

Military Resistance 1015



03 September, 2012 Charlotte, North Carolina. Tom Pennington/Getty Images/AFP

**“Mouton Brought An Open Mind
To Working With The Afghan
Colonel”**

**Less Than Two Months Later,
Suspicious Arose Among U.S.
Officers That Wasil Had Ties To
The Taliban:**

**“Wasil, 47, Is Suspected Of Tipping
Off Militants To U.S. Troop
Movements, Releasing Detainees In
Exchange For Bribes And Selling
Weapons To Insurgents”
“He And Members Of His Command Staff
Also Appear To Have Pocketed The
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Supplies Allocated For Troops”**

Wasil's alleged misdeeds include divulging U.S. troop movements to a retired Afghan army commander who consorts with local Taliban leaders.

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September 3, 2012 By Martin Kuz, Stars and Stripes

MUQUR, Afghanistan — The words returned to Lt. Col. Daniel Mouton months later, freighted with a new and troubling connotation.

“Good people come to Muqur, but good people don’t leave,” Afghan Col. Mohammad Wasil told him this past spring, during one of their earliest conversations.

“It is impossible to stay clean in Muqur.”

At the time, Mouton interpreted Wasil’s comment as an indictment of this farming village in the eastern province of Ghazni, where the Taliban remains entrenched, imposing its authority through bribery, coercion and murder.

By July, deep into a corruption investigation of Wasil and several of his senior officers, Mouton believed the remark was something closer to an admission.

“I realized Col. Wasil could have been talking about himself,” he said.

Wasil and Mouton first met after the 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment deployed to southern Ghazni in March. Along with Mouton, a senior combat adviser assigned to the unit, two of its companies moved into a base in Muqur. The outpost doubles as the headquarters of an Afghan army battalion, which was then under Wasil’s command.

Mouton brought an open mind to working with the Afghan colonel.

Less than two months later, after suspicions arose among U.S. officers that Wasil had ties to the Taliban, Mouton was investigating him.

In the ensuing weeks, Mouton uncovered a raft of alleged offenses that suggested a man with a dual identity: the battalion commander as crime boss.

Wasil, 47, is suspected of tipping off militants to U.S. troop movements, releasing detainees in exchange for bribes and selling weapons to insurgents. He and members of his command staff also appear to have pocketed the wages of Afghan soldiers, sold supplies allocated for troops and extorted subcontractors who worked on the base.

Mouton turned over his findings and the investigation to Afghan officials last month. He held on to his scorn for Wasil.

"I really loathe him," said Mouton, 40, of Lafayette, La. "He's the antithesis of our Army values."

The scandal reveals at once the culture of graft that plagues the Afghan military and the reluctance of its leaders to crack down on misconduct.

An Army official with the U.S. command in eastern Afghanistan estimates that, in the 14-province region, there are more than 50 corruption cases involving high-ranking Afghan officers.

"The corruption is embedded like a tumor, and it isn't easy to remove," said Lt. Col. James Salome, commander of the 1-504, referring to efforts by some Afghan officials to stymie the Wasil investigation.

Afghan authorities arrested Wasil after prodding by Salome and Mouton.

Yet, despite losing his post, he could take charge of another battalion.

Salome worries that Afghan troops, who are struggling as they inherit the country's lead security role from U.S. forces, will grow jaded unless their superiors pursue reform.

"It's not just about stealing," said Salome, 40, of Clarksburg, N.J. "The bigger problem is that you have these soldiers — young men — who are willing to die for their country, but they can see that not all of their leaders are equipped to lead them."

The poor example offered by senior officers could spawn another generation of corruption, a dispiriting prospect in a country riven by war since 1979.

"If these (younger) guys see bad behavior go unpunished, what can you expect to happen when they're eventually in charge?" said Capt. Caleb Ling, who commands the 1-504's Company C based at Muqr. "They'll do the same thing, and they'll be just as easy for the Taliban or whoever to influence."

“They Told Us Everyone Had Known For Three Days We Were Coming”

On a morning in May, before the sun breached the horizon, U.S. and Afghan troops departed Combat Outpost Muqur to begin a three-day mission. They traveled to a nearby village that, like much of southern Ghazni, received scarce attention from the Polish military during the four years its forces occupied the area before handing over control to the 1-504.

The soldiers split their time between building a security outpost and combing the village for insurgents. More than one resident explained why they found none.

“They told us everyone had known for three days we were coming,” said Ling, 27, of Charleston, S.C.

The timing sharpened doubts about Wasil — U.S. officers had informed him of the mission three days earlier.

They suspected that he or someone in his inner circle leaked the details to a Taliban contact.

Graft pervades the Afghan military, a circumstance widely recognized by U.S. commanders here and one that, to varying degrees, they consider a cultural norm.

In most cases, they avoid intervening. The approach is born of pragmatism — too much corruption, too little manpower — and the notion that, as much as possible, Afghan security forces should police their own.

U.S. soldiers noticed soon after occupying COP Muqur in March that the Afghan battalion lacked sufficient ammunition, fuel and food. Though they speculated that Wasil might be hoarding or selling supplies, they considered the matter better left to Afghan officials.

But his apparent disclosure of a mission to the enemy posed an explicit threat to U.S. troops. Salome directed Mouton, a former aide-de-camp to Gen. David Petraeus, to launch an investigation.

Mouton spoke with Afghan officers and soldiers, subcontractors on the base and public officials and villagers in Muqur. The sources, coupled with additional evidence assembled by the 1-504’s command staff, implicated Wasil and more than a half-dozen senior officers in a crime ring linked to the Taliban.

“He and his behavior are utterly unforgivable,” Mouton said.

Wasil’s alleged misdeeds include divulging U.S. troop movements to a retired Afghan army commander who consorts with local Taliban leaders.

The information likely enabled militants to evade capture during the U.S.-Afghan mission in May, and may have aided their planning of attacks on American soldiers during the previous two months.

“U.S. Officials Assert That Wasil And His Officers, Working Through Intermediaries, Further Abetted Insurgents By Selling Them Hundreds Of Automatic Rifles”

The cabal appears to have sold new guns intended for the battalion and weapons that Afghan soldiers had confiscated from militants.

Wasil also ordered the release of at least 10 suspected insurgents detained by American troops and placed in Afghan custody, according to Mouton.

Wasil apparently granted their liberty for a price. In one reported instance, he received 2 million Pakistani rupees — roughly \$21,000 — to free a Taliban operative.

Other alleged schemes of Wasil and his collaborators exploited Afghan subcontractors and soldiers at COP Muqur.

Construction crews needed to drive through the base while building a new headquarters complex for the Afghan battalion, a \$52 million project managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Workers claimed that Wasil's officers charged \$1,000 for each truckload of gravel hauled out, and demanded a \$60,000 “security fee” from one company.

Afghan troops endured shortages of ammunition, fuel and food as Wasil and his cohorts allegedly siphoned supplies that they later sold to villagers, some of whom had ties to militants.

Low-ranking soldiers suffered added hardship, with the colonel and his senior officers forcing them to take extended leave and skimming their wages in the meantime, according to Mouton.

“I feel sorry for them.”

Mouton described Wasil as an unimposing man with a subdued manner who, during his time at COP Muqur, complained of persistent headaches and dizziness. In the midst of his investigation, Mouton brought Wasil to a medical clinic at a larger U.S. base a few miles away.

A blood test showed Wasil's system contained traces of cocaine, barbiturates, opiates and methadone.

“It's not surprising he wasn't feeling well,” Mouton said.

His health presumably didn't improve when Afghan officials, armed with the results of the U.S. investigation, detained Wasil a few weeks later.

If surprised by his arrest, Wasil retained his composure, perhaps confident he could atone for his apparent crimes with a refund. When Afghan authorities detailed the charges against him, he reportedly replied, “If there is a problem, I can pay it all back.”

The headquarters of his unit's brigade is located on a coalition base in the city of Ghazni, 60 miles north of Muqur.

Held there in what Mouton likened to a "white-collar facility," Wasil was provided a cellphone and allowed visitors.

The soft treatment bothered Mouton less than the efforts of some Afghan officials to prevent Wasil's case from moving forward.

The Afghan military, on the premise of corroborating the allegations of U.S. officials, dispatched no fewer than three teams of investigators to COP Muqur.

Their work served mostly to stall the judicial process and intimidate sources, with one group attempting to expose soldiers who talked to Mouton.

The tactics help explain the U.S. military's limited appetite for corruption cases targeting Afghan officers. "They're complicated, often sordid and require a lot of follow-up," Mouton said.

Afghan officials have told Mouton and Salome that Wasil will not return to his old battalion. The fate of the other officers implicated in the case remains unclear.

The possibility exists that Wasil will assume control of another unit, and even with the arrival of a new commander at COP Muqur, the fallout from Wasil's regime lingers for the Afghan troops there.

"We have had a lot of problems, and some of the soldiers are angry," said Capt. Safiullah Stankakai, 29, a platoon leader. "We don't know if it was all because of Col. Wasil or because of the people around him. There is a lot of confusion for us."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation "Servicemember" Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

September 3, 2012 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following an improvised explosive device attack in southern Afghanistan, Sept. 3

Green Beret From Mesquite Dies In Afghanistan Combat

September 4, 2012 by TERESA WOODARD, WFAA

MESQUITE, Texas -- U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jeremie Border of Mesquite has died in combat in Afghanistan.

The Mesquite High School and McMurry University football standout is being called a hero by the people who watched him grow up.

The moment you pull up in front of Border's childhood home, you know. The flags and ribbons give it away.

This is a soldier's home.

Neighbor John Counts described Border in simple but powerful terms: "A man. A man of honor."

He and others best remember him as a boy — a football player at Mesquite High School, where they said he was a member of the 2001 state championship team which recorded a perfect 15-0 season.

Border went on to play college football for four years at McMurry University in Abilene.

Then he joined the Army, became a staff sergeant, and a Green Beret.

Border was killed Saturday in Afghanistan. His body arrived Monday at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

"To go over there — for himself, his family, the country — I don't know what else you can say about a man like that. That's top of the list," Counts said.

The flags and signs have been on display at Border's home for many months. Yellow ribbons have been tied around the trees there, too.

Neighbor Leonard Campos has taken it upon himself to make sure those symbols are treated with dignity.

"I came home one day and noticed it was on the ground, and I know what it means," he said. "I tied it back up out of respect for the soldier who was fighting for us."

Now, that soldier is gone. "He died doing what he loved — serving his country," Campos said, choking up when thinking about what Border has done for America.

"I wish I could do something to bring him back, but I know I can't," he said. "The good Lord done this. But I know one thing: I know where he's at. He's in a better place than we are."

McMurry University released a statement saying the campus extended heartfelt prayers and condolences to Border's family.

He graduated from McMurry in 2006. In addition to playing football, he was a member of the Servant Leadership program and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He was also a Resident Assistant and was named to Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.

The school will honor Staff Sgt. Border during its Fall 2012 Convocation at 11 a.m. Tuesday.

Sgt. Louis R. Torres Of Oberlin Dies Of Wounds Suffered In Afghanistan



Sgt. Louis R. Torres, 23, of Oberlin, who died Wednesday in San Antonio, Texas, after suffering wounds on Aug. 6 in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

August 24, 2012 By Tonya Sams, The Plain Dealer

OBERLIN, Ohio — A 23-year-old soldier from Oberlin died Wednesday in San Antonio, Texas, after being injured Aug. 6 while on duty in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Sgt. Louis R. Torres was injured by “an enemy improvised explosive device,” according to a news release from the Department of Defense.

“He was very outgoing, very much a leader,” said his mother, Armanda Ellis. “He loved fighting for his country.”

The decorated soldier joined the Army in June 2008 after graduating from Lorain County Joint Vocation School in Oberlin. While at JVS he played football and took classes in law enforcement and security.

"I knew something was up," said Ellis, referring to his interest in the military while in high school. "During his 12th-grade year, I kept getting calls from the Army and Marines. I kept hanging up on them."

Ellis remembers that even as a 5- or 6-year-old Torres loved to play with military men. He was also a history buff, sitting in front of the television watching the History Channel, learning about various wars and battles.

Two weeks after graduating, Torres told his mother that he needed his birth certificate because he had joined the Army.

Torres immediately started training at Fort Benning in Georgia. By October 2008 he was stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

He was deployed to Iraq from August 2009 from June 2010. He deployed with his brigade to Afghanistan last December, according to Department of Defense.

He had just more than a month remaining on his tour.

Torres had just visited his family in Oberlin at the end of June. He returned to duty July 2, a few days before his birthday on July 5.

Ellis said that her other son, Alberto Torres, 24, who was also stationed in Afghanistan, was told by officials that his brother had been injured. He accompanied Torres to Germany before being transferred to San Antonio. Military officials awarded Louis Torres a Purple Heart after he arrived in San Antonio. He had already won a number of honors, including Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

"He was a leader, not a follower," his mother said. "He was very kind-hearted and a great son. He was always thinking of me. He made sure that I was on Facebook so he could tell me Happy Mother's Day and Valentine's Day."

He wanted to wait before starting a family.

"He was trying to do it right," his mother said.

Besides his mother, older brother Alberto and father Alberto Torres Sr., he also is survived by his brother, Andre Ellis, 18, and a sister, Ayanna Morrison, 14.

A memorial service will be held at the hospital in San Antonio. He should return to Oberlin next week with services to possibly be held Friday, Aug. 31.

"I'm very proud of him," said Ellis. "He was so dedicated. He was good at what he did."

Puerto Rican Soldier Among Casualties Of Black Hawk Crash

August 22, 2012 Puerto Rico Report

A Black Hawk crash this weekend left 11 dead, including a serviceman from Puerto Rico, Sgt. Luis Galbreath of San Juan. Sgt. Galbreath was 41 and a member of 25th Infantry Division's 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. Three of the eleven were U.S. soldiers.

According to Stars & Stripes, the Taliban took credit, but NATO is still investigating the cause of the crash. While the Taliban claimed to have shot down the helicopter during a conflict with insurgents, initial reports say that the Black Hawk was not in fact shot down.

Galbreath was married with three children.

He was responsible for helicopter repair and had been doing this essential work since 2003. This was his second deployment.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

Australian Troops Execute Civilian Construction Supervisors

September 4, 2012 Dylan Welch, Rory Callinan; Fairfax Media

The Defence Minister, Stephen Smith, has rejected angry claims by the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, that an Australian raid that resulted in the deaths of two Afghan villagers was unauthorised.

The raid, at a mosque in the village of Sula, near Oruzgan's capital, Tarin Kowt, came 48 hours after three Australian soldiers were shot dead by a rogue Afghan soldier, Hekmatullah, in the latest in a steadily increasing number of so-called "green-on-blue" attacks.

Villagers said Australian and Afghan soldiers arrived at the mosque during evening prayers on Friday. They said that as people left the mosque at about 8pm they were detained by the troops.

Twelve people were bound and had hoods placed over their heads.

Eleven of those detained, including a woman, were later released. The one man the Australians took for questioning was later alleged by an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) spokesman to be a bomb placer who was involved in helping Sergeant Hekmatullah escape.

In the next few minutes, two men were shot dead by the Australian and Afghan soldiers. They were construction overseer Haji Raz Mohammad Akhund, believed to be aged between 50 and 70, and his relative Abdul Jalil Akhund, aged about 30.

The villagers said the men were from another village but had come to Sula to supervise the building of a mosque.

Residents said that while they were hiding in their houses they heard the sound of gunshots from the mosque.

When they went outside, they saw Abdul Jalil's corpse lying in front of the mosque. Raz Mohammad's body was a few metres away in the dirt.

Many residents expressed shock and sadness at the fact the two men had been killed and said they did not believe the men had any connection to Sergeant Hekmatullah.

MILITARY NEWS

“Syrian Rebels Detonate Bombs Inside The Syrian Army’s General Staff Headquarters”

“Four People Were Wounded”

“The Operation Targeted Officers In The Assad Army Who Have Been Planning And Giving The Go Ahead For The Massacres Against The Syrian People”

Sep 3, 2012 Reuters

Syrian rebels planted bombs inside the Syrian army's General Staff headquarters in central Damascus on Sunday as President Bashar al-Assad's forces bulldozed buildings to the ground in parts of the capital that have backed the uprising.

Syrian state television said four people were wounded in what it called a terrorist attack on the General Staff compound in the highly guarded Abu Rummaneh district, where another bomb attack killed four of Assad's top lieutenants two months ago.

"The operation targeted officers in the Assad army who have been planning and giving the go ahead for the massacres against the Syrian people," said a video statement by the Grandsons of the Prophet brigade, a division of the Free Syrian Army.

"Bombs were planted inside the army headquarters," said the video statement, which was broadcast on Arab satellite channels.

But as the rebels demonstrated they could strike at the heart of the security apparatus, residents said army bulldozers moved on al-Zayat and Farouk neighborhoods to the west, and destroyed at least 20 buildings in the Sunni Muslim areas that have sheltered the insurgents.

In the eastern Damascus neighborhood of Hazza, footage taken by activists on Sunday showed several buildings on fire. Opposition sources said the army had earlier stormed the area and executed 27 young men.

"Any youth of fighting age seems to have been captured and killed," said activist Obadah al-Haj, who had fled the area.

Activist video footage from the area showed a young man lying dead beside a yellow taxi, shot in the face. Another dead youth was in the driver seat, blood covering his head and chest.

Manning's Lawyer Demands 7 Years Cut From Sentence Due To Mistreatment At Quantico: "Quantico Staffers Simply Stripped Manning Naked And Kept Him Confined To A Small, Dark Space Because, In Their Own Words — According To One Internal Email Quoted By Coombs — They 'Felt Like Being Dicks'"



www.bradleymanning

05 September, 2012 TV-Novosti

The attorney for Bradley Manning is asking a military court to remove at least seven years from any term his client is sentenced to if found guilty for crimes relating to his alleged role with WikiLeaks.

David E. Coombs, the civilian lawyer for US Army Private First Class Bradley Manning, has released a 28-page supplement for the defense's case, and in it he accounts for several incidents of malfeasance and misconduct carried out by the US military and staffers at the Quantico Brig in Northern Virginia at the hands of his client.

PFC Manning, 24, is accused of contributing hundreds of thousands of sensitive military documents to the WikiLeaks whistleblower site, which the government claims in turn directly jeopardized the security of the United States.

How it did as much, however, remains up for discussion, and the government has, on the record, refused to disclose just how damaging Manning's alleged crimes have been.

Because PFC Manning was subjected to a series of abuses identified by Coombs in the supplement, he asks that the court credit his client with 10 days of time-served for every one day spent at Quantico, a deal that would remove as much as seven years off of any sentence for Manning.

Coombs had originally asked for the military to entirely drop their case, *United States v PFC Manning*, on the basis that his client was cruelly imprisoned and subjected to torturous conditions during his time at Quantico and the months after. Taking into account all time spent in custody so far, including his current imprisonment in Ft. Leavenworth, KS, PFC Manning has been behind bars for over 800 days.

In this week's supplement, Coombs writes that the 265 days his client spent at Quantico constitutes illegal pretrial punishment in violation of Article 13 of the UCMH, as well as both the Fifth and Eighth Amendments to the US Constitution.

According to the material released this week by Mr. Coombs, the Pentagon staffers who oversaw operations at the Quantico brig where Manning was initially held exercised little to no oversight in how a human being, who hadn't at the time been charged with a crime, was treated at the base, losing both his civil and constitutional rights in the process.

At the root of the problems, writes Coombs, is that the leading official who oversaw the handling of PFC Manning at Quantico had his "orders and directives" handed from "the top of the food chain," resulting in "a culture of indifference for how the confinement conditions were impacting PFC Manning."

"Instead of following the recommendations of their mental health professionals, Quantico officials chose to discount the wisdom of their advice and concentrate more upon any potential negative publicity," Coombs writes. "Even the judge advocates at Quantico abdicated their moral responsibility to speak up when the chain of command was going awry."

"Ultimately, those who should have done something to address PFC Manning's confinement conditions did nothing," the attorney argues.

Instead, writes Coombs, Quantico's management subjected PFC Manning to conditions considered torturous by a United Nation's special rapporteur to ensure that the soldier didn't attempt to take his own life, an option that, while considered unlikely by experts, would have been a PR disaster for the military.

But while physicians suggested that Manning be removed from suicide-watch during his stay at Quantico, "concern over embarrassment" at the top of the pyramid at the brig was instead "adopted by the entire chain of command."

In one example, for instance, Coombs quotes a Defense Department memo where it was decided Manning would be continued a possible suicide case, not from a risk standpoint, "but for security reasons."

"It is clear that the Brig was risk averse to the point of absurdity," Coombs writes, insisting, "if they could have put PFC Manning in a strait-jacket for nine months without calling undue attention to themselves, they would have."

Instead, though, Quantico staffers simply stripped Manning naked and kept him confined to a small, dark space because, in their own words — according to one internal email quoted by Coombs — they "felt like being dicks."

In another email quoted by Coombs, one Quantico staffer to another leaves instructions for watching over Manning, writing, "You should be taking his panties right before he lays down."

"This sort of communication is clearly not appropriate in a professional setting.

However, it reflects the culture at Quantico — a culture where "boys will be boys" and nobody is held to account for their conduct," writes Coombs.

“The fact that a senior enlisted would refer to a detainee’s undergarments as ‘panties’ in correspondence with four subordinates demonstrates not only incredibly poor judgment, but also a culture where anything goes,” writes Coombs.

The defense also alleges that the comment is an example of the blatant intolerance at the Brig which could have targeted Manning, a homosexual.

Pre-trial hearings in the case against PFC Manning will continue next month at Ft. Meade, Maryland.

The actual trial itself is currently slated to run from February through March of next year, during which point Manning will have been held more than 1,000 days in prison.

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.

**“They Aren’t Telling The Truth”
“They Are Minimizing Their Efforts
And Reporting Them As
Thorough”**

**Toxic Aviation Gas And Jet
Propellant “From Air Force Fuel
Depot Has Sunk Into The Aquifer,
Drifting Toward Wells That Help
Supply Albuquerque’s Drinking
Water”**

**“Millions Of Gallons Of Fuel Went
Missing”**



Technician James Baca performs maintenance work at an Albuquerque well near the leak site at Kirtland Air Force Base. (Adolphe Pierre-Louis, Albuquerque Journal / July 11, 2012)

Bruce Thomson, a University of New Mexico engineering professor who chairs a civilian board advising base officials, suspects that the Air Force delayed drilling monitoring wells to the water table because it didn't want to acknowledge the full extent of the problem.

"I don't think that was an oversight," he said.

September 3, 2012 By Michael Haederle, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — As environmental disaster sites go, it doesn't look like much. A scattering of rusting wellhead covers and a machine noisily sucking hydrocarbon vapors from the earth scarcely hint at what has grown into a \$50-million headache.

But nearly 500 feet beneath this spot, a plume of aviation gas and jet propellant that leaked undetected for decades from an Air Force fuel depot has sunk into the aquifer, drifting toward wells that help supply Albuquerque's drinking water.

Base officials acknowledge that millions of gallons of fuel went missing, and although they don't know exactly how close the leading edge of the plume is to the municipal water supply, they insist that there is little likelihood of contamination.

"The Air Force absolutely owns this problem, and we're committed to remediating it," said Col. Jeffrey Lanning, who recently assumed command of the 377th Air Base Wing, which operates Kirtland.

But neighbors are mistrustful, with some accusing the Air Force of soft-pedaling the extent of the leak.

“They aren’t telling the truth,” said Jim McKay, a former software engineer who criticizes the Air Force’s water-monitoring methods. “They aren’t trying to find out what it is. They are minimizing their efforts and reporting them as thorough.”

At a recent community meeting with Lanning, Marian Jordan, president of the Elder Homestead Neighborhood Assn., voiced her worries.

“If it does get into the water, what are we going to do?” she asked. “What are we going to drink? I want to know when you will have a plan, so I can tell the people.”

Lanning assured her that officials were still working on a contingency plan in case the plume reached the city’s drinking water, but added, “I don’t have a date for you.”

Established during World War II, Kirtland is home to Sandia National Laboratories and the Air Force Research Laboratory, a pararescue training school and a large underground nuclear weapons repository.

The problem dates to the late 1950s, when a fuel off-loading facility was built on the sprawling air base bordering Albuquerque’s Southeast Heights neighborhood. Pumps moved fuel from trucks and train cars via an underground pipe to large holding tanks.

At some point the buried pipe started leaking and the volatile fuel seeped deep into the sandy soil.

Estimates range from 8 million to 24 million gallons. No one noticed until 1999, when fuel started pooling on the surface.

The facility was shut down and a handful of monitoring wells were dug to gauge the extent of the problem.

“What we found were holes in those large-bore underground pipes,” said Brent Wilson, the base’s chief civil engineer, while visiting the now-demolished facility in August. “It appeared at that time to be a limited leak localized to this area here.”

The Air Force installed soil vapor extraction units, which pull fuel vapors from the ground and burn them in an internal combustion engine.

In 2007, further testing revealed the fuel plume had reached groundwater and spread more than a mile to the north, across the base boundary.

The biggest concern was a highly toxic chemical called ethylene dibromide. Known as EDB, it was used as an additive in leaded aviation gas until the Air Force switched to unleaded jet fuel the mid-1970s.

The base officials reported this spring that some fuel had dissolved into the aquifer, complicating cleanup efforts.

Bruce Thomson, a University of New Mexico engineering professor who chairs a civilian board advising base officials, suspects that the Air Force delayed drilling monitoring wells to the water table because it didn't want to acknowledge the full extent of the problem.

"I don't think that was an oversight," he said.

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

<p>It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it. -- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers</p>

ISAF Drops Candy To Afghan Children, 51 Killed



May 22, 2012 [late report] by G-Had, The Duffel Blog, Duffel Blog investigative writer Dark Laughter also contributed to this report.

Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan – In a tragic accident earlier today, aircraft belonging to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) inadvertently killed 51 Afghans near the city of Mazar-i-Sharif while attempting to drop candy to a group of children.

According to accounts from both Afghans and international observers, two NATO aircraft, later identified as American C-130s, made a low pass over a village of several hundred Afghans outside the city.

Approximately 1.4 million M&Ms were to be delivered via Container Delivery System in a single package with a weight of 1500 lbs.

Due to a malfunction in the static line, the parachute failed to deploy and the container crashed through the roof of a local school at nearly 100 miles per hour.

Upon impact, the force of the rapidly settling candies caused the sides to explode outward, causing what physics professor Dr. Rosella Schwartz described as, “essentially a 360 degree anti-personnel mine full of chocolate flechettes.”

By “flechettes”, Schwartz is referring to the M&Ms’ candy shells, which shattered and spalled upon entering the bodies of the victims and also caused more numerous and severe secondary injuries.

Dr. Manuel Velez of the Red Cross, one of the first medical personnel at the site of the impact, had a similar assessment of the candy shells’ damage.

“I’ve seen a lot of injuries inflicted on civilians by military ordnance, but this was much worse,” Velez said, stooping to change the bandages on one of the victims while pointing out the many blue, green, and yellow splotches.

“The worst were the peanut M&Ms. The soft chocolate acted as a sabot around the peanuts, so basically these things were candy-coated penetrator rounds.”

ISAF spokesperson Colonel Mark Marshall, who spoke to reporters today at a press conference in Kabul, said the candy drop was only the latest phase of a new operation called “Reese’s for Peaces.”

He added that while ISAF regrets the accidental loss of civilian life, it would not deter them working to relieve the suffering of the Afghan people.

Sources at ISAF headquarters in Kabul said the operation was first proposed by Deputy Commander General Bill Whitehead as a way to help boost the morale of Afghans as western forces began their long-anticipated drawdown.

General Whitehead said he first got the idea after reading a book about the 1948 Berlin Airlift. After finishing their cargo deliveries, American pilots would drop pieces of candy to impoverished children, which earned the United States a lot of good publicity.

“Counterinsurgency is all about winning the hearts and minds of the people,” said General Whitehead, “and as we transition to a much smaller footprint, the Air Force is going to have to take on some of the roles traditionally filled by soldiers, such as handing out candy.”

In early March, General Whitehead gave ISAF the authority to begin planning a series of humanitarian airdrops over population centers in Afghanistan. Operation “Reese’s for Peaces” was launched two weeks later, with MQ-9 Reapers dropping several tons of licorice on Kandahar.

Over the next few weeks, ISAF warplanes dropped tons of assorted chocolates, sweets, and even ice cream over the war-torn country.

Other NATO countries also took part, with French planes dropping bon bons and German planes dropping Bavarian chocolate. The United States, however, is contributing the bulk of the candy being used in the operation.

The incident in Mazar-i-Sharif is unfortunately not the first setback for “Reese’s for Peaces”.

Other blunders included a crate-load of Baby Ruth bars being dropped short of its target on March 19 and plowing into a bus full of madrassa students, killing 22.

On April 27, several Snickers bars hit a wedding party near Kunduz, killing 35.

And on May 8, several packs of Starbursts inadvertently hit an orphanage and killed 8 children and an adorable kitten named Mittens.

Following the press conference, Colonel Marshall tried to exit the podium, but tripped and crashed into a group of civilians, killing 9.

ANNIVERSARIES

September 5, 1917: ***The Palmer Raids Begin*** **16,000 ARRESTED IN CAMPAIGN** **AGAINST RADICALS AND LEFT-** **WING ORGANIZATIONS**



Arrested for “obstructing World War I: “Big Bill” Haywood

Carl Bunin Peace History September 3-9

In 48 coordinated raids across the country, later known as the Palmer Raids, federal agents seized records, destroyed equipment and books, and arrested hundreds of activists involved with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), known fondly as the Wobblies.

Among the arrested was William D. “Big Bill” Haywood, a leader of the IWW, for the “crimes of labor” and “obstructing World War I.”

Spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk

In 1919 Woodrow Wilson appointed A. Mitchell Palmer as his attorney general.

Worried by the revolution that had taken place in Russia, Palmer became convinced that Communist agents were planning to overthrow the American government. His view was

reinforced by the discovery of thirty-eight bombs sent to leading politicians and the Italian anarchist who blew himself up outside Palmer's Washington home.

Palmer recruited John Edgar Hoover as his special assistant and together they used the Espionage Act (1917) and the Sedition Act (1918) to launch a campaign against radicals and left-wing organizations.

A. Mitchell Palmer claimed that Communist agents from Russia were planning to overthrow the American government.

On 7th November, 1919, the second anniversary of the Russian Revolution, over 10,000 suspected communists and anarchists were arrested.

Palmer and Hoover found no evidence of a proposed revolution but large number of these suspects were held without trial for a long time.

The vast majority were eventually released but Emma Goldman and 247 other people, were deported to Russia.

On 2nd January, 1920, another 6,000 were arrested and held without trial.

These raids took place in several cities and became known as the Palmer Raids.

A. Mitchell Palmer and John Edgar Hoover found no evidence of a proposed revolution but large number of these suspects, many of them members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), continued to be held without trial.

When Palmer announced that the communist revolution was likely to take place on 1st May, mass panic took place. In New York, five elected Socialists were expelled from the legislature.

When the May revolution failed to materialize, attitudes towards Palmer began to change and he was criticised for disregarding people's basic civil liberties.

Some of his opponents claimed that Palmer had devised this Red Scare to help him become the Democratic presidential candidate in 1920.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Heroic Zionist Army Defends The Fatherland From Terrorist Sheep: 30 Killed

September 01, 2012 by Saed Bannoura - IMEMC & Agencies

The Quds Press Media Agency reported Sunday that Israeli soldiers, stationed at military towers across the border, opened automatic fire at Palestinian shepherds herding their sheep in central Gaza, killing 30 sheep; the shepherds were not harmed.

The attack took place east of Juhr Ad-Deek town, in central Gaza. The shepherds said that they did not even approach the border fence.

Israeli soldiers repeatedly target Palestinian lands close to the border, and repeatedly opened fire at Palestinian workers, shepherds and farmers leading to dozens of casualties.

[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."]

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

U.S. TROOPS WILL STAY IN AFGHANISTAN UNTIL AT LEAST 2024

SOMEDAY THIS WILL ALL BE YOURS

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Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“A Series Of Illegal, Wildcat Strikes Have Hit South Africa’s Mines, Leaving Political And Industry Leaders—As Well As Police And State Prosecutors—Groping For A Response”

“We Are Being Killed By Our Own People, Oppressed By Our Own Government”

“If You Can’t Trust Your Own President, Who Can You Trust?”



Miners from a Lonmin mine, with supporters, celebrated their release from detention Monday near Pretoria. South Africa’s state prosecutor had charged 270 of the miners with murder but withdrew the charges Sunday. Reuters

September 3, 2012 By DEVON MAYLIE, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

JOHANNESBURG—Security guards at a South African gold mine fired rubber bullets into a crowd of protesters armed with iron rods and sticks, injuring four people and offering another glimpse of the turmoil upending the country's mining industry.

The incident, which took place on Monday at a mine belonging to Gold One International Ltd., 30 miles east of Johannesburg, bore similarities to the clash last month between protesting miners and police that left 34 protesters dead. In that clash, at the Marikana platinum mine of Lonmin PLC, police said armed groups charged them and they reacted in self-defense.

Since then, a series of illegal, wildcat strikes have hit South Africa's mines, leaving political and industry leaders—as well as police and state prosecutors—groping for a response.

The violent protests have rocked the nation's political establishment, with leaders promising better conditions for miners and more scrutiny for mining companies.

On Monday, Gold One said a group of former employees attacked a minibus carrying workers to its mine for the morning shift. Security personnel used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. Police arrived later to fire tear gas at what police estimated were 200 protesters.

Four injured were taken to the hospital. An additional four were arrested for disorderly conduct, according to police spokeswoman Capt. Pinky Tsinyane.

The tensions arising from South Africa's mines reflect broader frustrations at the inequalities that have endured long after white minority rule ended in 1994. Worker anger has focused not only at mining companies, but the politically connected black entrepreneurs who have struck it rich in a new democratic era.

Gold One said Monday's protest stemmed from a June strike which led to the dismissal of many workers. The dismissed workers were joined by workers from a nearby mine previously owned by Aurora Empowerment Systems, which Gold One is in the process of buying.

Aurora was run by former President Nelson Mandela's grandson, Zondwa Mandela, and President Zuma's nephew, Khulubuse Zuma. The company was kicked off the property after it failed to pay workers and bills.

The most recent standoff at Gold One followed a visit on Thursday to the community near the mine by expelled ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema, who was kicked out for sowing divisions within the ruling party. Mr. Malema has threatened to make mines ungovernable, even as he has chastised President Zuma for not doing enough to improve the situation.

“We are being killed by our own people, oppressed by our own government,” he said to roars of approval from the crowd of miners during the visit. “If you can’t trust your own president, who can you trust?”

An emerging union, the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union, has taken advantage of the worker complaints to draw members from the country’s largest mine union, the National Union of Mineworkers.

That battle for members has sparked violent clashes such as those at Lonmin, where a total of 44 people have died, including two policemen. The world’s third-largest platinum producer has suspended production while it tries to coax its miners back.

Since the Lonmin strike began, illegal protests have broken out at Anglo American Platinum Ltd.’s Thembelani mine, when several hundred workers refused to go underground, and one at a mine belonging to Royal Bafokeng Platinum Ltd., which briefly halted operations, in the middle of August.

Most recently, strikes spilled into the gold sector last week. Gold Fields Ltd. said workers at its KDC east mine put down tools amid complaints about local union leadership, and remain on strike.

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**The Big Lie About Police Brutality Is
Claiming It’s Not Rampant:
“Scene After Scene Of Police Beating
The Crap Out Of, And Even Shooting
And Killing Unarmed Or Minimally
Dangerous Students, Women, Old Men
And Crazy People, Many Of Them After
They Have Been Handcuffed And
Checked For Weapons”**



2 September 2012 By Dave Lindorff, Nationofchange.org [Excerpts]

Police brutality is in the news, thanks to the widespread availability of amateur video and the omnipresence of security cameras.

We've seen scene after scene of police beating the crap out of, and even shooting and killing unarmed or minimally dangerous students, women, old men and crazy people, many of them after they have been handcuffed and checked for weapons.

The police brass, and leading politicians who oversee the departments involved, nearly always have the same answer: This is not the norm, these are isolated incidents, police violence is not on the rise.

The thing is, of course, it is on the rise.

Just as the exonerations of supposed murders and rapists are only those where there was DNA available to prove their innocence, while many more are also clearly wrongly facing death or long prison sentences, the scenes of brutality we're seeing on the videos are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg too.

What is different is that we're seeing these things at all.

It used to be that getting videos of police brutality was very rare -- like the taping of the notorious police assault on the prone body of Rodney King by Los Angeles cops during a traffic stop. It just happened that someone with a video camera was at the scene when it occurred.

Nowadays everyone with a cellphone is a potential videographer, so we're seeing more of what really goes on when police make their arrests.

Just check out the latest [video of LAPD officers body slamming a 5'4" nurse](#) (two times!) who had the audacity to get out of her car when they stopped her for talking on her cell phone while driving (this particular video was taken by a surveillance camera at a store focused on the parking lot where police had followed the woman's car).

Note that one of the burly cops slamming this small handcuffed woman to the ground and later fist-bumping to celebrate with his younger partner holds the rank of commander -- he's a 20-year veteran of the LAPD.

Or check out [this video of four LAPD cops on top of a 19-year-old \(black\) student stopped for skateboarding on the wrong side of the street](#). After he was down and handcuffed he was punched in the face by a cop, breaking his nose and cheekbone. This for a very minor offense, not even warranting an arrest, but just a citation.

The thing we need to all recognize is that these videos are just the incidents that have been captured on video. They clearly reflect something that is going on all the time, usually without any video to record it, or often even without any eye witnesses.

Police in too many departments are out of control. Too many departments are allowing their uniformed and armed cops to act as though they are an occupying army.

The attitude of being occupiers and in a state of war with the people being "policed" is enhanced by politicians who call for tough policing, and by the Pentagon, which is handing out military equipment to police like candy to trick-or-treaters. Police are routinely armed with M-16s in their squad cars.

We all saw the result of this kind of militarization of the police in the ease with which police in cities across the country, from New York to Chicago to Los Angeles to Portland and points in between became paramilitary goons in attacking peaceful Occupy Movement protesters with everything from tear gas canisters and rubber bullets to mace or pepper spray aimed point blank into faces.

Or look at what happened when a whacked and sacked employee in New York City staked out a spot near his former employer and executed a supervisor he felt had gotten him fired.

[I] was recently threatened with arrest and jail by a bullying cop from the town of Horsham, Pennsylvania for standing legally on the grass beside the road trying to hitchhike.

I was lied to by the officer, who claimed that hitchhiking is illegal in the state (it's only illegal if you stand on the road and the officer should have known, and surely did know this), which is bad enough, but to be threatened with arrest and jail for something that, even had I been in violation, gets you a citation and which carries a \$35 fine (it's just a summary offense), is simply outrageous.

And suppose I had argued with this officer? He might well have cuffed me and then slammed me into the ground or into the side of his SUV before hauling me in on a charge of resisting arrest, and would anyone have been surprised?

Sadly no. This is law enforcement today in America.

The advent of cameras in the hands of the masses is a good thing (there's a reason why so many cops illegally harass and even arrest or confiscate the cameras or cell phones of those who try to videotape or photograph their

activities, as cops just doing their job should have no fear of cameras), but it won't end the problem of rampant police brutality in America



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