

Military Resistance 10H13



**“Everyone Is Nervous, All The Time”
“Do You Know How Weird It Is To See A
U.S. Marine At The Gym With Their
Sidearm, On The Treadmill?’ Said A Low-
Rank Military Officer In Afghanistan”**

August 20, 2012 By MARIA ABI HABIB, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

KABUL—The U.S.’s top general on Monday discussed new measures to help combat attacks on international troops by their Afghan colleagues, amid a rise in so-called green-on-blue killings.

Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, paid a scheduled visit to Afghanistan as New Zealand announced an accelerated withdrawal from the country.

“Everyone is nervous, all the time. Do you know how weird it is to see a U.S. marine at the gym with their sidearm, on the treadmill?” said a low-rank military officer in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Surprise Attack Claims Marine With Local Roots



Staff Sgt. Scott Dickinson, 29, attended Horizon Christian Academy. Dickinson family

Aug. 15, 2012 Written by Loic Hostetter, The San Diego Union-Tribune

A staff sergeant from San Diego was one of three Marines who were fatally shot Friday night in the Garmser district of southern Afghanistan.

Scott Dickinson, 29, who attended Horizon Christian Academy in the Clairemont neighborhood, was killed by an Afghan while working on an installation shared by international coalition and Afghan forces.

Also slain were Cpl. Richard Rivera Jr. of Ventura and Lance Cpl. Gregory Buckley of Oceanside, N.Y. All three Marines served with the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division from Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

The shooting was the second of the day involving Marines in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

Earlier Friday, three Marine special forces operatives were killed in the Sangin district by a man wearing the uniform of an Afghan policeman. They were with Camp Pendleton's 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion.

Dickinson's mother, Pauline, said Tuesday that her son decided to join the Marine Corps immediately after he graduated from high school in 2001.

"We were shocked that he wanted to go into such a difficult military branch," she said. "The brotherhood that's there attracted him."

Although Dickinson's unit was based in Hawaii, he was previously stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C., where he met his wife, Alicia. The couple married in 2009.

Pauline Dickinson said her son hoped to be assigned to an embassy after his current deployment so he could spend more time with his wife.

"It was something they could do together," she said.

Dickinson was deployed to Afghanistan for about seven months in 2010, Pauline Dickinson said. He had spent four months in Afghanistan when he was killed.

U.S. officials told The Associated Press that the shooter was a member of the Afghan Uniformed Police. On Tuesday, military officials would only say the incident was under investigation.

So-called "green-on-blue" attacks by members or impersonators of Afghan security forces against their international counterparts have raised questions about U.S. efforts to train Afghan soldiers and police.

This year, 37 international service members have been killed by Afghan security forces.

Although Dickinson was pursuing a long-term career in the Marine Corps, he also spoke about entering college after leaving the service.

"He thought he would like real estate or some sort of business career," his mother said.

She remembered that he was involved in baseball and football at Horizon Christian Academy. Kerry Keehl, baseball coach at the academy during Dickinson's time there, remembered him as a dedicated team manager and a respectful but happy-go-lucky student.

"Anything that you wanted, Scott would do for you," Keehl said, adding that the whole team enjoyed spending time with Dickinson on and off the field. "He's the type of guy, you would want him to be your brother," Keehl said.

Jesse Fournier, who also graduated from Horizon Christian Academy, said Dickinson embraced him as a friend when he was still new to the school.

"I definitely remember him as the nicest guy," Fournier said. "(He was) always happy and really had no worries in a sense. Things didn't really get to him."

At home, Dickinson was remembered as a respectful and friendly member of the community.

Keehl said his entire family knew Dickinson. His son remembered one particular evening when he and Dickinson made Gatorade together for Horizon Christian Academy's baseball team.

Dickinson's mother recounted his great generosity, one of the last examples coming in the form of Dickinson's death gratuity, a portion of which he arranged to go to each of his six younger nieces and nephews.

Details Emerge About Death Of Local Soldier Serving In Afghanistan



Ethan J. Martin

Aug 10, 2012 By Whitney Hise, KLEW News

LEWISTON, ID - The Department of Defense announced Thursday that Specialist Ethan J. Martin was killed on August 7th while serving in the U.S. Army in south-east Afghanistan.

According to a D.O.D. press release, Specialist Martin was supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Koragay where the 40th Cavalry was deployed, when he encountered small arms fire and was killed in action.

According to a D.O.D. source, the 2009 Lewiston High School graduate was among four casualties from August 7th and 8th reported in the Paktika Province in Afghanistan. Those soldiers have yet to be identified by the Army or if they were involved in the same skirmish Martin encountered.

The family of Specialist Martin have requested privacy at this difficult time and asked for no contact by the media. However, they have provided the following statement:

“Ethan was a very loving young man with a tender heart. He loved Idaho and he loved to hunt and fish. He planned to go to nursing school after leaving the Army. Ethan leaves behind a loving family and many friends in Bonners Ferry and northern Idaho.

“His family includes his mother and father, his sister, 4 stepsisters and 3 stepbrothers. Ethan was preceded in death by his grandfathers Leroy Oakes and Ron Marcy. He will be greatly missed by his family and his friends.”

Martin was serving with the 1st Squadron of the 40th Cavalry out of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, in Alaska. Martin attended school in Bonners Ferry through 10th grade before moving to Lewiston. According to a report out of Bonners Ferry, Martin’s father, Harv Martin, posted the following on his Facebook page:

“May God rest his soul. It is with deep regret that I make this post, but with honor also.”

The KLEW News Facebook page has been flooded with viewers sharing their appreciation for Ethan’s service and condolences to his family. Here are a couple of posts:

Lindsey Robinson wrote “God has a special place for you. Thank you for being such an amazing, brave, strong friend. It was an honor to know you, you’ve changed my life forever.”

Sarah Krueger Showers expressed her condolences and wrote, “Thank you Ethan for protecting our country and our freedom. So sorry you had to pay the ultimate sacrifice. What a brave young man!”

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BLOODSHED**

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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

**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**

Romney’s Decline And Fall: “As It Stands Now, Romney Has Lost”

Aug 13, 2012 By David McReynolds, Edge Left

Edge Left is an occasional column by David McReynolds. McReynolds was the Socialist Party candidate for President in 1980 and 2000, worked on the staff of War Resisters League for nearly forty years, and is retired and living with his two cats on Manhattan's Lower East Side. He can be reached at: davidmcreynolds7@gmail.com

One of the curious omissions by all the commentators I've heard thus far, is that Mitt Romney, by choosing Paul Ryan as the VP candidate, has insured that following Romney's defeat in the general election, Ryan will become the leader of the GOP and the almost certain GOP Presidential candidate in 2016.

In mid-July I had the odd feeling I was watching the disintegration of the Romney campaign.

First, Romney was unable to deal with Obama's master stroke of lifting the threat of deportation from a large number of illegal immigrants. Obama had, with that action, secured a clear advantage with the Hispanic vote.

Second, Romney's inability to deal with the income taxes, and his confusing efforts to deal with his time at Bain (IE., he had ended his ties with Bain "retroactively"!!!), left a sense among political observers that Romney was in free fall.

It wasn't, if folks remember, simply that the Democrats had made an issue of the income taxes, but that key Republicans and conservatives had joined in the chorus demanding he release more than two years of returns.

Third, most of us (including me) had not seen the media attacks Romney had made on his opponents in the primary, because those attacks were not made in the national media, but at the local and state levels.

Some of those candidates self-destructed (the case with Rick Perry), or had known they had no chance of winning the nomination (as was true of Ron Paul), but Romney had waged a ruthless campaign against Gingrich, Cain, and Santorum. He had poured in money, dug up dirt, and essentially "bought" the primaries with his war chest.

Primaries are always lessons in how blunt objects will be used to knock out opponents. In this case, the net result was that Romney had left behind a trail of genuine bitterness and hard feeling among the conservative candidates. It is true the "Tea Party" (and the "establishment GOP") hate Obama so much, they will support whoever is running against him, but in this case what we saw was the victory of the candidate no one really loved, and many profoundly detested. Contributing to this was the perception that Romney would take any side of any issue if it would help him to win.

The election had been Romney's to lose.

With 8% unemployment, (and I am referring to long term unemployment), Obama, on the face of it, had no chance of winning. "It is the economy, stupid", to quote the slogan from Bill Clinton's campaign. Romney had done his best to make that the central issue of his campaign.

Thus I found it difficult to believe, in mid-July, that the Romney campaign was coming apart at the seams. But this was confirmed by his overseas trip, where he managed to irritate the conservative Prime Minister of England.

It was therefore no surprise when, starting in the first week of August, key elements in the Republican Party (the Wall Street Journal and National Review) began to push for the selection of Paul Ryan as the VP choice.

The selection of Paul Ryan was almost a concession that Romney had lost the election but at least would be able to pull the base together.

In politics it is extremely risky to state any outcome as a sure thing three months in advance. Much may happen, from some tragedy involving the candidates themselves, to events in Europe, which could sink the US financial ship, to a possible Israeli attack on Iran.

But as it stands now, Romney has lost.

The polls of early August confirmed this - they were unanimous in showing a shift away from Romney and toward Obama, beyond the margin of error, and, most important, in the key states Romney had to win.

Romney's plight helps explain why the GOP has launched such a strong national attack on the right to vote - special credit goes to Rachel Maddow, perhaps the brightest star in the MSNBC galaxy, who has documented both the national efforts to restrict the right to vote, and the specific and outrageous effort in the key state of Ohio to make it much harder for voters in Democratic districts to have their votes counted.

(Ohio is a scandal - in the Bush vs. Gore race the combination of the voter fraud in Florida and in Ohio gave the race to Bush. Voter fraud goes both ways - the Democrats have done much the same thing. But this is the first time I can remember, since the Civil Rights Act was passed, that we have seen a systematic effort to deny categories of voters easy access to the polls - this means African Americans, Hispanics, the elderly, and students).

If I'm right and the GOP is doomed to defeat in this election, the fault rests in large measure with the Tea Party which has locked Romney into positions which alienated key sectors of the voting public.

Leaving aside gay voters, most of whom will go to Obama, the assault on women's rights (well covered by Maddow) has meant that even normally Republican voters have been alienated. The Black vote will, again, go overwhelmingly to Obama. The immigration issue has locked an overwhelming majority of Hispanic voters into support of Obama. Romney's visit to Israel did not split the Jewish vote, which will still go by a heavy margin to Obama.

What Romney does have is a clear majority of the white working class male voters, plus a majority of the middle class voters. (The number of upper class voters is too small to be decisive, but in any event will split). In the old days this might easily have been enough to win an election.

But older white voters who depend on Medicare and Social Security will be turned off by the choice of Paul Ryan. (The addition of Ryan to the ticket may well have guaranteed that Florida will go to Obama).

With each passing year the electorate is “less white”.

One reason for the Tea Party is the sense of alienation felt by older white voters who are baffled by a world in which there are gays and lesbians getting married and anchoring TV news shows, and a black is in the White House.

The Tea Party is hardly a “reasoned response”, and this was confirmed by those who sought its blessing, from Bachmann to Santorum.

What is disturbing about the GOP campaign this year was the range of possible candidates.

We didn't have a choice of serious folks, but people like Herman Cain, Michele Bachmann, Newt Gingrich, and Rick Perry. Jon Huntsman was one of the few candidates who could be considered qualified, and he was quickly eliminated. If this had been an “off year” when the GOP stood no chance of winning, one might understand why someone such as Michele Bachmann was taken seriously.

But as it stands, the range of candidates suggests the GOP has few heavy hitters. (An exception is Paul Ryan who, despite my sharp disagreements with his “Ayn Rand” economic approach, is a thoughtful man).

One personal note on Romney.

It is rare that truly wealthy men or women enter politics - it is easier for them to hire a candidate.

(As, if you check the record, you will find Richard Nixon was hired, long ago, by a group of businessmen in his Congressional district). There are exceptions such as Rockefeller or Bloomberg. Generally, however, the very rich do their best to avoid publicity.

It is considered in bad taste to make a display of wealth.

The very rich are virtually invisible. They do not ride the subways or buses, they do not fly economy class. Their children go to private schools. They lived in gated communities or in well guarded condominiums. They often have body guards.

It is not merely, as Scott Fitzgerald wrote, that “the rich are different” from the rest of us - they are, for the most part, invisible, and prefer it that way.

Romney is in this category of the super-rich but he lacks something that usually goes with this category - a sense of noblesse oblige.

That ability to leave “lesser mortals” at ease marked FDR, John F. Kennedy, and George Bush (the senior - not the Jr.). But it is something George Romney lacks.

His laugh is nervous, his smile too quick, his responses too robotic.

This is in part because his background in the Mormon Church already put him at a distance from most of us. Remember, as a Mormon, Romney can't have a beer, or a bourbon and branch water. Unlike JFK or Bush Sr., who saw military service and had to deal with people from a range of classes, Romney didn't share that experience.

It is my private guess that this accounted for his extraordinary fumble on the matter of taxes.

I doubt there is anything illegal in the returns, rather I think Romney felt "we" simply didn't have the right to demand more than the two years he will give us.

His wife, who shares his background, made the comment when pressed about the taxes that "you people have all you need". That "you people" was so revealing - it wasn't said in anger, but from that sense of distance that great wealth has given the Romney's.

What is missing in the debate about the deficit, and the Paul Ryan budget (which, let it be noted, was attacked by the Catholic Bishops) is not some display of anger about exempting the wealthy - the Democrats are good at that.

What is missing is any discussion of the one area where massive cuts can safely be made - the military budget. Hundreds of overseas bases will remain off limits to discussion.

And on this, Obama, just as much as Paul Ryan, will be silent. (Though there have been some subtle hints that Obama may mention this in the course of the campaign). Jesus once said to his disciples "the poor you have always with you", something Paul Ryan is happy to accept. If Jesus were around today he might say "the military you have always with you".

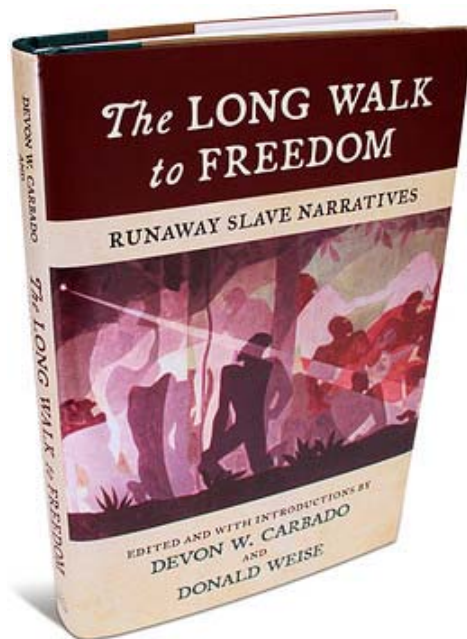
In any event we will know very soon if I have badly misread the political scene.

For myself, I will vote for the Socialist Party ticket, Stewart Alexander - and if the SP can't make the New York State ballot, I'll vote for whatever minor party does make it.

"I Had As Well Be Killed Running As Die Standing" [Book Review: Runaway Slave Narratives]

“Readers Will Learn More About Slavery In The American South From These Autobiographical Accounts Than They Could From Any Textbook”

“Their Aim Is To Dispel The Myth Of The Slave As Passive And Afraid To Cast Off His Chains”



August 21, 2012 By MELANIE KIRKPATRICK, Wall Street Journal

On March 29, 1849, in Richmond, Va., the slave Henry Brown climbed inside a cramped, custom-made box into which he had drilled three air holes.

The box was nailed shut, stamped “Express Mail” and addressed to an anti-slavery society in Philadelphia. Twenty-seven hours and 350 miles later, Brown emerged at his destination. “I rose a free man,” he later wrote. It was “my resurrection from the grave of slavery.”

Thus concluded one of the more ingenious escape stories in the annals of the African-American experience. Brown went on to become a popular speaker on the abolitionist

circuit, often carrying with him the box that had delivered him from bondage. He published a chronicle of his life in 1851.

The story of Henry “Box” Brown, as he came to be known, is just one of the remarkable first-person accounts of escapes from slavery collected in “The Long Walk to Freedom.”

The 12 personal testimonies included here are as fresh, as powerful and as moving as they were when they were originally published between 1815 and 1901.

Each story is riveting—a powerful testament to the enduring lure of freedom and the extraordinary courage and drive of those who seek it.

Readers will learn more about slavery in the American South from these autobiographical accounts than they could from any textbook.

The editors are Devon W. Carbado, a professor of law and African-American studies at UCLA, and Donald Weise, the editor in chief of Magnus Books. Their focus is on fugitive slaves — why they ran, how they did it, what obstacles they encountered on their journey.

Their aim is to dispel the myth of the slave as passive and afraid to cast off his chains.

Messrs. Carbado and Weise note that the majority of runaway slaves didn’t reach freedom. They were apprehended “long before they ever reached free soil,” tracked down by bloodhounds or arrested by brokers. In the 1850s, at the height of the Underground Railroad, only about 1,000 slaves made it to safety each year in a Northern state or Canada. Many other slaves fled to Southern cities, where they hoped to blend into the free-black populations.

The difficulties of fugitive slaves were compounded, the editors note, by the fact that slaves were usually illiterate and “unable to read signs or maps.”

They were prohibited from using public transportation unless they were traveling with their masters. They also had to answer to suspicious whites, who were constantly on the lookout for runaways. Any white man could stop a black person and demand to see his pass from his master or mistress or his emancipation papers.

If the traveler could not produce the requisite documents, he could be arrested, jailed, flogged and held until his owner reclaimed him. If the owner did not show up, the unfortunate prisoner could be sold to a slave broker.

Several of the slave narratives featured here are well known, such as Frederick Douglass’s autobiography and that of Harriet Jacobs, who hid in the crawl space under her grandmother’s roof for seven years to escape the sexual abuse of her master. More than half of the narratives, however, have not been published in more than a century.

One of the most daring tales is told by William Craft, who recounts how he and his wife, Ellen, made their way from their home in Georgia to safety in Pennsylvania, a distance of 1,000 miles across the hostile territory of the Deep South.

As a small child, Ellen had endured the pain of being sold away from her mother, and the couple did not want their future children to be born into slavery. They resolved to flee and devised an audacious plan.

Ellen, who was biracial and could pass for white, cut her hair and dressed as a young gentleman in clothes that her husband purchased illegally. In Georgia, William explains, “it is unlawful for a white man to trade . . . with slaves without the master’s consent.”

William pretended to be Ellen’s slave companion, serving his young “master,” who was supposedly an invalid. The couple traveled on public trains and vessels and stayed in hotels patronized by whites.

To disguise the fact that she was illiterate, Ellen bound her right hand in a bandage and put it in a sling, giving her a ready-made excuse for not signing her name when required. She wound another bandage around her lower face, hiding the fact that she had no beard. After many close calls—including a humorous incident in which two young white ladies took a fancy to the young invalid—the Crafts finally reached Philadelphia.

If the collection has a fault, it is that it leaves readers wanting to know more about the men and women who tell their stories here. The editors introduce each narrative, but the material is sketchy and sometimes ignores obvious questions, such as how the writer eventually made his way to freedom.

The once-enslaved men and women at the center of the narratives emerge as the central players in their own lives.

The narratives do indeed show, as the editors put it, that slaves were not “resigned to their roles as human chattel.” They show as well how a slave’s decision to flee could be influenced by a range of factors, including his Christian beliefs, his family situation or his desperation to escape punishment.

President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863. Nearly 150 years later, the testimonies of the former slaves found in “The Long Walk to Freedom” still hold power.

In the famous words of Frederick Douglass, describing his decision to flee bondage: “I had as well be killed running as die standing.”

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 email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

ANNIVERSARIES

Honorable Anniversary: [Late: August 21] Nat Turner's Rebellion



Carl Bunin, Peace History Aug 21-27

August 21, 1831

Nat Turner, a 30-year-old man legally owned by a child, and six other slaves began a violent insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia.

They began by killing the child's stepfather, Joseph Travis, and their family. Within the next 24 hours, Turner and ultimately about 40 followers killed the families of adjacent slaveholding properties, nearly 60 whites, while freeing and inciting other slaves to join them.

Militia and federal troops were called, and the uprising was suppressed with 55 African Americans including Turner executed by hanging, and hundreds more killed by white mobs and vigilantes in revenge.

“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

The Radio

“This August 24th, Remember Jeremy King”



[From: GI SPECIAL 5H19: 8.24.07]

07/25/2007 by Justin C. Cliburn
[Iraq Veterans Against The War] [www.ivaw.org/]
Branch of service: Army National Guard of the United States (ARNG)
Unit: 1st Battalion 158th FA Oklahoma ARNG
Rank: SPC
Home: Lawton, Oklahoma
Served in: LSA Anaconda: MSR Patrol, one month. Camp Liberty, Baghdad: PSD/IP
Training, ten and a half months.

When I was in Mrs. Riner's junior English class at MacArthur high school, we were required to read a short story titled "The Radio."

The premise was simple. A couple in the 1930s were given a special radio that allowed them to hear all their neighbors' conversations. At first they were elated, but, ultimately, they were haunted by the miracle of their ability. They could hear all the horrors of society that usually go unnoticed or are covered up and sterilized . . . and they couldn't turn it off.

They couldn't change the channel.

It took seven years, but I eventually went back to that story in my head and felt their horror.

August 24th, 2006 was a routine day for my squad in Baghdad. We had gone to Traffic Headquarters and I had gotten to visit with Ali. Business taken care of, we started to make the familiar trek back to Camp Liberty.

It was a hot day, over 120 degrees, and I stood up just a little higher than usual with my sleeves unbuttoned to let the air circulate inside my body armor and clothing. It had been a good day.

Back on Route Irish, we were on the home stretch when the call came out over the radio:

“Eagle Dustoff, Eagle Dustoff, this is Red Knight 7* over”

“This is Eagle Dustoff, over”

“Eagle Dustoff, I need MEDEVAC; my gunner has been shot by a sniper.”

The voice went on to recite the nine line MEDEVAC report and I marveled at how cool, calm, and collected he sounded. My squad leader plotted the grid coordinates and found that this had occurred only a couple blocks away from one of our two main destinations on Market Road.

“Cliburn, go ahead and get down; someone might be aiming at your melon right now”, CPT Ray said. Sergeant Bruesch concurred and I sat down, listening intently to the radio transmissions that I couldn’t turn off if I wanted to.

Five minutes in, the voice on the radio was losing his cool.

“Have they left yet?! He’s losing a lot of blood; we need that chopper now!”

In the background, you could hear other soldiers yelling, screaming, trying to find anyway to save their friend’s life. At one point, I swear I heard the man gurgle.

Ten minutes in, the voice on the radio was furious.

“Where’s that fucking chopper!? We’re losing him! He’s not fucking breathing! Where the fuck are you!?”

Every minute to minute and a half the voice was back on the radio demanding to know what the hold up was. Every minute to minute and a half the other voice on the radio, a young woman’s voice, tried to reassure him that the chopper was the way from Taji. She was beginning to tire herself; I could hear it in her voice. She was just as frustrated as he was.

All the while, there I sat.

Sitting in the gunners hatch, listening life’s little horrors with no way to turn the channel.

No one in the truck was speaking.

The music was on, but no one heard it. There was just an eerie silence.

All I heard was the radio transmissions; I watched as the landscape passed me by in slow motion.

I didn't hear wind noise or car horns or gunfire or my own thoughts. I was only accompanied by the silence of the world passing me by, interrupted only by the screams of the voice on the radio.

At this point, I was as frustrated as I had been all year. Where the fuck was that goddamn chopper and why was it taking so long?! What if it were me?

Would I be waiting that long? Would this pathetic exchange be included in the newscast if the guy dies?

I was angry, upset, frustrated, and anticipating the next transmission in this macabre play by play account. Forget about TNT, HBO, and Law and Order: THIS was drama. This was heart wrenching.

Seconds seemed like hours; minutes seemed like days.

Finally, after several more non-productive transmissions where Eagle Dustoff attempted to reassure the voice, after twenty minutes and a few more frantic, screaming transmissions by the voice, the man's voice was calm again.

"Eagle Dustoff, cancel the chopper. He's dead."

. . . and that was that. The voice had gone from being the model for the consummate soldier (cool, calm, collected, professional) to the more human screams and frantic pleading for help to solemn resignation.

Now, the voice was quiet.

"Eagle Dustoff: requesting recovery team. We can't drive this vehicle back; we need someone to come get the vehicle and body. Over."

"Do you have casualty's information?"

"Yes. SGT King, over."

I sat in that gunners sling in a fit of rage that I couldn't let out.

I had to be a soldier; I had to keep my cool.

We all did.

I was so angry, I still am, about being an unwilling voyeur, forced to listen to the gruesome play by play of another soldier's life and death.

We had been told that the insurgency was in its last throes, that they were just a bunch of dead enders. No, not this day.

Today, SGT King was in his last throes, and I was there to listen to the whole thing, whether I liked it or not.

A soldier's death isn't anything like the movies. There was no patriotic music; there was no feeling of purpose. It's just . . . death.

I wasn't there physically; I didn't see him, but I was there.

Any sane person would have wanted to turn the channel. No one wants to hear the screams of a man losing his friend, but I couldn't turn it off. We were required to monitor that channel.

Either way, it didn't take long to become emotionally invested in it; was he going to make it? I hung on every word until I got the final, sobering news.

My truck was the only one in the convoy monitoring that net. When we got back to base, no one else had heard it, and SSG Bruesch, CPT Ray, and I didn't discuss it. I don't think we ever did.

A few days later, I felt like I had to find out more about his soldier. I felt like I had lost a friend, yet I didn't know anything but his name and rank.

Looking back on it, I should have just let it go, but I didn't. Using the miracle of the Internet, I found out all I needed to know about the young man.

SGT Jeremy E. King was 23 years old. He was from Idaho, where he played high school football. He had joined the army to get out of Idaho and see the world.

He was one year younger than I was, and he was dead. He sounded like any of a number of teammates I played high school football with.

I've replayed that scene in my head more times than I'd ever want since that day.

I don't believe in fate or karma or any type of pre-destined events, but I often wonder what made that sniper hole up on North Market Road instead of South Market Road, where I often found myself.

I was fortunate enough in my time there to never have to call in MEDEVAC.

I didn't bury any of my comrades, but I will always remember what it was like listening to the miracle of modern communications, the radio, and for the first time in my life being terrified, much like the couple in the story over eighty long years ago.

This August 24th, remember Jeremy King:

Wednesday, August 30 2006 @ 04:20 AM EDT
Contributed by: River97
Views: 621

Star Telegram -- KILLEEN, Texas - A Fort Hood soldier from Idaho has died in Iraq of injuries sustained when troops came under fire during combat, the Department of Defense said Friday.

Sgt. Jeremy E. King, 23, of Meridian died Thursday in Baghdad.

He was assigned to the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood.



Jeremy King

Noble Anniversary:
August 25, 1969
The Rebellion Of Company A;
“One Of Hundreds Of Mutinies Among
Troops During The War”



Company A of the 3rd Battalion the 196th Light Brigade refused to advance further into the Songchang Valley of Vietnam after five days of heavy casualties; their number had been reduced from 150 to 60.

This was one of hundreds of mutinies among troops during the war.

“He (President Nixon) is also carrying on the battle in the belief, or pretense, that the South Vietnamese will really be able to defend their country and our democratic objectives (sic) when we withdraw, and even his own generals don’t believe the South Vietnamese will do it.”

James Reston in the New York Times

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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CLASS WAR REPORTS

South African Mine Strikes Spreading: “Lonmin Workers Met With South African President Jacob Zuma Near The Site Of Last Week’s Shootings” “The President’s Efforts At Mediation Appeared To Leave The Strikers Underwhelmed” “The Audience, Sitting Next To Homes Made Of Tin Or Cement Blocks, Met Mr. Zuma’s Comments With Heckling”

August 22, 2012 By DEVON MAYLIE, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

MARIKANA, South Africa—Workers clamored for higher wages Wednesday at two more platinum companies in South Africa’s mining heartland, less than a week after police shot and killed 34 people at a violent protest at Lonmin’s Marikana mine.

Miners at the world’s biggest platinum producer, Anglo-American Platinum Ltd., or Amplats, and Royal Bafokeng Platinum Ltd. echoed the Lonmin workers in calling for better pay and working conditions.

Amplats said a group of workers submitted demands including a wage increase at its Thembelenmi mine. The company said there was no strike yet.

On Tuesday night, Royal Bafokeng Platinum said about 500 rock drillers embarked on an illegal strike.

They blocked the entrance to its North shaft, which accounts for 40% of its production, preventing other miners from work.

The wage protests and disruption to the Marikana mine's production briefly lifted platinum prices to their highest level in four months as investors took in the possibility of a production halt at Amplats, which accounts for 40% of global platinum supply. On Wednesday, spot platinum rose 1.24% to close at \$1,525.20 a troy ounce.

The Lonmin strike wasn't the first violent clash seen this year in the platinum industry. A group of rock drillers launched an illegal strike at Impala Platinum Holdings Ltd. in February, shutting down its largest mine and causing the company to lose 120,000 ounces of platinum production. Police said three died in clashes between workers.

At the Marikana mine on Wednesday, the striking Lonmin workers met with South African President Jacob Zuma near the site of last week's shootings. Mr. Zuma's visit was his first public appearance near the site of the shootings, though he had visited the mine hospital this past Friday.

His promises of mediation, however, failed to placate the workers.

Speaking to a crowd of several hundred miners who gathered in a grassy field about 1,700 feet from where the shootings took place, Mr. Zuma attempted to show common cause with the strikers, rebutting their claims that the government had authorized the shooting and was overlooking their concerns.

The president, whose mother tongue is Zulu, addressed the workers in Xhosa. Many Lonmin employees come from the Eastern Cape, where the language is most widely spoken.

The audience, sitting next to homes made of tin or cement blocks, met Mr. Zuma's comments with heckling.

One Lonmin worker, who identified himself as a local leader with the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union, or AMCU, said the president wasn't listening to them and hadn't paid his respects to the site where protesters had died in violent clashes with police.

The problems at Lonmin began Aug. 10, when 3,000 rock drillers launched an illegal strike for higher wages.

The protests quickly led to violence. Fighting among workers at first claimed 10 lives, including two police officers. Then, police fired live ammunition into a crowd Thursday during a standoff with protesting employees, killing 34 workers.

A rivalry between the established National Union of Mineworkers and the emerging AMCU added to the tension. Workers wearing new green T-shirts with the AMCU insignia patrolled the area on Wednesday and said protesters weren't allowed to speak to the media.

A dozen workers wandered around the site wearing the AMCU T-shirts and carrying sticks. They said they wouldn't speak about their grievances until after the dead are buried on Thursday.

The president's efforts at mediation, however, appeared to leave the strikers underwhelmed.

Lonmin employee Sekeni Nkumbi said he is staying away from the mine until the management agrees to meet workers over demands to increase wages.

"I am getting old and have very little to show for the years I have worked," said 54-year-old Mr. Nkumbi, who has worked at Lonmin for seven years.

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**“The Barada River Valley,
Outside Damascus, Has
Become An Opposition Haven”**

**“Opposition Fighters Train In
Nearby Orchards”**

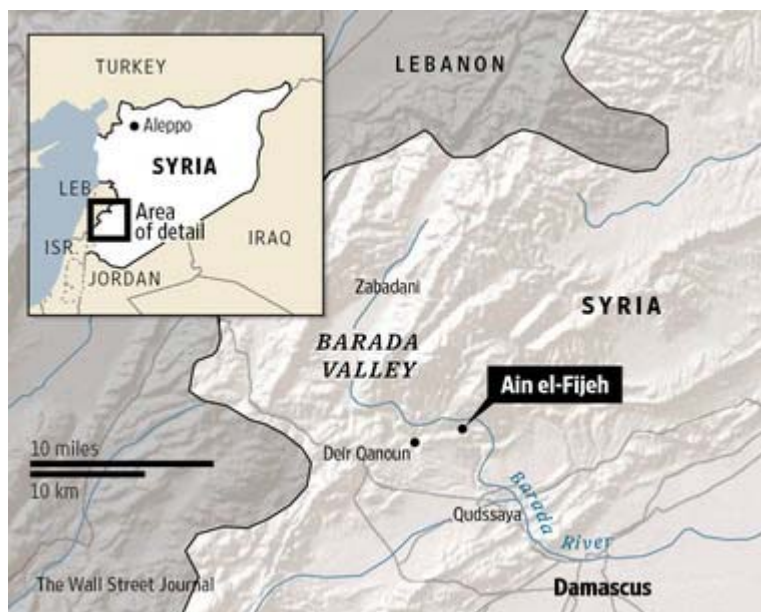
**““We Have Boycotted The State
Completely Here,’ A 28-Year-Old
Defected First Lieutenant Who Leads
The Wadi Barada Military Council”**

**“Government Troops Aborted Their Last
Attempted Attack, In April, As Local**

Fighters Consolidated Control Over A Pumping Station That Sends Drinking Water From Fijeh's Ancient Spring To Damascus"



Seen from Ain el-Fijeh, the Barada River Valley, outside Damascus, has become an opposition haven. Nour Malas/The Wall Street Journal



Local elders mediated with the security forces, leaving the townspeople to protest freely until that June, when, residents say, government forces started to open fire on protests. In response, men picked up their hunting rifles and women hurled stones at tanks, several residents said.

August 22, 2012 By NOUR MALAS, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts

AIN EL-FIJEH, Syria—A short drive from downtown Damascus, where fighting surged again Wednesday between government and opposition forces, the rebel-held villages of the Barada Valley have been puzzlingly quiet.

For decades, Damascus families sheltered from the summer heat at the riverview restaurants of Ain el-Fijeh, a village just 15 miles up a mountain road from the capital.

Now, the entrance to the village's municipal building has been painted with the design of Syria's rebel flag.

Government office blocks bear graffiti reading "Independent Ain el-Fijeh."

Opposition fighters train in nearby orchards.

For weeks, residents of Ain el-Fijeh have listened to the near-daily shelling of Zabadani, a town about nine miles away.

On Wednesday, fighting raged in the other direction, too, as Damascus residents said Syrian government tanks and helicopters attacked the capital's southern neighborhoods of Kafar Souseh and Nahr Aisha. At least 43 people were killed in the shelling and mortar attacks, activist groups said, including 24 men in Kafar Souseh who activists said appeared to have been shot in the head.

In Ain el-Fijeh, several villagers wonder if they will be next—and, if not, why regime forces haven't returned since earlier attacks.

Many in this village, home to 6,000 people, say local rebels outfoxed the government.

Regime forces dispatched tanks and armored vehicles twice against Ain el-Fijeh earlier this year after residents began taking up arms, residents say. But government troops aborted their last attempted attack, in April, as local fighters consolidated control over a pumping station that sends drinking water from Fijeh's ancient spring to Damascus, say residents and the rebels who control the spring.

It isn't clear whether the government took any threat to the capital's water supply seriously; more skeptical locals believe the government will fight opponents here sooner or later.

The enclave's existence has many residents wondering about the Syrian military's strategy and strength against opposition forces.

In ceding control in this area, while bigger fights rage in Aleppo and Damascus, the regime appears to have given the opposition the space to turn the 14 villages of the surrounding Wadi Barada, or the Barada River Valley region, into a haven.

“We have boycotted the state completely here,” a 28-year-old defected first lieutenant who leads the Wadi Barada Military Council said in Deir Qanoun, another village in the valley, which has about 90,000 residents in all.

“We don’t pay for electricity anymore. Cars don’t pay registration. We still get all services,” said the lieutenant, known to people here as Abu Zein, or Zein’s father.

The mountains between Damascus and the Lebanon border have been bitterly contested between government and rebel forces. The regime has continued to make incursions into nearby Zabadani after it briefly fell to local fighters in January, rebel fighters say.

These fighters allege the town lies along a transit route for weapons between the Syrian regime and its ally Hezbollah, the militant and political group, in Lebanon. Syria’s government denies trading weapons with Hezbollah.

But regime forces have lost control of other nearby towns, including in the Barada valley.

The Syrian military hasn’t deployed its full capability in and around Damascus, military analysts and several observers say. The military barely used its tank arsenal to fight the boldest rebel attack on the capital last month, according to United Nations monitors in Syria whose mission expired last week.

Some monitors who had visited Damascus conflict zones noted a strategy of bombardment from afar—relying more on machine-gun attacks from helicopters or long-range tank guns, rather than sending troops to fight.

That, they said, could suggest a dearth of reliable soldiers to staff ground operations as the government’s elite, loyalist units have been spread across the country.

Some rebels argue government forces may have a strategy of neglect in these areas—periodically prodding towns that first rose in peaceful protest until their residents militarize, and then turning a blind eye while they become hubs for fighters that the military can later stamp out.

Joined by rocky mountain roads and lush apple and peach orchards, Wadi Barada’s villages are populated mainly by members of Syria’s Sunni Muslim majority. Ain el-Fijeh and other villages here erupted in early protests last year against President Bashar al-Assad’s regime.

Local elders mediated with the security forces, leaving the townspeople to protest freely until that June, when, residents say, government forces started to open fire on protests. In response, men picked up their hunting rifles and women hurled stones at tanks, several residents said.

The first fatality here was Fatima Nasrullah, a mentally handicapped woman in her 30s. She was shot as she stood on her balcony throwing pebbles at a tank column on the street, residents say.

By January, residents here had started to help smuggle weapons in from Lebanon to the Damascus suburbs, and sent 300 men to help fight in Zabadani.

“After this, we were in the eye of the storm,” said a young engineer, now a trainee with the local rebel council.

In February, after a six-hour battle with government forces, rebels claimed control of the Fijeh spring.

General Mohammad Dib Zeitoun, Syria’s head of political security, intervened to ask rebels to put guards at the spring infrastructure, three rebel leaders said.

The rebels agreed, and let a member of the security forces stand guard at the main spring source. When troops attacked the concrete pump building in March, the locals expelled the security agent.

“Honestly, we simply asked him to leave,” said Abu Zein, the rebel commander.

Rebels say they didn’t cut the water to the capital because they didn’t want to harm the population.

Now, locals can be heard cursing President Assad on the streets and in line at the vegetable market, often to the surprise of the many families taking refuge here from other hot spots around Damascus.

Puzzled by the regime’s apparent inattention but anticipating an attack if the battle for Aleppo fizzles, fighters here say they keep their activities secret even from family members.

They sneak away to orchards they have turned into training grounds, where they say they have been joined by fighters from Damascus.

Abu Zein and two other fighters pointed out what they said were government sniper positions in the next mountain range, toward Lebanon. Gunshots echoed. The fighters said the rounds weren’t from snipers, but from some two dozen rebels drilling in the orchards.

A young mother sat facing the trio, her 6-year-old daughter grabbing at her leg. Hearing for the first time that her lifelong neighbors—one a handyman, the other a salesman—are leaders with the local rebel military council, she pleaded with them to better organize themselves.

“You must fight harder,” she said. Invoking what village residents call their first martyr, she added: “For poor Fatima’s lost soul.”

The men nodded.

Their first advance on Damascus was poorly planned, they admitted, saying they learned about it at the last minute.

Abu Zein also promised to balance the destruction of fighting with the revival of their village, once a popular tourist spot. "We will bring this place back," he said. "For now, we are just waiting to see what the war will bring."



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