

Military Resistance 7L8



12.5.09 THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. UNIVERSAL PICTURE.

**Danger:
Politicians At Work:
Pols' Empty Rhetoric Dishonors
The 300 American Soldiers Killed
In Afghanistan In 2009:
“They Sell This War The Way They
Would Some Kind Of Stimulus
Package, Because That Is Much
Better Than Talking About The Loss
Of Another Dead Soldier, Another
One Of Our Own”**

“We Are About To Spend More Than Ever In Afghanistan, And You Wonder What The Price Tag Will Be When We Finally Admit Defeat”



GIs during a patrol in Chabar, Afghanistan, last week. ISAF/Handout

The figure thrown around constantly these days is that it costs us a million dollars per soldier in these wars.

Except, how do you put a dollar figure on the life of Sgt. 1st Class Gonzalez of South Ozone Park? How do you even measure the cost of a single American life like his?

This is what the politicians never understand. There are no words.

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

December 7th 2009 Mike Lupica, The New York Daily News

The politicians always make them sound like wars of abstraction so nobody has to talk about the blood of young American soldiers.

It was like that on the Sunday news shows as this country prepares to send even more soldiers to Afghanistan.

There was Defense Secretary Robert Gates, a front man now for this amped-up war the way Robert McNamara always was for Vietnam, talking about the date President Obama pulled out of the air the other night, July 2011.

That is when we are supposed to start pulling back our combat forces in Afghanistan if everything goes according to plan, as if anything ever has for an occupying force in that country, going back a thousand years.

"I do not consider this an exit strategy," Gates said. "This is a transition that is going to take place...."

At which point the only sensible transition for anybody listening to Gates was changing the channel.

This is the familiar, empty rhetoric of war, about surges and exit strategies and transition, even as we go past 300 dead in Afghanistan for this year, a new American record there.

They sell this war the way they would some kind of stimulus package, because that is much better than talking about the loss of another dead soldier, another one of our own.

It is much better to talk strategy than talk about someone like Sgt. 1st Class Luis Gonzalez, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, dead because of a roadside bomb in Afghanistan on Oct. 27.

The body of Sgt. Gonzalez, out of Corona and South Ozone Park, was returned to Dover Air Force Base two days later.

President Obama, who now sends 30,000 more just like Luis Gonzalez when he has to know 10 times that wouldn't be enough to finish the job, was at least there to pay his respects.

Obama sends more young soldiers over there after the worst speech of his presidency and maybe his whole public life the other night at West Point, when he made his case for doing what he is doing to nobody.

He sends more like Sgt. 1st Class Luis Gonzalez, who joined the Army one year after Sept. 11, in the fall of 2002, and saw his wife, Jessica, enlist 3-1/2 years later. He was in Iraq after that and eventually became a squad leader for the 5th Stryker Combat Team. He went to Afghanistan in July and now he is gone - at 27 - leaving behind his wife and his 5-month-old son.

"He knew what the consequences were," Jessica Gonzalez said Sunday from Fort Lewis in Washington State, where she is in the process of being discharged. "He had a passion for what he did and that is why I supported every decision he made."

Then, in a quiet voice, she said, "He would have made such a great father. Even in the two months he had with our son, you could see."

Then he came home to Dover as one of those 300 American casualties in 2009, that number about to grow as we get more soldiers over there fast.

And the message from the politicians, selling this strategy like Lyndon Johnson's Mad Men of the 1960s sold Vietnam to the bitter end, continues to be that there can be no "swift exit" for American troops.

"We believe that this is best for the United States," Hillary Clinton said Sunday.

Of course that is the message from her, the President, the generals.

We hear from these war experts that the stakes in Afghanistan are tremendous.

Almost as tremendous as the cost, as the United States continues to be the greatest debtor nation on Earth.

We are about to spend more than ever in Afghanistan, and you wonder what the price tag will be when we finally admit defeat.

You wonder how much we have to spend and how many of our own get killed, how many we have to kill.

This is always supposed to be a season of hope, in New York City and everywhere else.

Only now, it becomes a Christmas when we send off 30,000 more like Luis Gonzalez, a hero from Queens who had a future before that bomb went off on Oct. 27.

Who had a son.

The figure thrown around constantly these days is that it costs us a million dollars per soldier in these wars.

Except, how do you put a dollar figure on the life of Sgt. 1st Class Gonzalez of South Ozone Park?

How do you even measure the cost of a single American life like his?

This is what the politicians never understand.

There are no words.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

“Iraq Remains The War That Won’t Go Away”

10 December 2009 New Statesman [Excerpts]

Iraqi government figures suggest that violence has fallen over the past 18 months - yet in October, bomb attacks killed at least 155 people in the capital.

Most recently, on 8 December, a series of co-ordinated car bombings killed at least 127 people and wounded more than 400 in the centre of Baghdad.

Six years on, Iraq remains the war that won’t go away.

“The Iraqi Resistance Will Continue Until The Last U.S. Soldier Has Left His Homeland”

December 10 2009 By Andrew England in Damascus, The Financial Times Limited [Excerpts]

Sitting comfortably in a flat in Damascus, Abdul Nasser al-Jenabi is in defiant mood. Dressed in a flowing robe and white headscarf tied similarly to that of a cleric, he pledges that the Iraqi “resistance” will continue until the last US soldier has left his homeland.

“We do not want to be under slavery,” he says. “Iraq has been invaded 27 times in history – this is the 28th time – and it has freed itself with guns.”

“We Have Explosions Every Day, But Most Of Them Are Small And Scattered And So They Either Receive No Media Attention Or Are Camouflaged By The Government”

“Politicians Are Lying To Us”

“We Go To The Bomb Sites - We Know How Many People Really Die”

11 December 2009 By Natalia Antelava, BBC News, Baghdad [Excerpts]

“We don’t do body counts.” These were the words of Gen Tommy Franks, the man in charge of the US-led invasion of Iraq.

But more than six-and-a-half years after the invasion, the body count has become a critical measure of success and failure in Iraq.

In November, officials announced that violent deaths were at their lowest since 2003. That was an important example of progress in Iraq, according to the Iraqi government.

“The government is manipulating the figures,” says journalist Hindt al-Bedeiri who writes for the pro-opposition al-Mashraq newspaper.

“Politicians are lying to us because they are worried about the election. They are looking after their own interests. We go to the bomb sites - we know how many people really die,” she says.

Shortly after Tuesday’s bombings, the BBC visited one of Baghdad’s hospitals.

The total number of injured given by administrative staff was significantly lower than the estimates provided by doctors who were receiving patients.

One of the doctors, surgeon Tara Barki, said she believed the government was trying to downplay violence.

“We have explosions every day, but most of them are small and scattered and so they either receive no media attention or are camouflaged by the government,” Dr Barki said.

Resistance Action

Dec 10 (Reuters) & Dec 11 (Reuters)

A bomb attached to a car seriously wounded a police officer in eastern Baghdad’s Zayouna district, police said.

Resistance fighters opened fire at an Iraqi army vehicle, wounding a soldier in central Kirkuk, 250 km (150 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Six people were killed and 21 wounded when a bomb planted in a shop exploded and a subsequent car bomb detonated as police rushed to the scene in Yusufiya, 20 km (12 miles) south of Baghdad, police said. Two of the dead were police.

A roadside bomb detonated near a police checkpoint and wounded two policemen in central Mosul, 390 kilometres (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb went off near the convoy of Brigadier General Majed al-Bayati, head of a brigade of federal police, in central Mosul. Three of Bayati's guards were wounded, but he escaped unhurt, police said.

Two Iraqi soldiers were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near their patrol in northern Mosul, police reported.

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

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!**

Why Don't You Have Any Weapons?

December 11, 2009 by Warren Strobel, Baghdad Observer

Favorite checkpoint story: After an interview today at the Ministry of Interior, we drove back home down Abu Nawas street, which runs along the east side of the Tigris. With other cars, we went through a vehicle checkpoint, and were stopped by an officer, who leaned in toward the car window.

Officer: Do you have any weapons?

Us: No.

Officer (incredulously): You don't have weapons? Why don't you have any weapons?

Moral of the story: Everyone in Iraq has a weapon. And with good reason.

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

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

Still No Oil For U.S. Blood: English, Dutch, Chinese, French & Malaysian Corporations Win Iraq Oil Field Contracts



Representatives of oil corporations attend the second bidding round for oilfields in Baghdad, December 11, 2009. REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani

12.11.09 Prashant Rao, AFP [Excerpts]

Iraq struck deals with consortiums led by Shell and CNPC over massive southern oil fields on Friday, as part of a two-day auction that seeks to dramatically boost the country's crude output.

The successful bids from the Anglo-Dutch and Chinese giants kicked off the sale, which aims to catapult Iraq towards the top of the list of the world's oil producers and bring in much-needed revenue to rebuild the country.

The contract for the enormous Majnoon field was jointly won by Shell and its Malaysian partner Petronas, while CNPC led a group comprised of Petronas and France's Total to capture Halfaya.

“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

Welcome To The New Iraq, Where There Is No U.S. Military Occupation



Dec. 7, 2009: A US army soldier takes a retinal scan of a man at a crossing point at Rabiya, Iraq, at the border with Syria. (AP Photo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Oregon Sgt. Killed In Nuristan



U.S. Army Sgt. Elijah J. Rao, 26, of Lake Oswego, Ore., killed Dec. 5, 2009 in Nuristan, Afghanistan, by an improvised explosive device; was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colo. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Connecticut Marine Killed In Helmand



U.S. Marines Cpl. Xhacob Latorre of Waterbury, Conn., died Dec. 8, 2009, from wounds suffered during combat in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/U.S. Marines)

December 10, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release December 10, 2009

Cpl. Xhacob Latorre, 21, of Waterbury, Conn., died Dec. 8 of wounds sustained while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Florida Staff Sgt. Dies Of Afghan Wounds

December 10, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 966-09

Staff Sgt. Dennis J. Hansen, 31, of Panama City, Fla., died Dec. 7 at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany, of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit Dec. 3 with an improvised explosive device in Logar province, Afghanistan.

He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Fort Drum, N.Y.

Australian Soldier Wounded In Clash With Insurgents In Oruzgan

December 09 AAP

AN Australian soldier has been wounded in Afghanistan during a clash with insurgents.

The soldier was shot in the leg during an operation in Oruzgan province in southern Afghanistan last Friday and is in a stable condition.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) said the soldier, who has not been named, was treated at the scene before being evacuated to the military hospital in Tarin Kowt.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



Nov 29: US Marines search for improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Mian Poshteh in Helmand Province. (AFP/Manpreet Romana)

Poland Mi-24 Down In Ghazni

12.10.09 Flight International

A Polish army Mil Mi-24V assault helicopter was damaged after making an emergency autorotation landing immediately after taking off from Ghazni airfield in Afghanistan on 3 December. The crew and passengers were not seriously injured.

The latest accident means Polish forces now have four Mi-24s and four Mi-17-1V transport helicopters available in Afghanistan.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Fighting Starts In North Mogadishu, Islamists Claim Victory: “Transition Government Controls Little More Than A Few Blocks Of Mogadishu”

12/10/2009 By: Hassan Osman Abdi, Sh. M. Network & GAROWE ONLINE

Heavy fighting between the Islamist fighters of Harakat Al shabab Mujahideen and Hizbul Islam and the transitional federal Government troops has started in north of the Somali capital Mogadishu, just as the Islamist forces claimed victory over the fighting between the two sides.

Resident told Shabelle radio that fighting was very heavy adding that there had also been mortar shells that were landing to areas near Global hotel and parts of Abdal Aziz and caused more casualties of deaths and injuries.

The clashes started in the capital's Abdiaziz district where forces loyal to rebel Hizbul Islam group fired missile to government troops' vehicle, leading to heavy gun battle that killed the seven people, mostly combatants.

Officials of Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen who contacted with Shabelle radio said that they had attacked the former port of Abdal Azis in north Mogadishu and claimed that they captured a battle wagon from the government soldiers who were the area.

Sheik Mohamed Osman Arus, the spokesman of the Islamist fighters of Hizbul Islam for the operations told Shabelle radio that the Islamist fighters attacked their positions adding that they killed more soldiers and burnt one of their armed vehicles during the fighting.

On the other hand we had contacted with the transitional Federal Government officials to know more about the clashes, but was too difficult to get any comment about fighting from them and the fighting seemed to be part of the daily clashes between the two rival sides in the capital

Somali powerful militants are bent on overthrowing fragile UN-backed transition government, which controls little more than a few blocks of Mogadishu.

TROOP NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



The casket of Army Spc. Stephen Mace at Arlington Cemetery Oct. 19, 2009. Mace, of Lovettsville, Va., was killed earlier this month in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

**Silly Gates Says Afghan War May
Last Until 2016:
He Thinks U.S. Troops Will Be Dying In
Afghanistan For “Three Years Or Two
Years Or Four Years” After Fake 2011
Withdrawal Bullshit**

Dec 8 By ANNE FLAHERTY, Associated Press Writer

KABUL – After meeting Tuesday with U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said it may be five years before his army is ready to take on insurgents — a blunt warning that the planned exit strategy for U.S. troops from Afghanistan 18 months from now could grind slowly through 2014.

Gates voiced “hope that we not only could meet the timelines that President Karzai has laid out, but that as more Afghans are trained we will be able to beat those timelines.”

But even the hopeful timelines Gates suggested would entail American troops remaining in Afghanistan for several years well beyond the July 2011 start that Obama detailed last week.

“Whether it’s three years or two years or four years remains to be seen,” the defense secretary said.

Comment: T

Just as they did in Vietnam, where the soldiers rebelled and stopped that war, the troops will decide when the Afghan war ends, and that day will come sooner than Gates or Obama or any of the other traitors running the government can possibly imagine, although not so soon as may be wished.

This time, in order to make sure there are no further Imperial wars, it will be necessary and desirable to take down and break up the whole Imperial government structure in Washington DC, once and for all.

That fact of life becomes clearer every day.

NEED SOME MORE TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW DECEMBER TRAVELING SOLDIER:

**“I Am Thoroughly Opposed To The Army As A
Whole, And The War In The Middle East”
[An Army Sergeant Sends An Open Letter To Active
Duty Soldiers]**

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

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

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.

-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

The Social-Democrats ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression no matter where it appears no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

-- Lenin; What Is To Be Done

"While there is a lower class I am in it; while there is a criminal element I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free"

-- Eugene V. Debs

"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms."

Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.

"The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!"

-- Camille Desmoulins

"When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, "No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country."

-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq

We stand in a moment of time between the eternal past and the eternal future, content that, for us, all that was before and all that will be cannot exist for us, and yet we exist because all that was before us gave us our moment in time, and we will share the responsibility for all that will exist in the eternal future.

-- Abraham Lincoln

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

-- George Washington

The History Of An Unwinnable War, 1945-1975



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance
Sent: December 09, 2009
Subject: The History of an Unwinnable War, 1945-1975

The History of an Unwinnable War, 1945-1975

“We can now say with confidence that the South Vietnamese can develop the capability for their own defense, and we can say with confidence that all American combat forces can and will be withdrawn.”

**Richard M. Nixon
President of the United States
San Clemente, California
April 20, 1970**

**Photo taken by Mike Hastie,
at a bookstore in Portland, Oregon
December 8, 2009**

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**“In Prison I Found Palestine’s
Political, National, Revolutionary
University”
Khaled Al-Azraq Writing From Nafha
Prison:
“The Prisoners’ Movement Came Up
With Ingenious Ways Of Smuggling
Books Into Israeli Prisons”**



Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been held as political prisoners by Israel in its attempt to repress the national movement for liberation. (Hatem Omar)

Simply put, learning and passing on knowledge and understanding, both about Palestine and in general, has been considered a patriotic duty necessary to ensure steadfastness and perseverance in the struggle to defend our rights against Zionism and colonialism.

December 2009 By Khaled al-Azraq writing from Nafha prison; Live from Palestine, 9

Khaled al-Azraq is a refugee who lived in Aida refugee Camp (Bethlehem) before being captured and imprisoned by Israel.

He has been a political prisoner for the past 20 years, and is currently being held in Nafha (Hadarim) prison in southern Palestine.

This article was originally published in the Autumn 2009 issue of al-Majdal, the quarterly magazine of the Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (<http://www.badil.org/>), and is republished with permission.

Let me start by saying that the role of the Palestinian prisoners' movement in educating its cadre, and thereby contributing to Palestinian "national education" is a large topic, and one worthy of much more discussion and research.

As a Palestinian political prisoner who has spent the past 20 years in Israeli jails I would like to highlight some of the general characteristics of the prisoners' movement's struggle to build a system of self and collective education as a central part of developing a patriotic and revolutionary culture that can be a pillar of the liberation movement.

It was at a very early age that I began to understand the occupation, and the state of being under occupation.

Some of my first interactions with the occupation involved hearing conversations in my family, for example about how my older brother was not allowed to enter Jordan because of his "security file" with the occupation.

I learned the meaning of occupation in the all-too-frequent days of curfew imposed on our refugee camp. Any question I asked about these difficult times were met with the same answer; "it's Israel, it's the occupation."

Little by little I learned the meaning of Palestine through the stories narrated by my father and grandmother about the Nakba and the difficult early years of exile and refuge.

I fell in love with Palestine through the stories of "al-blad" (the land), memories of the times before the Nakba, or "real life" as my grandmother used to call it.

In those days of diving into my elders' stories -- the late 1970s -- I had no other source through which to learn about Palestine other than those stories and the few words secretly uttered by a teacher risking the loss of his job and livelihood at the hands of the district military commander if the latter found out.

In the early '80s, Palestinian society transformed into a volcano of protest against the Israeli regime's attempt to impose the "village leagues" as a kind of political leadership that would replace elected municipal leaders and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

This period of protests changed my life.

I became an active part of the growing popular movement.

My activism was not limited to participating in strikes, rallies and protests, for I had begun the lifelong process of political self-education. This was harder than it may seem.

Finding books about Palestinian political history and the Zionist colonization of Palestine required a great deal of effort and discretion; all of these books were banned by Israel, and most of them had been burned or confiscated by the army.

It was very difficult to find a book about Palestine or Palestinians, even if it was a novel by Ghassan Kanafani, or a book of poems by Mahmoud Darwish.

I quenched my thirst for these texts by consuming the secret books and pamphlets which, you may be surprised to hear, were not instruction manuals for making explosives, but historical, literary, political writings by various Palestinian and international authors that we would secretly pass around from one person to another.

If an Israeli soldier caught you with one of those texts, you would most likely end up in prison.

In those years I fed my revolutionary fervor with patriotic songs.

I particularly craved the compositions of Marcel Khalife and Ahmad Qaabour, and the voice of Muthaffar al-Nuwwab reciting his own poetry.

Tapes with recordings of patriotic music, like their printed counterparts, were also illegal as far as the Israelis were concerned.

We recorded these songs on tapes with foreign love songs just in case a soldier decided to check.

It was through these banned songs and poems that I learned the meaning of struggle for freedom, the meaning of international solidarity and how a victory for one can be a victory for all.

Despite the harshness and difficulty of those days, I miss them. Today, after two decades of isolation in prison, I say "if only I could relive those days!"

I was first imprisoned in 1982 at the age of 16.

In prison I found what I was not expecting to find: I found inside the prison what I could not find outside of it.

In prison I found Palestine's political, national, revolutionary university.

It was in prison that I realized that knowledge is what paves the road to victory and freedom.

In prison, and through a long and arduous struggle, the prisoners' movement has been able to win and maintain the right to a library.

Members of the prisoners' movement came up with ingenious ways of smuggling books into Israeli prisons, methods that Israeli prison guards were never able to discover.

The movement systematically organized workshops, seminars and courses held inside the prison to educate prisoners on every relevant topic one can imagine.

Every day, the prisoner holding the position of "librarian" would pass through the different cells and sections, and prisoners would exchange the book they had just finished for the one they were about to begin. The librarian carried the "library book," a record of the books available in the library, and a list of the books each prisoner had requested.

Talking about this reminds me of one of the most memorable prison library moments.

We had found out that the movement had managed to smuggle Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* into the old Nablus prison. We all raced to get our names on the list of people wanting to read the book, and the wait lasted weeks! Several times, we resorted to making copies of sought-after books like this. Of course, copies were done with pen and paper, and I remember copying Naji Aloush's *The Palestinian National Movement* of which we made five hand-written copies.

I remember how we all raced for the writings of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Jorge Amado, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, Hanna Mina, Nazim Hikmet, and many, many others.

Through the will and perseverance of the prisoners, prison was transformed into a school, a veritable university offering education in literature, languages, politics, philosophy, history and more.

The graduates of this university excelled in various fields. I still remember the words of Bader al-Qawasmah, one of my compatriots who I met in the old Nablus prison in 1984, who said to me, "before prison I was a porter who could neither read nor write. Now, after 14 years in prison, I write in Arabic, I teach Hebrew, and I translate from English."

I remember the words of Saleh Abu Tayi (a Palestinian refugee in Syria who was a political prisoner in Israeli jails for 17 years before being released in the prisoner exchange of 1985) who told me vivid stories of prisoners' adventures smuggling books, pieces of paper and even the ink-housing tubes of pens.

Prisoners passed on what they knew and had learned in an organized and systematic fashion.

Simply put, learning and passing on knowledge and understanding, both about Palestine and in general, has been considered a patriotic duty necessary to ensure steadfastness and perseverance in the struggle to defend our rights against Zionism and colonialism.

There is no doubt that the Palestinian political prisoners' movement has played a leading role in developing Palestinian national education.

A Pogrom In Enebus

December 8, 2009 By Adam Keller, Adam-keller2.blogspot.com

Enabus.

I was there two years ago, to help with the olive harvest. A Palestinian village south of Nablus. Industrious, lively and hospitable inhabitants. A very steep mountain terrain.

Not the most ideal of agricultural lands, but the people of Enabus do their best. They build terraces on the mountainside, plant olive trees even on the most tiny plot available.

This week uninvited guests arrived in Enabus.

Settlers.

They arrived in Enabus in the middle of the night, burned cars and also a tractor, tried to set a house on fire, threatened inhabitants with their guns. (The guns which had been provided to them by the army for "self defense").

This was not because of something which the Enabus villagers had done. It was because the settlers are angry at Netanyahu's "settlement freeze".

When settlers are angry at something which the Government of Israel is doing (or pretends to be doing), they are quick to "exact a price" from the first Palestinians they happen to encounter.

In fact, this is not the settlers' own invention.

This method is already centuries old.

Historically, in quite a few countries people who were furious with the King's latest decree took out their anger on the nearest Jews.

In such places, this was called simply "a pogrom".

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Obama Kills 721 In Pakistan: “Intelligence Officials Believe That At Least 56 Were Militants”

Dec. 11, 2009 CBS/ AP

Since Jan. 28, 2008, there have been at least 67 suspected U.S. missile strikes into Pakistan, killing more than 721 people.

Intelligence officials believe that at least 56 were militants, according to Pakistani intelligence officials and witnesses interviewed by The Associated Press after each strike.

Petraeus Says It's Necessary To Kill Or Capture Obama And Gates

Dec. 11 By Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg

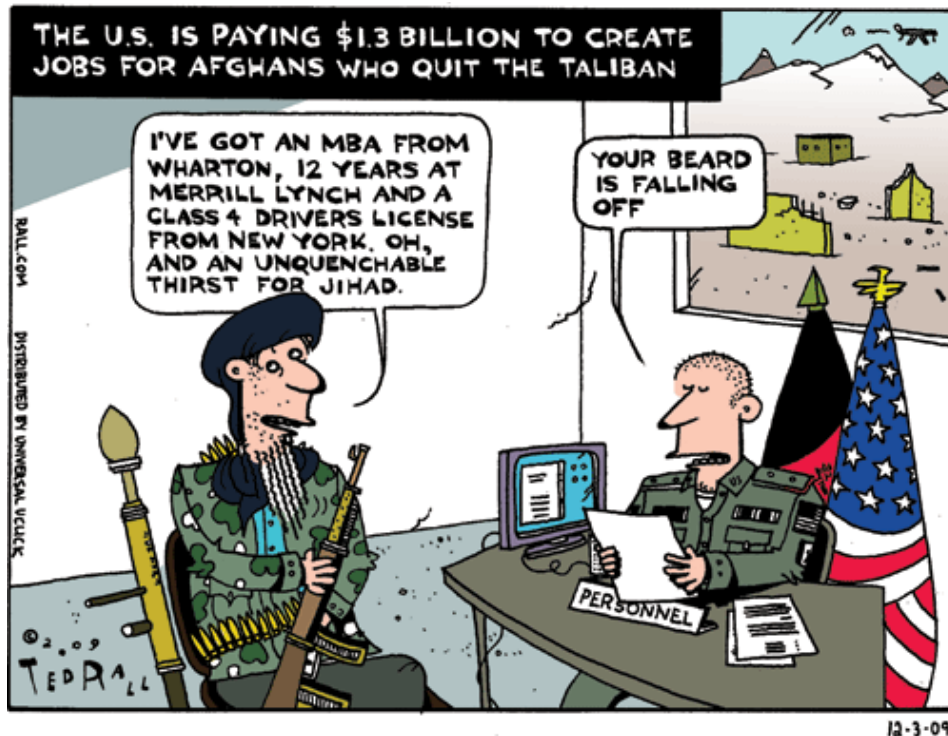
General David Petraeus, who commands U.S. forces in the Middle East and Central Asia, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Dec. 9 that the U.S. will increase “our counterterrorist component of the overall strategy.”

“You’ve got to kill or capture those bad guys that are not reconcilable and we are intending to do that,” he said.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Americans Want Government to Spend for Jobs, And Make The Rich Pay For It: Also Cut Spending On Iraq And Afghanistan Wars

Dec. 10 By Mike Dorning and Catherine Dodge, Bloomberg [Excerpts]

Americans want their government to create jobs through spending on public works, investments in alternative energy or skills training for the jobless.

They also want the deficit to come down.

And most are ready to hand the bill to the wealthy.

A Bloomberg National Poll conducted Dec. 3-7 shows two-thirds of Americans favor taxing the rich to reduce the deficit.

Even though almost 9 of 10 respondents also say they believe the middle class will have to make financial sacrifices to achieve that goal, only a little more than one-fourth support an increase in taxes on the middle class.

Fewer still back cuts in entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare or a new national consumption tax.

These long-standing contradictions in voters' attitudes toward taxes, spending and the deficit are intensified as the U.S. grapples with the most severe economic crisis in decades, says J. Ann Selzer, president of Selzer & Co., a Des Moines, Iowa-based firm that conducted the nationwide survey. The rich have become an especially inviting target as the combination of a bank bailout and big bonuses stoke resentments, she says.

"People are hurting," Selzer says. "They want anything that can help and not hurt them more."

"It's hard enough just to get by," says poll respondent Trevor Wofsey, 32, a postal carrier in Big Pine Key, Florida. "We're being cut at every level: There are less hours at work and they want us to pay more into medical. Food is up, gas is up."

"With the middle class making more sacrifices than they are already making because of what the government ran up, it's going to eventually leave the middle class at the bottom," says poll respondent Laisha Wright, 25, an unemployed resident of Columbus, Ohio.

The wealthy would be better able to bear the burden of more taxes, she says. "I don't think it would be a big issue for them."

The appeal of taxes on the wealthy crosses party lines. About half of Republicans back the idea and it is more popular among Democrats and independents.

Majorities of poll respondents also say some big government programs either are not justified or could be cut.

They included the \$700 billion rescue of the nation's banking system, the auto industry bailout, Iraq War funding, the \$787 billion economic stimulus package and funding for the Afghanistan War.

Cuts in funding for the Medicare prescription drug program would be resisted by 71 percent.

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