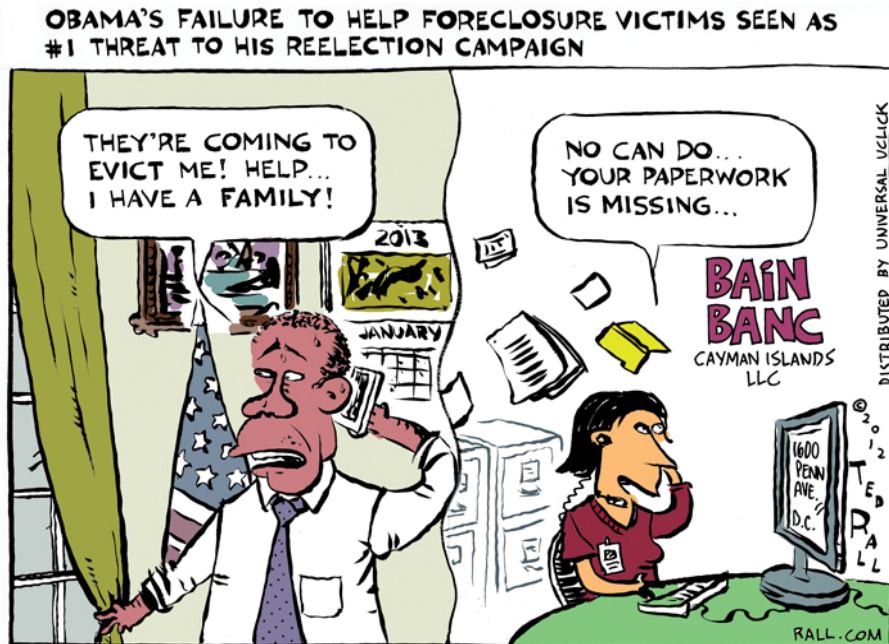


Military Resistance 10H17



“As Mrs. Buckley Recounted Things Her Son Loved — Basketball, Girls, Movies, The Beach — Bitterness Choked Her Words”

“Our Forces Shouldn’t Be There,” She Said. “It Should Be Over. It’s Done. No More”

**“Nearly Nine Years Passed Before
American Forces Reached Their First
1,000 Dead In The War”
“The Second 1,000 Came Just 27 Months
Later, A Testament To The Intensity Of
Fighting Prompted By President
Obama’s Decision To Send 33,000
Additional Troops To Afghanistan”**

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

August 21, 2012 By JAMES DAO and ANDREW W. LEHREN, New York Times.
[Excerpts]

His war was almost over. Or so Marina Buckley thought when her son Lance Cpl. Gregory T. Buckley Jr. told her that he would be returning from southern Afghanistan to his Marine Corps base in Hawaii in late August, three months early.

Instead, Lance Corporal Buckley became the 1,990th American service member to die in the war when, on Aug. 10, he and two other Marines were shot inside their base in Helmand Province by a man who appears to have been a member of the Afghan forces they were training.

A week later, with the death of Specialist James A. Justice of the Army in a military hospital in Germany, the United States military reached 2,000 dead in the nearly 11-year-old conflict, based on an analysis by The New York Times of Department of Defense records. The calculation by The Times includes deaths not only in Afghanistan but also in Pakistan and other nations where American forces are directly involved in aiding the war.

Nearly nine years passed before American forces reached their first 1,000 dead in the war.

The second 1,000 came just 27 months later, a testament to the intensity of fighting prompted by President Obama’s decision to send 33,000 additional troops to Afghanistan in 2010, a policy known as the surge.

In more ways than his family might have imagined, Lance Corporal Buckley, who had just turned 21 when he died, typified the troops in that second wave of 1,000.

According to the Times analysis, three out of four were white, nine out of 10 were enlisted service members, and one out of two died in either Kandahar Province or

Helmand Province in Taliban-dominated southern Afghanistan. Their average age was 26.

The dead were also disproportionately Marines like Lance Corporal Buckley.

Though the Army over all has suffered more dead in the war, the Marine Corps, with fewer troops, has had a higher casualty rate: At the height of fighting in late 2010, two out of every 1,000 Marines in Afghanistan were dying, twice the rate of the Army.

Marine units accounted for three of the five units hardest hit during the surge.

Suffering the most casualties was the Third Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment out of Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Twenty-five of its Marines died and more than 180 were wounded, many with multiple amputations, during a bloody seven-month deployment in Helmand that began in fall 2010.

The analysis also shows that Army casualties during the surge fell heaviest on two bases with frequently deployed units: Fort Campbell in Kentucky, home to the 101st Airborne Division, which recorded the most Army deaths in the surge, and Fort Drum in New York, home to the 10th Mountain Division.

The summer remained the peak season for fighting, with the single highest period for American deaths being July, August and September 2010, when at least 143 troops died.

And as has been the case since at least 2008, improvised explosive devices, known as I.E.D.'s, remained a leading cause of death and injury, along with small-arms fire, the analysis showed.

For the Buckleys, of Oceanside, N.Y., their son's death so near the end of his tour, so late in the long war and possibly at the hand of a purported ally, was uniquely anguishing.

As Mrs. Buckley recounted things her son loved — basketball, girls, movies, the beach — bitterness choked her words.

“Our forces shouldn't be there,” she said. “It should be over. It's done. No more.”

The Third Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment out of Camp Pendleton, Calif., was emblematic of the surge.

Sent into Sangin, Afghanistan's opium-producing heartland, in 2010, the battalion faced a formidable enemy expert in the use of I.E.D.'s., losing 25 Marines in a seven-month tour, the second most of any American unit in the entire war, a Times analysis shows.

Mark Moyar, an independent national security analyst who has studied the battalion's operations, said that the British who had preceded the Marines in Sangin, a district in Helmand, focused on economic development and political outreach to undermine the

insurgency. But the Taliban also operated with near impunity in parts of the district, he said.

The battalion took a different approach, pushing into Taliban-dominated villages and expanding the security bubble beyond combat outposts and Afghan commercial centers. Fighting was intense, with civilians often getting caught in the middle, and casualties piled up fast.

On Oct. 8, barely two weeks after the battalion landed, it lost its first Marine, Lance Cpl. John T. Sparks. Five days later, four Marines of the battalion died when their armored truck was decimated by a powerful bomb. Three more died the next day when they stepped on a mine during a foot patrol.

The rapid-fire deaths prompted calls in Washington for the battalion to pull back. But senior Marine commanders — including the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Jason Morris — prevailed on Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates to leave them in place.

“Everyone was shocked, including me, that we lost that many guys that quickly,” Colonel Morris said. “But honestly, me and most of my Marines would have rather come home in body bags than let the Taliban claim a victory.”

Deanna Giles, the mother of a squad leader from the battalion, remembers those days all too well. Amid the blur of casualty reports, Ms. Giles began watching for strange cars in her neighborhood in Kankakee, Ill., fearing the next one would bear horrible news.

Anxiously seeking information or solace, she took to Facebook and Marine Corps chat rooms, forming a powerful digital bond with other families from the battalion, whom she never met in person.

“You began to care about people in a way you could not have before the Internet age,” Ms. Giles said.

Her son, Sgt. Caleb Giles, came home alive.

Patty Schumacher’s son, Lance Cpl. Victor A. Dew, did not.

Ms. Schumacher had begged her son to defer enlisting until the war ended. When he refused, she urged him to take a job with a presidential security detail. He again said no, determined to be an infantryman and to go to war.

“Boy, did my heart sink,” she recalled. “But I was also proud of him for following his true desires. As a parent you just suck it up, hold your heart and take a deep breath and hope all goes well.”

In late August 2010, Lance Corporal Dew proposed to his girlfriend, then was deployed a month later. Within weeks of arriving in Helmand, he died with three other Marines in a powerful I.E.D. blast. At age 20, he became the 1,259th American to die in the war.

Inside his coffin, his fiancée placed a photograph of herself, wearing her wedding gown.

Ms. Schumacher maintains a Facebook page to keep his memory fresh, and occasionally toasts him at dinner with tequila. She still cries, too, though the tears are hard to predict, prompted by stray images and fleeting sounds that remind her of him: a smile, a song, a joke.

"When do you get better? You don't ever get better," she said.

"You just get better in your grieving. There will always be something that triggers it. And then you are back on that emotional roller coaster."

MORE:

Greg Buckley, Jr. 21-Year-Old Marine Lance Corporal Murdered In Afghanistan

From: Perry Brass
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Subject: From Perry Brass, poem about war dead.
Date: Aug 28, 2012

I learned about your anti-war newsletter through David McReynolds.

Here is a poem I wrote recently after the death of Greg Buckley, Jr., a 21-year-old Marine Lance Corporal recently killed in Afghanistan.

I was so heart broken by the senselessness of this that I was moved to write this. It is being published on the blog Ask A New Yorker today.

Greg Buckley, Jr. 21-Year-Old Marine Lance Corporal Murdered in Afghanistan

**You died for a lie: that you were
protecting your country. Your
beautiful presence
will no longer shimmer among us.
The songs that you loved will dim
their meanings in your absence.
Your friends will swear they will not
forget you, but they will the way
the war dead are forgotten as the
living go on,
pacing in their everyday life,
fretting about the price of gas,
the price of boredom and of poverty,**

A foreign servicemember was killed in an insurgent attack in eastern Afghanistan on Tuesday.

Windsor Soldier Dies On 3rd Tour In Afghanistan

Aug 28, 2012 Written by Trevor Hughes Trevor, The Fort Collins Coloradoan

WINDSOR — — A Windsor soldier serving his third tour of Afghanistan was killed over the weekend, rocking his hometown.

The Department of Defense on Tuesday confirmed the death of Sgt. Christopher Birdwell, 25, and that of Spc. Mabry J. Anders, 21, of Baker City, Ore.

They died Monday in Kalagush of injuries suffered from enemy small arms fire. The soldiers were assigned to the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson.

Due to the time difference between Colorado and Afghanistan, Birdwell's family was notified of his death by Army officials late Sunday night, and the word began spreading through the town and across Facebook on Monday.

"Everybody loved him," said his brother, Dustin, 23. "He was a really fun guy to be around."

Birdwell joined the Army when he was 18, a few months after graduating from Windsor High School, and he re-enlisted when his initial contract was up. Dustin Birdwell said his brother took great pride in being a leader of his fellow soldiers.

According to Army records, Chris Birdwell made sergeant in February 2011, and his brother said he found a second family within the ranks. "He was loved by his brotherhood," Dustin Birdwell said.

He said many of the men who served with his brother called or messaged him on Monday to share memories and condolences.

John Sears, who attends the same Windsor Church of Christ as the Birdwell family, said Chris Birdwell's repeated tours of duty in the "backyard of nowhere" brought him closer to the family he didn't get to see very often.

The church displays a folded American flag Birdwell brought back from Afghanistan.

"He always made sure to shake my hand," Sears said. "He's making it so I can sit on my butt and eat McDonald's, because he was out on the front lines."

Birdwell served in Afghanistan in 2006-2007 and 2009-2010.

Dustin Birdwell said his brother wasn't allowed to talk in detail about his service in Afghanistan. A Facebook profile photo shows Chris Birdwell in the prone position, wearing fatigues, cradling a scoped rifle while a spotter with binoculars sits nearby.

Birdwell's father owns American Air Heating and Air Conditioning in Windsor.

The last military member to die from Northern Colorado was David Carter, 47, a Colorado National Guard helicopter pilot who was killed when his aircraft crashed in Afghanistan a year ago August 2011.

He was buried in Fort Collins.

Kentwood Navy SEAL's Death Touches Holland SEAL, Family, Friends



David Warsen

August 18, 2012 By John Agar, Michigan Live

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Serving overseas, Navy SEAL Brandon Peterson of Holland got the horrible news late Thursday: His close friend and fellow SEAL David Warsen of Kentwood was killed when a Blackhawk helicopter went down in Afghanistan.

At first, he didn't say much. SEALS are taught to be tough.

"I said, 'Brandon, David is your best friend,'" Peterson's mother, Brenda Batts recalled.

It started sinking in.

"He just kept saying, 'Why David? Why David? He's got so much to give.'"

Warsen, 27, was among 11 killed, including seven U.S. troops, in a Special Operations mission in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan. Peterson, who is deployed in an undisclosed country, is working to get back to West Michigan.

The loss devastated Warsen's family.

The loss has also been felt throughout the “tight brotherhood” of Navy SEALs and their families. Batts said she considered those serving with her son as her own. Everyone liked Warsen.

‘He was the real deal’ former team member says of David Warsen, fallen Kentwood Navy SEAL

“David loved life. David taught us to laugh. He was just a beautiful, noble man of courage, values and honor,” Batts said.

Her son, a Holland Christian High School graduate, met Warsen, an East Kentwood grad, while they worked at The B.O.B. in downtown Grand Rapids. Warsen tended bar, while Peterson was a bouncer. They became fast friends.

“Everybody wanted to know David. He radiated fun and life and laughter.”

Peterson joined the Navy first, with the SEALs as his goal. He kept telling his buddy he should do it. Warsen signed on.

“The whole time, Brandon was always three to four months ahead of David in the training. Every time I’d go out there (San Diego), he’d say to Brandon, ‘What’s next?’ Brandon would walk him through it, and say, ‘You’ll get through it, bro. Stay focused.’ They just built each other up.”

Batts said her son and his friend and others who completed the grueling SEAL training never let on they were part of an elite squad. It’s the mark of a SEAL.

She said she looked at Warsen and the others serving with her son as her own. But she said Warsen’s family hurts beyond what most can only imagine.

He left three younger brothers, Aaron, Kyle and Ryan, and father and stepmother, David and Stephanie Warsen, and his mother and stepfather, Patricia Vroon-Frank and Greg Frank.

“David comes from a wonderful family. His three younger brothers are all so close,” Batts said.

He also left a fiancée, Karlyn Deveau. Friends thought of her planning the wedding, counting down the weeks, or days.

Warsen would call her when he returned from missions so she would know he was OK.

Debbie Collins of Caledonia thinks of all of the losses: for his brothers, for Deveau and Warsen’s dreams of becoming a father.

Collins, a family friend, said he has always been good with children. He would go to her son Tyler’s hockey games at East Kentwood, and his brother’s events. She recalled that Warsen, who was living in California, “moved heaven and earth” to get back for brother Ryan’s state championship in soccer a couple of years ago.

Collins, overcome by grief, paused at times. The brothers “are so close,” she said.

“This is going to be really hard for them. He loved his family, and would do anything for his family. He so much looked forward to starting a family.”

Her son, Tyler, who is a close friend to Ryan Warsen, heard about the loss early Friday. “When I saw his name, I couldn’t even breathe. It’s heart-breaking.”

She said Warsen’s mother, her friend, has to be “just crushed, absolutely crushed.” He was the kind of son any mother would be proud of, she said.

She will remember Warsen as “just a kind, kind soul. Like I said, everybody loved him. He touched a lot of people. It brings to light we do have a lot of soldiers out there fighting for our freedom.”

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

4 Guardsmen From NV, 1 MT Ok In Afghanistan Copter Crash

August 28, 2012 & Aug. 29, 2012 The Associated Press

No one was seriously hurt but there were some nervous moments when a Nevada National Guard helicopter made a rough landing in Afghanistan.

Nevada Guard Major April Conway says the CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to the 1/189th Aviation based in Stead was attempting to land in the regional command-east section of Afghanistan on Tuesday when the "non-hostile incident" occurred.

Conway says there were no significant injuries to the five-soldier crew - four guardsmen from Nevada and one from Montana. She says they have returned to duty.

The aircraft was heavily damaged, so the crew destroyed it before they were evacuated from the scene.

The Taliban claimed in a statement Tuesday that its fighters shot down the helicopter.

Resistance Action

August 29, 2012 By AFP

Five Afghan army soldiers were killed in an insurgent roadside bombing and attack in an eastern Afghanistan militant hotbed, officials said Wednesday.

The soldiers were attacked late Tuesday in Kunar province by a bomber on foot after a smaller explosion caused by a roadside bombing, a tactic that Afghan insurgents use often, the officials said.

"First there was an improvised roadside bombing that hit an army convoy," Mohammad Amin Tokhi, the Kunar provincial deputy governor, told AFP.

"Some of the soldiers got out of their vehicles to check it out. A suicide bomber ran at them and detonated. Five of our soldiers were martyred and another was wounded."

The incident took place in Manogai district, a hotspot of the Taliban insurgency.

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

Pakistan Says 9 Soldiers Killed By Taliban Attackers Near Border With Afghanistan

Aug. 5, 2012 AP

Taliban militants attacked an army post near the Afghan border in Pakistan's northwest, killing nine soldiers, a military official said Wednesday.

The attack occurred in the South Waziristan tribal area, once the main stronghold for the Pakistani Taliban, and was a reminder of the threat posed by insurgents despite numerous military offensives against them.

The military launched a large offensive against militants there in 2009, but insurgents still operate in the area and periodically stage attacks.

In addition to the nine soldiers killed, several others were wounded in the attack on the post near Ghatbadr village in the Shakai Valley, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. The attack started just before midnight and lasted for several hours, he said.

The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. The group's spokesman, Ahsanullah Ahsan, claimed they killed 12 soldiers and beheaded some of them.

The military has conducted offensives against the Pakistani Taliban in six of the seven areas that make up Pakistan's semiautonomous tribal region **[this “tribal region” is a piece of Afghanistan hacked off by the British Empire in the old days and attached to Pakistan now. T]** along the Afghan border.

[So, what happened here is that Afghans attacked Pakistani occupation troops in another part of Afghanistan. T]

BEEN ON THE JOB WAY TOO LONG: HOME, NOW



Paratroopers from Chosen Company of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry rest towards the end of a helicopter assault mission to improve their biological database, near the town of Ahmad Khel in Afghanistan's Paktiya Province on July 16. Erin Trieb / VII Mentor Program, 22 Aug, 2012, NBC News staff and wire reports.

MILITARY NEWS

“A Key Aspect Of The Revolution Against Syria's Government Has Been Waged

**By Men Who Do Not
Themselves Often Carry Guns”
“A Grass-Roots Effort To Create
The Fighters’ Diverse And
Idiosyncratic Arsenal”
“The Rebels Have Steadily Pursued
Their Own Project, Developing The
Dark Arts Of Weapon-Making With
Surprising Speed”
“It Is Also An Indicator Of Both The
Rebels’ Local Organization And Their
Near Absence Of Outside Logistical
Support”**



Abdul Hakim Yasin, a rebel commander, inspecting a homemade artillery shell. Bryan Denton for The New York Times



August 28, 2012 By C. J. CHIVERS, The New York Times

TAL RIFAAT, Syria —

As the midsummer sun blazed over this partially deserted Syrian city one recent afternoon, two young men appeared in a pickup truck in an alley near several auto repair workshops. Protruding from the truck's bed was a steel pipe about three feet long and two and a half inches wide, resting on a simple frame.

The pipe was not for plumbing.

It was a locally made mortar that had been used in July in the battle for Azaz, a city in northern Syria where antigovernment fighters drove away the army of President Bashar al-Assad.

"Now we have three or four of these, but we need to make more," said Mustafa, one of the men who had assembled the weapons in small machine shops where since last year a key aspect of the revolution against Syria's government has been waged by men who do not themselves often carry guns.

Mustafa's handiwork, which also includes the manufacture of homemade mortar rounds ("We can make, every day, 25 shells," he said), is part of a grass-roots effort to create the fighters' diverse and idiosyncratic arsenal.

That is an essential component of the rebels' survival and their recent successes against the professionally trained military with which they are locked in a struggle for Syria's future.

Working together and at the urging of antigovernment fighters, local businesses and tradesmen have organized into a network engaged in making weapons, in part by delegating different tasks among the various trades.

Some shops concoct explosives and propellants, a job that one organizer, Ahmed Turki, said had best been accomplished by a local painter with experience mixing chemicals.

Others, who have electricians' skills, wire together the circuits for makeshift bombs.

Machinists and metallurgists assemble rockets and mortars, as well as the bodies for mortar and artillery shells or the large cylinders often used to hold the charges in roadside or truck bombs.

(These men also manufacture truck mounts for machine guns captured from government forces; one novel design included using a disc brake from a motorcycle to arrest the movement of the weapon as its operator adjusts the gun's elevation.)

Still others remove the propellant from captured tank and artillery rounds, which is then repurposed in the rebels' arms.

As the forces opposed to Mr. Assad have appealed with little success to the West for weapons and foreign air support, the rebels have steadily pursued their own project, developing the dark arts of weapon-making with surprising speed.

In many ways, the weapons gathered by the uprising here resemble those seen in the insurgencies fought against Western forces by Iraqis, or against Israel by Palestinians.

This is in part, participants in the effort said, because they were able to model their weapons on those used in other Middle Eastern uprisings.

"We copied original Palestinian rockets," said Mr. Turki, who has since designed seven different styles of midrange explosive rockets.

He also drew up plans for a rear-loading, 62-millimeter towed artillery piece that is in development and that was displayed, between tests, to two journalists from The New York Times.

Mixing arms captured from their enemies with arms smuggled across borders, and adding in weapons that the rebels' supporters have made in a constellation of hidden shops, Syria's guerrilla brigades have managed to drive the conventionally equipped Syrian armed forces from areas of the northern countryside and, in certain areas, to put the government to siege.

This shadowy industry — resourceful and effective, but also dangerous — serves as more than a source of supply.

It is also an indicator of both the rebels' local organization and their near absence of outside logistical support.

The rebels' success with makeshift bombs has been well documented, and has been instrumental in denying territory to government troops and to the loyalist militias.

Recent examination of the equipment and interviews with smugglers and laborers who have helped the antigovernment units reveal an even larger, bustling grass-roots arms industry just outside the government's grasp and gaze.

“We were suffering from lack of equipment,” said Mustafa, who, like several men interviewed for this article, asked that his last name not be published for security reasons. “So we began doing our jobs in these ways.”

Mr. Turki organizes tests for weapons that require a degree of consistency and precision, like rockets and mortars, whose ranges must be determined and whose projectiles’ flight should be stabilized by fins or by spin.

The artillery piece he helped move off the drafting board has been fired about 20 times, though its range so far has not been ideal. “We are still working on the shells,” said Badr, who made the weapon with the help of a 15-year-old assistant, Mohammed.

The weapon has been nicknamed “Dadool,” Badr said, Syrian slang for an energetic, overweight man. Asked when the weapon would be ready for use in battle, he nodded toward a milk crate full of locally made shells.

Each had been put together from Chinese-made pipes and fittings, and topped with a threaded fuse body made of cast aluminum.

A simple point-detonating striker had been assembled from a hollow bolt packed with a volatile explosive. This was intended to ignite the projectile’s main charge upon the shell’s impact with the ground.

“With God’s help we will be using these soon,” Badr said.

In addition to such projects, the rebels have acquired many arms and weapons components from smugglers. These include blasting caps for bombs and telephone components used to manufacture remote-control detonators.

And the rebels have been aided, they said, by what once would have seemed an unlikely source: the Pentagon’s distribution of weapons for Iraq’s security forces.

Two days before Mustafa showed his mortar, a Sunni tribesman who used the name Abu Khaled arrived in a truck at a residential compound used as a rebel base. Abu Khaled, who has family members in Anbar Province, Iraq, and in eastern Syria, was a smuggler dropping off arms.

On this day he had three R.P.D. light machine guns, a 60-millimeter mortar, five mortar rounds and a sack of 7.62x54R rifle cartridges.

The rebels said Abu Khaled had been one of their steady suppliers, and had been ferrying in weapons from Iraq since the uprising began last year.

In an interview, Abu Khaled said he acquired his weapons from the Iraqi Army and police officers, who freely sold old stock and weapons provided to them by the United States.

“They sell everything,” he said, referring to what he described as Iraq’s corrupt security forces.

He gestured to the mortar rounds. "I bought these from Shia people who had received them from U.S. troops," he said.

Abdul Hakim Yasin, a rebel commander who received him at the compound, paid him, handing over a thick wad of Syrian pounds.

After a meal shared with the fighters and their commander, Abu Khaled and two men who traveled with him soon departed.

They were equipped with a fresh shopping list, including a request that they buy shoulder-fired, antiaircraft missiles — one class of weapon the rebels routinely say they need, but that cannot be made in garages.

Each man is trying to do his part to realize the same goal, Abu Khaled said. "We will never enjoy eating," he said, "or sleeping, or drinking, or living life like humans, until this regime falls."



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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

The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.

-- Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"

The past year – every single day of it – has had its consequences. In the obscure depths of society, an imperceptible molecular process has been occurring irreversibly, like the flow of time, a process of accumulating discontent, bitterness, and revolutionary energy.

-- Leon Trotsky, “Up To The Ninth Of January”

OBEDIENCE



Photo by Mike Hastie, Army Medic Vietnam: Arlington West in Santa Monica, Calif. August 19, 2012

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: August 29, 2012
Subject: OBEY

OBEDIENCE

Those who control the present control the past,
and those who control the past control the future.
George Orwell
1984

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

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

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

Mission Accomplished: Soldier Screws Up PowerPoint Slide, Ends War in Afghanistan



June 25, 2012 by ArmyJ, The Duffle Blog

Kabul, Afghanistan –

Last night at 2140 Afghan local time, outgoing ISAF Joint Command (IJC) leader Lt. Gen. Curtis Scapparotti announced to assembled press and senior military officials that the war in Afghanistan was over.

Amid streamers, fireworks, and an enormous MISSION ACCOMPLISHED banner — reminiscent of President Bush’s now infamous speech on the deck of an aircraft carrier shortly after the invasion of Iraq — the General smiled for the cameras and spoke of victory.

“I just gotta say, this is a great day for the US Military, and our country as a whole,” said General Scapparotti.

Soldiers mobbed Dining Facilities (DFACs) across the war-torn nation in search of non-alcoholic beer to celebrate the historic event, while back on the home-front, millions of citizens took to the streets in thousands of impromptu “victory parties.”

The cause for all of the celebration lies in the assessment slide at the center of the main briefing screen in the Kabul IJC — headquarters for the entire war effort.

It shows a map of Afghanistan, with a block next to each Province, indicating the progress in that particular region. For the first time in the history of the now 11 year war, all blocks are colored green.

The General was asked about his feelings on the slide after the press conference.

“I’m not going to lie to you, I thought we were pretty screwed here.

"I mean, we're losing one, maybe two soldiers every single day, spending almost a trillion dollars to keep the most corrupt government on earth in power, and indiscriminately killing civilians by the dozen," he says, shaking his head, as if trying to clear a bad memory.

"Then this morning I wake up and receive my morning update brief, just like any other day, but then I saw this slide. It hasn't changed in so long that we usually just flip right past it. I was actually saying 'Next Slide' when I looked again and saw those beautiful green blocks! Then I thought to myself, thank God! It's finally over!"

Reporters then asked the General what he planned to do next, now that the eleven-year Afghan war was coming to a close. He laughed, saying, "What the hell do you think I'm gonna do? Get the fuck out of here and take my ass to Disneyland."

At the center of this rapid change of fortune for the US war effort in the country is Specialist Mario Flores, attached to the 21st Civil Affairs BDE, currently deployed to Camp Julien in Kabul.

We tracked down the young soldier and asked him about the now famous briefing slide.

"Well, the other night it was late and I got handed this tasker.

"Usually my LT comes in and does the slide, which we then send over to the IJC for the morning brief, but he forgot to come back to work after crashing in the CHU [container housing unit] of this interpreter chick that he's been banging. At first I was worried about having to do it myself, but I figured nothing ever changes here, so why worry about it. But then I saw that the blocks in the assessment were all red. I mean look at this place."

The Specialist waves his hands, taking in the burnt out buildings, the stench of human waste in the air, and the incessant calls to prayer coming over the scratchy loudspeakers that are located throughout the capital in the thousands.

"Of course it was red. But I didn't want everyone to think this was a complete waste of time. So I decided to change the slides to yellow. I figured what's the harm?"

"I mean there's no real difference. Shit's still fucked up, but at least it looks like we're doing something."

Then the young man sighed. "That's how it started. Turns out my monitor's color display was fucked up, so I actually changed the slides to green. And-well, you guys know the rest." The quiet young soldier smiles and lights a cigarette.

When asked whether he would alert his chain-of-command to the discrepancy, Flores is hesitant.

"The fuck I will! I'm already scheduled on the Freedom Bird flying out this Saturday. Let the brass figure it out later."

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**The Heroic Zionist Army Makes
War On “Our Water Cisterns, Two
Caves, Two Houses And Six
Stables” In Occupied Palestine:
“Can You Live Without Water?”**

“What Can We Drink?”

**“They Left The Kids Sitting Under The
Sun, The Sheep In The Field. Where Will
We Sleep Tonight?”**



Palestinian children in front of their destroyed home in Zenuta, August 28 2012
(Operation Dove)



Israeli bulldozers demolish water cistern in Zenuta August 28, 2012 (Operation Dove)

August 28, 2012 By Sean O'Neill, +972 Magazine

Zenuta, West Bank – At around 10 a.m. on Tuesday, a group of Palestinians from the village of Zenuta watched from across a valley in the South Hebron Hills as two Israeli army bulldozers suddenly appeared and destroyed their village's water cisterns, cave dwellings and stables. The village, divided by a valley, is just 3 kilometers from the Green Line, at the southern tip of the West Bank.

The bulldozers in Zenuta were accompanied by five army jeeps, three vehicles from the Israeli Civil Administration, and a charter bus of Israeli soldiers, trying to keep activists and members of the press from entering the village.

A group of about 20-25 Palestinian men, women, and children who were there at the time sat in front of one of the bulldozers in an effort to stop them. They were quickly removed, however, by the army and the destruction commenced.

In total, four water cisterns, two caves, two houses and six stables were destroyed. Zenuta is a small village of seven families with a herd of 400 sheep.

The army destroyed the houses of two families, each with seven children, as well as six stables holding sheep.

Perhaps most devastating of all in a region starved for water, the army bulldozed the village's cisterns, holding water collected from winter rains.

The cisterns cost NIS 15,000 each, an incredible toll amounting to about a year and half's wages for the average Palestinian worker in the area.

The cisterns had been filled with water after a winter that brought the best rainfall in at least 10 years, according to residents of the area.

Now two young boys walked around with the only two bottles of water left in the village offering it to visitors.

Mohammed Khaled Samamry, the owner of one of the houses destroyed, was indignant. "Can you live without water?" he asked, his hand trembling slightly with frustration.

"What can we do without water? What can we drink? You see what they do to us, the Israelis? They left the kids sitting under the sun, the sheep in the field. Where will we sleep tonight?"

A handful of children sat quietly, shocked and sad, in the midst of twisted metal rods and pots and pans scattered on the ground. The sheep wandered aimlessly in a field, nibbling at the straw.

According to Israeli activists, three tents were also destroyed Tuesday morning in Susya, a nearby village that is under threat of demolition. The tents were built by the UN's OCHA department, and were destroyed by the army once before, last November.

The destruction comes in the midst of a wider threat to the villages in this region.

In July, Israel issued orders to wipe out the nearby villages of Jinba, Farkheti, Majaz, Sfai, Khoruba, Tabban, Mirkez, and Halawah.

Demolition orders have also been issued for structures in the villages of Mufagara and Tuba.

In all, over 1,500 residents are at risk of losing their homes.

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

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

“Russell ‘Maroon’ Shoats Has Been Kept In Solitary Confinement In The State Of Pennsylvania For 30 Years After Being Elected President Of The Prison-Approved Lifers’ Association”

“Despite Not Having Violated Prison Rules In More Than Two Decades, State Prison Officials Refuse To Release Him Into The General Prison Population”

10 Aug 2012 By Kanya D'Almeida & Bret Grote, Al Jazeera [Excerpts]

"The torture technicians who developed the paradigm used in (prisons) 'control units' realised that they not only had to separate those with leadership qualities, but also break those individuals' minds and bodies and keep them separated until they are dead." -

Russell "Maroon" Shoats

Russell "Maroon" Shoats has been kept in solitary confinement in the state of Pennsylvania for 30 years after being elected president of the prison-approved Lifers' Association. He was initially convicted for his alleged role in an attack authorities claim was carried out by militant black activists on the Fairmont Park Police Station in Philadelphia that left a park sergeant dead.

Despite not having violated prison rules in more than two decades, state prison officials refuse to release him into the general prison population.

Russell's family and supporters claim that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) has unlawfully altered the consequences of his criminal conviction, sentencing him to die in solitary confinement - a death imposed by decades of no-touch torture.

The severity of the conditions he is subjected to and the extraordinary length of time they have been imposed for has sparked an international campaign to release him from solitary confinement - a campaign that has quickly attracted the support of leading human rights legal organisations, such as the Centre for Constitutional Rights and the National Lawyers Guild.

While the state of Pennsylvania has remained unmoved in this matter so far, some in the US government are finally catching on.

Decades after rights activists first began to refer to the practice of solitary confinement as "torture", the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on the constitution, civil rights and human rights held a hearing on June 19 to "reassess" the fiscal, security and human costs of locking prisoners into tiny, windowless cells for 23 hours a day.

The hearing opened a spate of debate: with newspapers in Los Angeles, New York, Washington DC, Tennessee, Pittsburgh, Ohio and elsewhere seizing the occasion to denounce the practice as "torture" and call for a reversal of a 30-year trend that has shattered - at a minimum - tens of thousands of people's lives inside the vast US prison archipelago.

But as happens with virtually all prison-related stories in the US mainstream media, the two most important words were left unprinted, unuttered: race and revolution.

Any discussion on solitary confinement begins and ends with a number: a prisoner is kept in his or her cell 23 or 24 hours per day, allowed three showers every week and served three meals a day.

According to a report by UN torture rapporteur Mendez, prisoners should not be held in isolation for more than 15 days at a stretch. But in the US, it is typical for hundreds of

thousands of prisoners to pass in and out of solitary confinement for 30 or 60 days at a time each year.

Human Rights Watch estimated that there were approximately 20,000 prisoners being held in Supermax prisons, which are entire facilities dedicated to solitary confinement or near-solitary. It is estimated that at least 80,000 men, women and even children are being held in solitary confinement on any given day in US jails and prisons.

Unknown thousands have spent years and, in some cases, decades in such isolation, including more than 500 prisoners held in California's Pelican Bay state prison for ten years or more.

Perhaps the most notorious case of all is that of the Angola 3, three Black Panthers who have been held in solitary confinement in Louisiana for more than 100 years between the three of them.

While Robert King was released after 29 years in solitary, his comrades - Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace - recently began their 40th years in solitary confinement, despite an ongoing lawsuit challenging their isolation and a growing international movement for their freedom that has been supported by Amnesty International.

But all these numbers fail to mention what Robert Saleem Holbrook, who was sentenced to life without parole as a 16-year-old juvenile and has now spent the majority of his life behind bars, pointed out: "Given the control units' track record in driving men crazy, it is not surprising that the majority of prisoners sent into it are either politically conscious prisoners, prison lawyers, or rebellious young prisoners. It is this class of prisoners that occupies the control units in prison systems across the United States."

Holbrook's observation is anything but surprising to those familiar with the routine violations of prisoners' human rights within US jails and prisons.

The prison discipline study, a mass national survey assessing formal and informal punitive practices in US prisons conducted in 1989, concluded that "solitary confinement, loss of privileges, physical beatings" and other forms of deprivation and harassment were "common disciplinary practices" that were "rendered routinely, capriciously and brutally" in maximum-security US prisons.

The study also noted receiving "hundreds of comments from prisoners" explaining that jailhouse lawyers who file grievances and lawsuits about abuse and poor conditions were the most frequently targeted. Black prisoners and the mentally ill were also targeted for especially harsh treatment.

This "pattern of guard brutality" was "consistent with the vast and varied body of post-war literature, demonstrating that guard use of physical coercion is highly structured and deeply entrenched in the guard subculture".

But while broad patterns can be discerned, these are the numbers that are missing: how many of those in solitary confinement are black?

How many are self-taught lawyers, educators or political activists? How many initiated hunger strikes, which have long been anathema to the prison administration?

How many were caught up in the FBI-organised dragnet that hauled thousands of community leaders, activists and thinkers into the maws of the US "justice" system during the Black liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s?

Former Warden of United States Penitentiary Marion, the prototype of modern supermax-style solitary confinement, Ralph Arons, has stated: "The purpose of the Marion Control Unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in the society at large."

One of these revolutionaries is Russell "Maroon" Shoats, the founder of the Black Unity Council, which later merged with the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party. He was first jailed in early 1970.

Hailing from the gang-war-torn streets of West Philadelphia, Shoats escaped twice from prison system, first from Huntingdon state prison in September 1977 and then again in March 1980.

Shoats' escapes - the first of which lasted a full 27 days, despite a massive national search complete with helicopters, dogs and vigilante groups from predominantly white communities surrounding the prison - earned him the nickname "Maroon", in honour of slaves who broke away from plantations in Surinam, Guyana and later Jamaica, Brazil and other colonies and established sovereign communities on the outskirts of the white settler zones.

Still, it was not until Shoats was elected president of the prison-approved Lifers' Organisation in 1982 - the closest thing to a union for inmates, through which they demanded basic rights such as proper visiting hours, access to legal documents and healthier food - that the prison system decided he was a "threat" to administrative stability and placed him in solitary confinement.

For the past 30 years, Maroon has been transferred from one "torture chamber" to another, where his best efforts to interact with his fellow prisoners or resurrect his old study sessions for the younger generation are thwarted at every turn.

In 2006, the US had an incarceration rate for black males that was more than five-and-a-half times greater than that of South Africa at the end of the apartheid era in 1993.

Yet most mainstream authorities on the prison system in the US - such as the eminent scholar Michelle Alexander, whose book *The New Jim Crow* suggests that the prison system is racially "biased" - do not come close to touching on the phenomenon of political prisoners, let alone on the inmates who take up the cudgels on behalf of their fellow detainees and attempt to carve out niches of justice in a massive chamber of terror.

The discussion of solitary confinement as a violation of a basic human right comes five decades after Malcolm X first began to preach that black people in America should take their grievances not to the US Supreme Court, but to the United Nations, to appeal not for civil rights, as white bourgeois parlance would have it, but for basic human rights, as a colonised people.

As a black revolutionary, Malcolm X's words were largely painted over by mainstream historians. But if the struggle to end inhumane treatment inside prisoners is to become anything more than a largely apolitical movement for so-called "civil rights", it must put two long-ignored points back on the agenda: race and revolution.



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