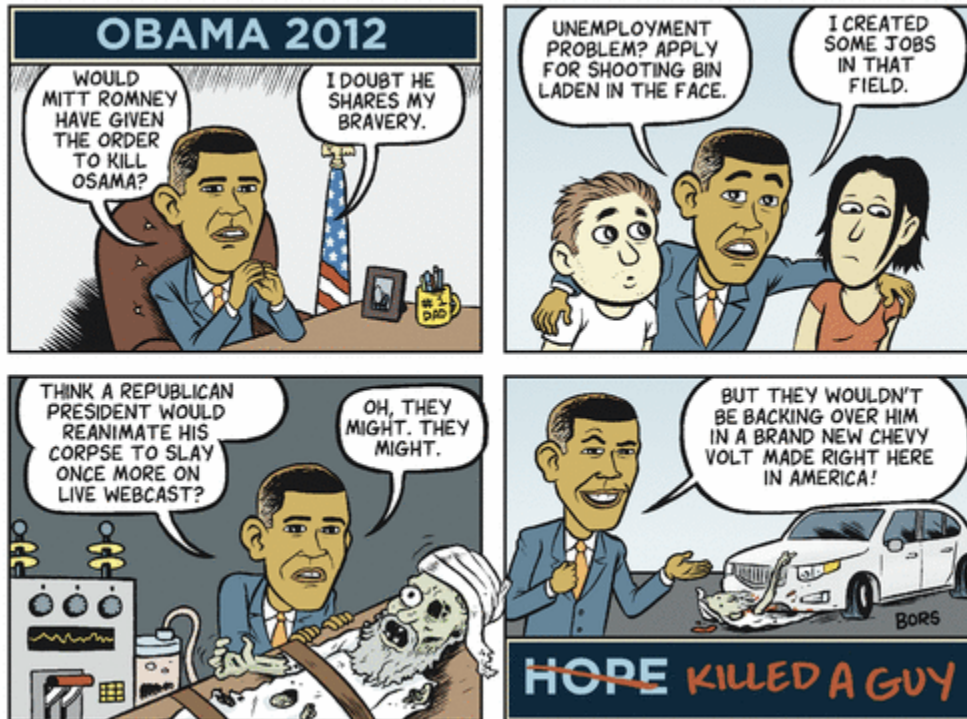


Military Resistance 10E6



**A U.S. Soldier And The Afghan
Soldier Who Killed Him:
The Man Who Turned His Gun On
Green Beret Andrew Britton-Mihalo
Of Simi Valley Was Also Part Of An
Elite Corps;
“The Taliban Claimed That The Attack
Had Been Carried Out At The Group’s
Behest, Specifically Mentioning
Zakirullah By Name”**



In an undated photo, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Andrew Trevor Britton-Mihalo, who was killed April 25 on a military base in Afghanistan, is shown at parachute jumping school. (Britton-Mihalo memorial website / May 12, 2012)

May 12, 2012 By Laura King and Steve Chawkins, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan —

In many ways, the two young soldiers were not so different from each other.

Each was tough-minded and physically powerful. Each worked hard to win a place in an elite military unit, and spoke with pride of serving his country.

They were 25 years old, these two: one newly married, the other planning a wedding this year. Their upbringings were as disparate as their homelands were distant, but religious faith was entwined with the family lives of both.

Their lives ended, violently and nearly simultaneously, one evening late last month at a remote outpost in southern Afghanistan — one dead at the other's hands.

An Afghan special forces sergeant named Zakirullah has been identified by his commanders as the man who shot and killed U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Andrew Trevor Britton-Mihalo, a Green Beret from Simi Valley, before being gunned down himself.

"We had thought he might die while he was serving in the army," said an uncle of Zakirullah, who, like many Afghans, used one name. "But we never thought it would happen like this."

“Afghan Security Forces Turning Their Guns On Western Troops Is Becoming, In The Eyes Of Some Commanders, A Strategic Threat”

As the U.S. military embarks on the task of extracting itself from America’s longest war, the phenomenon of members of the Afghan security forces turning their guns on Western troops is becoming, in the eyes of some commanders, a strategic threat.

At least 21 NATO troops have died in these assaults this year, accounting for a stunning 14% of troop deaths, with the latest shooting coming Friday in northeastern Afghanistan, the victim an American.

The total number of such attacks is unknown; they generally go unreported publicly by the military if they result in injuries only.

Although all have a corrosive effect on field morale and trust, the April 25 confrontation that killed Britton-Mihalo was cause for particular alarm:

For the first time, the killer was a member of Afghanistan’s special forces, handpicked from the ranks of its commandos, who are themselves considered an exclusive fraternity: carefully vetted, highly trained, closely watched.

More than three dozen teams of Afghan special forces are spread across the country, partnered with U.S. counterparts in "village stability" operations meant to win the support of residents in isolated hamlets menaced by the Taliban.

“Britton-Mihalo’s Military Roots Ran Deep”

Britton-Mihalo’s military roots ran deep.

His dad was a Marine; Andrew was born in Costa Rica while his father was serving there.

In December, he married Jesse Lamorte, an Army combat photographer who had served in Afghanistan with a special operations unit. He had proposed to her stateside, at a Special Forces winter ball. Two of his half brothers recently enlisted, and Britton-Mihalo had signed up for a third tour in Afghanistan.

From the beginning, his career aim was soldiering. He signed on with the Army in 2005, right after graduating from Royal High School in Simi Valley. Nobody who knew him was surprised when he made it into the elite Green Berets in 2008.

"He was something special when it came to dedication and endurance," said Paul Mole, one of his wrestling coaches in Simi Valley, where a 5-year-old Andrew had moved after his parents split up and his mother remarried.

Mole, who now teaches at Ponderosa High School in Parker, Colo., keeps a photo on his classroom wall: It’s the Royal team that won the school’s first wrestling championship, a squad whose standout was the boy then known as Andrew Mihalo. (He

adopted the hyphenated name later, combining the surnames of his biological father and his stepfather.)

The young wrestler was known for his ability to withstand pain. When his shoulder was dislocated during a match and his coaches couldn't work it back into place, he dove onto the mat to pop it back in. He went on to win the match.

By the time of the championship bout, the 144-pound senior's injuries had raised doubt about his ability to keep going. Early on, his opponent took him down, but as a crowd chanted, "An-DREW! An-DREW!" he managed to turn the tables, get the decisive pin, and bring home the wrestling title.

"He was so happy, he was just a ball of emotion," recalled Rich Carrillo, Royal's current head coach.

"He couldn't stop crying. I put my arm around him and said: 'From here on, your life will never be the same. You're a hero.' I never realized just how much of a hero he would become."

“After The Shooting, The Taliban Claimed That The Attack Had Been Carried Out At The Group’s Behest, Specifically Mentioning Zakirullah By Name”

As a youth, Zakirullah didn't bear the hallmarks of a hometown hero.

Born into a typically large family in the impoverished Pashtun farming hamlet of Wazir Tatang in Nangarhar province, near the Pakistani border, he spent some of his teenage years working as a mechanic and driver while other brothers went off to university.

Though close to his family as a boy, playing and tussling with his brothers in the dry riverbed where their village lies, he became estranged from the clan in his late teens.

Five years ago, he left without telling anyone and joined the army, said an uncle, Haji Naamdaar.

Military life, it turned out, seemed to suit him. After a few years, he made the cut to become a commando. And from there, he advanced to an even more severe test: a special forces battalion. Along the way, he was promoted to sergeant. He returned to the family fold, becoming engaged to a cousin in a match arranged by tribal elders.

For Afghan troops, commando and special forces training is modeled in part on the grueling winnowing process for celebrated U.S. special operations forces such as the Green Berets. Not only is physical endurance required, psychological resilience is considered a key attribute.

"Sometimes, even if they are doing something correctly, we shout at them and criticize them for doing it wrong, to see how they handle it," said Bismullah, the colonel. "If they crack, they're out."

The shooting erupted about 8 p.m. on the base, in an abandoned residential compound in the remote village of Kajoor.

After Zakirullah shot Britton-Mihalo, the slain American's fellow Green Berets returned fire, killing him instantly.

Members of Zakirullah's team, just a month into a three-month posting in Kandahar province, has been pulled back to Kabul, the capital, for questioning and more training.

After the shooting, the Taliban claimed that the attack had been carried out at the group's behest, specifically mentioning Zakirullah by name. Although the group could easily have learned his identity after the fact, investigators are looking at whether he could have had some link to the insurgents.

Although nearly all Afghan soldiers are observant Muslims, displays of intense religious fervor can sometimes attract attention. Zakirullah "prayed five times a day like anyone, but there was nothing unusual there," said Col. Nabiullah Merzaee, the deputy commander of the commando center where he trained.

NATO officials say "insider" shootings are often triggered by something more mundane than religious sentiment or insurgent sympathies. A grudge, a quarrel, an affront: All can be extremely serious matters in the Pashtun culture in which Zakirullah was reared, sometimes even when the actual disagreement appears trivial.

Naamdaar said that although he remembered his nephew as a generally easygoing boy, his temper occasionally flared if he felt he was being treated with disrespect.

"In an argument," he said, "he could sometimes go a little crazy."

To his sister Michelle Carranza, a mother of four in Simi Valley, Britton-Mihalo was a "normal, average brother — a goofball who teased us."

He loved animals. He kept snakes in his room as a boy, and always had a dog.

He was active in his family's Mormon church. For his Eagle Scout project, he built a wheelchair ramp at the local cemetery.

In his senior year of high school, his mother moved to Missouri, and Andrew was allowed to stay behind with his best friend's family.

"Some of my greatest memories of Andrew were sitting up till 4 a.m. in his pitch-black room, lying on his floor, solving all of the problems of the world like only brothers could," wrote the friend, T.J. Mathias, in a Facebook tribute. "We would discuss politics, school, girls, life, movies, music, cars ... absolutely whatever came to mind."

His death at the hands of an Afghan ally is no more or less devastating than it would have been otherwise, said some who knew him.

"He was the world to me," Carranza said. "I don't know what was in the heart of the man who killed my brother. I don't know what he was seeking. Those are things I'm going to leave to a higher power. If I dwell on it, I let it take over."

More than 700 people have joined a Facebook page Britton-Mihalo's friends started in his memory, posting photos of a trip Andrew took to Disneyland, reminiscences of his school days, Ronald Reagan quotes about freedom, shots of fun times with the woman now known as Sgt. Jesse Britton.

At his old school, students observed a moment of silence to mark his death.

"In high school, we create a bubble; we try to keep them young and carefree for a few years," said Principal Deborah Salgado. "Then we send them out into an overly serious world."

In accordance with his family's wishes, Andrew Britton-Mihalo is to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery on May 25. Thirty days later, he would have celebrated his 26th birthday.

Back in Afghanistan, hundreds of mourners trekked from nearby villages for Zakirullah's funeral six days after his death. Wails rang out as he was carried to a forlorn-looking cemetery less than a mile from the family home, but there was little talk of his final act. Some of those in attendance did not know how he died; others clearly felt the circumstances were best buried with him.

It had fallen to Haji Naamdaar to identify and claim Zakirullah's corpse. In the chill of the morgue, the body lay swathed, grievous wounds hidden. All Naamdaar could see was Zakirullah's face.

Gazing down at it, he saw neither rage nor fear written on the features of his young nephew.

"I thought he might look different," he said. "But he looked only like himself."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Government Policeman Kills Two British Servicemen In Lashkar Gah

13 May 12 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that two British servicemen, one soldier from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and one airman from the Royal Air Force, were killed in Afghanistan on the 12th May 2012.

Serving as part of an advisory team, the two servicemen were providing security for a meeting with local officials near patrol base Attal, in the Lashkar Gah district of Helmand province, when they were shot and killed by members of the Afghan Police Force.

Two Foreign Occupation “Servicemembers” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

May 12, 2012 AP

Two foreign servicemembers died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

Fort Bragg Paratrooper Killed Saturday In Afghanistan Recalled As A ‘Team Guy’



Pfc. Christian Sannicolas Contributed photo

May 01, 2012 By Steve DeVane, Staff writer, The Fayetteville Observer

The Fort Bragg paratrooper killed Saturday in Afghanistan was a "team guy," his high school wrestling coach said Tuesday.

Pfc. Christian R. Sannicolas, 20, joined the Army in January 2011, the 82nd Airborne Division said.

He was killed while on patrol in Afghanistan, when his vehicle was struck by a roadside mine, the military said.

Sannicolas wrestled for Sunny Hills High School in Fullerton, Calif., during his junior and senior years, said Jimmy Valenzuela, the coach. "He would do whatever he could to help the team," Valenzuela said. Sannicolas wasn't always the best wrestler but tried to do his best, the coach said.

"If he said he was going to do something, he tried to do it," Valenzuela said.

Valenzuela described Sannicolas as one of the characters on the team. "He kept us all light and loose," he said. "He was our stress relief."

Valenzuela said he heard of Sannicolas' death from an assistant coach who wrestled on the team with him. The seniors on the team this year were freshmen during Sannicolas' senior year, he said.

Sannicolas graduated from Sunny Hills in 2009.

"It's not going to be easy the next couple of days," Valenzuela said. "He was and is going to be remembered here on our campus."

Sannicolas was on patrol in a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle when the roadside bomb went off, military officials said.

He was pronounced dead of his injuries upon arrival at the Forward Operating Base Warrior's Medical Center in Kandahar province, according to a news release from Fort Bragg officials.

Sannicolas served as a rifleman with Company C, 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. He was assigned to the 1st Brigade in June before deploying with the brigade this spring, the release said.

Sannicolas received the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, NATO Medal and Parachutist Badge.

He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Sannicolas is survived by his mother, Deanna Howard, of Fullerton, Calif.

Sannicolas was one of five Fort Bragg soldiers killed last week by bombs in Afghanistan.

Staff Sgt. Brandon F. Eggleston, 29, of Candler, died Thursday. He was assigned to 4th Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group.

Cpl. Benjamin H. Neal, 21, of Orfordville, Wis., died April 25. He was in the 82nd's 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

First Lt. Jonathan P. Walsh, 28, of Cobb, Ga., and Pfc. Michael J. Metcalf, 22, of Boynton Beach, Fla., died April 22. They were assigned to the 504th's 2nd Battalion.

Hours After Phoning Home, Minn. Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

May 1, 2012 By Mark Brunswick, The (Minneapolis, Minn.) Star Tribune

Nick Dickhut called his little brother David on Sunday from Afghanistan to wish him a happy ninth birthday. Nick said he couldn't talk long. He was about to go out on a mission.

A few hours later, his parents had to explain to David that he would never talk to his big brother again.

The 23-year-old Stewartville, Minn., soldier was killed Sunday morning by small-arms fire in Afghanistan, the first Minnesota casualty in Afghanistan in 2012.

"I don't think it's sunk in. David doesn't get it yet, the fact that he's never coming home again, that he's never going to see him again," said Jacqueline Carson, the mother of the two.

"The hardest thing was talking to him Saturday and Sunday and hearing about his plans for the future. And now he's not coming back. The idea that he's not coming back is hard to wrap your arms around."

Sgt. Nicholas Dickhut died during a firefight in southern Afghanistan's Kandahar province, his parents were told Sunday.

Dickhut was a forward observer, on the front lines to identify and communicate enemy positions for other units. He was assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., and attached to the 82nd Airborne. It was his second deployment to Afghanistan. His mother said he did not talk much about this deployment, which began in December.

But a photo of him pointing his rifle at a doorway after coming under fire by the Taliban while on patrol in Zharay district in Kandahar province was taken Thursday by a Reuters photographer. The picture shows Dickhut pointing his weapon toward an entrance to an abandoned building, as light streams in.

The picture made its way around the world quickly and Dickhut used instant messaging to describe to his mother what was happening: There had been a firefight and the shooters had fled from the building. Four of the shooters were visible from a nearby treeline but the soldiers thought they had seen a fifth.

Late Monday, the U.S. military had not officially confirmed Dickhut's death, but his stepfather said military personnel told the family an investigation was continuing.

Dickhut left a supervisor's job at a Rochester-area Office Max to join the military. At 17, he often trained new employees. "He got along with people," said Adam Judy, a manager of the store. "He was young when he was a supervisor. But he knew what he was doing."

He blew out a knee during a first deployment to Afghanistan and could have faced medical discharge. But he rehabbed his knee and requested a second deployment.

"He thought it was something new and interesting and he was having some fun with it," said his stepfather, Randall Carson. "He was always gung-ho. Everything he did, he did 120 percent."

A 2007 graduate of Stewartville High School, Dickhut spent his last two high school years in post secondary classes at Rochester Community College. When he graduated from high school, he was only a credit short of an associate's degree.

Bruce Hoff, principal, said Dickhut performed well in English and had a fascination with American history, particularly related to wars and veterans. When news of Dickhut's death made its way to the high school, a counselor told Hoff she had recently received an e-mail from him asking for a transcript of his records. He planned to take online classes.

"He was always smiling," Hoff said. "I was thinking of that smile today."

Dickhut told his parents he hoped to be assigned to an airborne unit in Italy for jump school and was considering becoming a helicopter pilot. Both Dickhut's mother and stepfather were in the Army. He joined out of a sense of serving his country but also to gain new experiences he might otherwise miss if he stayed home.

"It's kind of small town-ish here," his mother said. "There's a lot of people who live their whole lives in a town like this and they don't get to see things. I agreed with him that getting new experiences, knowing what he wanted to do with the rest of his life, that the Army would be good to do that."

Soldier With Placer County, Newcastle Ties Killed In Afghanistan

4/26/12 By Gus Thomson, Auburn Journal Staff Writer

AUBURN CA - The Department of Defense reported Thursday the death on Tuesday of a soldier who has ties to Placer County.

Spc. Manuel J. Vasquez, 22, West Sacramento, was killed in Paktika province, a statement from the Defense Department said.

Vasquez is the grandson of Newcastle residents Joyce and Bill Costa. The Costas have lived in Newcastle for 22 years and often had Vasquez over to their acreage during holidays and vacations while he was growing up.

Joyce Costa said she learned of her grandson's death by phone Wednesday and shock soon turned to tears as the reality of the situation began to take hold.

Over the phone, she said she learned that Vasquez had been shot and killed while serving with his unit.

He had reportedly been found in a lookout tower and an investigation is to determine events surrounding his death, she said.

Less than six months ago, Vasquez was the center of attention as the family gathered for Thanksgiving and he stationed himself at his favorite location – at the barbecue preparing food for others, his grandmother remembered.

By that time, Vasquez had already served 1½ years in the Army and had been in Afghanistan since early July.

Vasquez grew up in West Sacramento but spent most of the past 10 years with his father – Costa's son – in Citrus Heights.

Joyce and Bill Costa look at photos of their grandson and see a young man who was quick with a joke or a smile, gravitated toward electronic games like many his age, enjoyed eating and barbecuing, and went too soon.

Vasquez could have joined another branch of the service.

“But he wanted to be where the action is,” Joyce Costa said. “At Thanksgiving, he was very happy. He loved being up there and the friends he made.”

Bill Costa, himself an Army veteran, recalled a grandson who was the tallest – at 6 feet 3 inches – in the family and someone who loved to visit and ride on the tractor lawn mower. During his time in Afghanistan, Vasquez had been serving with a mortar artillery team, Bill Costa said.

Joyce Costa said that Vasquez, one of 24 grandchildren, had been on the front line in Paktika province, which is located in the southeast of Afghanistan, near the Pakistan border.

Vasquez was with the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Infantry Brigade in an isolated area.

“He had to walk three miles to get to a computer,” Joyce Costa said.

The Newcastle couple said that Vasquez was especially close with two of his brothers – Marcus and Raymond. All had matching tattoos inked on their arms with their names and hearts.

The Defense Department did not provide information on the details of Vasquez's death. Joyce Costa said that details of Vasquez's funeral arrangements have yet to be worked out but members of his family had traveled to Dover, Del. on Thursday for a ceremony marking his return to American soil.

Costa said she had anticipated that her grandson would be ending his tour in Afghanistan in July and returning home.

"He was a wild and crazy kid and made people laugh," Costa said. "Everybody loved that boy."

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

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

**“The Goal Of The Platoon’s
Walk Through A Bazaar And
Meetings With Village Leaders,
The Lieutenant Said, Was For
The Afghan Government To Be
‘Seen As An Effective
Governing Body’”**

**“Such Ambition Used To Elicit
Enthusiastic Praise From Visiting
Generals. Not Anymore”**

“‘How Are *You* Going To Create *That* As An End State?’ Allen Asked, Making No Effort To Mask His Deep Skepticism”

“Allen Is Painfully Aware That Two-Thirds Of Americans No Longer Believe The Afghan War Is Worth Fighting”

May 12 By Rajiv Chandrasekaran, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

GELAN, Afghanistan — Standing in a plywood-walled command post before Gen. John R. Allen, the supreme allied commander in Afghanistan, the nervous-but-earnest young lieutenant cast his platoon’s task for the day in the grand terms of counterinsurgency strategy — the American military’s wartime playbook for the past several years.

The goal of the platoon’s walk through a bazaar and meetings with village leaders, the lieutenant said, was for the Afghan government to be “seen as an effective governing body that gains legitimacy with the local population.”

Such ambition used to elicit enthusiastic praise from visiting generals. Not anymore.

“How are *you* going to create *that* as an end state?” Allen asked, making no effort to mask his deep skepticism.

Here in Ghazni province, where American forces will mount the last major offensive of the decade-long war over the next few months, he is narrowing long-held U.S. goals.

Instead of trying to reform the Afghan government, protect the civilian population and conduct security operations until Afghan forces are ready to take over — all of which Americans sought to do as recently as last year — a newly arrived brigade from the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division plans to spend the summer attacking Taliban redoubts before departing in mid-September, regardless of whether Afghan soldiers are capable of holding their own.

Allen, 58, is an avid reader of military histories and sees the Vietnam analogies — the insurgent safe havens across a national border, the plummeting public support back home — but he is studying a different withdrawal: that of the Soviets from Afghanistan in 1989.

“We’re fighting on the same ground,” he noted.

Only 18 of the country's 293 battalions have been deemed by the Americans to be capable of independent operations with coalition advisers.

Some battalions have been plagued by poor leadership and weak morale. Others have been hindered by basic logistical challenges.

When Allen visited the forward operating base in Qara Bagh, he asked about the status of the Afghan army battalion in the area. He was told that it had 100 percent of its assigned personnel, but the unit had only six working Humvees of the 28 it had been assigned.

The problem was maddeningly simple: Nobody in the battalion had requisitioned the necessary spare parts from the supply depot.

Late in the evening of April 25, Allen received a nightly summary of casualties across the country.

The tally from southern Afghanistan was unusually high: two killed in action and 16 more wounded, several of them seriously, over the previous 24 hours. Allen decided to cancel his meetings the next morning and head to Kandahar.

He would spend just 30 minutes there, all of it at the base hospital, walking from bed to bed in the intensive care unit, bending over the wounded and putting his hand on their head or shoulder, and whispering words of encouragement.

Thank you for all you have done.

Take care of yourself.

You're one tough guy.

Then he pressed a gold-rimmed commemorative coin in their palms.

Allen is painfully aware that two-thirds of Americans no longer believe the Afghan war is worth fighting.

It is, he hopes, withdrawal and transition with honor — a decent ending to a long, grueling conflict that has claimed almost 2,000 American lives and left thousands more with severe, permanent injuries.

Allen assumed his days would be consumed with the Afghan handover and the drawdown, not to mention all of the other chores his predecessors faced — the meetings with congressional delegations and defense ministers from 50 coalition nations, the regular sessions with Karzai and his security ministers, and the vexing problem of insurgent sanctuaries in Pakistan.

What he didn't count on were what his staff calls "meteor strikes": the release of a video showing Marines urinating on Taliban corpses; the burning of Korans at a giant U.S. base outside Kabul; and an Army sergeant's allegedly murderous rampage near Kandahar.

Each has thrown Allen and his staff for a loop, consuming hundreds of hours of time that could have been devoted to other tasks.

And they have complicated his relationship with Karzai, increasing Afghan leverage in negotiations over restrictions on nighttime raids and a transfer of prisoners to Afghan control.

“I need for our standards to be inviolate. We all know what’s right,” he said as the lieutenants and captains ate roast beef and noodles from Styrofoam containers. “This war can be lost without the Taliban winning. We have to win this morally as well as tactically and operationally.

“We want them to miss us because we were special to them.

“We don’t want them wiping their brows and saying, ‘Thank God they’re gone.’”

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Army dog handler Aaron Yoder is treated by Private first class Cody Groninger from Alpha troop 4-73 Cavalry Regiment, 4th brigade 82nd Airborne division after sustaining injuries during a fire exchange with Taliban fighters while on a mission in the Maiwand district in Kandahar province, April 9, 2012. REUTERS/Baz Ratner

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

MILITARY NEWS

Soldiers In Revolt Against A Bloody Tyrant



Syrian soldiers who defected to join the Free Syrian Army are seen in front of their armoured military vehicle at Khalidieh in Homs May 12, 2012. REUTERS/Thair al-Khalidi/Shaaam News Network/Handout



5.12.12: Member of the Free Syrian Army's "Freedom for the River Assi Brigade" return to Qusayr after an attack on Syrian regime forces in the village of Nizareer. (AFP Photo/)

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

**Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you-
Ye are many — they are few
-- Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819, on the occasion of a mass murder of British
workers by the Imperial government at Peterloo.**

**The Forever War:
“The Plain Fact Is That The War
Will Definitely Continue For At
Least Two-And-A-Half More Years-
-Until The End Of 2014”**

**“Administration Officials Expect That
‘As Many As 20,000 U.S. Troops May
Remain After The Combat Mission
Ends,’ According To The Associated
Press”**

**“Under This Timeline, The Last U.S.
Troops Would Actually Leave The
Afghan Battlefield In 2024, Making
Afghanistan 23-Year-Long War”**

May 7, 2012 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

The best way to make sense of the Obama administration's statements about its plans to "wind down" the decade-old occupation of Afghanistan is to recall the words of author George Orwell: "Political language...is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

As Barack Obama launches his reelection campaign, the administration is eager to demonstrate that it plans to end a war that has lost the support of the U.S. population.

Hence Obama's high-profile midnight landing at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan, his live televised address hours later in U.S. prime time, and the signing of agreements with Afghan President Hamid Karzai to "end" the U.S./NATO war and transfer responsibility to "the people of Afghanistan."

But despite the spin, the plain fact is that the war will definitely continue for at least two-and-a-half more years--until the end of 2014, or halfway through Obama's second term, if he wins one.

And after that?

Administration officials expect that "as many as 20,000 U.S. troops may remain after the combat mission ends," according to the Associated Press.

Under this timeline, the last U.S. troops would actually leave the Afghan battlefield in 2024, making Afghanistan 23-year-long war.

Meanwhile, the death and destruction faced by Afghanistan's people and the crisis of its economy grinds on.

Thousands upon thousands of dead and wounded continue to pile up, and though the U.S. military is celebrating a decline in violence this year compared to last year, last year was the bloodiest year in the Afghanistan war to date.

The conservative estimate of what the U.S. has spent waging war in Afghanistan so far is \$525 billion. In 2012, the U.S. is spending about \$2 billion a week--in a country with an annual gross domestic product of \$17.2 billion.

So the U.S. has spent more than 30 times the annual output of the Afghan economy in its crusade to impose its will on the country--and the U.S. is still losing.

It would have been far more effective to distribute that money among Afghanistan's 29.8 million people--giving each Afghan man, woman and child about \$16,000. That means a family of four would receive \$64,000 in a country where annual per capita income is about \$1,000.

It seems fair to say that would buy a lot of good will--as compared to night raids, drone strikes and Koran burnings.

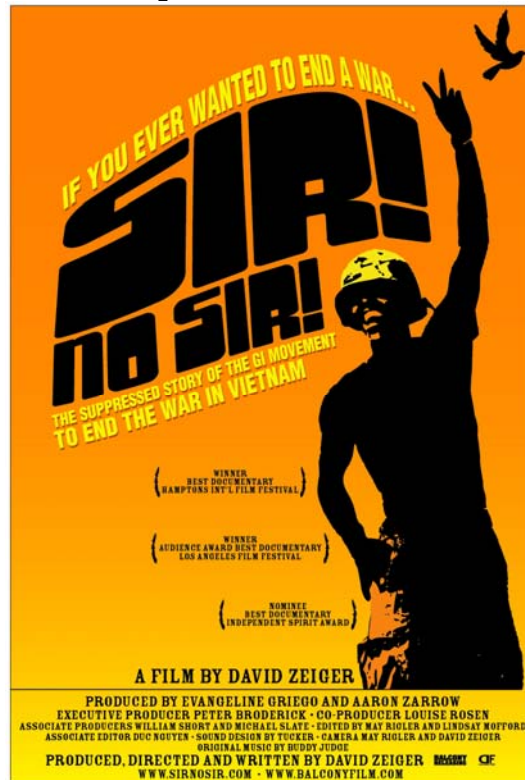
With the summit of the NATO military alliance in Chicago fast approaching, Obama is particularly keen to give the "appearance of solidity to pure wind."

In fact, this is an essential component of Obama's reelection campaign. The Obama campaign thinks its foreign policy credentials shine compared to Mitt Romney's, and the Democrats are also banking on the assumption that U.S. voters fed up with more than a decade of war have no choice other than Obama.

For this reason, the May 20 mass march in Chicago during the NATO summit [8] will send an important message for peace and justice--across the U.S. and around the world.

See you in Chicago.

A Film All About How An Armed Forces Rebellion Stopped An Imperial War



Sir! No Sir!:

Dear Sir! No Sir! supporters,

Displaced Films, Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), and a growing number of organizations have been working to distribute free DVDs of Sir No Sir to soldiers.

Hundreds have been distributed and we want to see that number grow into the thousands.

The response has been tremendous.

David Zeiger and Jade Fox
Displaced Films
jadefox@sirnosir.com

To Whom it May Concern:

I just wanted to say thank you for this film, for raising my awareness, I never even knew some of these things happened.

I think this probably is one of the most important documentaries made about war resistance.

Thank you again,
SGT Spencer Batchelder

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**"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

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ANNIVERSARIES

Mothers Day Proposed: May 15, 1870

**“We, The Women Of One Country, Will
Be Too Tender Of Those Of Another
Country To Allow Our Sons To Be
Trained To Injure Theirs”**

Carl Bunin Peace History May 11-17, 2009

May 15, 1870: Julia Ward Howe, suffragist, abolitionist and author of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” proposed Mother’s Day as a peace holiday.

Julia Ward Howe, 1870

Arise, then, women of this day!
Arise, all women who have hearts,
Whether our baptism be of water or of tears!

Say firmly: “We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies,
Our husbands will not come to us, reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause.
Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn
All that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.
We, the women of one country, will be too tender of those of another country
To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs.”

From the bosom of the devastated Earth a voice goes up with our own.
It says: “Disarm! Disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice.”
Blood does not wipe out dishonor, nor violence indicate possession.
As men have often forsaken the plough and the anvil at the summons of war,

Let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of counsel.

Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead.
Let them solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means
Whereby the great human family can live in peace,
Each bearing after his own time the sacred impress, not of Caesar,
But of God.

In the name of womanhood and humanity, I earnestly ask
That a general congress of women without limit of nationality
May be appointed and held at someplace deemed most convenient
And at the earliest period consistent with its objects,
To promote the alliance of the different nationalities,
The amicable settlement of international questions,
The great and general interests of peace.

MORE:



Cover illustration by Arthur Machia for *The Rebel Girl*. Words & Music by Joe Hill (Ithaca, NY: Glad Day Press, 1940, c1915).

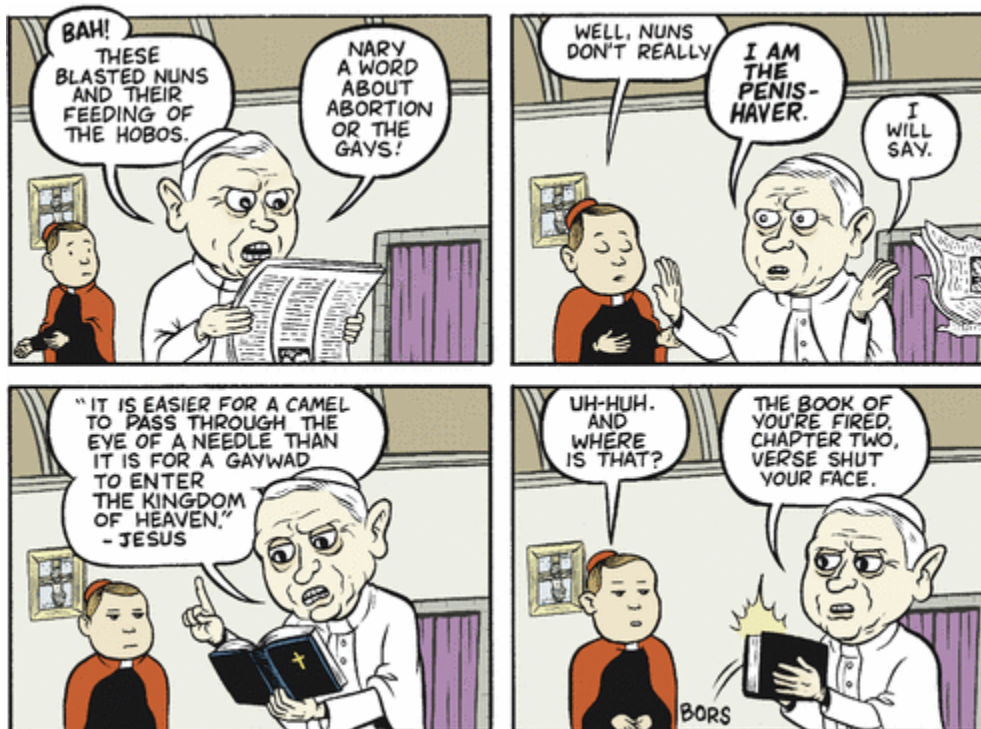
“The Rebel Girl” In Person



Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, June 1913, speaking against capitalism and for working class revolution to a mass audience

Joe Hill dedicated his song "The Rebel Girl" to her a few months before he was executed November 19, 1915 by firing squad in Utah for organizing workers to join labor unions affiliated with Industrial Workers Of The World.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



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