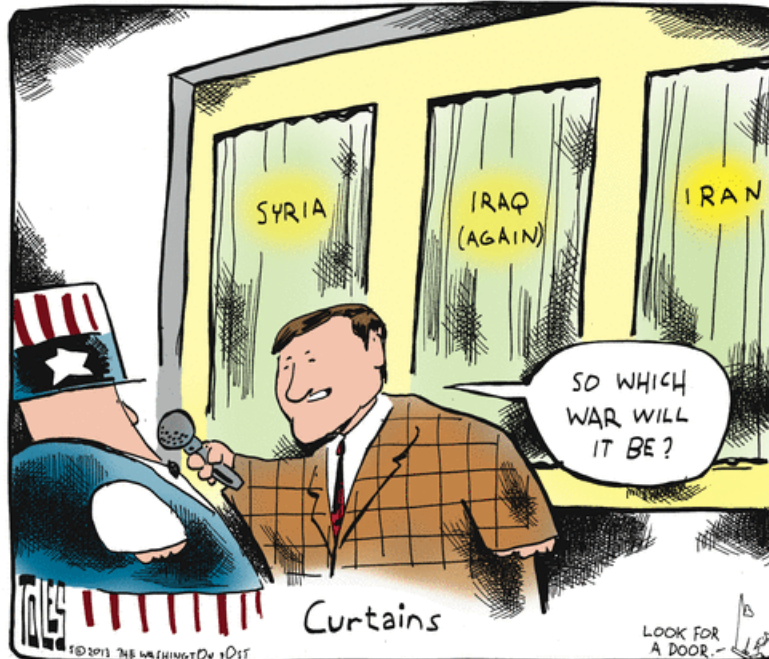


Military Resistance 11E8



“I Felt Betrayed”
Citizen Soldiers Lose Jobs --
U.S. Government Biggest
Offender:
“Government Agencies Account
For About A Third Of The More
Than 15,000 Complaints Filed”

Guard And Reserve Soldiers Come Home To Find That Their Employers Have Given Away Their Jobs: “There’s Nothing That Will Prevent An Employer From Violating Over And Over And Over”



“I felt betrayed,” said Pierre Saint-Fleur, a former Fresno County mental health worker who said he was forced into early retirement after three deployments to Iraq as a military chaplain in the California National Guard. (Tomas Ovalle)

May 5, 2013 By Alexandra Zavis, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

The jobs of the nation’s citizen soldiers are supposed to be safe while they are serving their country: Federal law does not allow employers to penalize service members because of their military duties.

Yet every year, thousands of National Guard and Reserve troops coming home from Afghanistan and elsewhere find they have been replaced, demoted, denied benefits or seniority.

Government agencies are among the most frequent offenders, accounting for about a third of the more than 15,000 complaints filed with federal authorities since the end of September 2001, records show.

Others named in the cases include some of the biggest names in American business, such as Wal-Mart and United Parcel Service.

With good jobs still scarce in many states, the illegal actions have contributed to historically high joblessness among returning National Guard and Reserve members — as high as 50% in some California units — and created a potential obstacle to serving.

“The whole point of the National Guard and reserves, how they save the country money, is they get paid only when they are serving,” said Sam Wright, director of the Service Members Law Center at the Reserve Officers Assn. “It’s a great deal for the country, but if we don’t protect their civilian jobs ... they aren’t going to volunteer and serve.”

Veterans’ advocates say that the heavy use of the nation’s citizen-soldiers to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan placed a burden on employers in a tough economy.

Even as 11 years of war wind down, Guard and Reserve members are being called up for peacekeeping and other duties around the world.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, a 1994 law that strengthened job protections for returning troops first introduced during World War II, requires that service members are reemployed in the type of position they would have attained if they had not been called to active duty.

Just how many service members are being denied jobs illegally is impossible to know.

The nonpartisan Government Accountability Office estimated in 2005 that fewer than a third of service members with complaints seek help from the government. Many don’t file lawsuits, either.

Even so, the Labor Department and Office of Special Counsel, which investigate complaints for possible prosecution, have seen cases surge from 848 in fiscal 2001 to 1,577 in the 12 months ending in September 2011.

Last year, the agencies handled 1,436 new cases, according to preliminary figures.

A Defense Department program that tries to mediate disputes handled 2,884 cases in fiscal 2011 alone, including 299 that went to the Labor Department when they could not be resolved informally.

Although the law says the federal government should be a “model employer,” federal agencies accounted for nearly 20% of the formal complaints in fiscal 2012, about twice the share recorded in 2007.

The departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs lead the way with 105 and 47 complaints respectively.

Obtaining redress can take months, if not years.

For service members, the experience can be a maddening double-blow.

Lt. Col. Pierre Saint-Fleur, a former Fresno County mental health worker who deployed three times to Iraq as a military chaplain, said he was forced into early retirement because of his service in the California National Guard.

He protested to the Labor Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service but said he was told the case had no merit.

"I felt betrayed," Saint-Fleur said. "This same government that called me to go into harm's way, into a war zone, failed me when I got back and lost my job."

Saint-Fleur said he had no problem getting rehired after he demobilized in 2008. But he said he quickly saw that he was no longer welcome at the Department of Children and Family Services, where he had worked as a counselor for 18 years.

Instead of getting his old office back, he was given a desk in what he described as a trailer, with no privacy for counseling patients — a situation he feared could cost him his license. He said his work was criticized, his authority was reduced to the level of a student intern and a fraud investigation was opened alleging that he had been overbilling patients — claims he said were baseless.

"I had no choice but to leave," he said.

Only after hiring a private attorney did he win a \$100,000 settlement, court and county records show.

The county did not admit fault in the 2010 settlement. Fresno County officials did not return calls seeking comment.

Government agencies and Fortune 500 companies — especially defense contractors — are major employers of people who serve in the armed forces and might be expected to experience the most disputes.

State and local governments accounted for more than 20% of the complaints last year and private companies nearly 60%.

Home Depot has won awards for its support of current and former military members, who make up about 10% of its workforce.

But Brian Bailey, an Iraq veteran and former California National Guard member, said his supervisors at a Home Depot store in Flagstaff, Ariz., complained about having to find a replacement when he was called up for training or to fight a brush fire.

"They think you have a weekend off," he said.

In 2010, two years after Bailey was promoted to department supervisor, he was fired.

At the recommendation of Labor officials, the Justice Department investigated and filed suit. Home Depot did not admit wrongdoing but agreed last year to pay Bailey \$45,000 and to update its policies to provide explicit protection for workers needing to take military leave.

“We would never tolerate the termination of any of our employees for illegitimate reasons,” said Stephen Holmes, a company spokesman. At any time, about 1,500 Home Depot employees across the nation are on military leaves of absence, he said.

Bailey’s grievance took two years to resolve.

Veterans complain that the process can take too long and that investigators are too inclined to take the word of employers.

A Labor official, who was not authorized to speak on the record, said most disputes are resolved without recourse to the courts.

But attorneys for aggrieved service members say some employers have grown sophisticated about trying to get around the law.

Rather than wait to see if deploying troops will want their old jobs back, some hand out pink slips as soon as they are notified that their employees are expecting orders.

Others refuse to hire people who serve in the Guard and Reserve, a form of discrimination that is illegal but difficult to prove.

Enrique Ostojic, an Air Force reservist, said he lost a job offer after he told a prospective employer about his military obligations. Ostojic said a San Diego-based security firm offered him a full-time position but changed the offer to part-time after learning he would need some weekends off for training.

When he complained to the Labor Department, he said he was told insufficient evidence existed to pursue a case against the company, which is now closed.

“Apparently my word isn’t good enough,” he said.

Ostojic said he didn’t take the matter further because he couldn’t afford a lawyer on his Reserve pay.

Last year, he showed up at a veterans’ job fair, where he collected a stack of brochures from such companies as UPS and Verizon.

“At least I feel confident that if they are here, I am not going to be discriminated against,” Ostojic said.

Yet records show that these and other companies at the job fair have been the subject of repeated complaints.

The Labor Department investigated eight new claims against UPS last year and 11 in fiscal 2011. Verizon was the subject of six complaints in the last two years.

Wal-Mart was named in 29 cases, more than any other Fortune 500 company.

Officials at the company did not respond to requests for comment. The Labor Department did not identify smaller employers, to protect the privacy of complainants.

Some veterans' advocates would like to see the law strengthened to include punitive damages and mandatory attorney's fees. For willful violations, courts can require employers to pay twice the amount of compensation a service member lost, but critics say the awards are often small.

Ramsey Sulayman, a legislative associate for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, said he believes employers are "rolling the dice" and getting away with breaking the law.

"It's a paper tiger," Sulayman said. "There's nothing that will prevent an employer from violating over and over and over."

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.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“Their Enemies Disguised As
Their Friends”**

**“They Were In The Observation
Point With Them, Just A Few Feet
Behind”**

**“Six Members Of The Afghan
National Police Climbed Quietly Atop
A Small Wall, Raised Their Guns And
Fired”**

“Four U.S. Soldiers Were Killed”



Spc. Josh Nelson of Greenville was one of four soldiers killed in September in the worst green-on-blue attack of the year in Afghanistan, as Americans were preparing to hand over a small outpost in the Zabol Province to Afghan forces. Courtesy of the Nelson family

May 11, 2013 By Adam Ashton and Martha Quillin, News & Observer.

Adam Ashton is the military reporter for The News Tribune of Tacoma, Wash. He embedded in Mizan last year and interviewed officers about the insider attack after they returned from Afghanistan.

The killers bided their time for days, then weeks, patiently waiting for a moment when the American soldiers were vulnerable.

It came, finally, in the early hours of Sept. 16.

Four cavalry soldiers from Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Tacoma, Wash., and two communications specialists from Fort Gordon, Ga., had an overnight assignment at a hillside observation point in the Mizan District of Zabol Province near Afghanistan's border with Pakistan. They watched a valley they suspected enemy fighters were using to lob mortars into the soldiers' small forward base a mile away.

About 20 more members of their platoon rested in a fortified checkpoint a quarter-mile distant; some were sleeping.

The soldiers' thermal imaging scopes let their eyes cut through the dark for several hundred yards. It was a huge nighttime advantage over their enemies.

The trouble was, their enemies at this moment were disguised as their friends. And they were in the observation point with them, just a few feet behind.

Six members of the Afghan National Police climbed quietly atop a small wall, raised their guns and fired, according to soldiers and civilians familiar with the Army investigation into the attack.

Four U.S. soldiers were killed in the assault: Spc. Joshua Nelson, who had grown up in Greenville, N.C., and was based at Fort Gordon; Sgt. Sapuro Nena; Pfc. Genaro Bedoy and Pfc. Jon Townsend, all from Lewis-McChord.

The attack marked the single deadliest “green-on-blue” insider attack against American forces in 2012, according to the Long War Journal’s catalog of such incidents.

At least 51 Western service members died in insider killings in 2012.

The ambush near Combat Outpost Mizan was so severe, and followed so many similar attacks, it led the Army to shut down partnered operations with Afghan forces for two weeks. This undermined the transition to Afghan control of the country – the very reason for the sustained U.S. presence in what has become America’s longest war.

It marked a betrayal that still burns among the fallen soldiers’ loved ones and those who served with them.

As far as his father, Brian Nelson, can tell, Josh Nelson should never even have been in that hole where he died.

“I’ll be fine,” Brian remembers his son telling him at the end of May 2012, when he deployed with 19 other members of his unit to provide electronic warfare support for combat forces in Afghanistan, a little more than a year after he had joined the Army.

Nelson, 22, was a signals intelligence analyst in the 297th Military Intelligence Battalion at Fort Gordon – a communications specialist.

“What I do,” he told his dad before he left for Afghanistan, “I won’t be out where there’s shooting.”

But in Afghanistan, there is often shooting where it’s not expected. The soldiers Nelson was working with from Lewis-McChord had learned that.

Their unit, from the 14th Cavalry Regiment, was on its first deployment in Afghanistan after three tours in Iraq. When they took over the outpost at Mizan from the outgoing unit in the spring of 2012, the area looked relatively stable, and relations between U.S. and Afghan troops who each had a section of the compound seemed good.

“Mizan is open for business,” Command Sgt. Maj. James Coroy, the top enlisted soldier leading the outgoing troops, told a reporter at the time.

Coroy felt confident the newly secured road between Mizan and Qalat, the capital of the province, 25 miles away, would stay open under the protection of Afghan National Army

soldiers. This would speed the withdrawal of American forces from that corner of the country.

The plan was to hand over the Mizan outpost to Afghan forces in the fall.

But the Taliban are known to put on a show when U.S. forces hand over their positions, to give the impression they are driving out the occupying force. Troops from Mizan were attacked by the Taliban in May and June. As the transition neared, the commander of U.S. troops there, Lewis-McChord's Lt. Col. Jim Dunivan, doubled the number U.S. forces, packing 80 soldiers into the tiny outpost.

On the night of Sept. 10, the outpost came under mortar attack, which continued the next day. Dunivan sent about 25 soldiers to an overlook about a mile away to try to stop the attacks. Six of those soldiers, along with six Afghan police officers, were broken off to hunker down in the overnight observation post on the hill a quarter-mile away.

It didn't look like much, just a dugout covered with some tent-like camouflage to protect against the weather. A wall about 3 feet high surrounded it. Soldiers stocked their post with guns, ammunition, night-vision goggles and gear to intercept enemy communications.

The Americans clustered at the front, either resting or scanning the valley below for enemy movements.

Eighteen months earlier, Josh Nelson had been more likely to be listening to music than trying to hear the conversations of insurgents.

He had graduated from North Pitt High School in 2008 with no plan for his life, his father said. He got a job in Greenville working as a telemarketer, spent his Sunday mornings playing drums or the tuba in local churches and his spare time hanging out with his musician friends.

But when he decided to get married, he snapped to like a flag in a stiff breeze.

His parents had once suggested a stint in the military, and Nelson dismissed the idea. But once he got serious with Quamisha Earlene Cierra Palmer, who came from a military family, he changed his mind, his father said.

He decided to join the Army, requiring him to lose about 100 pounds. To do that, he would have to change his diet and start exercising, running 4 to 5 miles a day, doing push-ups and sit-ups and pull-ups. Until then, his dad recalls, Nelson had never done anything athletic in his life.

"He would send me updates," Brian Nelson said. "He would text me: 'Dad, I'm joining the Army. Dad, I'm going to lose weight. Dad, I've lost the weight. Dad, I'm getting married. Dad, I've joined the Army.'

"Bam! Bam! Bam! It happened just that fast."

Joshua Nathaniel Nelson spoke his vows to his bride in January 2011.

A few weeks later, he joined the military and headed off to boot camp at Fort Jackson, S.C. From there, he went to Goodfellow Air Force Base in Texas to train as a signals intelligence analyst, and in December 2011, he was assigned to Fort Gordon.

“He felt that what he was doing was a very, very important job,” Brian Nelson said. “At one point, he said he couldn’t even tell me what it was. ‘Top secret, Dad. I can’t talk about it.’”

Like many parents and spouses of deployed service members, Brian Nelson didn’t know exactly what part of Afghanistan his son was in. He only knew that Nelson would be leaving Afghanistan in October, heading back to Georgia, and then home to Greenville for a visit.

At about 1 a.m. on Sept. 16, the Afghans in the dugout with Nelson and the other soldiers mounted the wall and unloaded their guns, according to Dunivan and families of fallen soldiers. Some of the U.S. soldiers managed to return fire, but the Afghans had the high ground and the element of surprise on their side.

One soldier from Fort Gordon and one from Lewis-McChord survived but were severely injured. One of the Afghans was killed in the attack, though there is disagreement between the survivors over whether he was shot by his comrades or the Americans. The five killers got away.

At his home in Greenville, Brian Nelson was unaware of the assault. But he knew as he sat in his den watching TV with his wife that the two shadows that crossed his window and headed for his door on the afternoon of Sept. 17 were of men bringing the worst kind of news.

He raised his hands to his head, as if to defend himself from physical blows, then fell to his knees, wailing.

Brian Nelson finally let the men in and let them tell him what they knew: only that Josh and three other soldiers had been killed by Afghan forces they were there to help train.

Later, Brian Nelson got an autopsy report, which he couldn’t bring himself to open for a month.

He recently got the Army’s report on its investigation into the shootings, but he has not read that yet. Whatever the report says, it won’t change one other thing Brian Nelson knows: “Josh was a hero.”

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

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

Resistance Action

12 May 2013 By Sadaf Shinwari, Khaama Press

According to local authorities in southern Helmand province of Afghanistan, district attorney chief for Marjah was killed following an improvised explosive device explosion.

Provincial governor spokesman Omar Zwak confirming the report said Marjah district attorney chief, Lal Mohammad was killed early Sunday morning after his vehicle struck with a roadside bomb.

Mr. Zwak further added the incident took place around 7am local time while Lal Mohammad was on his way towards his work place.

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

MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WAR?



The headstone of Marc Scialdo March 22, 2013 at Palm Royale Cemetery Mausoleum in Naples, Fla. U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Marc A. Scialdo, 31, was laid to rest with full military honors after an hour-long funeral ceremony at St. John The Evangelist Catholic Church. Hundreds of friends, family and military supporters came to pay their final respects. He was killed March 11 when a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter he was traveling in crashed in Afghanistan. Photo by COREY PERRINE, Naples Daily News

**“An Iraq War Veteran And Internet
Talk Show Host Is Trying To
Gather Thousands Of Protesters
To March Into The District On
Independence Day With Loaded
Rifles On Their Backs”**

**“Protesters With Loaded Guns Slung
Across Their Backs Will March
Around The District’s Seats Of Power
- The U.S. Capitol, The Supreme
Court And The White House”**

**“2,500 People Have Signed Up For The
Cause”**

08 May 13 by Peter Hermann, the Washington Post

An Iraq war veteran and Internet talk show host is trying to gather thousands of protesters to march into the District on Independence Day with loaded rifles on their backs.

But if Adam Kokesh follows through with his July 4 plans - 2,500 people have signed up for the cause - he and his makeshift band will be met on the Arlington Memorial Bridge by two police forces packing guns of their own.

Kokesh, 31, and D.C. Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier say they want to work together to ensure a peaceful airing of grievances. But the chief says only one side can have guns: hers. And she'll have backup from the U.S. Park Police, which will also position officers at the District line.

“If you’re coming here to protest government policy, great,” Lanier said Tuesday on her monthly appearance on NewsChannel 8, reacting to the group’s plan to cross the Potomac River from Arlington National Cemetery. “If you’re coming here to break the law, we’ll take action.”

Lanier added, "There's a pretty good chance we'll meet them on the D.C. side of the bridge."

Kokesh is calling the event an "Open Carry March" but described it as a general demonstration against "tyranny," not a protest against specific gun laws.

News of the march comes amid a national debate over gun regulations that emerged after the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Kokesh has chosen to stage his protest in one of the most strictly regulated cities when it comes to firearms laws - and one of the most contested.

Washington allows residents to possess registered firearms on their property but forbids carrying them in public. And it was the backdrop for a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2008 that struck down a total ban on firearms - and guaranteed the right to own a gun for self-defense.

Kokesh's timing is curious given the recent success of gun advocates in defeating a series of firearms restrictions in Congress that emerged in the wake of the Newtown massacre. However, efforts to revive the legislation are underway.

Authorities noted that they have not been in contact with Kokesh, who returned from Iraq a self-proclaimed libertarian and antiwar activist. Kokesh publicized his plans in Internet postings.

On his blog, "Adam Vs The Man," Kokesh called on people to register for the march, which he called an act of civil disobedience.

He said protesters with loaded guns slung across their backs will march around the District's seats of power - the U.S. Capitol, the Supreme Court and the White House.

Kokesh wrote that he is planning a nonviolent protest, but he won't predict what could happen if the police move in with force.

He urged protesters to submit to arrests and said the group will peacefully turn back if denied entry to the District. Separately, he said some protesters plan to take a step into the District to prompt an arrest.

"We will march with rifles loaded and flung across our backs to put the government on notice that we will not be intimidated and cower in submission to tyranny," Kokesh wrote on his Web site. "Should we meet physical resistance, we will peacefully turn back, having shown that free people are not welcome in Washington. . . . We are truly saying in the SUBTLEST way possible that we would rather die on our feet than live on our knees."

He said he wants to work with law enforcement and hopes that Lanier will make an exception to the law and grant his group safe passage, and even a police escort, through the District. A D.C. police spokeswoman said the protesters will not be allowed in the District while carrying firearms.

Sgt. Paul Brooks of the U.S. Park Police said guns are not allowed in the cemetery in Arlington. But he said it appears the group plans to start just outside the cemetery gates, along Memorial Drive. He said the organization has not sought a permit, as required for demonstrations on National Park Service property, but Kokesh said on the Web site he does not intend to get one.

Lanier said on the television program that city representatives are willing to meet with Kokesh and other leaders “to facilitate whatever they want to get accomplished in a legal way.” But, she said, “passing into the District with loaded firearms is a violation of the law and it will be treated as such.”

In 2007, Kokesh was photographed at the Hart Senate Office Building being arrested wearing a T-shirt that read, “Iraq veterans against the war.”

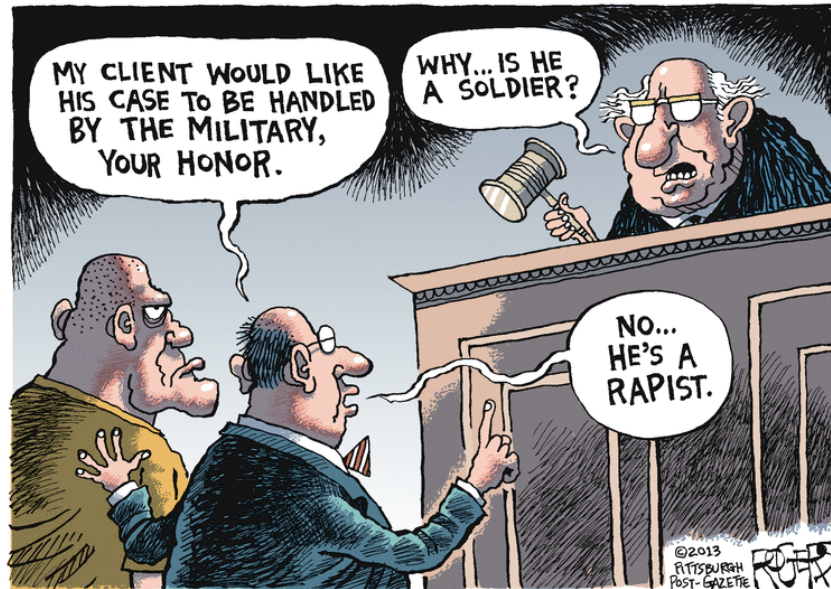
He was arrested again in 2011 when he led a group dancing at the Jefferson Memorial, and he has gotten into trouble for protesting in a Marine uniform and for taking a souvenir gun home from the battlefield.

**“Former Sergeant Once In
Charge Of The Marine Corps
Recruiting Efforts In Alaska
Found Guilty Of First-Degree
Sexual Assault At Military Trial”**

**“Howard Was Stripped Of His
Military Rank And Privileges And
Dishonorably Discharged, But He
Was Not Sentenced To Any Jail
Time”**

**“When The Sentence Was
Announced ‘The Entire Chain Of**

Command's Jaws Dropped,' 'They Could Not Believe It'' “And It May Never Be Clear Why Howard Walked Away”



May 7, 2013 By MICHELLE THERIAULT BOOTS, Anchorage Daily News

When a 23-year-old woman accused Nicholas Howard, an Anchorage recruiter for the United States Marine Corps, of sexually assaulting her in 2011, police believed the case rested largely on DNA evidence.

At the time, the state crime lab that tests DNA had a backlog of hundreds of cases and many months.

So when the Marine Corps offered to take over the case from the Anchorage Police Department to expedite DNA processing, police agreed.

The result: DNA linked Nicholas Howard to the crime and he was court-martialed.

The former gunnery sergeant once in charge of the Marine Corps recruiting efforts in Alaska was found guilty of first-degree sexual assault at a military trial on a Marine Corps installation in San Diego May 3.

Howard was stripped of his military rank and privileges and dishonorably discharged, but he was not sentenced to any jail time.

Military prosecutors had asked for five to seven years, said APD detective Brett Sarber, who testified at the trial with another Anchorage detective and a forensic nurse.

When the sentence was announced “the entire chain of command’s jaws dropped,” he said. “They could not believe it.”

It’s not clear why the military chose not to give Howard jail time for an offense as serious as first-degree sexual assault.

“The sentence he received was within the discretion of the court-martial members who heard the entire case,” Capt. Jorge Escatell of the 12th Marine Corps Recruiting District told the Daily News

And it may never be clear why Howard walked away.

“(Military justice) is not a really transparent system,” said Clint Champion, an Anchorage prosecutor who served as an Army judge advocate general attorney for nine years and is now a member of the Army National Guard.

Nicholas Howard had been a recruiter for the U.S. Marine Corps in Alaska since 2009, according to a short story in the Daily News that noted his promotion. He had an office in the Dimond Mall.

On the night of December 31, 2011, Howard, his wife, her sister, the victim and the victim’s boyfriend started a night out at a restaurant in Wasilla, according to detectives’ version of events.

After a stop at an Eagle River restaurant for drinks, the group ended up back at Howard’s house.

According to police, at one point in the night Howard carried the victim from a hot tub to a camper where she and her boyfriend were planning to sleep. He then locked the camper door and sexually assaulted her on the bed, police said. When the woman’s boyfriend, who had been changing clothes, came to the camper he found the woman crying.

The couple left and drove to Alaska Regional Hospital, detectives said.

At the hospital she reported the rape and underwent a sexual assault exam that included the collection of DNA evidence.

In interviews with police, Howard initially denied having sexual contact with the woman.

“There were no witnesses and not enough evidence to make an arrest immediately on the spot,” said Sgt. Ken McCoy of the Anchorage Police Department.

Police needed DNA evidence to show that Howard was lying.

At the time, the state crime lab in Anchorage was running a “significant” backlog of cases, said Michelle Collins, an Alaska Crime Detection Lab supervisor.

Police believed it would take 18 to 24 months to get the DNA evidence in the Howard case analyzed, APD spokeswoman Anita Shell said.

Cases in which a suspect is not in custody aren't at the front of the line for DNA testing, Sarber said. That's because once a suspect is arraigned, the clock starts ticking on his right to a speedy trial, making those cases more urgent for the lab.

In July 2012, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service asked to take over the case, saying it could quickly process the DNA. The military had an interest in the case because its recruiter -- representing the Marine Corps to the public -- was accused of rape, Campion said.

APD and prosecutors agreed to the handoff.

That's rare, said department spokeswoman Shell. "It only happens once every couple of years."

At a court martial, there are maximum sentences but no minimum sentences for crimes.

"(The jury panel members) are not obligated to give anyone any jail time," said Campion, who said he didn't know the specifics of the Howard case and was only commenting generally on military court proceedings.

Punishments like discharge, forfeiture of rank, pay and privileges are weighed heavily, he said. They represent not just financial loss but a career.

Howard will also be required to register as a sex offender, according to the APD.

Still, victims and law enforcement agencies might think differently, he said.

Howard made a statement to the court martial during the proceedings, Sarber said. "The defendant took no responsibility for what happened at all," he said.

Calls to Howard's civilian attorney were not answered or returned Tuesday.

Now, prosecutors in Anchorage must weigh whether they will charge Howard in civilian court for the same crime the military has already convicted him of. They are talking to APD, Campion said, but no decision has been made.

When the case was given to the Marine Corps, "we made a decision to let this process run," Campion said. Trying Howard would

“Top Leaders At The Atlanta VA Medical Center Clearly Had ‘Something To Hide’ After Failing To Reveal The Suicide

Of A Georgia Veteran At The Hospital Last Fall” “They Lied To Us” “I Left Confident That The Leadership There Was Committed To Making An Honest Effort To Turn The Facility Around” “Today, That Confidence Is Shattered”

[Thanks to a veteran who wishes to remain anonymous who sent this in. He writes: “The VA couldn’t give a shit, it’s delay, deny until you die. Fucking disgusting ass-holes! They don’t have to pay people when they are dead!”]

May 10, 2013 By Misty Williams, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution [Excerpts]

The head of the U.S. House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs said Friday that top leaders at the Atlanta VA Medical Center clearly had “something to hide” after failing to reveal the suicide of a Georgia veteran at the hospital last fall.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., and four Georgia congressmen toured the 405-bed facility in Decatur on Monday in response to recent federal inspection reports linking the deaths of three veterans to pervasive mismanagement of the hospital’s mental health unit.

When Miller asked hospital officials whether there were any other patient deaths Congress should know about, he said he was told, “No.”

But last November, hospital staff discovered Army veteran Joseph Petit, 42, locked in a hospital bathroom dead in his wheelchair, a plastic trash bag tied over his head with a blue cord around his neck, a medical examiner’s report shows.

Petit’s suicide was not included in two audits released last month by the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

“I left confident that the leadership there was committed to making an honest effort to turn the facility around,” Miller said in a statement. “Today, that confidence is shattered.”

Petit’s suicide did not happen during three separate visits by inspectors that resulted in last month’s audits, which revealed the deaths of three other veterans tied to the facility, according to the Inspector General’s office.

The reports showed that many of the more than 4,000 veterans the hospital referred to outside mental health facilities “fell through the cracks.”

One man died of an apparent drug overdose after providers failed to connect him to a psychiatrist.

In another case, hospital staff told a man who tried to see a VA psychiatrist who wasn't available to take public transportation to the emergency department. He never went and committed suicide the next day.

Both Miller and U.S. Rep. David Scott, an Atlanta Democrat, called on Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki to take action to deal with serious leadership issues at the Atlanta hospital. Scott also called for the resignations of top hospital officials. Military leaders in Washington and the White House both need to get involved, said Scott, adding that he has contacted the Obama administration about the facility's problems.

“They lied to us,” said Scott, who also toured the facility earlier this week. “This cannot go unanswered. The credibility of the hospital is at stake here.”

Joseph Petit dreamed of being an Army Ranger — the best of the best.

But his ambitions began to quickly unravel just months after enlisting when he injured both knees during a parachute landing training exercise. The McDonough man soon found himself declared physically unfit for military duty.

Petit, who as a brother and son was always the one who took care of others, spent the next two decades battling chronic pain, said his sister, Brandie Petit. He eventually resorted to using a wheelchair and walker.

He later spent years battling mental illness, including hallucinations and major depression, and had attempted suicide once before.

When Petit wheeled himself into the veterans hospital's emergency department on Nov. 8, 2012, he told doctors he was “hearing voices and was afraid he was going to harm his mother,” who he lived with, according to a DeKalb County medical examiner report obtained by Channel 2 Action News.

The report shows Petit had over time been prescribed seven different medications, including powerful anti-psychotics and drugs to treat depression and anxiety.

The ER staff said that Petit was having a “mental health crisis” and sent him to his regular psychiatrist, who discharged him later that afternoon.

Instead of leaving the hospital, Petit locked himself in a staff bathroom on the 8th floor. Employees didn't discover his body until around 11 a.m. the next day.

“They told my mom they had found him and he was already cold,” Petit's sister said.

Petit's death is the latest in a series of troubling revelations that spurred intense scrutiny of the facility and outcries by lawmakers.

The federal audits show, among other findings, that a suicidal patient died of an overdose of drugs given to him by another patient. In another instance, a patient with schizophrenia was missing for eight hours, later telling nurses he "got lost" on the way to his room.

A separate confidential report by the Joint Commission, a nonprofit that accredits health care providers throughout the country, revealed numerous problems in other areas of the hospital, including fire safety concerns and powerful prescription drugs, such as morphine, left unsecured out in the open.

Veterans advocates say the troubles in Atlanta reflect bigger problems in the whole VA system, as thousands of soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues come home from war.

Petit's sister said she doesn't want her brother's death to be in vain and wants justice for him and other soldiers who need help.

"He was my brother. He was my best friend," she said. "He was more than just a statistic."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Stupid Psychopathic Shitheads At Virginia School Suspend Two Boys For Pointing Pencils Like Guns: “A Pencil Is A Weapon When It Is Pointed At Someone In A Threatening Way And Gun Noises Are Made”

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

May 8, 2013 By Elise Solé, Shine Staff

A 7-year-old boy, who was suspended for two days after playing a game of make-believe with his friend, returned to school on Wednesday.

On Friday, Christopher Marshall, a second grader at Driver Elementary School in Suffolk, Virginia and his classmate were playing with their pencils, pointing them at each other and making machine gun noises when a concerned teacher pulled them into the principals' office.

“I got a call from Christopher’s school at 12:30 on Friday,” the boy’s mother, Wendy Marshall, 34, a stay-at-home mother of five, told Yahoo! Shine.

“His teacher told me that Christopher and his friend were playing with pencils, making machine gun and ‘bang bang’ noises. I asked if they were pointing the pencils at anyone else, if they were angry or hostile, disrupting class, or refused to stop when asked and the teacher said no.

“I told her that I would speak to Christopher but his teacher said she was under obligation to report them anyway.”

Wendy immediately picked up her son from school and when she got there, the principal explained that due to the school’s zero tolerance policy against weapons or anything that resembles a weapon, Christopher would be suspended on Monday and Tuesday, allowed to return on Wednesday.

Bethanne Bradshaw, a spokesperson for Suffolk Public Schools could not be reached for comment but according to a report from Fox43 she said, “A pencil is a weapon when it is pointed at someone in a threatening way and gun noises are made” and that “Some children would consider it threatening, who are scared about shootings in schools or shootings in the community.

"Kids don't think about 'Cowboys and Indians' anymore, they think about drive-by shootings and murders and everything they see on television news every day."

Student ID # 90001910

PP-100/R-09



**SUFFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISCIPLINARY REFERRAL
NOTICE TO PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving your child.
2. The action taken by the school personnel serves as an effort to modify your child's behavior and serves as a consequence for the violation(s) described.
3. Should a conference be desired, please contact the school for an appointment.

Student's Name Christopher Marshall Grade 2nd Building/School Driver
 Date of Incident May 3, 2013 Time of Incident 10:30 Location Classroom
 Reporting Staff Member [Signature] Reported to [Signature] (Administrator)
 Description of Incident Christopher pointed his pencil at another student as if it was a gun and made shooting sounds. I told him to stop and he did.

THIS SECTION MUST BE FILLED OUT PRIOR TO SENDING REFERRAL TO THE OFFICE

Action taken prior to referral:

No Previous Action Taken Separated Student from Group Consulted with Counselor (Date) _____
 Field Conference with Student Sent Previous Report Home Other _____
 Changed Student's Seat Held Conference with Parent Other _____
 Contacted Parent: Date(s)/Time(s) 5/3/13 mom @ 12:40
 Attempted to Contact Parent Left Message Date/Time _____

**PRESENT ACTION TAKEN
(This section for School Administrative Use Only)**

Incident Code _____ Action Date 5/3/13 Action Imposed Suspended
 Duration 2 days Duration Date(s) 5/6 & 5/7
 Person Contacted Mother Date of Parent/Guardian Contact 5/3/13
 Comments I met with Christopher's mother in my office in reference to this. He may return on May 8th.
 Motivation _____ Problem Behavior _____ Minor _____ Major _____
 Others Involved: (Circle one) None Peers Staff Teacher Substitute Unknown Other
Signatures
 Student _____ Teacher/Staff _____
 Administrator [Signature] Parent/Guardian [Signature]

This report was provided by the Marshall family.

According to the Suffolk News-Herald, the school had received hundreds of emails and on one day fielded about 75 phone calls per hour regarding the matter.

Bradshaw wrote in an email to the paper that the reaction to the incident was overwhelming. "Opinions were very strong and mean-spirited, and often included abusive language and profanity."

[That's a start but obviously more of the same are needed. Here's the shitheads phone number: Suffolk Public Schools (757) 925-6750 T]

"I told the principal that Christopher's father is an ex-Marine and he was just emulating his dad," said Wendy.

"Apparently the students were told at the beginning of the year that they couldn't pretend that objects were guns — there are only four weeks left in school. How could they remember that? Kids need to be reminded to bathe and brush their teeth. Besides, they were just being boys. The disciplinary report will be on Christopher's record forever."

Wendy took her son home and asked him to explain what happened. "He was shaking with fear and didn't understand why he was in trouble," she said.

"So we reenacted the scene and I told him that he did nothing wrong."

Christopher's father alerted the local news station and Wendy and Christopher spent the next two days eating ice cream, playing Mario Go Kart on Wii, and cleaning the house. "I let him drink soda too," she says. "I'm not going to punish him."

Wendy did not want to identify Christopher's friend but she says she believes he got a similar punishment.

"I would understand the school's point better if the kids were older and they were being hostile toward each other," she says.

"But these kids were laughing and playing and Christopher is being made into an example, which isn't right."

Stupid Psychopathic Shitheads At Ohio School Suspend Little Kid For His Haircut:

Apr 8, 2013 By Lylah M. Alphonse, Senior Editor, Yahoo! Shine

When 5-year-old Ethan Clos showed up at school with a short, spiky mohawk last week, his fellow kindergarteners thought it was cool. But administrators at Reid Primary and Middle School in Springfield, Ohio, deemed the edgy cut too disruptive, and ordered him home until he adopted a tamer style.

His mom, Keshia Castle, said that school officials suspended her son on Wednesday. After he begged her for the hairstyle, she finally let him get it over spring break.

"They seen his hair like it was," she told WHIO-TV on Friday. "All the little kids were going over and feeling on it and everything."

Superintendent Gregg Morris says that's exactly why they had to send little Ethan home.



Ethan Clos, 5, was suspended from kindergarten after he showed up with this hairstyle last week.
(Photo: WHIO]

“Our dress and grooming policies are designed to ensure that clothing and hairstyles do not cause a distraction to the learning environment,” Morris said in a statement.

The school’s handbook states that “Hair shall be worn above the eyebrows and must be kept clean, neat and trimmed” and specifies that boys may not wear their hair longer than the bottom of their shirt collars. It also says: “Hair styling or coloring arrangements which are disruptive or distracting are not permissible.”

“Our policy clearly states that any dress or grooming which is disruptive or distracting to the educational process is not acceptable,” Morris verified to WHIO-TV. “In this particular case, the student’s hairstyle did provide disruption to the classroom.”

Ethan’s grandmother, Joyce Wells, thinks the suspension was too harsh a penalty to pay for a hairstyle.

A mohawk, she said, isn’t really that different from other styles where the hair is cut close to the scalp, especially if the mohawk itself is short.

“I could understand if it was colored, and if it stood up off longer of his head,” his grandmother said. “But I don’t see nothing wrong with this.”

This isn’t the mile-high, stiffly gelled punk look of the past. (In fact, if they hadn’t used styling product to give his mohawk some definition, Ethan’s hair would probably have looked much like a typical military cut.)

The child’s stylist may have taken a cue from celebrity kids like Maddox Jolie-Pitt and Willow Smith, both of whom have sported the spiky look, to mixed reviews. Kingston

Rossdale (son of rockers Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale), Madonna's 4-year-old son David Banda, and Cruz Beckham (whose parents are sport-and-style icons David and Victoria Beckham) have also sported modified mohawks, where the sides are cut close, rather than shaved bare, and a strip of hair on the top is left a bit longer.

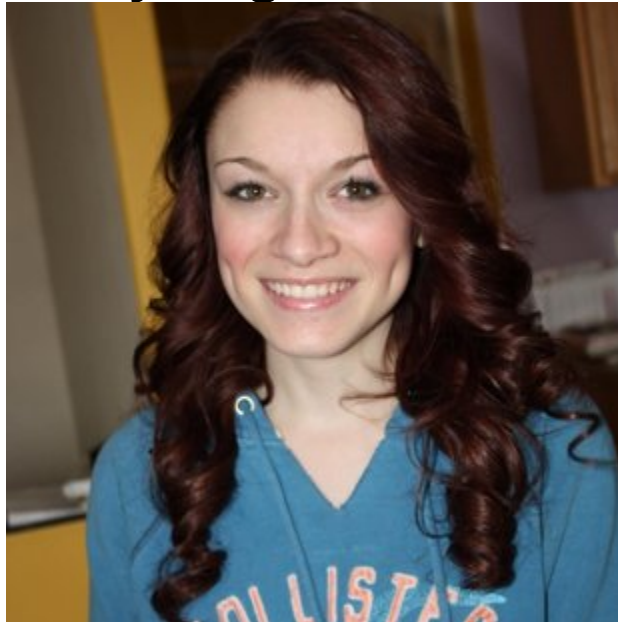
In 2009 (and again in 2011), a volunteer football coach at the local high school wore a blond-tipped Mohawk to motivate his team. When a WHIO-TV reporter asked Morris why the coach's hair was acceptable while the kindergartener's was not, Morris said that the two situations are totally different.

"One involved an extracurricular spirit initiative designed to motivate our kids in the football playoffs a year ago," Morris explained. "Classrooms were not disrupted. The other poses a disruption to the learning environment as well as violates the student dress code."

Ethan's mom told WHIO-TV that her son would return to school on Monday, after she has his head shaved, but the style shouldn't have been such a big deal.

"He's a 5-year-old little boy who chose to wear his hair a certain way," she told the news station.

Stupid Psychopathic Shitheads At Utah School Suspend Honor Student Teen for Dyeing her Hair Dark Red



Unnatural? Rylee MacKay was kept out of class because of her hair color. (Photo: MacKay family via Facebook)

In the past few months, schools have banned everything from yoga pants and Ugg boots to birthday candles and peanut butter sandwiches.

But one Utah middle school is cracking down on hair color—even if the color in question isn't a garish blue or green but just a dark shade of red.

After being kicked out of class last week for dyeing her brown hair auburn, an honors student at a Utah middle school has been allowed to return to school — but only after she toned down her hair color.

Though Rylee MacKay, 15, had been dyeing her hair the same shade every six weeks since September, it wasn't until earlier this month that the school took issue with the color.

On Feb. 4, Hurricane Middle School vice principal Jan Goodwin spotted Rylee in the halls and ordered her into the office. She had just had her hair touched up two days earlier.

The Washington County School District dress code states that “Hair, including beards, mustaches and sideburns, should be groomed so that it is neat and clean. Hair color must be a naturally occurring color; i.e. red, brown, black, blonde.” And while Rylee’s stylist had assured her that her new color complied with the dress code, Goodwin felt that Rylee’s auburn-hued hair didn’t look natural enough.

“In the light he said it was pinkish-purplish,” Rylee told KUTV. “He told me to have it fixed by the next day or I couldn’t come back to school.”

But she didn’t want to dye her hair back to brown—and her mother refused to make her.

“I absolutely am not going to dye it brown. That is not an option,” Amy MacKay told Utah news station KSL.com on Sunday.

Rylee had a hard time with the family’s move to Hurricane two and a half years ago, MacKay said, and when she was finally allowed to dye her hair last year she felt better about herself.

“My daughter feels beautiful with the red hair. Changing her hair really changed her; she really blossomed,” she explained. “And now I have to say, ‘No, sorry, you have to dye it brown?’ I’m not going to change it back.”

MacKay said that the district’s hair policy is too open to interpretation. “It’s totally his opinion whether it’s too bright or not,” she told KSL.com. “There’s no set standard, no hair palette you can look at and say, ‘OK, I’ll go with that red.’”

But school officials insist that the rules are not arbitrary.

“We deal with dress code issues nearly every day, specifically hair issues maybe once per week,” Hurricane Middle School Principal Dr. Roy Hoyt, explained to Yahoo! Shine in

an interview on Tuesday. "Most of the time it is a situation where students color their own hair and it doesn't come out as they had intended."

"Most of time it is a judgement call for the administration," Hoyt added. "This student's hair did not meet the expectation of naturally colored hair. We apply this standard consistently to all students and nearly every parent is supportive."

After four days of washing her hair at home, Rylee's hair had faded enough to be acceptable to school administrators, and she was allowed back in class. "All I wanted to do was just get back to school," she told KUTV on Monday.

Hoyt confirmed that Rylee's hair now met school standards, even though she hadn't re-dyed it.

"We are small school in a conservative community," he told Yahoo! Shine. "While this policy may seem restrictive, it does establish a behavioral expectation. When these standards/expectations are established and enforced for seemingly small things it provides for a school culture where more egregious offenses are less likely to occur."

Parents and former students took to Facebook to weigh in on the controversy.

"My daughter went through the same thing there last year, but they told her she could stay because there were only three days left of school," Elizabeth Ebert said in response to a local newspaper's poll about MacKay's hair color on Facebook. "However, they also told me she would have to change it back in order to start school this year."

"I went to HMS about 6 years ago and this doesn't shock me one bit," Danielle Ritchey said in response to a local newspaper's poll. "This school really needs to focus on things that matter, like drug use, sex, and peer bullying and stop those...."

"I'm pretty sure the long term effects of being a drug user or a teen mom are a lot worse than putting some color in one's hair."

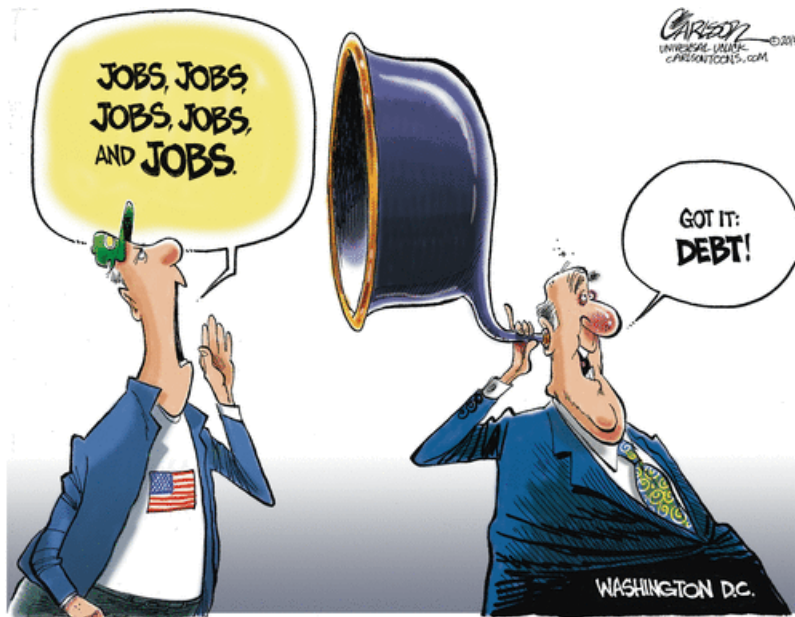
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Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether at a base in the USA or stationed outside the Continental United States, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

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CLASS WAR REPORTS



Michigan Fast Food Strike Largest Yet:

“Management Attempted To Avert A Shutdown By Bringing In Replacement Workers—But Those Replacement Workers Then Promptly Joined The Strike”

05/10/2013 By Ned Resnikoff MSNBC

Organizers estimate that as many as 400 workers at more than 60 fast food restaurants in the Detroit metro area walked off the job on Friday, in what may be the largest fast food strike in American history.

Leaders in the workers rights campaign said the strike has shut down multiple restaurants entirely, including multiple McDonald's outlets, a Long John Silver's, a Burger King, two Popeye's restaurants, and a KFC.



Fast food workers and Reverend Charles Williams II (center) picket a Long John Silver's in Detroit, Mich. on May 10, 2013. Photo courtesy of Suzette Hackney, D15 coalition.

At one McDonald's, management attempted to avert a shutdown by bringing in replacement workers—but those replacement workers then promptly joined the strike.

The strike in Detroit is the second major labor action to hit an American city's fast food industry this week: On Wednesday and Thursday, more than 100 workers in St. Louis walked off the job at roughly 30 different restaurants.

These rolling walkouts followed similar actions in New York, central Pennsylvania, and Chicago. The fact that two strikes have now occurred in a single week—including, potentially, the biggest strike yet—suggests that the nationwide trend of labor unrest in the fast food industry is intensifying, not abating.

“(Detroit's striking fast food workers) are fired up and ready to continue to grow this movement, not just in Detroit and the state of Michigan, but across the country,” said Reverend Charles Williams II, president of the Michigan chapter of the National Action Network. Williams is a leader in the D15 campaign, which advocates raising the minimum wage in Detroit to \$15 an hour.

As in other fast food strikes, Detroit workers are demanding the right to form a union and that their base pay be raised to \$15 an hour.

But this strike takes place in the unique context of Michigan labor politics: Once an historic stronghold for the country's manufacturing unions, the state now has “right-to-work” laws on the books and a Republican state government which is deeply hostile to organized labor. The Detroit strike is the first such action to occur within a right-to-work state.

Detroit is also the latest city to be put under emergency management by Republican Gov. Rick Snyder's administration. Under Michigan law, emergency managers (EMs) in cash-strapped cities and school districts have the power to overrule local authorities on

virtually all policy matters, and the ability to unilaterally rewrite or nullify contracts with public sector unions. In other Michigan localities, EMs have used this power to lay off civil servants, privatize local industry, and force public sector unions to accept sharp wage and benefit cuts.

“The emergency management kind of sparked an anger here and a movement,” said Pastor W.J. Rideout III, a leader in Detroit’s Good Jobs Now coalition. That anger, and the local wave of protests against Snyder’s policies, helped attempts to organize low-wage workers, he said.

While Detroit fast food workers have been in contact with the people behind similar fast food walkouts in other parts of the country, Williams described the Detroit strike as “organic.”

“They’ve been wronged in so many ways, it really doesn’t take much coaching to say, hey, we’re going to organize together, we’re going to stand up together,” he said.

“There are 50,000 plus fast food employees in the Detroit metro area ... and they’re not even giving them the proper amount of hours,” said Rideout.

“At 40 hours a week, they’re making about \$15,000 a year, and they’re not even getting 40 hours a week.” Instead, managers hire many employees on an exclusively part-time basis. “Some of them are getting between 15 and 20 hours a week, and that’s barely enough to pay a cell phone bill.”

There are now roughly twice as many fast food workers as auto industry employees in the Detroit area, according to the National Employment Law Project.

Though America’s manufacturing industry is making modest gains, the fast food industry is growing even faster. As it grows, labor unrest within the industry is likely to grow as well, roughly paralleling the flood of worker activism which struck Detroit and Michigan generations ago, when the auto industry occupied a similar position in the U.S. economy.

“You know how the civil rights movement had a long, hot summer?” said Williams. “We’ve got a long, hot summer planned in front of us, I think, to go and push this forward.”

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