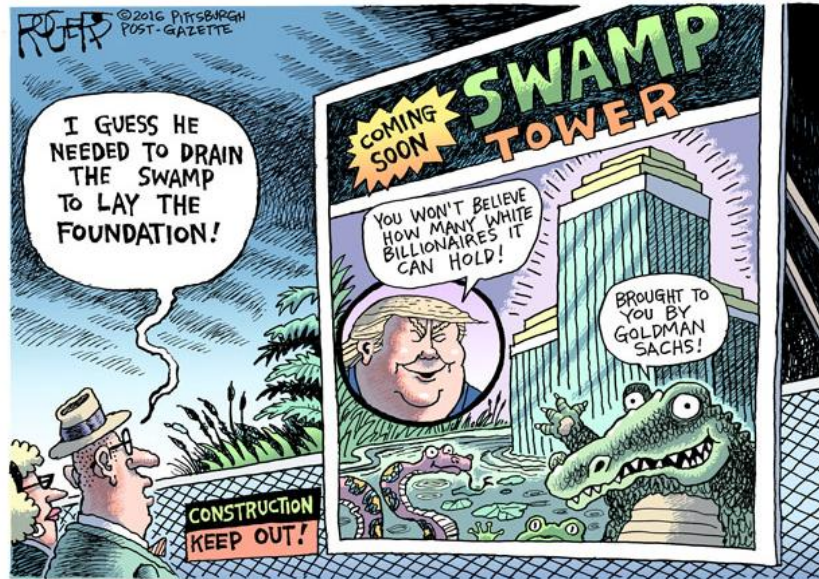


Military Resistance 14L8



Trump's Cabinet Picks So Far Worth A Combined \$13 Billion: "Out Of Touch With The Working-Class Americans Whom He Vowed To Champion During The Campaign"

DECEMBER 20, 2016 by Matt Rocheleau, BOSTON GLOBE STAFF

President-elect Donald Trump boasted about his wealth during his campaign. Now he's surrounding himself with people who have similarly unimaginable riches.

Collectively, the wealth of his Cabinet choices so far is about five times greater than President Obama's Cabinet and about 34 times greater than the one George W. Bush led at the end of his presidency.

And Trump still has four more key advisory spots left to fill.

The net worth of the Cabinet Trump had selected as of Monday was at least \$13.1 billion, based on available estimates, or more than the annual gross domestic product of about 70 small countries.



Clockwise from top left: Betsy DeVos, Steven Mnuchin, Wilbur Ross, Elaine Chao, Jeff Sessions, and Tom Price.

That included the \$3.7 billion Trump is estimated to be worth, according to Forbes. (Trump has claimed to be worth much more — around \$10 billion.)

It also included the \$5.1 billion in net worth that Forbes estimated belongs to the family of Betsy DeVos, the former Michigan Republican Party chair and education activist selected to be education secretary.

Investor Wilbur Ross, picked to become commerce secretary, is estimated to be worth \$2.5 billion, according to Forbes.

Linda McMahon, a former WWE executive and U.S. Senate candidate, has been picked to serve as small business administrator. She and her husband Vincent McMahon are worth at least an estimated \$1.35 billion, according to Bloomberg.

Exxon Mobile CEO Rex Tillerson, nominated to become secretary of state, is estimated to be worth \$365 million, according to Bloomberg.

Steven Mnuchin, the former Goldman Sachs executive in line to become Treasury secretary, is worth at least \$46 million, according to Politico.

Retired neurosurgeon and former presidential candidate Ben Carson, who is in line to become the housing and urban development secretary, was worth \$26 million, according to a Forbes estimate from 2015.

The pick for transportation secretary, Elaine Chao, the former labor secretary, was worth an estimated \$16.9 million as of 2008, when she last held public office, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, a Washington-based nonprofit that tracks campaign finance data.

Two other Cabinet picks — Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions for attorney general and Georgia Representative Tom Price for health and human services secretary — were

estimated to be worth about \$7.5 million and \$13.6 million, respectively, as of 2014, according to the center.

Former Texas governor and presidential candidate Rick Perry, selected to be energy secretary, is estimated to be worth about \$3 million, according to the Associated Press.

U.S. Representative from South Carolina Mick Mulvaney, picked to become director of the Office of Management and Budget, was worth an estimated \$2.6 million as of 2014, according to the center.

Fast-food executive Andrew Puzder, picked to fill the role of labor secretary, is also a multi-millionaire, according to Politico.

U.S. Representative from Montana Ryan Zinke, picked to become interior secretary, was worth an estimated \$675,000 as of 2014, according to the center.

One of the least wealthy members of the Cabinet was actually Trump's running mate. Vice President-elect Mike Pence was worth about \$211,000 as of 2012, data from the center show.

Trump still has to fill the following spots: agriculture secretary, veterans affairs secretary, US trade representative, and chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisers.

By comparison, the collective estimated net worth of Obama's entire current Cabinet is less than \$3 billion, according to available estimates. And the vast majority of that wealth is held by just one member, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker, who is worth \$2.4 billion, according to Forbes.

The Cabinet that served Bush at the end of his presidency was worth about \$390 million collectively.

The figures above consider only the presidents and their official Cabinet members and officials holding "cabinet-rank" positions.

The calculations do not consider other important presidential appointments.

If they did, the collective net worth of Trump's Cabinet would grow by at least \$7 billion.

Chicago Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts has been picked to serve as deputy commerce secretary. Forbes estimates Todd Ricketts and his family are worth \$5.3 billion.

Vincent Viola, an Army veteran, Wall Street executive, and Florida Panthers owner, has been selected to become Army secretary. He is estimated to be worth \$1.79 billion, according to Forbes.

Two other key appointments: Gary Cohn, the Goldman Sachs president who is in line to become director of the National Economic Council, and former Breitbart executive Steve Bannon, who will be Trump's chief strategist, are also multimillionaires, according to Bloomberg and Politico.

Trump's affluent Cabinet picks are, in some ways, not surprising. He touted his own wealth and business experience as being key attributes that qualified him to be president and would help him boost the country's economy. He also regularly stressed that he wanted to upend the existing political establishment.

But Trump's critics have said that the picks represent a departure from his anti-Wall Street rhetoric during the campaign, and that they are out of touch with the working-class Americans whom he vowed to champion during the campaign.

MORE:

Trump's Army Secretary Pick A Billionaire

December 19, 2016 By: Leo Shane III, Military Times [Excerpts]

President-elect Donald Trump on Monday nominated billionaire philanthropist Vincent Viola as the next secretary of the Army.

Viola, founder of digital stock trading firm Virtu Financial and owner of the National Hockey League's Florida Panthers, is a 1977 West Point graduate who rose to the rank of major in the Army Reserve.

No timetable has been set for when Viola's confirmation hearing may take place. In a statement, he called the responsibility of the role an honor and a challenge.

Trump praised Viola as "a man of outstanding work ethic, integrity, and strategic vision" who will help keep America safe.

"Whether it is his distinguished military service or highly impressive track record in the world of business, Vinnie has proved throughout his life that he knows how to be a leader and deliver major results in the face of any challenge," he said in a statement.

The 60-year-old businessman is a former chairman of the New York Mercantile Exchange and was serving in that role during the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. In response, he helped found the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, a privately funded research wing of the school focused on "counterterrorism policy and strategy" and "ways to confront the dynamic threat environment" facing America today.

The Army appointment will require Viola to step away from several of his business holdings, including his NHL franchise. In a statement, team officials said ownership of the Florida Panthers will remain in the Viola family, but the team's vice chairman will take over operations responsibilities.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier Succumbs To Wounds Received During November Suicide Bombing In Afghanistan



U.S. Army Sgt. First Class Allan E. Brown. Baltimore Sun

December 7 By Thomas Gibbons-Neff, Washington Post [Excerpts]

U.S. Army Sgt. First Class Allan E. Brown died Tuesday, nearly a month after he was wounded during a suicide bombing at Bagram air base in northeastern Afghanistan.

Brown, 46, of Takoma Park, Md., succumbed to his wounds at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in nearby Bethesda, according to a Pentagon news release. He was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division based out of Fort Hood, Tex.

Brown was one of 16 Americans wounded in the unprecedented Nov. 12 attack. Two U.S. contractors were killed as were two other soldiers, Sgt. John W. Perry and Pfc. Tyler R. Lubelt. A Polish soldier was also killed. While there have been attacks near and on the perimeter of Bagram, it was the first time in the nearly 15 years since the base has been used by U.S. and NATO forces that a suicide bomber was able to infiltrate its numerous layers of security. Located just north of Kabul, Bagram is the largest U.S.-run installation in Afghanistan and is a central hub for military operations in the region.

Brown is the ninth U.S. service member to die in combat in Afghanistan in 2016.

The soldiers were killed as they were preparing for an organized run on the sprawling installation. Waheed Sediqqi, spokesman for the Parwan provincial governor, told reporters at the time that the bomber was standing in a line with Afghan laborers when

he detonated a suicide vest. The Taliban took responsibility for the attack, saying that it had been planned for months and the start of the run was the intended target.

U.S. Army Gen. John Nicholson, the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan told reporters last week that the bomber was a local contractor working on the base and that the bombing is under investigation. He added that U.S. and NATO forces undertook a complete review of their security measures following the attack, “especially in terms of local national contract employees.”

“So, we are revetting and rescreening all those individuals before they are able to resume their positions, and reviewing all — all of our procedures,” Nicholson said. “We’re looking at this very closely.”

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

Being an Afghan General Is Nice Work If You Can Get It. And Many Do

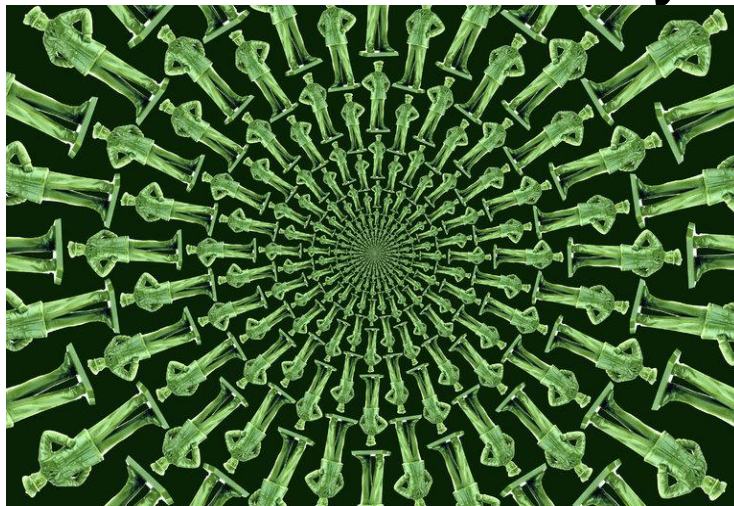


Illustration by Alvaro Dominguez; photograph by Trinacria, via Shutterstock

DEC. 19, 2016 By MUJIB MASHAL, New York Times

Afghanistan may struggle to recruit enough soldiers for its armed forces, but it's swimming in generals.

The country has close to 1,000 officers of general rank on its books — more than the United States, whose military is three times as large.

And off the books? No one knows.

New names are added to the roster at a rate far out of proportion to battlefield realities, where the Afghan armed forces — the army, national police and intelligence forces, numbering 350,000 in all — have been steadily losing soldiers and territory to the Taliban.

Meanwhile, retirements are rare.

The United States government, which picks up much of the tab for the Afghan military, can't pin down the number of generals.

"We still don't know how many police and how many soldiers we're paying salaries for," said John F. Sopko, the United States special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction.

"We don't even know how many generals. It is pretty pathetic, and here we are, 15 years into this."

It's nice work if you can get it, with fairly good pay, fringe benefits and a pension. So how do you become an Afghan general?

Some of them have climbed the command ladder for decades, working hard and surviving purges by successive governments. But others took much easier routes.

Suppose you are the young son of a former warlord who has just died. Along with condolences, the government will make you a general, as if the rank were hereditary. Commissions are also handed out as political thank-yous to male relatives of important figures. And in the golden age of general-making — the 1990s civil war — they were sometimes distributed in lieu of pay.

In the anarchy that followed the Soviet withdrawal and the fall of the Communist regime, hundreds of generals were born overnight. Sibghatullah Mujadidi, the interim president of the mujahedeen government, which was backed by the Central Intelligence Agency, had little to offer the disheveled fighters who crowded his waiting room, so an aide kept note of whoever asked to become a general.

According to Abdul Hafiz Mansour, who ran state television at the time and is now a member of Parliament, a confidant of the president — often his son — would turn up at the studios every evening to hand the news anchor a list of new generals to declare. One night, he said, there were 38 names.

"The list would be handwritten on a plain sheet of paper — there was no logo, no official stationery," Mr. Mansour said.

The list sometimes grew mysteriously on the way from the president's office to the studio. Mr. Mansour said he knew of current generals who had gotten their rank in those days through a little clandestine photocopying and the stroke of a pen.

In response to the TV announcements, rival factions across the country would summarily declare their own generals. The former warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, who now serves as vice president of Afghanistan, awarded stars to many of the men closest to him, and even printed his own currency to pay them.

The joke was that among General Dostum's bodyguards, there were no colonels.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

“The Iraqi Troops Holding The Front In Eastern Mosul Are Perched Inside Bedrooms And Kitchens Of Homes, On Rooftops And In Hallways”

“They Haven't Pushed Forward In Days”

“Weeks Of Urban Combat Have Left Some Of Iraq's Most Capable Soldiers Battered, And Only About A Quarter Of The City Has Come Under Their Control”

“If Iraq's Military Continues At The Current Pace, They May Retake Mosul In The Coming Months”

December 19, 2016 By: Susannah George, The Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — The Iraqi troops holding the front in eastern Mosul are perched inside bedrooms and kitchens of homes, on rooftops and in hallways. They haven't pushed forward in days. The water bottles and Styrofoam food containers they've used up pile around them, spilling into the houses' gardens.

Advancing into Mosul has become a painful slog for Iraqi forces. Islamic State group militants have fortified each neighborhood, unlike past battles where they concentrated their defenses in one part of the city.

As a result, every advance inflicts relatively high casualties.

Weeks of urban combat have already left some of Iraq's most capable soldiers battered, and only about a quarter of the city has come under their control.

It took up to 10 days for Iraqi troops to move a few hundred meters (yards) and retake the neighborhood of al-Barid, a district of grand, upscale homes where fruit trees grow in the gardens.

There were only a few IS fighters in the neighborhood, but they were able to hold back the much larger Iraqi force because they were faster and more nimble than the slow-moving convoys of hundreds of troops, said Hatem al-Kurdi, one of the residents who remained in the district throughout the fight.

The militants "cut holes in the walls between the homes so they could always be moving from one position to another," al-Kurdi said.

For every few hundred meters of their territory, the IS militants allocate as few as four to five fighters, along with a handful of car bombs, to fight to the death, said Iraqi special forces Maj. Firas Mehdi. It is the same formula of counterattacks and defenses he has seen in every neighborhood he enters, he said.

If Iraq's military continues at the current pace, they may retake Mosul in the coming months, but at significant costs. Current rates of attrition risk further weakening the military, a legacy that could haunt Iraq's security forces for years.

A medic who operates in eastern Mosul said he sees an average of 18 military casualties a day, and his figures would not cover the other main front southeast of Mosul. A hospital official in the nearby city of Irbil corroborated the figure. They spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to disclose military casualty figures to the press.

In al-Barid, the front line now runs in part along a creek that snakes through eastern Mosul.

Medhi's troops have hunkered down in defensive positions in the houses, much like those of IS just across the creek — but without the benefit of more than a year of preparation.

His special forces troops climbed through a garden and into a broken window to reach their sniper post on a rooftop overlooking IS fighters. At another position, in a house where two families are sheltering, men filed past dinner cooking on a stove.

The only rounds of fire that broke the silence on a Sunday afternoon visit were unleashed after the men heard the buzz of an IS drone overhead. Over the past few weeks commercial drones carrying small explosives have begun flying over Iraqi positions in Mosul, Mehdi said. The bombs they drop have only caused a few injuries.

"They haven't killed anyone, but they've flattened the tires of our Humvees," he said.

After shooting down one drone Sunday, a soldier yelled out that he could see another. "That's just an F-16," Mehdi called back, laughing.

On one street corner in al-Barid, the legs of an IS fighter stuck out of an open sewer pipe. His body had been left there for days after the battle. Small children watched as Iraqi soldiers posed for photos next to the corpse.

"It's better this way," Iraqi special forces soldier Omar Zeidan said of the decision not to bury the dead. "This is a lesson for them, it will teach them not to support Daesh."

Iraqi commanders say they've seen months of preparation by IS throughout Mosul's neighborhoods as troops advance from the city's fringes to denser neighborhoods like al-Barid.

"This kind of a fight takes time," said Iraqi special forces Brig. Gen. Yehya al-Azawi. "After each step we need to repair our equipment and reorganize our forces." Supply lines are lengthening and it takes longer to evacuate casualties.

Abbas Yasin, who lived in a tall building in the nearby district of Bab Shams, had a bird's eye view of IS preparations in past months.

He said in late 2015, IS fighters moved onto his roof as a sniper's post as they did in other tall buildings around the city. They forced families to move into buildings along main roads to serve as buffers against advancing forces.

Yasin had planned to stick it out at his home with his family through the Mosul fight. But as it dragged on, food began to run out, water was shut off and he and his family had to flee. One day when the IS fighters on the roof changed positions, he waited until nightfall and bolted across the street to a government-held area.

IS "wanted the army to come deep into the city, so the battle would be waged in the streets, not the villages," the 54-year-old said. "They knew that Mosul was always going to be their last battle."

Military Resistance In PDF Format?

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

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Insurgent Bomb Kills Five Somali Soldiers In Capital Mogadishu Second Bomb Exploded At Checkpoint About 500 Meters From The Presidential Palace

Dec 15, 2016 By Abdirahman Hussein and Abdi Sheikh, Reuters. Additional reporting by Feisal Omar; Writing by Duncan Miriri; Editing by Catherine Evans

MOGADISHU - A bomb blast killed five soldiers and injured a dozen other people in the Somali capital on Thursday, a municipal spokesman said, hours after a car bombing at a checkpoint.

A spokesman for Islamist al Shabaab militants claimed the attack on the soldiers. He did not comment on the first attack.

"We targeted the so-called government soldiers," spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab said.

Al Shabaab has been trying to disrupt Somalia's protracted parliamentary elections - part of efforts to rebuild the fractured nation after decades of war. The three-month vote is due to end on Dec. 29.

Abdifatah Omar Halane, spokesman for Mogadishu municipality said a bomb planted under a tree outside a tea shop had killed at least five soldiers and wounded a dozen other people, including civilians.

"We heard a huge blast and soon we saw people lying under the tree, some dead, others yelling for help," shopkeeper Nur Abdullahi said. "Among the injured ones were two young children."

Earlier in the day, a car bomb exploded at a checkpoint near the national theatre in Mogadishu, about 500 meters (yards) from the presidential palace, killing the bomber, police in the coastal capital said.

Witnesses said the explosion was followed by gunfire.

"The bomber blew up the car after police ordered him to stop at gunpoint. We are investigating," Abdikadir Hussein, a police officer, told Reuters.

Militants Kill Another Senior Official In Somalia's Puntland

Dec 20, 2016 Reuters

BOSASSO, SOMALIA

Militants shot dead an aide to a regional official in Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region on Tuesday, the second such attack in a week, police said.

Aden Huruse, a director in Puntland's presidential palace, was attacked at a restaurant in its main city Bosasso, police told Reuters. "Two men armed with pistols fired several bullets into his head. He died on the spot," said Major Mohamed Hassan, a Bosasso police officer.

Al Shabaab regularly targets officials throughout Somalia. Its insurgency aims to drive out African Union peacekeepers [translation: U.S. government backed foreign occupation troops], topple Somalia's Western-backed government and impose its version of Islam on the Horn of Africa state.

Tuesday's shooting occurred six days after al Shabaab killed the region's deputy police commander Jamac Sahardiid outside a hotel in Bosasso.

"This evening we killed the director in Bosasso. We were also behind the killing of Puntland's deputy police commander days ago," said Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, the militant's military operation spokesman.

MILITARY NEWS



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Very scary Indeed."]

“Sexual Misconduct And Harassment Allegations Against Senior Army Leaders Increased This Year”

**“More Were Substantiated”
“The Most Frequent Charge Lodged Against Senior Officers On Active Duty Was Reprisal”**

Army Lt. Gen. Gary Cheek Whines Excuses For Sexual Predators

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veteran & Military Initiative Organizing Committee, who sent this in.]

Dec 15, 2016 By LOLITA C. BALDOR, ASSOCIATED PRESS [Excerpts]

Sexual misconduct and harassment allegations against senior Army leaders increased this year and more were substantiated than in 2015, according to a closely held report by the Army Inspector General.

The memo obtained by The Associated Press also said the most frequent charge lodged against senior officers on active duty, in the National Guard, Reserves and senior executive service in the past budget year was reprisal, with nearly 50 such allegations as of Sept. 30.

The total number of cases is small, but they represent some of the more serious misconduct concerns faced by the military.

And they underscore the fact that transgressions are occurring in the higher ranks, not rooted simply in the younger enlisted force.

Sexual misconduct — which includes assault, harassment and improper affairs — and professional reprisals or retaliation have long been identified by the Pentagon as thorny problems with no easy solutions.

Whether the increase in allegations suggests a growing problem or just that victims are more willing to step forward isn't clear.

The latest Army memo, however, noted that reprisal is the "number one allegation" that the inspector general's office investigates and that a growing percentage of the cases are substantiated. Some 10 percent of the reprisal allegations were substantiated in 2016, "a significant increase" from prior years, it said.

"This is very concerning," said the memo sent last month to top Army leaders. "The burden is on you to clearly explain and justify any unfavorable action you take against a soldier or civilian employee."

The report was aimed at identifying both positive and negative trends in misconduct cases across the Army leadership.

It focused on charges made against officers who hold the rank of one- to four-star general, senior civilian executives and colonels who have been approved for promotion to brigadier general.

It said there were seven allegations of sexual misconduct substantiated in the last fiscal year, compared to two cases in 2015.

Most of this year's cases involved charges against senior Army National Guard officials. There were eight allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment against National Guard members, four of them substantiated. In the regular Army, there were three allegations of sexual misconduct. The number substantiated was not provided.

The good news, the report, said, is that the number of overall charges against senior officials dipped, and the number of those who had at least one charge substantiated against them decreased from 39 in 2015 to 30 this year. Travel violations and ethical misconduct, which includes inappropriate political activities or endorsements, both declined.

The report said that while it is difficult to document, a program of training and briefings for senior officials "has helped leaders avoid common pitfalls and eliminate confusion regarding policies and regulations."

Army Lt. Gen. Gary Cheek, director of the Army staff, said in an interview earlier this fall that he believes the service has a good track record with the training that is given to general officers as well as the enlisted corps.

Cheek, who spoke to The Associated Press before the memo came out, said many senior Army leaders have been deployed frequently and are under a lot of pressure.

"If anything, as we look inward, are we missing things as we take care of our senior leaders, in terms of their mental well-being, their physical well-being," he added. "They're very, very dedicated, but at the same time they may be, in an unintended way, putting themselves at risk or are vulnerable to making mistakes."

**“Among Those Ordered To Repay
Their Enlistment Bonuses Are
Soldiers Who Did Not Complete
Their Enlistments After They Were
Injured In Combat”**

“He Was Injured In A Mortar Attack”

**“He Was Later Diagnosed With
Severe Post-Traumatic Stress
Disorder And Memory Loss Due To
His Head Injuries”**

**“He Got A Call From A Debt Collection
Agency Last Year, Informing Him That
He Was Delinquent”**

11.14.16 by David S. Cloud, LA Times [Excerpts]

Pentagon audits found widespread problems in enlistment bonuses given to soldiers in several National Guard units across the country, but soldiers facing repayment demands in those states won't be eligible for waivers under a new federal law that will apply only to the California National Guard.

The bonus mistakes appeared less common than in the scandal that has rocked the California Guard, although the Army Audit Agency looked only at a small sample of the bonuses and only at four states.

Agency audits obtained by The Times found “little or no oversight” of bonuses and other financial incentives given to soldiers in Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Pennsylvania from 2006 to 2010, the only states reviewed.

The audits said those Guard units paid “incentives to ineligible soldiers” and later — like the California Guard — sought to recover the money. The reports did not say how many soldiers were affected in the other states.

In October, following stories in The Times, the Pentagon suspended an aggressive effort to recover improper bonuses from about 9,700 California Guard soldiers and veterans. Congress last week passed a law that is expected to produce waivers for most of them.

But the provision, part of the \$619-billion defense authorization bill that President Obama is expected to sign, applies only to the California Guard. Soldiers and veterans from other states facing repayment demands are not covered.

Among those ordered to repay their bonuses are soldiers who did not complete their enlistments after they were injured in combat.

Dennis Lang, a former Army reservist from Columbia, Mo., said he received a letter from the Pentagon in March ordering him to repay \$5,000 of a \$20,000 enlistment bonus after he was discharged from the Army because of injuries he received in Iraq.

A civil affairs sergeant assigned to a small outpost in east Baghdad in 2007 and 2008, he was injured in a mortar attack. He was later diagnosed with severe post-traumatic stress disorder and memory loss due to his head injuries.

He says he first learned that he owed the Army \$5,000 when he got a call from a debt collection agency last year, informing him that he was delinquent.

The Pentagon had turned the matter over to a private collection agency because Lang had not responded when it mailed a letter demanding repayment to an address he hadn't lived at for more than a decade, he said.

The debt stemmed from his failure to attend training with his Missouri unit after he returned from Iraq. The Pentagon then demanded partial repayment of his bonus.

When he refused to pay, they began taking \$300 out of his Social Security disability check every month.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

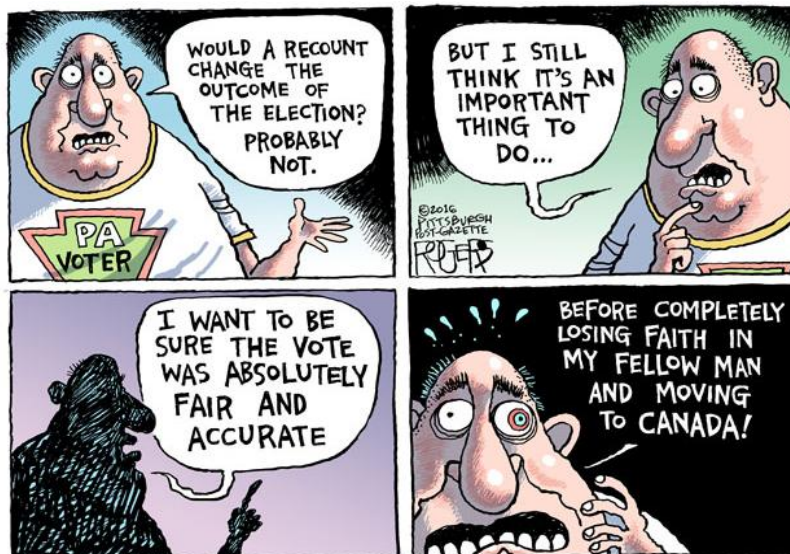
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

The past year – every single day of it – has had its consequences. In the obscure depths of society, an imperceptible molecular process has been occurring irreversibly, like the flow of time, a process of accumulating discontent, bitterness, and revolutionary energy.

-- Leon Trotsky, “Up To The Ninth Of January”



Remembering The US Soldiers Who Refused Orders To Murder Native Americans At Sand Creek:

**“It Was A Horrible Scene And I
Would Not Let My Company Fire”
“Any Man Who Would Take Part In The
Murders, Knowing The Circumstances
As We Did, Was A Low Lived Cowardly
Son Of A Bitch”**



Captain Silas Soule. Kansas Historical Society

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

November 21, 2016 by Billy J. Stratton, The Conversation US, Inc. Stratton is Professor of Native American studies/contemporary American literature, University of Denver

Every Thanksgiving weekend for the past 17 years, Arapaho and Cheyenne youth lead a 180-mile relay from the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site to Denver.

The annual Sand Creek Massacre Spiritual Healing Run opens at the site of the Sand Creek Massacre near Eads, Colorado, with a sunrise ceremony honoring some 200 Arapaho and Cheyenne people who lost their lives in the infamous massacre.

This brutal assault was carried out by Colonel John Chivington on Nov. 29, 1864.

While the Sand Creek massacre has been the subject of numerous books, much less attention has been given to two heroes of this horrific event: U.S. soldiers Captain Silas Soule and Lt. Joseph Cramer.

These were men who rejected the violence and genocide inherent in the “conquest of the West.” They did so by personally refusing to take part in the murder of peaceful people, while ordering the men under their command to stand down. Their example breaks the conventional frontier narrative that has come to define the clash between Colonial settlers and Native peoples as one of civilization versus savagery.

This is a theme I’ve previously addressed as a scholar in the fields of American Indian studies and Colonial history, both in my book on the Indian captivity narrative genre, “Buried in Shades of Night,” and more recently in writings on Sand Creek.

Soule’s noble act of compassion at Sand Creek is humbly conveyed in a letter to his mother included in the Denver Public Library Western History Collections:

“I was present at a Massacre of three hundred Indians mostly women and children... It was a horrible scene and I would not let my Company fire.”

Refusing to participate, Soule and the men of Company D of the First Colorado, along with Cramer of Company K, bore witness to the incomprehensible.

Chivington’s attack soon descended into a frenzy of killing and mutilation, with soldiers taking scalps and other grisly trophies from the bodies of the dead.

Soule was a devoted abolitionist and one dedicated to the rights of all people. He stayed true to his convictions in the face of insults and even a threat of hanging from Chivington the night before at Fort Lyon.

In the following weeks, Soule and Cramer wrote letters to Major Edward “Ned” Wynkoop, the previous commander at Fort Lyon who had dealt fairly with the Cheyenne and Arapaho.

Both harshly condemned the massacre and the soldiers who carried it out. Soule’s letter details a meeting among officers on the eve of the attack in which he fervently condemned Chivington’s plans asserting “that any man who would take part in the murders, knowing the circumstances as we did, was a low lived cowardly son of a bitch.”

Describing the attack to Wynkoop, Soule wrote, “I refused to fire and swore that none but a coward would.” His letter goes on to describe the soldiers as “a perfect mob.”

This account is verified by Cramer’s letter. Detailing his own objections to Chivington, whom he describes as coming “like a thief in the dark,” Cramer had stated that he “thought it murder to jump them friendly Indians.” To this charge, Chivington had replied, “Damn any man or men who are in sympathy with them.”

In Soule’s account, he writes, “I tell you Ned it was hard to see little children on their knees have their brains beat out by men professing to be civilized.”

While few Americans – especially those living outside of Colorado – may know their names, Soule and Cramer are honored and revered by the descendants of the people they tried to save.



Soule's Grave. Author provided.

According to David F. Halaas, former Colorado state historian and current historical consultant to the Northern Cheyenne, without their courage in disobeying Chivington's orders and keeping their men from the massacre, "the descendants probably wouldn't be around today," and there would be no one to tell the stories.

The horrific descriptions of Soule and Cramer prompted several official inquiries into the atrocity. Both men also testified before an Army commission in Colorado as witnesses. While the officers and soldiers responsible escaped punishment, their testimony brought widespread condemnation upon Chivington, who defended the massacre for the rest of his life.

These investigations also ended the political career of the Colorado territorial governor, John Evans, who had issued two proclamations calling for violence against Native people of the plains, and for organizing the 3rd Colorado Cavalry Regiment in which Chivington was placed in command.

The Cheyenne and Arapaho will return to Denver this year to honor their ancestors and remember Soule's and Cramer's conscience and humanity. This will be done through an offering of prayers and blessings, along with the performance of honor songs.

On the third and final day of the healing run, they will gather for a sunrise ceremony at Soule's flower-adorned grave at Denver's Riverside Cemetery. The participants will then continue on to 15th and Lawrence Street in downtown Denver. There, a plaque is mounted on the side of an office building at the place where Soule was murdered on April 23, 1865. His death, for which no one was ever brought to justice, occurred only two months after he testified against Chivington before the Army commission.

Over the last few decades, Soule's grave and place of death have been transformed into sacred sites of remembrance within a violent and traumatic frontier past.

The catastrophe of the Sand Creek Massacre is recognized by historians as among the most infamous events in the annals of the American West. Even now, it is the only massacre of Native people recognized as such by the U.S. government, with the land itself preserved as a national historic site for learning and reflection.

In Cheyenne and Arapaho stories, this event remains an ever-present trauma and persists as part of their cultural memory. In addition, it encapsulates the stark moment of betrayal against their ancestors and the theft of their lands.

The story of Soule's and Cramer's actions and their courage to say "no" to the killing of peaceful people at Sand Creek is an important chapter of U.S. history.

I maintain that it is people like Soule and Cramer who truly deserve to be remembered through monuments and memorials, and can be a source for a different kind of historical understanding: one based not on abstract notions of justice and right, but upon the courage and integrity it takes to breathe life into those virtues.

On the 152nd anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre, as we honor the memory of those who died at Sand Creek, may we also be inspired by the heroic actions of these two American soldiers.

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2472 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Saturday 650,000 People Took To
The Streets In The Korean Capital
Seoul:
"People Were Angry To See
Government Refusing To Step Down"**

“Arrest Park, Prime Minister Hwang Should Also Step Down”

Thanks to Steven L. Robinson, AmeriConscience group, for posting]

December 20, 2016 by Workers' Solidarity [Korea]

For the past eight weeks mass protests have rocked South Korea demanding the resignation of the president Park Geun-hye.

Last Saturday 650,000 people took to the streets in the capital Seoul, despite the parliamentary vote to impeach Park the previous week.

People were angry to see Park—and her government—refusing to step down.

Park has brazenly submitted to the Constitutional Court, a body which needs to ratify the impeachment, that she had “done nothing wrong.” Park’s prime minister, Hwang Kyo-ahn, is now acting president and has made clear that he would continue her policies.

The establishment, from the right-wing press to the official opposition parties including the social-democratic Justice Party, has argued that people should allow the prime minister to stabilise the country and wait for the constitutional court to decide.

Last Saturday’s protesters defied that idea, marching towards the prime minister’s office and the constitutional court as well as protesting outside the presidential residence as usual.

People shouted, “Arrest Park, prime minister Hwang should also step down, the constitutional court should not delay ratifying the decision.”

The number of protesters was much larger than the organisers expected, reflecting the anger and potential behind this movement.

A woman spoke on behalf of the families of victims of the Sewol ferry disaster that cost 305 lives.

She said, “It is shame that Park and Hwang are out there while KCTU trade union federation president Han Sang-Gyun is still in jail. It is Park who should be arrested and Han should be released!”

The majority of the South Korean ruling class now seems to be prepared to save its own skin by removing Park and her immediate cabinet colleagues. But many people call Park’s policies “accumulated evils” and want them scrapped along with Park.

Park has been pushing through labour “reforms” and cutting welfare to maintain bosses’ profits at a time of deepening economic crisis.

Park has also been pursuing policies to push South Korea closer to the interests of US imperialism.

The official opposition parties are reluctant to support the demand for halting “labour reforms”, closing US military bases or even freeing the jailed KCTU president. They voted for impeachment only when they were forced to and are refusing to demand the Prime Minister’s and his cabinet’s resignation, a key demand of the movement.

NGOs are still arguing that the movement needs to work with these parties.

But Stalinists, previously aligned with the NGOs, are starting to vacillate because they feel the movement needs to attack the Prime Minister.

Revolutionaries can provide the movement with vital demands that target Park’s policies in order to mobilise people to more actions in the streets, schools and workplaces. These demands are different from the ones being raised by reformists, including the NGOs, which are basically election platforms for the next presidential election.

The Workers’ Solidarity newspaper sells several thousand copies on every protest, and our key members are in the very midst of organising the protests. We know socialist politics and organisation are very important. We need an independent revolutionary organisation capable of pushing the demands of the

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Summing Up

Dec 16, 2016 Gush Shalom

**Summing up
After three weeks:**

**Fires throughout
The country:
1773.**

**Suspects charged
With arson:
Zero.**

**Apologies from
Those who blamed
"The Arabs":
Zero!**

Zionists Shoot Activist With Rubber-Coated Steel Bullet For Taking Photos While Palestinian

Dec. 13, 2016 Ma'an News Agency

JERUSALEM -- Israeli forces on Monday evening shot a Palestinian activist in the leg with a rubber-coated steel bullet during a raid in the occupied East Jerusalem neighborhood of al-Issawiya while he was attempting to take photos and video footage in the neighborhood, according to a local committee.

Members of a local follow-up committee in al-Issawiya told Ma'an that committee member Muhammad Abu al-Hummus was "documenting Israeli violations and provocations" when an Israeli soldier "threatened to shoot him in the head if he didn't leave."

Shortly after the threat was made against him, another soldier then shot a rubber-coated steel bullet at Abu al-Hummus from an approximate distance of 25 meters, hitting him in the leg.

Prior to the shooting, Israeli forces and police officers had stormed the town and deployed in its alleys "in a provocative manner," started stopping drivers, and arbitrarily issued a number of locals traffic fines, according to the committee.

After being informed of the forces' arrival into the town, Abu al-Hummus began taking photos and writing notes about their activities.

An Israeli police spokesperson was not immediately available for comment.

Israeli police and soldiers have come under heavy criticism over the past year for what rights groups have referred to as excessive use of force against Palestinians, including journalists and activists, who did not pose an immediate threat at the time they were injured.

Occupation Forces Seize Palestinian Medical Clinic Caravan, Demolish Quarry In Hebron Area: “Israel ‘Does Not Want Them To Have A Life’ On Their Lands ‘In Order To Leave It For The Benefit Of Expanding Nearby Israeli Settlements’”

Dec. 13, 2016 Ma'an News Agency

HEBRON -- Israeli forces on Tuesday seized a caravan used as a medical clinic in the Bedouin village of al-Markaz in the Hebron hills in the southern occupied West Bank, and demolished a quarry in the Hebron-area village of al-Samu, according to Palestinian Authority (PA)-owned Wafa news agency.

Wafa reported that soldiers raided al-Markaz and seized the medical clinic caravan that was given to residents by the Italian Cooperation as part of a humanitarian assistance package to Palestinians living in difficult conditions in Area C -- the more than 60 percent of the occupied West Bank under full Israeli security and civilian control.

According to Wafa, the medical clinic served residents of al-Markaz and the nearby village of al-Halaweh.

Residents told Wafa that Israel “does not want them to have a life” on their lands “in order to leave it for the benefit of expanding nearby Israeli settlements.”

A resident of the nearby Bedouin village of Masafer Yatta, which has been declared by Israel as a "restricted military zone," told Ma'an that the clinic served about 200 people from the cluster of Bedouin villages in the area.

He highlighted that al-Markaz was more than 13 kilometers away from the nearest medical center in the town of Yatta, and without the clinic, residents would have to

travel on an unpaved dirt road, through 'Firing Zone 918,' in a private car in order to receive care.

A spokesperson from Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) -- the government entity responsible for enforcing the Israeli government's policies in the occupied West Bank -- told Ma'an that "an enforcement took place against two illegal transportable structures that were placed a couple of days ago in Firing Rage (sic) 918."

Meanwhile, Wafa reported that Israeli forces demolished a Palestinian-owned quarry in the town of al-Samu in the Hebron district.

A bulldozer, accompanied by Israeli forces, raided the quarry owned by Muhammad Daghamin and "leveled the quarry and destroyed everything there," under the pretext that it was constructed, presumably without a permit, in Area C.

Daghamin told Wafa that soldiers had raided the same quarry a few months ago and seized its machines. Forces returned the machines after Daghamin paid around \$13,000 for their return.

The COGAT spokesperson told Ma'an that "an enforcement took place against an illegal quarry in the Samoa area of Judea and Samaria that was damaging the environment of the surrounding area," using the Israeli term for the occupied West Bank.

COGAT went on to add that the quarry was being operated without proper permits and that tools were confiscated during the operation, only to be returned to their owners after they paid a fine.

Separately, Israeli forces on Monday afternoon notified a Palestinian man from the town of Idhna west of Hebron that two houses he owned in Area C were slated for demolition.

Locals told Ma'an that Israeli troops stormed the Jurat Salim area in the northern suburbs of Idhna and delivered demolition notices to Muhammad Hasan Muhammad Salih.

COGAT confirmed that a demolition notice was delivered for homes "built without the required permits."

Israel rarely grants Palestinians permits to build in Area C, forcing most Palestinians to build without permits.

All building in Area C, whether by Palestinians or Jewish settlers, comes under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Civil Administration, which has full control over all zoning and planning issues.

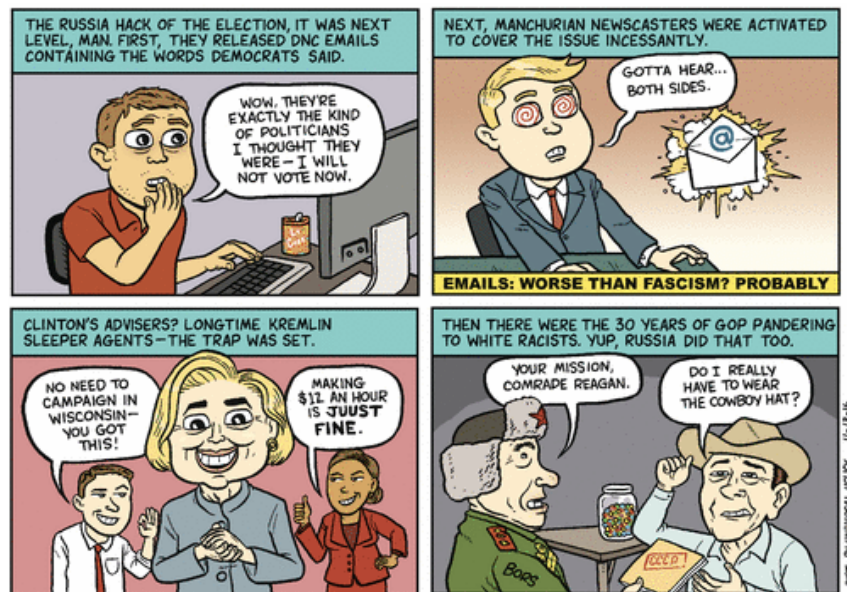
In practice, almost all Palestinian applications for a building permit are rejected, with the Civil Administration granting only a handful of permits.

Demolitions in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem have seen an unprecedented surge this year, with the number of structures demolished in the first half of 2016 well exceeding the total number of demolitions carried out in all of 2015.

At least 1,569 Palestinians have been displaced since the beginning of 2016 as a result of demolitions in the occupied territory, compared to 757 Palestinians displaced over the entirety of 2015, according to UN documentation.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:
<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>
The occupied nation is Palestine.
The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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