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On the General Collapse of Everything

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The marines who murdered Hashim Ibrahim Awad, a 52 year old Iraqi, and placed an AK and shovel (?) next to his corpse (presumably to give the impression that he was in the process of digging his own grave and then decided to kill himself with a machine gun), were sentenced to jail-time in Camp Pendleton here in Southern California on Friday August 3rd; this saves the government the hassle of having to indict their high commanders and generals for ordering the murder of thousands more, and for callously putting those soldiers in a fast-collapsing situation doomed to failure.

Like the Abu Ghraib scandal, what we have here is another classic case of state terrorism being used to justify more state terrorism and excuse the engineers of that terrorism by shifting the blame onto the grunts who do the dirty work, who can only ever do a shabby job because they don't really care – it's not really them that benefits, and anyway they're totally alien to the kind of total self-management that alone can build a feeling of care for one's work and responsibility for it.

Like when the cops plant drugs on you and then bust you for them, these scape-goats, instead of being considered "great, grand, glorious heroes of war" for killing the "right" people, have killed the wrong person, and thus have once again made a demonstration of the fact that as a soldier your first duty is to kill and die for the state until you're needed to shift the blame off it, and then to go down willingly to ensure the continued glory of your superiors.

Although it may not be immediately obvious, there is a kind of similarity between this case and the case of the bridge that collapsed in Minnesota and the mine shaft that collapsed in Utah the other day.

The Utah mine collapse, the Minnesota bridge collapse, the chaos of that moment when the soldiers killed Awad and tried to cover it up – over and over we see the rotten set up go to pieces; and it is all to be expected, since the whole thing was designed and put in place by alienated people who work for pennies compared to those who profit off their labor, like the soldiers who kill and die for pennies compared to the millions being made by the private contractors they work beside, who, unlike the soldiers but like the politicians in charge, are rarely, if ever, subjected to any law, much less the code of military "justice," when they commit murders and other assorted crimes.

In Utah, the "retreat mining" technique used by the capitalist despoilers/exploiters involves the use of "pillars of coal...to hold up an area of the mine's roof. When that area is completely mined, the company pulls the pillar and grabs the useful coal, causing an intentional collapse. Experts say it is one of the most dangerous mining methods[.]" (Paul Foy, AP) This profit-seeking haste to extract wealth from the earth with the sweat and blood of miners puts not only the miners' lives, but the whole ecological balance of the area severely at risk... Says the hysterical "Robert E. Murray, chairman of Murray Energy Corp. of Cleveland, a part owner of the Crandall Canyon mine, 'There is nothing on my mind right now except getting those miners out.'"...sure, that and the easy money his company's going to lose.

On the General Collapse of Everything

"Representative" Oberstar of Minnesota says that "of the 597,340 bridges in the national bridge inventory, 26 percent are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete." (Far more than 26 percent of our politicians are deficient and obsolete, of course.) The upkeep of these bridges, like the upkeep of the levees that broke in New Orleans in 2005, is apparently too unimportant an investment for the government, which would rather give away the workers' tax money to its favorite corporations than use it to make sure those workers can survive to be worked to death another day.

This whole system, which constantly uses cheap cover-ups to refurbish a collapsing infrastructure, was set up to exploit and kill people while giving them the illusion that they are being cared for; and it's falling apart. Everywhere the symptoms of this leprosy are appearing more and more frequently.

The cops are the only branch of government that deigns to come into the world's shantytowns; the infrastructure, if any exists, is built by the poor themselves, and isn't up to code - and even the requirements of the code itself of course are always insufficient, so as to allow maximum profit and just the most minimal safety.

In general, looking at the sentencing of these marines and the collapse of these physical structures one might say that they have a lot in common. The marines tried to cheaply cover up a murderous mishandling of a situation to save face, and the engineers behind the Utah mine shaft and Minnesota bridge tried to cheaply cover up a murderous situation to save face. All these people - the marines and construction engineers - were victims of a system where the concept of "responsibility" has been reduced to this: your superiors take credit for what you do, but blame you when anything goes wrong.

If we are to rebuild this broken society, we'll have to take greater responsibility upon ourselves, and stop delegating responsibility to authorities and relying on them. Otherwise we'll be confronted with an ever worsening succession of disasters like these, where people get screwed over for profit, and "our" authoritarian, machinelike institutions remain blameless when they fail miserably over and over again to do what they're apparently supposed to do.

Let's do away with the profiteers who take the credit while avoiding the blame! Let's arise and take over everything, and establish total self-management, in order that we might sturdily reinforce those among these collapsing structures which we decide are worth keeping and help to collapse those among them which are not.

The Iraqi who was murdered by these indicted marines met a fate no different from that of the Minnesotans and Utah miners - they were all crushed beneath the eroded physical state of the superstructures set up by a system that compels everyone to produce for profit and not for use: the Iraqi was crushed beneath the collapsing superstructure of a failed invasion, beneath the collapsing self-control of a group of soldiers whose eroded state of mind compelled them to murder him; the Americans in Minnesota and Utah (not to mention New Orleans) were crushed beneath the collapsing infrastructure of a shoddy construction, beneath the collapsing integrity of public and private works that were produced for profit, not reliability, and murdered them as all their slapped-together precariousness finally came apart. They all met their fate at the hands of the State and Capital, for whose "freedom" we are all forced to work fight and die. Why do we kill ourselves for these gods?