

The crowd jeered the commander, and a lieutenant shocked the crowd by throwing his shoe at him, a sign of extreme disrespect, they said.

JANUARY 30, 2012 By MARGARET COKER, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

SAN'A, Yemen — Thousands of pilots, mechanics and intelligence officers from Yemen's air force marched through the capital on Saturday and Sunday to demand the ouster of their commander, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's half-brother, heightening tensions in this fractured country as its new coalition government struggles to assert power.

The escalation of the protests against the Saleh family, which started a week ago, underscore the weaknesses of the nascent new government and the diplomatic deal

designed to remove the longtime leader and usher in the first handover of power in Yemen's modern history.

The document details a road map to remove the president, but is vague about the fate of his relatives who command the country's elite forces, including the air force, Republican Guards — quick-deployment units that have had extensive training by the U.S. — and special forces.

The air force protesters say they are trying to force the government to confront that issue with their demand for the removal of Mohammed Saleh, their commander.

They assert that the growing numbers of officers on the street, coupled with an isolated protest this weekend within the Republican Guards, controlled by the president's son, show the time is ripe to move against the rest of the family. President Saleh left Yemen on Jan. 23 and arrived in the U.S. for unspecified medical treatment on Saturday.

"It's not enough that Ali Abdullah Saleh has left. His whole family has to leave, too," said Gen. Abdul Aziz al-Muhayya, the air force's deputy commander for operations, who was leading the marchers on Saturday. "What good is a new government if they can't make this happen?"

There are some indications that the Saleh commanders are moving to counter the threats against them.

At least 60 air force officers have been jailed at Mohammed Saleh's request since last week, according to several demonstrators, including two men who had been released on Saturday.

Ahmed Ali Saleh, the president's son, has given his Republican Guards a 20% salary bump and has jailed at least 500 men for their antiregime political views, according to a senior security official.

The Saleh-controlled military units are the same forces that the U.S. relies on for counterterrorism cooperation.

During the course of the yearlong anti-regime popular protests, top Yemeni army commanders and whole brigades mutinied against President Saleh in support of the demonstrators.

But the military units headed by his relatives, including the air force, Republican Guards and the National Security Bureau, remained intact.

They used their superior training and weaponry — much of it coming from U.S. military aid — in retaliatory attacks against the demonstrators.

Some of the most deadly crackdowns occurred in late summer, when air force jets bombed opposition positions in Arhab, a region just north of the capital, where tribal fighters who had sided with the protesters had overrun military bases belonging to the Republican Guards, run by the president's oldest son, and Central Security, commanded by his nephew.

Tribal leaders from Arhab say the sorties killed hundreds of people, including civilians, although those figures haven't been independently verified.

Morale sank after the Arhab raids. But the protesters say they didn't feel safe enough to publicly challenge their commander until President Saleh left the country.

After President Saleh's departure from San'a last week, air force officers said they felt safe enough to make public their criticism against Mohammed Saleh.

At that point, internal grumbling turned into a public uproar, especially at the Dulaimi Air Base in San'a and the Tariq Air Base in Taiz, a city about 125 miles southwest of the capital.

On Saturday and on Sunday, more than 1,000 uniformed air force officers marched in formation in front of the vice president's office.

Chanting angry slogans such as "Mohammed Saleh Is a Killer," the units held up banners identifying them from at least five separate divisions and two separate bases.

Many of the marchers said they were fed up with what they see as corruption within the Saleh family and the resulting deterioration of their fighting forces.

"We want to build real institutions, powerful security forces, that are capable of defending our nation, not exist as political patronage, We want to serve our nation, not an individual," said Gen. Muhayya.

Demonstrators say tension within the air force has been building for months.

Last week, Mohammed Saleh called a meeting of commanders and junior officers at Dulaimi to berate them for speaking out against him, according to people who attended the meeting.

The crowd jeered the commander, and a lieutenant shocked the crowd by throwing his shoe at him, a sign of extreme disrespect, they said.

Gen. Saleh then called in reinforcements from the Republican Guards.

At least 60 officers were arrested, and Republican Guard units now control both of the air bases, say the air force demonstrators.

MORE:

**“The Battle Moved Ever Closer
To President Bashar Al-Assad's
Seat Of Power”**

Dissident Troops “Positioned In A Suburb No More Than Five Miles From The Presidential Palace In Damascus”

“Activists Reported Fighting In Ain Tarma, 2½ Miles From Damascus”

“The Regime’s Loyal Units Were Becoming Severely Overstretched, Risking The Government’s Defense Of The Capital Itself”



1.30.2012: A Syrian government army tank burs in a street of the city of Rastan, 20km (12 miles) north of Homs. (AFP Photo/)



The retreat, followed by a cease-fire negotiated by Assef Shawkat — Syria's deputy defense minister and the president's brother-in-law — marked a surprising first for Syria's opposition.

It left the town under the control of rebel troops and town councils that sprang up, with just state police allowed to stay under the negotiated cease-fire, residents said.

JANUARY 30, 2012 By NOUR MALAS, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Syria's government moved to defend Damascus as its military fought rebel troops outside the capital for a third day on Sunday, as the battle moved ever closer to President Bashar al-Assad's seat of power.

Rounds of fighting rocked at least four suburbs for most of Sunday, residents and activists said.

They described a government offensive to regain control of restive towns around Damascus that have become the latest concentration of armed resistance against Mr. Assad's regime.

The sustained fighting appears to suggest the government is struggling to maintain control of some areas around the capital, 11 months into a conflict in which military and security forces had repeatedly crushed protests — and a gradually militarized opposition movement — across the country.

Analysts said it likely also suggests the regime's loyal units were becoming severely overstretched, risking the government's defense of the capital itself as it increasingly deploys troops to the suburbs.

Activists said at least 50 tanks moved into al-Ghouta, the city's eastern agricultural belt, on Sunday, firing artillery and rockets while snipers shot from rooftops.

Communications, electricity and water were cut off from a handful of towns, several activist groups said. Some activists said bodies lay in the street.

Closer to the capital, opposition fighters loosely organized under the dissident Free Syrian Army claimed some successes.

In Douma, a suburb some nine miles from Damascus, they said they wrested control from the military.

Less than four miles from Damascus's old city in Arbeen, dissident troops said they burned a tank and killed three government snipers.

The government said terrorists in the Damascus suburb of Sahnaya on Sunday remotely detonated a bomb that targeted a bus carrying soldiers, killing six and injuring six more.

In Zabadani, the first Damascus suburb to slip out of government control last week, residents said government forces broke a cease-fire by shooting and killing a Free Syrian Army soldier, angering the resort town's remaining residents — many had already fled. In response, the dissident army attacked two security barricades on the outskirts.

Damascus was wrenched from its relative insulation from the violence roiling Syria's other cities some 10 days ago, when government troops pulled out of Zabadani, a mountainous resort town about 20 miles northwest of Damascus, after days of fighting with dissident troops.

The retreat, followed by a cease-fire negotiated by Assef Shawkat — Syria's deputy defense minister and the president's brother-in-law — marked a surprising first for Syria's opposition.

It left the town under the control of rebel troops and town councils that sprang up, with just state police allowed to stay under the negotiated cease-fire, residents said.

That agreement broke down on Sunday when government forces killed a dissident soldier on a road out of town.

But as both sides held their fire at nightfall, Zabadani hung in what one resident described as a "cautious calm."

Zabadani's mountainous terrain made it easier for dissident soldiers to launch attacks on the military, some soldiers said.

The military pounded a string of suburbs as it fought to push back rebels and the armed fighters — mostly residents — backing them, activists said.

"We can finally say the military balance is starting to shift in our favor," said a senior commander with the dissident army near Syria's border with Lebanon.

In another show of force, dissident troops said they were positioned in a suburb no more than five miles from the presidential palace in Damascus.

Their accounts couldn't be independently verified, but residents of two suburbs less than four miles from the center of Damascus's old city confirmed opposition fighters continued to fight the army Sunday night.

Activists reported fighting in Ain Tarma, 2½ miles from Damascus.

On Sunday in Damascus, reports of the two, often conflicting faces of the capital were stark. Activists reported tanks guarding central squares across the capital and the sounds of shooting and explosions near the city center. Security around the city has been tight, but the military has yet to deploy around large public squares. Residents in nearby parts of the capital said the streets appeared to be calm.

MORE:

“In The Last Few Hours Units Stationed In The Periphery Of Damascus Have Defected With Their Military Vehicles”

“Two Thirds Of The Syrian Army Is Being Kept In Barracks For Fear Of Immediate Mass Defection If They Are Deployed Against The People”

“The Road To The Damascus International Airport Was Cut Off For A Few Hours Apparently Due To Skirmishes Between The Assad Forces And FSA”

“No To Foreign Intervention”

For many weeks there has been news of the formation of popular committees and revolutionary councils in areas like Dar'aa, Homs, Der Al-Zor and Idleb, but no concrete details have been available on this matter.

Today we saw a glimpse of this process for the first time with a declaration coming from "The Free Local Council in Zabadani".

29 January 2012 Written by Mousa Ladqani; Marxist.com via Uruknet

The Syrian revolution has entered a higher stage in the last few weeks.

The number and size of demonstrations have reach record numbers, towns are falling under the control of the defected soldiers - including areas surrounding the capital Damascus, and embryonic forms of popular power are appearing on the stage in the form of popular councils.

After dying down for a period, the demonstrations in Syria have come back to a record level in terms of their size and geographical distribution.

The Syrian Revolution 2011 facebook-page estimates the number of demonstrators to range from 3 to 5 million on Fridays and the number of locations to be in tens and hundreds covering the whole country.

Most notable development is that the protests are becoming a daily phenomena in many areas.

Significantly the movement is expanding inside the two largest cities of the country, Damascus and Aleppo involving neighbourhoods like Al-Mazeh in downtown Damascus and Salah Al-Din inside Aleppo.

The forces of the regime had not been able, after trying for weeks, to bring under their control areas such as Baba-Amrou in Homs City and Khan-Shekhun in the Idleb countryside.

Today, officer Maher Al-Na'imi, the spokesperson of the FSA, spoke to Al-Arabia TV said that the forces of the FSA have been strengthened and emboldened, and they continue to be strengthened with fresh daily splits in the armed forces.

He mentioned that in the last few hours units stationed in the periphery of Damascus have defected with their military vehicles (tanks etc.). If confirmed this would be the first time soldiers defect with vehicles and heavy artillery.

Al-Na'imi threatened dire consequences if the regime does not stop its attack on the surrounding areas of Damascus or if the air force is used against the defected soldiers, reminding the regime that the presidential palace is within the reach of the FSA, only 8 Kilometers away.

However, a military expert from Beirut explained that the regime is refraining from using the air force fearing that the air force itself might defect!

Another expert speaking from Cairo made the point that two thirds of the Syrian Army is being kept in barracks for fear of immediate mass defection if they are deployed against the people. Al-Na'imi added that they had information that already around 1500 army officers are in jail due to Syrian intelligence forces being suspicious of their loyalties.

Many of these informations remain unconfirmed, but there are growing indications that they reflect the real situation on the ground. This would indicate a turning point in the Syrian revolution.

The regime is frightened. Troops and tanks were heavily deployed inside Damascus for the first time today, and there are also reports of a number of explosions took place in the Abasi'yn square and Al-Sabeh Bahrat square in Damascus.

Also, the road to the Damascus International Airport was cut off for a few hours apparently due to skirmishes between the Assad forces and FSA.

In parallel, the regime deployed its thugs in mass numbers in Aleppo after mass demonstrations broke out in neighbourhoods such as Salah Al-Din and Al-Fourdos.

It was reported that scuffles broke out with demonstrators fighting back with stones and their bare hands. One of the regime thugs was reportedly killed by demonstrators and a security bus was wrecked.

In addition to what seems as a rapid collapse of the forces of the regime in the last hours, interesting news have come from the town of Zabadani.

For many weeks there has been news of the formation of popular committees and revolutionary councils in areas like Dar'aa, Homs, Der Al-Zor and Idleb, but no concrete details have been available on this matter.

Today we saw a glimpse of this process for the first time with a declaration coming from "The Free Local Council in Zabadani".

This declaration is translated in the following paragraph as we received it:

"The Free Local Council in Zabadani:

"Having lived in freedom for two months after its youths repelled the violent attack of the Assad gangs aimed at destroying it and sabotaging it, and after persisting in standing in the face of any possible attack upon it, Al-Zabadani sought to build its own democratic experience....."

"The people of the town gathered to set up an election system based on family affiliation so that each 1000 citizen get one seat.

"The families agreed to form groups of around 1000 people each, and all components and sects of society participated in the process, most notably the Christians, where a priest delivered a touching speech in the constituent assembly.

“Each family or group of families were asked to elect a representative for each of their 1000 members and a general commission was formed, out of which 60 ran for the election of the local council resulting in the formation of a council of 28 members distributed on a number of offices.

“They elected a president and a secretary and formed a number of offices: political bureau, financial bureau, health and rescue bureau, military and security council, administration and general services bureau. The council and the offices have assumed their duties and the general strike has seized. (apparently there had been an ongoing general strike in the area – ML)

“The schools have reopened their doors and the new flags have been raised, saluted every morning together with slogans for the fall of Bashar Al-Assad and his miserable criminal regime.

“The Imams of the mosques were replaced by ones belonging to the people and committed to the revolution.

“A special branch for security and investigations, popular tribunals, and a detention center were formed.....the vehicles of the Free Army put on their special plates and started patrolling and forming groups to control and watch for any potential hostile forces.

“Committees record the entrance and exit of strangers. Everyone is participating in a massive workshop to prepare what is needed to repel a potential attack, including military, food, and health needs, and also to accommodate refugees asking for safety from the brutality of Shabiha (thugs) and their regime. Also, to provide supplies other ruined cities and villages and help them to be liberated.

“The city council appointed by the regime was prohibited under the penalty of detention and trial of any authority that does not come to exist based on free elections.

“The streets and squares were renamed by the names of the dignified martyrs.

“The clinic of the opposition figure, Dr. Kamal Labawani, was chosen as the centre for the free city council since it is located by the major mosque in the old commercial city centre where demonstrations start and where the first martyrs fell.

“Democracy is a new experience and a new born baby that needs attention and everyone knows that they are lacking experience and culture of democracy, and that it is necessary to move to the system of parties.

“But first an atmosphere of freedom is necessary for different party points of view to form and crystallize.....

“It is a start, and a successful start if God wills.

“We want it to be the beginning of the liberation of all lands and people of the homeland who are dear heroes deserving all good, respect and support.....and God will bring success.....”

What we are seeing in Zabadani is obviously the emergence of an alternative power.

The regime no longer has any means of asserting its authority and the masses have created their own democratically elected organs of power.

In each and every revolution in the history of capitalism, starting with the Paris commune of 1871, such forms of council power have appeared. In Russian they were called "soviets". They formed the basis for the revolutionary government after the 1917 revolution and thus the "Soviet Union". Similar councils have also appeared in the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions. It is unclear if similar councils have developed to the same extent in other areas of Syria but it is likely.

These councils mean the beginning of a situation of dual power, at least at a local level.

Unfortunately, the petty-bourgeois opposition politicians who have appointed themselves as "leaders" of the people, never believe or trust the masses. More concretely, they are afraid of the independent movement of the masses as it threatens their own "leadership" position.

Still, after seeing these marvellous development and the iron determination of the masses, the Syrian National Council (SNC), and the General Commission of the Syrian Revolution (GCSR) are both calling for foreign intervention *to save the revolution from being militarized!*

At a time when the masses are taking the initiative and arming themselves, creating their own power, these gentlemen of the liberal opposition are appealing for "peace," an appeal which amounts to leaving the people unarmed in the face of brutal military repression.

Things are moving quickly. It is difficult to gauge precisely the stage the movement is at. What is clear to many activists in Syria is that there is no turning back. The developing dual power in Zabadani and other places can only be resolved in one of two ways: either the masses seize the initiative boldly, or the regime smashes the movement in blood.

The demands of the day are:

- A national general strike must be called immediately. Occupy work places, factories, and offices. Paralyze what remains of the power of the regime.
- It is time for a general armed insurrection. Mobilize the free soldiers. Arm the masses.

Appeal to the ranks and lower officers of the Army to defect and join the revolutionary people.

It is time to take Damascus.

•No to foreign intervention. The Syrian masses can and must complete the job themselves. Denounce the political leaders who keep sewing illusions among the people. The masses are more than capable of overthrowing Assad.

•From workers councils in all factories and workplaces.

•Democratically elected councils in every neighbourhood.

Link revolutionary councils from all villages, towns, cities and workplaces in a democratically elected national council of representatives expressing the will of the people and the interests of the revolution.

Down with impotent and bankrupt SNC and GCRS. For a revolutionary government based on committees of workers, farmers and youth.

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 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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Guardsman Injured In Deadly Blast Recovering

Jan 30, 2012 The Associated Press

HAMMOND, Ind. — The only survivor of a roadside bombing in Afghanistan that killed four members of an Indiana National Guard unit is recovering from surgery in which six titanium plates were implanted in his shattered face.

Relatives of Pvt. Doug Rachowicz said the 30-year-old Hammond soldier underwent the five-hour facial surgery Friday at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Kathy Rachowicz said her son has undergone multiple surgeries since the Jan. 6 roadside bombing in southern Afghanistan, but she said Friday's surgery was expected to be the final surgical procedure he'll need.

"Now he will start to heal," Rachowicz told The Times of Munster.

On Saturday, she said her son was able to walk, with help, for the first time since the blast. Kathy Rachowicz said her son hasn't spoken yet but that he was able to communicate Sunday with relatives using a pen and paper to write some notes.

She said he wrote "hi" and "what" and asking them questions about what was going on. He even asked who was going to do his taxes — something that indicates he is able to tell what time of the year it is.

"That's wonderful. I feel very blessed that he has comprehension at all," Kathy Rachowicz said.

She said her son hasn't been told that the four fellow soldiers riding in the military truck he was driving were killed in the blast.

Kathy Rachowicz said her son is persistent in asking what happened and his family is worried that the sad news will take a mental toll on him.

She said officials may inform her son sometime Monday of the deaths.

Spc. Brian J. Leonhardt, 21, of Merrillville; Spc. Robert J. Tauteris Jr., 44, of Hamlet; Staff Sgt. Jonathan M. Metzger, 32, of Indianapolis; and Spc. Christopher A. Patterson, 20, of Aurora, Ill., were killed in the explosion.

All four, along with Rachowicz, were members of the Valparaiso-based 713th Engineering Company.

Since the explosion, Rachowicz has been on pain medication constantly, his mother said. He's had pins placed in his hips and his nose was reset to repair his sinus area. He also has a tube in his throat to help him breathe, a back brace for his back injuries and his ankle is secured with a boot.

Despite her son's slow improvements, Rachowicz's two children haven't yet been able to visit or talk to their father.

Kathy Rachowicz said the family will plan a trip for them soon.

Family and friends are planning several benefits for the recovering soldier. The next one is a Feb. 6 taco dinner at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Hammond. Proceeds from that dinner will be donated to the Rachowicz family to help the soldier and his children with the recovery after he is released from the hospital, which could be up to seven months from now, his mother said.

"He's where he needs to be right now, and we will get him home as soon as we can," she said.

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

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

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



A U.S. soldier at the scene of an attack in Kandahar south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012. An attacker blew himself up at an entrance to the sprawling base for U.S. troops in southern Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)...

MILITARY NEWS

Wisconsin National Guards Still Cheated Out Of Combat Pay

Years Later:

**“And It’s Not Just Wisconsin
Soldiers. There Are Soldiers
Throughout The Nation Who Have
Not Received Their Benefits”
“Military Records Has Acknowledged
He Earned The Days But Says He Can
Use Them Only For Future Military
Deployments”
“Trouble Is He Retired From The Guard
In 2009. There Won’t Be Any Future
Deployments”**

Jan 29, 2012 By Patricia Wolff - The (Oshkosh, Wis.) Northwestern [Excerpts]

OSHKOSH, Wis. — Members of the Wisconsin National Guard 1157th Transportation Co. spent much of 2006 and 2007 on duty in Iraq carefully planning and executing nighttime fuel transports and securing the perimeter of their large base.

It was work fraught with the danger of roadside bombs and sniper fire. The convoys became routine over time, but the soldiers never let their guard down.

“You were always on edge watching for what was waiting around the next corner,” said Richard Vander Sande, one of the roughly 170 guardsmen in the unit.

The soldiers were in Iraq for just less than a year.

When they returned they were due extra pay or leave days for serving multiple deployments, but due to a glitch in the way the Army computed and dispersed those benefits, some of the soldiers never received them.

Soldiers accrue 30 leave days per year but obviously while deployed they are unable to use them. They can take them once they come home or they can be paid \$200 for each day of leave not taken.

The error regarding Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence payments was discovered in February 2010.

Some 78 Wisconsin National Guard soldiers in the 1157th are affected, said Lt. Col. Jackie Guthrie of the National Guard.

About half are currently in the military and half are out.

Vander Sande was paid for 14 days when he had 41 coming to him. He failed to receive pay for 27 days of leave he was never able to take because he retired from the National Guard after the Iraq deployment and resumed his work as a police officer. He works for Plymouth police as a patrol lieutenant. His wife works in the cafeteria at the local public school. The Vander Sandes have a 13-year-old child.

Based on the \$200 per day rate, Vander Sande, 42, is owed \$5,400. If he ever sees the money he'll use it to take a vacation with his family in Hawaii, he said.

"It's frustrating. For some it's the issue of the money. For some it's the principle. If soldiers are owed something, they should be paid," Vander Sande said.

"It's annoying to have to go through this struggle."

Guthrie agreed.

"This needs to be corrected. These soldiers did what was asked of them," she said. "And it's not just Wisconsin soldiers. There are soldiers throughout the nation who have not received their benefits."

William Butzlaff, 31, is owed pay for 22 days. If he ever sees the \$4,400, he'll use it to pay some bills. Butzlaff loves his job as a technician at Oshkosh Corp., but he doesn't expect to get rich there. The back pay from the Army would make a difference to him.

"It would definitely help," Butzlaff said as he relaxed in his Oshkosh apartment after work.

His apartment, though clean and comfortable, is not plush. He drives a 10-year-old car and has pretty simple tastes.

He has served 14 years in the guard and expects to deploy to Kuwait in less than three weeks where he'll serve in a security mission providing base and convoy protection as equipment returns to the U.S. after the Iraq war.

He'll also accrue more leave days.

The most frustrating part for Butzlaff is the confusion. He's received several official letters since 2010 telling him he will get his pay. But, still, he has seen no trace of it.

“I would not be shocked if I never saw that money,” he said.

Vander Sande has been working for a year and a half contacting National Guard officials, active Army officials and elected representatives in an effort to make the situation right.

The Defense Department established the PDMRA program by law in January 2007 to provide the benefits to service members deployed beyond established rotation cycles.

To qualify, members must have been deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan or as a part of a certain unit in Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates or Kyrgyzstan with a departure date from the area of responsibility on or after Jan. 19, 2007.

However, the delay between the announcement of the program by DoD and the implementation of the program by the individual services prevented troops from receiving the respite leave benefits they earned.

“It was passed, authorized by law in January of 2007 but the wheels grind exceedingly fine. It was not implemented until August of 2007,” Petri said.

The soldiers in the 1157th returned from Iraq at the end of August 2007.

After returning from Iraq members of the 1157th went through demobilization at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

They received PDMRA days added to their leaves but because of the new implementation of the program, those days were calculated incorrectly for many soldiers, resulting in shorting many of them thousands of dollars each, Vander Sande said.

Because they were unfamiliar with the program they didn't learn of the error until years later.

Butzlaff said he still doesn't understand what went wrong and why he has not received his pay, despite promises from the Army that it is on its way.

He is perplexed that some of his fellow soldiers have been paid while others have not.

In November Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., offered an amendment to the annual Defense Authorization bill that would have granted soldiers the \$200 per leave day they were denied due to a government error. However, his amendment didn't make it out of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

It was approved by Democrats as part of a group of items that are usually not in dispute and are passed by unanimous consent, but not by committee Republicans because one committee member objected, according to a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel story.

The bottom line, according to Vander Sande, is that he and the other soldiers are entitled to the benefits of leave which the Army did not allow them to take due to the Army's error.

Their PDMRA benefits were miscalculated at Atterbury. "No one chose not to take all earned PDMRA days; it was miscalculated," he said.

The National Guard Bureau directed the Wisconsin Army National Guard to submit payments for those not covered in what has been termed the shadow area between January and August of 2007.

What is more frustrating to Vander Sande is that the Army Board of Correction of Military Records has acknowledged he earned the days but says he can use them only for future military deployments.

Trouble is he retired from the Guard in 2009. There won't be any future deployments.

Military channels have failed to resolve the issue, so now Vander Sande is relying on lawmakers to step in.

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

<p>It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it. -- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers</p>

**“Messy, Argumentative
Loudmouth Democracy Is Not
On Obama’s Agenda, Military
Quick-Step Is”
“Or Rather, His Fantasy Of Military
Life, Since He Never Served”
“One Reason Why Obama Said We
Should Copy The Military Is That ‘You
Know That There’s Someone Behind
You, Watching Your Back’”
“That’s What Worries Me”**

JANUARY 30, 2012 by CLANCY SIGAL, COUNTERPUNCH. CLANCY SIGAL is a novelist and screenwriter in Los Angeles. He can be reached at clancy@jsasoc.com

Last week's farce of the court martial of Marine sergeant Frank Wuterich at Camp Pendleton, California is a license to murder.

Everyone, especially the Iraqis, seems to understand this except the American public from President Obama on down. Wuterich led an eight-man combat team of Marines in a killing orgy in Haditha, western Iraq, in 2005, that massacred 24 unarmed civilians including 11 women and kids. All witnesses, including the Marines, testified that what occurred was basically an execution not a fire fight.

Wuterich could have faced 152 years in the brig. But under a plea deal, after a six year long investigation begun only when a Time magazine reporter began asking questions, and marked by a string of official lies, Wuterich was let off with a wrist slap, a reduction in rank and no prison time. None of the other Marines will be punished.

All the members of Wuterich's military court were chosen for prior combat experience because they presumably knew what the "fog of war" could do to a man under stress. Thus, the issue became not one of guilt or innocence, or degree of culpability, but: what would you do in the boots of this fallible, frightened, angry Marine?

Under the current rules of engagement, dramatized a few days ago when Navy Seals daringly rescued two hostages, including an American woman, from Somali kidnappers who were shot down, anything is permissible if you feel yourself – or you later tell investigators – that you were under threat.

Obama loves his Seals, which is the same unit that killed Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan. In their fierce focus on mission, fanatic discipline, unit solidarity, tactical skills, mastery of killer weapons and courage, they are – the President insists – what we civilians should ALL be like.

It's no secret Obama has a crush on, or been intimidated by, his generals – all those ribbons, all that braid! Allegedly they answer to their Commander in Chief rather than the reverse, but in reality he gives them pretty much everything they want, and glorifies their military adventures as the very best that America can do in the world.

Now he's gone overboard, in his 25 January state of the union speech to both houses of Congress – and in an election year speaking over their heads to the rest of us.

Ritual flattery was to be expected. But his fawning went over the line into real, hardass absurdity, starting with his opening, "We gather tonight knowing that this generation of heroes has made the United States safer and more respected around the world."

What world does Obama live in?

But then he got down to business by contrasting the greatness and glory of the military with our present, well, what shall we call it?, decay, disappointment, depravity of American democracy. "At a time," he thundered, "when too many of our institutions have let us down, they exceed all expectations."

Then the kicker: "Imagine what we could accomplish if we followed their example!"

Uh huh.

As a former conscript, who liked the military and almost re-upped, what I know best about this hierarchical, do-as-you're-told organization is that it is, and is supposed to be, undemocratic and that you follow orders without question...or else.

Messy, argumentative loudmouth democracy is not on Obama's agenda, military quick-step is.

Or rather, his fantasy of military life, since he never served.

"They're not consumed by personal ambition. They don't obsess over their differences. They focus on the mission at hand...Imagine what we could accomplish if we followed their example..."

Yes, imagine.

A militarized civilian life is Obama-the-liberal's Utopia?

Just a couple of days ago military helicopters hovered over downtown Los Angeles and San Fernando valley practicing for what nobody will tell us except, in a tightlipped police statement, "to ensure the military's ability to operate in urban environments". And the Blackhawks will be back soon, it's promised.

Local police departments all over America are pressing the Federal Aviation Authority to relax rules to permit more domestic use of unmanned Reaper drones for "urban monitoring"; i.e. domestic surveillance. Colorado and Miami-Dade police already use UAVs to catch alleged criminals...and, I assume, to spy on Occupy protestors.

No, it can't be, not the Saul Alinsky disciple and antiwar liberal Obama moving us closer to the police state that fringe groups and politicians like Ron Paul have warned us about?

One reason why Obama said we should copy the military is that "you know that there's someone behind you, watching your back."

That's what worries me.

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.

ANNIVERSARIES

January 31, 1876: Odious Betrayal



Sitting Bull: One of several chiefs who refused to comply.

Carl Bunin Peace History Jan 28 - Feb 3

The U.S. government ordered that all Native Americans must move to reservations by this date or be declared hostile.

Most Sioux did not even hear of the ultimatum until after the deadline.

Major General Philip Sheridan considered the notification exercise a waste of time.

January 31, 1968: Resistance Anniversary: The Tet Offensive

Peace History: Carl Bunin

The Tet (the lunar new year) Offensive began as North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces launched surprise attacks against major cities, provincial and district capitals in South Vietnam.

The attack had been anticipated but, nonetheless, half of the ARVN troops (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) were on leave because of the holiday.

There were attacks in Saigon (the South's capital) on the Independence Palace (the residence of the president), the radio station, the ARVN's joint General Staff Compound, Tan Son Nhut airfield, and the United States embassy, causing considerable damage and throwing the city into turmoil.

January 31, 1945: Anniversary Of A Murder; The Execution Of Private Eddy Slovik



Pvt. Eddie Slovik

Carl Bunin Peace History Jan 28 - Feb 3

Private Eddie Slovik became the first American soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion.

Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered Slovik's execution be carried out, he said, to avoid further desertions in the late stages of the war.

[Excerpt from the article by Joe Allen; Death Row At The "Castle": Inside The U.S. Military's Judicial System; the International Socialist Review. Joe Allen is a member of Teamsters Local 705 in Chicago and the International Socialist Organization.]

Alvin "Tommy" Bridges, a military policeman during the war and a future police chief, recounted his very bitter memories of "military justice" to Studs Terkel in the Good War: "They shot some of those same guys up there that were—if you'd go to a municipal court, they'd dismiss the case. Depending a lot upon the commanding officer."

Near the end of his narrative, Bridges makes clear the extent of summary "justice" and who was responsible:

"Eisenhower says that's the only guy (Eddie Slovik) that was ever executed for it (desertion). That's what burns me up, when a gross of them that I know were executed for probably more minor things than what Slovik was. They said he was the only one. We had to make a show of it. The son-of-a-bitches."

Eddie Slovik was a Polish working-class kid from Detroit who had a minor criminal record and spent some years in a youth reformatory. His draft classification was originally 4-F (unfit for military service) and therefore not eligible to be drafted. He married and got a decent paying job in the auto industry, whereupon he was reclassified 1-A.

The army was then drafting anybody it could get its hands on in preparation for the invasion of Europe. It was also clear that Slovik couldn't kill a living thing and was terrified of combat. In his "confession" after he deserted he said, "I'll run away again if I have to go their." (He misspelled "there," and by "there" he meant going into combat).

Over 40,000 other deserters tried by lesser courts-martial were punished by confinement to disciplinary centers or dishonorably discharged. Another 2,864 were tried by general courts-martial. Most were sentenced to long terms in prisons (many left prison soon after the war was over), but forty-nine were sentenced to death. All the sentences for desertion were commuted except Slovik's.

Slovik's story is recounted in William Bradford Huie's book *The Execution of Private Slovik*.

Why Slovik?

It seems likely that the reason Slovik was singled out was because he deserted at the time of stiffening German resistance in late 1944, when the Allied forces came dangerously close to collapsing on the Western front. Yet, curiously, the army never publicized his execution beyond his company, never told his wife, and buried him in a secret cemetery.

It would be nearly a decade after Slovik's death before Huie began investigating the strange circumstances surrounding it. Despite the efforts of many people, Slovik's wife never received the paltry \$10,000 plus interest she asked for in GI life insurance.

Slovik's remains were finally returned to the U.S. in 1987, to be buried beside the grave of his deceased wife.

While many people believe that Slovik was the only American soldier executed during the war, that is not true.

Many were executed on charges other than desertion, and African American soldiers once again bore the brunt of these executions.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to David McReynolds]

US Drones Provoke Outrage In Iraq:

**“Our Sky Is Our Sky, Not The
U.S.A.’S Sky”**

**“If They Are Afraid About Their
Diplomats Being Attacked In Iraq, Then**

They Can Take Them Out Of The Country”

1/30/2012 By ERIC SCHMITT and MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT, The New York Times
[Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — A month after the last American troops left Iraq, the State Department is operating a small fleet of surveillance drones here to help protect the United States Embassy and consulates, as well as American personnel. Senior Iraqi officials expressed outrage at the program, saying the unarmed aircraft are an affront to Iraqi sovereignty.

The drones are the latest example of the State Department’s efforts to take over functions in Iraq that the military used to perform.

Some 5,000 private security contractors now protect the embassy’s 11,000-person staff, for example, and typically drive around in heavily armored military vehicles.

When embassy personnel move throughout the country, small helicopters buzz over the convoys to provide support in case of an attack.

Often, two contractors armed with machine guns are tethered to the outside of the helicopters. The State Department began operating some drones in Iraq last year on a trial basis, and stepped up their use after the last American troops left Iraq in December, taking the military drones with them.

A senior American official said that negotiations were under way to obtain authorization for the drone operations, but Ali al-Mosawi, a top adviser to Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki; Iraq’s national security adviser, Falih al-Fayadh; and the acting minister of interior, Adnan al-Asadi, all said in interviews that they had not been consulted by the Americans.

Mr. Asadi said that he opposed the drone program: “Our sky is our sky, not the U.S.A.’s sky.”

Many Iraqis remain deeply skeptical of the United States, feelings that were reinforced last week when the Marine who was the so-called ringleader of the 2005 massacre of 24 Iraqis in the village of Haditha avoided prison time and was sentenced to a reduction in rank.

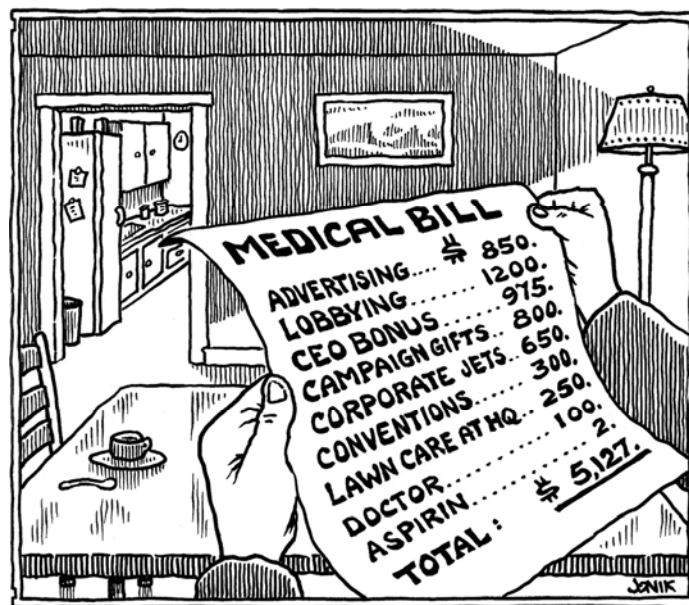
“If they are afraid about their diplomats being attacked in Iraq, then they can take them out of the country,” said Mohammed Ghaleb Nasser, 57, an engineer from the northern city of Mosul.

Hisham Mohammed Salah, 37, an Internet cafe owner in Mosul, said he did not differentiate between surveillance drones and the ones that fire missiles.

“We hear from time to time that drone aircraft have killed half a village in Pakistan and Afghanistan under the pretext of pursuing terrorists,” Mr. Salah said. “Our fear is that will happen in Iraq under a different pretext.”

Still, Ghanem Owaid Nizar Qaisi, 45, a teacher from Diyala, said that he doubted that the Iraqi government would stop the United States from using the drones. “I believe that Iraqi politicians will accept it, because they are weak,” he said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



GET MILITARY RESISTANCE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

If you wish to receive Military Resistance immediately and directly, send request to contact@militaryproject.org. There is no subscription charge.

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

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

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

*This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



*Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org*

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/military-resistance-archives/>; news@uruknet.info;

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

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

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

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