

Military Resistance 7L6



Two-Thirds Of Military Age Americans Oppose Sending More To Die In Obama's War

December 4, 2009 by Andrew Ryan, Boston Globe Staff [Excerpt]

Two-thirds of young adults oppose sending more US troops to Afghanistan, according to a national poll released yesterday by the Harvard University Institute of Politics that suggests fissures in a key demographic that helped President Obama capture the White House.

The poll found that 55 percent of the young adults surveyed disapproved of how he has handled Afghanistan.

MORE:

Poll Finds U.S. Public Turning Against The Empire: [And A Foul, Lying Newspaper Tries To Twist The Meaning Of The Poll]

Dec. 4, 2009 McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpt]

WASHINGTON - At the very moment when President Barack Obama is looking to thrust the U.S. ever more into global affairs, from Afghanistan to climate change, the American public is turning more isolationist and unilateralist than it has at any time in decades, according to a new poll released Thursday.

The survey by the Pew Research Center indicated a plurality of Americans, 49 percent, think that the U.S. should “mind its own business internationally” and leave it to other countries to fend for themselves.

Just 32 percent of the public favors increasing U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

[And that’s how twisted Empire-loving newspapers like this piece of shit decide the public is “isolationist” and for “unilateralism.”

[The public opinion that it is desirable to leave other countries free of U.S. government invasion and occupation is smeared with the lie that the public wants to “leave it to other countries to fend for themselves.” T]

MORE:

A Wall Street Journal Mouthpiece Also Tries To Twist Anti-Imperialism Into “Isolationism” And Ends Up Demonstrating The Opposite: In Passing, He Finds A “Silver Lining” Because “Elites” Favor Obama’s War On Afghanistan

Comment On The Article Below: T

Just as in the late 1960’s and 1970s, “mind its own business internationally” meant get the fuck out of Vietnam, today “mind its own business internationally”

means get the fuck out of Iraq and Afghanistan. And the public today is far ahead of where it was in then.

See the chart below. Case closed.

Elitists like Seib are the mirror image of elitists on the left, who puff themselves up by incessantly applauding their own brilliance while smearing the public as stupid, uncaring, ill-informed fools.

They belong to that section of the individualistic intelligentsia that hate the ruling class above them, to whom they believe themselves far superior, and fear the less privileged majority of the working class below, to whom they also believe themselves far superior: thus the hostile contempt they express toward the majority.

Here's a classic example:

“Even more disastrously, the immense majority of our brothers and sisters who disapprove of BushCo and its foreign policy (‘if you’re not with us, you’re against us’), are apathetic consumering automatons that allow the carnage to continue.”

Elitist politics on the left insult the people needed to move against the Empire, and thereby serve the Empire.

DECEMBER 4, 2009 By GERALD F. SEIB, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

President Barack Obama faces a lot of problems in executing his new Afghanistan strategy, but here is a basic one: He is trying to ramp up an operation abroad at a time when an economically weary country is growing more isolationist.

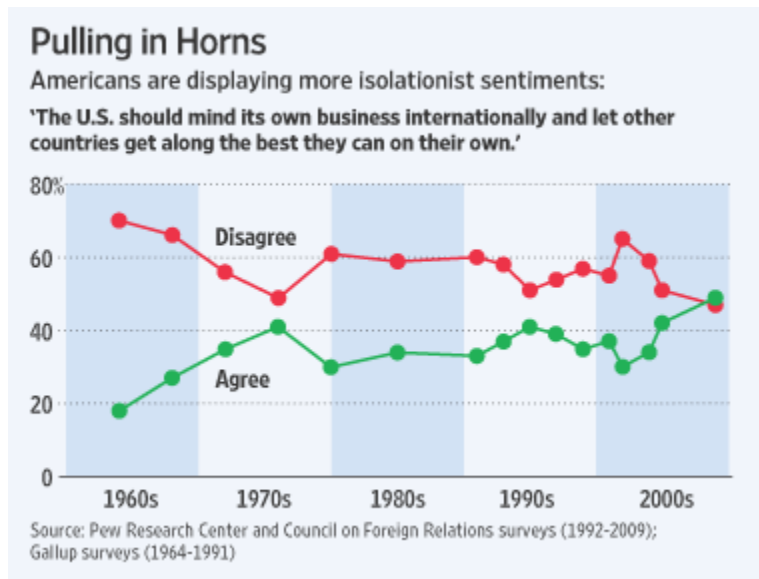
That picture -- of a recession-battered American public turning inward -- emerged Thursday in a broad new survey of American attitudes conducted by the Pew Research Center and the Council on Foreign Relations. Pew and the council found, as have other recent polls, that support for bulking up the force in Afghanistan is low; only a third favored adding troops.

Broader and more striking is the discovery of a marked rise in isolationist sentiment, which by some measures stands at a four-decade high. When Americans were asked whether the U.S. should “mind its own business internationally,” 49% said they agreed with that sentiment.

And here is one detail that has to be of concern to the White House: More than half of Mr. Obama’s Democrats -- 53% -- share the “mind our own business” sentiment, compared with 43% of Republicans.

The silver lining for Mr. Obama as he undertakes his new Afghan policy is that foreign-policy elites -- that is, Council of Foreign Relations members, who were surveyed separately -- are considerably more supportive of the Afghan surge and far less inclined toward pulling in America’s horns.

**[Notice the period 1960's to mid-1970s below:
This prior peak in what the liars call "isolationism" precisely
matches the growing movement at home and in the armed
forces that ended the Vietnam War. Case closed.]**



MORE:

It's The Elitists That Are The Ill-Informed And Backward Americans: Check Out Today's Daily News Poll

[The tabloid New York Daily News is New York's undisputed working class newspaper. The elite wouldn't be caught dead holding one in their hands. Too "low class" and "sensationalistic" for Mr. and Mrs. Snotty.

[Next time you run into some elitist piece of shit babbling about how backward and ill-informed average working class Americans are, shove this up their ass with a sharp stick. T]

12.7.09 New York Daily News Poll results as of 8:02 PM

Do you think Gates is being too optimistic about U.S. troops in Afghanistan?

Yes: 73%

No: 16%

I don't know: 11%

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

UK Soldier Becomes 100th To Die In Afghanistan In 2009

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

7 December 2009 BBC & Richard Norton-Taylor, Guardian News and Media Limited

A British soldier has been shot dead in Afghanistan, taking the total number killed there this year to 100.

The soldier of 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment died after an incident in central Helmand Province in the afternoon. Next of kin have been told.

The 100th British soldier to die this year was shot in the Nad-e Ali area in the afternoon. He has not yet been named.

As well as the fatalities, 145 British troops have received life-threatening injuries so far this year, compared with 65 last year, and more than 1,000 troops have been admitted to field hospitals this year. Improvised explosive devices have been the deadliest threat.

Britain's Most Senior Commander In Helmand Has Admitted Travelling By

Road “Now More Dangerous Than When The Taliban Were In Power”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

04 Dec 2009 Telegraph Media Group Limited [Excerpts]

Travelling by road in Afghanistan is now more dangerous than it was when the Taliban were in power, Britain’s most senior commander in Helmand has admitted.

Major General Nick Carter said that, before the 2001 invasion, young women could travel alone between major cities without risk of harm.

The admission heaped further pressure on Gordon Brown’s strategy in Afghanistan, suggesting that little had changed despite the long and bloody campaign.

“The difference, I think we need to be clear, is that when the Taliban were here they did ensure security on the main highways and they did it very effectively,” Maj Gen Carter said.

“You could put your daughter on a bus in Kabul sure in the knowledge that she would get in one piece to Kandahar.

“That is not the case at the moment, and we need to change that.”

Roadside bombs planted by the Taliban are a major part of the problem, accounting for around 70 per cent of casualties among coalition troops alone.

But the criminal gangs that operate with seeming impunity are of equal concern to locals, who complain that even the country’s main ring road, Highway One, is now plagued by bandits.

Karim, a 42-year-old coach driver on the route from Kabul to Herat via Kandahar, said there were robbers “everywhere”.

“Once they stopped my bus in Nimroz province and they robbed us all,” he said. “They went through all our pockets and took everything.”

The banditry also provides the Taliban with influence since in rural areas, people often turn to them rather than coalition forces for a form of redress.

Under their harsh system, murderers were publicly executed by relatives of their victim and thieves had hands cut off.

To improve the security offered, Maj Gen Carter said forces will use the Afghan police and military “to the best of their capabilities”.

Diplomats have warned of problems training up the local police from a pool of frequently drug-addicted and often corrupt officers.

“Obama’s Announcement Of A Massive New Escalation Seemed To Have Impressed Nobody In The Afghan Capital”

“Even If They Bring The Whole Of America, They Won’t Be Able To Stabilise Afghanistan”

“This Is Part Of America’s Further Occupation Of Afghanistan”

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

December 2, 2009 by Sayed Salahuddin, Reuters

KABUL - Thirty thousand more U.S. troops for Afghanistan?

Esmatullah only shrugged.

“Even if they bring the whole of America, they won’t be able to stabilise Afghanistan,” said the young construction worker out on a Kabul street corner on Wednesday morning. “Only Afghans understand our traditions, geography and way of life.”

U.S. President Barack Obama’s announcement of a massive new escalation of the eight-year-old war seemed to have impressed nobody in the Afghan capital, where few watched the speech on TV before dawn and fewer seemed to think new troops would help.

Shopkeeper Ahmad Fawad, 25, said it would not help.

“The troops will be stationed in populated areas where the Taliban will somehow infiltrate and then may attack the troops,” he said. “Instead of pouring in more soldiers, they need to focus on equipping and raising Afghan forces, which is cheap and easy.” For many, the prospect of more troops meant one thing: more civilian deaths.

“More troops will mean more targets for the Taliban and the troops are bound to fight, and fighting certainly will cause civilian casualties,” Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, a former Afghan prime minister, told Reuters.

“The civilian casualties will be further a blow to the U.S. image and cause more indignation among Afghans.”

Other Afghans, hardened by decades of war and wary of foreign forces whom have for years fought proxy battles in Afghanistan, were skeptical of the United States’ intentions.

Kabul money changer Ehsanullah wondered why U.S. forces had managed to find former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, but had yet to locate Al Qaeda head Osama bin Laden or Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, who both fled U.S. troops in Afghanistan in 2001.

“This is part of America’s further occupation of Afghanistan,” he said. “America is using the issue of insecurity here in order to send more troops.”

“One Senior Military Official Told Me, ‘There Are A Lot More Insurgents Than We Thought’”

“On This Trip, I Was Told That There Were As Many As 25,000 Hard-Core Fighters”

“Hungry Taliban Fighters Were So Confident That They Ordered 150 Kebabs From A Restaurant In Kandahar; Then Ate Their Kebabs Right There On The Street”

“In 33 Of The Country’s 34 Provinces, The Taliban Has Set Up Its Own Anticorruption Committees, Which Allow Local Afghans To Complain About Any

Injustice, Including Those Inflicted By The Taliban”

The senior official also told me that Omar, the Quetta shura’s reclusive leader, had installed five regional military commanders this year -- just as the U.S.-led coalition has in Afghanistan.

Several of these were dispatched by the Taliban shura to areas they were not from, showing a growing sophistication in Taliban military strategy that relies on the best military minds and not just homegrown allegiances.

November 30, 2009 By Kim Barker, Foreign Affairs [Excerpts]

KIM BARKER is Edward R. Murrow Press Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

For Afghans, corruption falls into three categories: first is petty corruption by lower-level government employees who are looking out for their own survival.

Next is large-scale corruption, which is committed by ministers and relatives of top Afghan officials involved in lucrative international contracts or the drug trade.

Last is what Karzai described as Western-driven corruption, which begins with the foreign contractors who live conspicuously well in Kabul. They subcontract out work to local Afghans, who then make their own subcontracts with other Afghans. The end result is that the bulk of every aid dollar is wasted. But this, at least by Western standards, is technically legal -- a seeming loophole that many Afghans find absurd, if not hypocritical and offensive.

Corruption in the country has reached such a scale that Ashraf Ghani, a former World Bank executive and presidential candidate, says that a senior Karzai adviser told him that one government minister made \$25 million in a single year, and a northern governor, \$75 million.

Some of the shifting public support toward the Taliban is due to the fact that the Taliban, unlike the central government, seem to take such widespread corruption seriously.

In 33 of the country’s 34 provinces, the Taliban has set up its own anticorruption committees, which allow local Afghans to complain about any injustice, including those inflicted by the Taliban.

One Afghan official told me that such committees would be “a good idea” for the government.

The Taliban also runs its own courts, which are known for quick justice without the need to pay bribes.

So far, the government’s approach to fighting corruption has been almost laughable.

In 2008, the country's first anticorruption task force was dissolved because it had no teeth. It probably did not help that Izzatullah Wasifi, the task force's first head, had been convicted of selling heroin in Nevada in the 1980s and then ran into personality problems with Karzai.

A second anticorruption task force was launched a year ago, just after the first disbanded. It was named the High Office of Oversight and Anticorruption (HOOAC), but like its predecessor, it also lacks effective enforcement ability -- largely because of early complaints by then Attorney General Abdul Jabar Sabit, who himself was later accused of corruption.

On a recent trip to Kabul, I heard some new and telling rumors.

Hungry Taliban fighters were so confident that they ordered 150 kebabs from a restaurant in Kandahar; so brazen that they then ate their kebabs right there on the street.

In past years, I had typically been told that the insurgents had a core group of 3,000 members who could recruit a total of perhaps 10,000 anti-government fighters.

But on this trip, I was told that there were as many as 25,000 hard-core fighters -- with as many as 500,000 people waiting to side with whomever seemed to gain the upper hand.

As one senior military official told me, "There are a lot more insurgents than we thought."

The Taliban is not a monolithic group.

Rather, it is a shorthand term that often includes various entities with similar agendas.

But the Taliban leadership council, or shura, in Quetta -- the movement most closely linked with Mullah Muhammad Omar and the former regime in Kabul -- is considered to be the group most interested in actually running Afghanistan, as opposed to merely fighting international troops and creating terror.

It is no accident that the most serious challenge posed by any insurgent group to the Afghan government -- and therefore to the U.S. troop surge -- is based in Quetta, a provincial capital in Pakistan. Western military officials said that although the Pakistani military has increased efforts against militants inside its own borders, it must do much more.

"I think the Pakistanis are scared to death," one senior official told me. They are especially worried, he said, by "their inability to do anything about it."

The senior official also told me that Omar, the Quetta shura's reclusive leader, had installed five regional military commanders this year -- just as the U.S.-led coalition has in Afghanistan.

Several of these were dispatched by the Taliban shura to areas they were not from, showing a growing sophistication in Taliban military strategy that relies on the best military minds and not just homegrown allegiances.

Meanwhile, the Quetta shura has developed shadow governments in 33 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, as well as "redress" committees, where Afghans can complain about Taliban behavior, such as roadside bombs that kill Afghans.

Western military officials and diplomats fear that the Taliban insurgents are doing much more than the Afghan government to establish good governance and accountability.

The Taliban has also set up committees for aid groups. This means that, in theory at least, if aid groups agree to Taliban conditions and aid gets delivered to remote areas, the Taliban could claim the credit and not the government.

In the remote provinces, the Taliban's efforts have had the effect of reinforcing the image of an absent Afghan central government (or of a government that is present but corrupt). In its place, the Taliban have been able to shore up their footprint across the countryside and display measures of accountability.

This is not just happening in the south, the Taliban's traditional stronghold, but also in the north, in formerly Taliban-free provinces such as Kunduz.

Coalition military officials said that Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, Omar's deputy who is responsible for day-to-day Taliban operations, has started polling Afghans in the north about their satisfaction with the Karzai government and such government services as education.

MORE:

Top British General Says Resistance Victory Will Be Difficult, But Is "Entirely Achievable"

"It will be difficult, it will be frustrating, it will be uneven and it will be messy, but if we concentrate unrelentingly on enabling and supporting local governance it is, I think, entirely achievable." Chief of the Defence Staff Sir Jock Stirrup, quoted in TELEGRAPH.CO.UK 04 Dec 2009

While U.S. Troops Die:

\$10 Million Is Smuggled Out Of Afghanistan Daily:

U.S. And Afghan Officials Believe Much Of The Cash Is Going To The Taliban.

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

December 7, 2009 By Tony Perry, The Los Angeles Times

Reporting from Kabul, Afghanistan

An estimated \$10 million a day is smuggled out of Afghanistan, most of it through Kabul's international airport, rather than through secret routes over the mountains or across the desert, the country's finance minister said Sunday.

The amount of corruption, both by public officials and officials of private companies, makes him embarrassed to acknowledge while traveling that he is an Afghan, Finance Minister Omar Zakhilwal said.

"Corruption is a stronger threat than terrorism for Afghanistan," said Zakhilwal, who was appointed in February and is the top financial advisor to President Hamid Karzai. "It is a cancer, a disease. It has destroyed the reputation of Afghanistan."

The \$10-million figure comes from a 19-day undercover study conducted by the U.S. that estimated \$190 million left the airport undetected during that period, Zakhilwal and U.S. officials said.

No similar study was done for the international airport in Kandahar.

Much of the hot cash ends up funding the Taliban insurgency, U.S. and Afghan officials said.

Much of the cash allegedly comes from drug cartels eager to get the money to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, a leading financial hub and the main destination for flights from Kabul. The rest may be from corrupt officials, or otherwise law-abiding businesses that wish to dodge taxes, Zakhilwal said.

If the Afghan government has done little to stop the cash smuggling, the U.S. has also not been particularly vigilant.

"For years," said a U.S. federal investigator who was not authorized to speak publicly about the issue, "the U.S. government has failed to pay proper attention to the flow of drug money into and out of Afghanistan and the pockets of the leaders of the insurgency and the Afghan government itself."

In opening comments, Wayne [E. Anthony Wayne, an American ambassador serving as coordinating director for development and economic affairs in Afghanistan] and other U.S. officials were careful not to point out embarrassing recent events, including the arrest of high-level Afghan officials accused of sneaking money out of the country and the investigation of two Cabinet ministers.

Wayne said cash smugglers use “low-tech methods” such as innocent-looking airline passengers on their way to Dubai for vacations or business. In many cases, payoffs are made to avoid detection at the airport, where the government has customs inspectors.

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



Nov 26: US Marines come under fire as they return to base following a search operation in Mian Poshteh in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. (AFP/Manpreet Romana)



Dec 2: US soldiers take cover at an abandoned house in eastern Afghanistan. (AFP/Simon Lim)

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

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

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Sgt. James Michael Nolen at Friendswood United Methodist Church in Friendswood, Texas Dec. 4, 2009. Sgt. Nolen , 25, was killed in action with a fellow soldier in Afghanistan on Nov. 22 when their military vehicle hit an improvised explosive device. Nolen's wife is expecting their first child in May and they were to celebrate their first wedding anniversary on Dec. 1. (AP Photo/Houston Chronicle, Melissa Phillip)

JCS Chief Loses His Mind During Interview In DC

12/03/09 By J. Taylor Rushing, The Hill [Excerpts]

The chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff said he foresees no problems with quickly deploying 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan.

Adm. Mike Mullen told The Hill shortly after a hearing Thursday that he has no concerns about the speed of the additional U.S. troop deployment.

Poor infrastructure in the southern half of Afghanistan has slowed previous deployments, but Mullen said U.S. officials are prepared.

The New Issue Of Traveling Soldier Is Out

This Issue Features:

**“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]**

1. **“I am thoroughly opposed to the Army as a whole, and the war in the Middle East” An army sergeant writes an open letter to active duty soldiers.**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.09.opposed.php>

2. **“If we make it back with ten toes and ten fingers the mission is successful” says a GI stationed in Afghanistan.**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.09.tento.es.php>

3. **“Soldiers aren’t dying because the Army is sending us overseas. Some of them pass away because the Army doesn’t care” says an active-duty soldier.**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.09.dying.php>

4. “Morale is getting low”

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.09.morale.php>

5. Download the new Traveling Soldier to pass it out at your school, workplace, or at nearby base or National Guard armory.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS26.pdf>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

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

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

**“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”
-- Camille Desmoulins**

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

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

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

**“Liberals Are A Useless Lot”
“The Only Talent They Seem To Possess
Is The Ability To Write Abject, Cloying
Letters To Barack Obama - As If He
Reads Them”**

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

December 7, 2009 by Chris Hedges, TruthDig.com [Excerpts]

Liberals are a useless lot.

They talk about peace and do nothing to challenge our permanent war economy. They claim to support the working class, and vote for candidates that glibly defend the North American Free Trade Agreement.

They insist they believe in welfare, the right to organize, universal health care and a host of other socially progressive causes, and will not risk stepping out of the mainstream to fight for them.

The only talent they seem to possess is the ability to write abject, cloying letters to Barack Obama - as if he reads them - asking the president to come back to his "true" self.

This sterile moral posturing, which is not only useless but humiliating, has made America's liberal class an object of public derision.

I am not disappointed in Obama.

I don't feel betrayed. I don't wonder when he is going to be Obama. I did not vote for the man.

How can an organization with the oxymoronic title Progressives for Obama even exist? Liberal groups like these make political satire obsolete.

Obama was and is a brand.

He is a product of the Chicago political machine. He has been skillfully packaged as the new face of the corporate state.

I don't dislike Obama. I would much rather listen to him than his smug and venal predecessor - though I expected nothing but a continuation of the corporate rape of the country.

And that is what he has delivered.

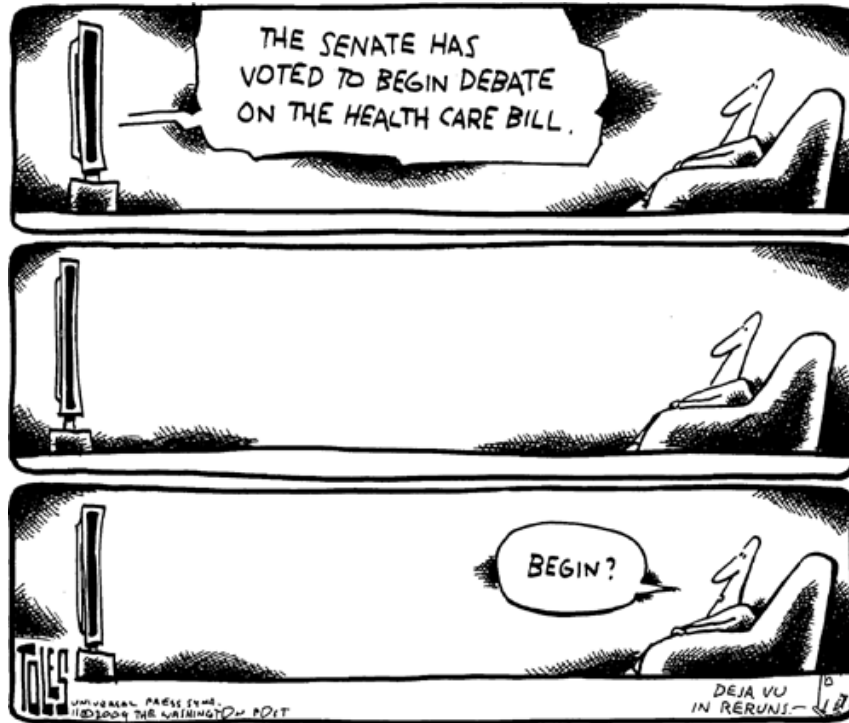
The state kills as ruthlessly and indiscriminately in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan as it did under Bush.

It steals from the U.S. treasury as rapaciously to enrich the corporate elite.

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 888.711.2550

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Obama's Lying Bullshit About Withdrawal In 2011: "Some Handful Or Some Small Number, Or Whatever The Conditions Permit, We'll Begin To Withdraw At That Time"

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

December 7, 2009 By Rajiv Chandrasekaran and Greg Jaffe, Washington Post Staff Writers [Excerpts]

In interviews and congressional testimony last week, members of President Obama's national security team said the U.S. effort in Afghanistan would be more focused and limited. "A good part of the debate and the discussion," Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates told the House Armed Services Committee, revolved around ways to "narrow the mission."

“We will have 100,000 forces, troops there,” Gates said on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” “and they are not leaving in July of 2011.

“Some handful or some small number, or whatever the conditions permit, we’ll begin to withdraw at that time.”

The fundamentals of the Obama administration’s approach largely mirror the counterinsurgency effort that was mounted in Iraq in the latter months of the Bush administration.

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

“Senior Goldman People Have Loaded Up On Firearms And Are Now Equipped To Defend Themselves If There Is A Populist Uprising Against The Bank”

“Goldman Partners Feel They Need Handguns To Protect Themselves From The Angry Proletariat”

Dec. 1 By Alice Schroeder (Bloomberg)

“I just wrote my first reference for a gun permit,” said a friend, who told me of swearing to the good character of a Goldman Sachs Group Inc. banker who applied to the local police for a permit to buy a pistol.

The banker had told this friend of mine that senior Goldman people have loaded up on firearms and are now equipped to defend themselves if there is a populist uprising against the bank.

I called Goldman Sachs spokesman Lucas van Praag to ask whether it’s true that Goldman partners feel they need handguns to protect themselves from the angry proletariat.

He didn’t call me back.

The New York Police Department has told me that “as a preliminary matter” it believes some of the bankers I inquired about do have pistol permits. The NYPD also said it will be a while before it can name names.

While we wait, Goldman has wrapped itself in the flag of Warren Buffett, with whom it will jointly donate \$500 million, part of an effort to burnish its image -- and gain new Goldman clients.

Goldman Sachs Chief Executive Officer Lloyd Blankfein also reversed himself after having previously called Goldman’s greed “God’s work” and apologized earlier this month for having participated in things that were “clearly wrong.”

Has it really come to this?

Imagine what emotions must be billowing through the halls of Goldman Sachs to provoke the firm into an apology.

Talk that Goldman bankers might have armed themselves in self-defense would sound ludicrous, were it not so apt a metaphor for the way that the most successful people on Wall Street have become a target for public rage.

Common sense tells you a handgun is probably not even all that useful.

Suppose an intruder sneaks past the doorman or jumps the security fence at night.

By the time you pull the pistol out of your wife's jewelry safe, find the ammunition, and load your weapon, Fifi the Pomeranian has already been taken hostage and the gun won't do you any good.

As for carrying a loaded pistol when you venture outside, dream on. Concealed gun permits are almost impossible for ordinary citizens to obtain in New York or nearby states.

In other words, a little humility and contrition are probably the better route.

Until a couple of weeks ago, that was obvious to everyone but Goldman, a firm famous for both prescience and arrogance.

In a display of both, Blankfein began to raise his personal- security threat level early in the financial crisis.

He keeps a summer home near the Hamptons, where unrestricted public access would put him at risk if the angry mobs rose up and marched to the East End of Long Island.

He tried to buy a house elsewhere without attracting attention as the financial crisis unfolded in 2007, a move that was foiled by the New York Post.

Then, Blankfein got permission from the local authorities to install a security gate at his house two months before Bear Stearns Cos. collapsed.

This is the kind of foresight that Goldman Sachs is justly famous for.

Blankfein somehow anticipated the persecution complex his fellow bankers would soon suffer.

Surely, though, this man who can afford to surround himself with a private army of security guards isn't sleeping with the key to a gun safe under his pillow.

The thought is just too bizarre to be true.

So maybe other senior people at Goldman Sachs have gone out and bought guns, and they know something.

But what?

Henry Paulson, U.S. Treasury secretary during the bailout and a former Goldman Sachs CEO, let it slip during testimony to Congress last summer when he explained why it was so critical to bail out Goldman Sachs, and -- oh yes -- the other banks.

People “were unhappy with the big discrepancies in wealth, but they at least believed in the system and in some form of market-driven capitalism. But if we had a complete meltdown, it could lead to people questioning the basis of the system.”

There you have it.

The bailout was meant to keep the curtain drawn on the way the rich make money, not from the free market, but from the lack of one.

Goldman Sachs blew its cover when the firm’s revenue from trading reached a record \$27 billion in the first nine months of this year, and a public that was writhing in financial agony caught on that the profits earned on taxpayer capital were going to pay employee bonuses.

This slip-up let the other bailed-out banks happily hand off public blame to Goldman, which is unpopular among its peers because it always seems to win at everyone’s expense.

Plenty of Wall Streeters worry about the big discrepancies in wealth, and think the rise of a financial industry-led plutocracy is unjust.

That doesn’t mean any of them plan to move into a double-wide mobile home as a show of solidarity with the little people, though.

No, talk of Goldman and guns plays right into the way Wall- Streeters like to think of themselves.

Even those who were bailed out believe they are tough, macho Clint Eastwoods of the financial frontier, protecting the fistful of dollars in one hand with the Glock in the other.

The last thing they want is to be so reasonably paid that the peasants have no interest in lynching them.

And if the proles really do appear brandishing pitchforks at the doors of Park Avenue and the gates of Round Hill Road, you can be sure that the Goldman guys and their families will be holed up in their safe rooms with their firearms.

If nothing else, that pistol permit might go part way toward explaining why they won’t be standing outside with the rest of the crowd, broke and humiliated, saying, “Damn, I was on the wrong side of a trade with Goldman again.”

Man Who Left Water For Immigrants In Desert Facing Prison

December 4, 2009 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) -- A judge has threatened to sentence an Arizona man to 25 days in prison for leaving jugs of water in the desert for illegal immigrants.

A federal jury in June convicted Walt Staton of Tucson of littering in the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. In August, a judge ordered Staton to pick up trash for 300 hours and also sentenced him to a year of unsupervised probation and banned him from the refuge for a year.

Staton is a member of the group No More Deaths, which supports humanitarian aid along the border. He was scheduled to be re-sentenced Friday after he told a U.S. magistrate last month that he objected to the court's punishment on moral and legal grounds.

But Magistrate Jennifer Guerin denied Staton's motion to modify or suspend his sentence pending appeal and threatened to double his community service hours to 600 hours or give him 25 days in prison.

Guerin has scheduled a probation violation hearing for Dec. 21.

Unions Shut Down Mexico City During Morning Rush Hour On Friday:

**“Some States, Such As Oaxaca, Sent
Thousands Of Union Members To
Participate In The Takeover Of The
Nation’s Capital”**

**“The Unionists And Their Supporters
Blocked The Four Main Entrances Into
Mexico City For Hours On Friday
Morning”**

December 5, 2009 By Kristin Bricker, Narco News

Thousands of unionists and supporters shut down Mexico City during morning rush hour on Friday.

They were protesting President Felipe Calderon's recent decision to unilaterally close the government-owned Luz y Fuerza del Centro electricity company. In the middle of the night this past October 10-11, Calderon sent thousands of soldiers and militarized Federal Police to take over Luz y Fuerza buildings and fire its workers. Thousands of Federal Police continue to occupy the power company buildings.

Specifically, the unionists who took to the streets on Friday turned out to support the Mexican Union of Electric Workers (SME), the union that represents Luz y Fuerza workers, in their demand that the Calderon administration negotiate with the union.

They want to negotiate the reinstatement of SME's 44,000 workers and continued pensions for its 22,000 retirees.

Unions, civic associations, peasant organizations, student groups, and neighborhood associations from across the country traveled to Mexico City to support the SME as it took over Mexico City. Some unions, such as those from Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Durango, Queretaro, and Zacatecas, arrived in a caravan that snaked through several states over a period of three days, holding rallies and picking up more supporters along the way.

The unionists and their supporters blocked the four main entrances into Mexico City for hours on Friday morning.

After holding their blockades for between one and two hours, they marched to the center of the city converging in Revolution Plaza. Along the way, they picked up other contingents of unionists and students who were blockading key intersections within the city.

The SME and its supporters held a rally in Revolution Plaza, but the number of marchers far exceeded the plaza's capacity.

By the time the contingent from Oaxaca and Chiapas arrived at Revolution Plaza, for example, they could not enter. Instead, they flooded the streets around the Plaza.

During the marches and rally, some rank-and-file unionists drove off reporters and camera crews from Mexico's corporate media with chants of "Que se ve la fuerza del SME!" ("Here you can see the power of the SME!").

The SME and its supporters have been extremely critical of the corporate media's pro-government/anti-union slant in its coverage of the Luz y Fuerza closure.

After being chased away by unionists, some camera crews returned to the rally without their press credentials in an attempt to slip in unnoticed. Rank-and-file workers recognized them and chased them out of the area.

While there was no official rule in place prohibiting the corporate media's coverage of the event (at least one corporate media camera crew managed to film

the rally) the incidents do reflect the rage rank-and-file workers feel about how the corporate media has portrayed them.

On the other hand, unionists received independent media with open arms and went out of their way to facilitate interviews with union spokespeople.

One of the most striking aspects of Friday's mobilization was the broad national support for the SME.

Some states, such as Oaxaca, sent thousands of union members to participate in the takeover of the nation's capital.

Unions from other states, however, were unable to send large delegations due to labor disputes in their own regions. Between 50-70 people came from San Luis Potosi, for example. Those 50-70 people, however, represented at least ten different unions.

Countless small delegations such as these added one or two thousand people to the approximately 5,000-person human blockade that shut down the eastern entrance to the city. The blockade at the eastern entrance appears to be one of the smaller ones that occurred on Friday.

One of the largest non-SME delegations that participated in Friday's blockades was the contingent from Mexico City's National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Students and unionized professors and other university workers came out to support the SME.

UNAM students remember that the SME supported them in their successful 1999 student strike against tuition increases. "Yesterday it was the UNAM, and today it's the SME" is a commonly heard phrase on the UNAM campus and at SME events.

Meanwhile, on Friday ten female SME members entered their twelfth day of hunger strike outside of a Luz y Fuerza administrative building downtown. The women are consuming only water.

Narco News spoke with Monica Jimenez Acosta, the coordinator of Women Electricians in Resistance on her eleventh day of hunger strike. She explains that she is the third generation of electricians in her family. When Felipe Calderon used the Federal Police and the military to fire SME members, they didn't just put Jimenez out of work; her brothers, sisters, cousins, and uncles also lost their jobs on that fateful night. Jimenez, a single mother, used her MX\$8,000 (US\$630) monthly salary to support herself and her daughter. She worked at Luz y Fuerza for ten years.

Jimenez says that the women decided to hunger strike because they felt that the government has gone too far.

"They threw us into the street as if we were criminals."

She explains that the Women Electricians in Resistance sought an audience with political parties, federal agencies, and the Calderon administration.

The government's response?

“They kicked us and beat us with billy clubs.

“And they told us, ‘Why don’t you sell junk food at traffic lights? Why don’t you set up a stand to sell telephones or quesadillas? If you’ve got a husband in Luz y Fuerza, why doesn’t he take construction classes, and you can cut hair? If you like the night life, why don’t you learn to mix drinks and work in a bar?’

“This is complete and utter cynicism. It’s a lack of respect. Why don’t they make their mothers work those jobs?”

Jimenez explains that over one hundred female SME members signed up to hunger strike, but that after medical screenings and other considerations, it was decided that eleven women would go without food.

However, their round-the-clock picket has the support of hundreds of people at any given time.

Those people guard the camp and keep the women’s spirits up with visits from clergy who lead prayers for the swift re-opening of Luz y Fuerza and mariachis who serenade the hunger strikers on their birthdays.



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<http://williambowles.info/gispecial/index-2009.html>; news@uruknet.info;

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