

Military Resistance 12F13



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Forever war."]

This Side Of Suicide

From: Dennis Serdel
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: June 22, 2014 6:34
Subject: This Side Of Suicide

Written by Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade; United Auto Workers GM Retiree

This Side Of Suicide

The Captain humps his Soldiers relentlessly,
says they have to get over this big mountain
and set up an Ambush where the rivers cross.
It's so hot and the tall grass is high
no breaks no nothing
he's a gung-ho Captain on the rise.
As his Soldiers see at the top of the mountain side
there are two small rivers down there

a large flat piece of land and then another mountain side.
As they hump down they are suddenly
told to stop and get down in the grass.
As they peer down there with their tired eyes,
they see some NVA fill their canteens up
and then walk across the flat piece of land.
Then another Company of NVA follows them
and another Company begins after that.
The Captain calls Artillery and their big boom
can't be heard, only the scream of death as they come in,
the explosions splatter the NVA.
Then the Choppers with Rockets and Mini-guns arrive
and try to kill everyone, as some brave NVA
stand in the open shooting up at the Choppers.
The Captain tells his Soldiers they will stay here tonight
in the tall grass on the mountain side that hides them,
but they are so tired that they fall asleep.
In the morning they wake up but nobody guarded
all night, they could have been killed where they slept.
But then the Captain says to get everybody ready
to go down the rest of the way to the rivers.
When they get there, there are no bodies,
just some blood on the ground, the NVA policed
all their wounded and dead, all through the night.
So he orders the Company who now know
they would have been dead if they tried the Ambush,
to go up the other mountain that had many trees.
Soon they contact the NVA and the Captain
orders Artillery, but this time he makes a mistake,
and it is landing on his own Company.
Wayne was lying next to a gravestone
with his name on it, the stone-smith used his tool
to finish up the end time, it finally said 1968.
He turned his head and an engraver
was spelling out his name on a Black Wall.
Wayne's life was a dot on the Universe.
Only his immediate Family and a close friend
would miss him, but as they get older,
his Mother and Father pass away
and his two sisters move to other States,
his close friend moves to the Millions that Don't care.
Walking down a path in the jungle by a village
and after six Soldiers walk past it,
the Squad Leader sees some twigs woven
on each other and he shouts Stop.
He tells the Soldiers ahead of him
to get farther down the path and lay down,
he tells the men behind him to do the same.
Seeing that they are all safe, he humps up
the hill from the booby trap and aims his 16
at the twigs, shoots it and there is a big explosion.

When Johnny comes marching home,
there is another war going on between
his Mother and Father and then he gets The call
from his Mother that his Father is walking
around drunk holding a loaded 45 saying
he is going to shoot himself in the head.
Johnny comes marching over and takes
away the gun from him in the night,
rescuing him, telling him to go to bed.
Within a year his Father commits suicide
in the back yard with another gun
that was Johnny's first gun as a boy
to go hunting with his Father and Uncles.
Johnny blames himself for missing this booby-trap,
he should have taken All the guns away,
but he did Not and now his Father is dead.
Then his oldest Sister tries to commit suicide
because their Father killed himself on her birthday,
but her Husband who was at Khe Sanh
rescues her and takes her to the hospital
where they pump her stomach out and she lives.
Now it is Johnny's turn, he takes a whole bottle
of tranquilizers that the VA had given him,
but they are not strong enough and after many hours,
he wakes up on this side of suicide.
His Father's suicide ostracizes his Mother
and her twin Sister will have nothing to do with her,
so she turns to alcohol and prescription drugs
and many years later, she dies when her liver gives out.
She had faithfully waited for him during WWII
when he was drafted and schooled in Communications
and sent to Pearl Harbor after it was Bombed.
He stayed at Schofield Barracks for the rest of the war,
the same place where Johnny was taught
Advanced Jungle Training, because the Military already
knew about the Tet Offensive that would be in 1968,
it was just another Booby-trap with woven sticks.
After the Big War, his Mother and Father were very much
in Love and married and had three children,
two girls and a boy. But Johnny remembers
when they were children going to see their Father
in a Mental Institution out in the country with big trees
in a big white old Building where they could
only talk to their Father through the large
screened in porch. He told their Mother that
they locked the door to his room at night and the drugs
just made him want to sit in a chair. After so many
Shock Treatments, they let him go home
but he could not remember which key to use
to start the car and he quit taking his drugs
because they just made him want to sit in a chair.

But with just drinking a few beers and going back to Work, he was happy again and playing his Accordion, with the pearl letters on it that spelled out his name. "Roll out the Barrel, We'll have a Barrel of Fun" "Deep inside my Heart, there is a Memory, a Memory of Old San Antone." His name was Anthony but everybody called him Tony and everybody thought their future was fine on This Side of Suicide.

written by Dennis Serdel for People Who Think Their Life is just a Dot .

MILITARY NEWS

Dead Veterans Kept On VA Waiting List: Deaths Hidden Up To Make Statistics Look Better; "New Requests By Veterans Wanting Treatment Were Actually Stuffed Into A Drawer"

June 24, 2014 By Scott Bronstein, Drew Griffin and Nelli Black, CNN Investigations
[Excerpts]

Records of dead veterans were changed or physically altered, some even in recent weeks, to hide how many people died while waiting for care at the Phoenix VA hospital, a whistle-blower told CNN in stunning revelations that point to a new coverup in the ongoing VA scandal.

"Deceased" notes on files were removed to make statistics look better, so veterans would not be counted as having died while waiting for care, Pauline DeWenter said.

DeWenter should know.

DeWenter is the actual scheduling clerk at the Phoenix VA who said for the better part of a year she was ordered by supervisors to manage and handle the so-called "secret waiting list," where veterans' names of those seeking medical care were often placed, sometimes left for months with no care at all.

For these reasons, DeWenter is among the most important and central people to the Phoenix VA scandal over a secret wait list, veterans' wait times and deaths. Despite being in the center of the storm, DeWenter has never spoken publicly about any of it -- the secret list, the altering of records, the dozens of veterans she believes have died waiting for care -- until now.

It was one of DeWenter's roles to call veterans when appointments became available to schedule them to get a consultation. Sometimes when she made those calls, she'd find that the veteran had died, so she would enter that on their records.

But at least seven times since last October, records that showed that veterans died while waiting for care -- records which DeWenter personally handled and had entered in details of veterans' deaths -- were physically altered, or written over, by someone else,

DeWenter said in an exclusive interview with CNN. The changes, or re-writes, listed the veterans as living, not deceased, essentially hiding their deaths.

The alterations had even occurred in recent weeks, she said, in a deliberate attempt to try to hide just how many veterans died while waiting for care, by trying to pretend dead veterans remain alive.

"Because by doing that, that placed (the veterans) back on the wait list," said DeWenter, explaining she believes that the purpose of "bringing them back to life" in the paperwork and putting the veterans back on the electronic waiting list was to hide the fact that veterans died waiting for care.

"I would say (it was done to) hide the fact. Because it is marked a death. And that death needs to be reported. So if you change that to, 'entered in error' or, my personal favorite, 'no longer necessary,' that makes the death go away. So the death would never be reported then."

Beginning early last year, DeWenter said she was also instructed to hide the crisis at the Phoenix VA medical center by concealing new requests for treatment. This was at a time when the VA was paying bonuses to senior staff whose facilities met the goals of providing care in a timely manner for veterans, typically within 14 days.

New requests by veterans wanting treatment were actually stuffed into a drawer, to make the books look better, according to DeWenter.

Asked what happened to the new requests for appointments, DeWenter said: "They went into a desk drawer.... That would be the secret list."

There was "no doubt" it was, in fact, a secret list, she said.

DeWenter said she has "submitted evidence" to criminal investigators about the altering of records and also the secret list and how it worked.

It has been an horrific year for DeWenter. In early 2013, the waiting list at the Phoenix VA was so long that 1,700 veterans were on it, and many vets could not get an

appointment for as much as nine months, or longer, DeWenter said. On average there were requests from 40 new patients a day, she said.

DeWenter says the hospital administration knew it, but was so focused on meeting an immediate goal, the patients didn't matter.

"It's beyond horrible," she said, tearing up at times during the interview.

DeWenter said in addition to keeping the secret list and keeping quiet when she learned veterans on the list died, she was also pushed to clear up the backlog on the electronic waiting list, which put pressure on follow-up care as well.

There simply were not enough doctors -- and not enough appointments -- to handle new patients, backlogged patients and even very sick patients.

DeWenter, a scheduling clerk, was suddenly making life and death decisions. Doctors, nurses and emergency room providers were calling her trying to get appointments for individual patients who couldn't wait.

"And that really overtook even the wait list," DeWenter said. "Because now I have a consult where veterans are very sick. So I have to ease up on the wait list. It sounds so wrong to say, but I tried to work these scheduled appointments so at least I felt the sickest of the sick were being treated."

The stress, DeWenter said, was unbearable. Then came the call she had to make in early December. She finally had an appointment available for a Navy veteran who had come to the VA months earlier urinating blood.

"I called the family. And that's when I found out that he was dead," she said.

DeWenter would not tell CNN the patient's name. But CNN interviewed Sally and Teddy Barnes-Breen earlier this year, and the stories match. Thomas Breen, Teddy's father and a Navy veteran, died in November 2013 after being repeatedly denied care at the Phoenix VA.

DeWenter called the home and reached Sally Barnes-Breen, telling her the VA finally had a primary appointment for her father-in-law.

Barnes-Breen told CNN she was incensed, as Breen had just passed away. "I said, 'Really, you're a little too late, sweetheart,'" she told CNN previously.

DeWenter said that conversation was a turning point -- hearing the anger from the family and details on how the veteran died screaming that veterans did not deserve such treatment.

"And I promised her that I would do everything in my power to never have this happen to another veteran again," she said.

DeWenter said that's when she and Foote began seriously talking about what could be done.

In December of last year DeWenter and Foote told everything to the VA's Office of the Inspector General.

“I thought that was a saving grace,” DeWenter said. “I thought, 'Okay, this is it. This is gonna be all over,' you know? Then it wasn't. And we were waiting, and waiting, and waiting, and waiting. And nothing ever happened... Nothing. We didn't hear anything. The leadership (in Phoenix) was telling us, 'Oh, we passed everything. We're not doing anything wrong.' And I'm like, 'We're not doing anything wrong? But people are still dying?’”

DeWenter said they were giving up hope and decided for Foote to contact the media.

DeWenter said until now she was simply too scared to come forward. And she is still scared.

“My life will change after this comes out. I will have people at work who are not going to like me because of what I've done. And I'll have other people at work who will say thank you for doing what you've done.”

DeWenter believes her information on what she says is an ongoing coverup at the Phoenix VA is in the hands of the FBI.

MORE:

“VA Internal Watchdog Created To Safeguard The Medical Care Provided To Former Service Members Instead Routinely Played Down The Effect Of Treatment Errors And Appointment Delays”

“The VA Office Of The Medical Inspector Has Repeatedly Undermined Legitimate Whistleblowers By Confirming Their Allegations Of Wrongdoing, But Dismissing Them As Having No Impact On Patient Care”

WASHINGTON—A Department of Veterans Affairs internal watchdog created to safeguard the medical care provided to former service members instead routinely played down the effect of treatment errors and appointment delays, a federal special counsel alleged Monday.

In a letter to President Barack Obama, U.S. Special Counsel Carolyn Lerner said the VA Office of the Medical Inspector has repeatedly undermined legitimate whistleblowers by confirming their allegations of wrongdoing, but dismissing them as having no impact on patient care.

Among the cases that whistleblowers reported to the special counsel:

A veteran wasn't given his first comprehensive psychiatric evaluation until he had spent eight years as a resident of a Brockton, Mass., VA psychiatric unit, in 2011.

Drinking water at the VA facility in Grand Junction, Colo., was tainted with elevated levels of Legionella bacteria, which can cause a form of pneumonia, and standard maintenance and cleaning procedures weren't performed.

A VA pulmonologist in Montgomery, Ala., portrayed past test readings as current results in more than 1,200 patient files, "likely resulting in inaccurate patient health information being recorded," Ms. Lerner wrote.

In Buffalo, N.Y., VA staff sometimes mishandled sterile surgical instruments and failed to wear required protective gear.

In each of these cases, VA whistleblowers brought the information to the special counsel, an independent federal entity that is charged with enforcing whistleblower-protection laws. The special counsel passed it along to the Office of the Medical Inspector.

The VA medical inspector concluded that the hospitals' failings, while accurately reported by the whistleblowers, didn't threaten veterans' health or safety, even when the VA inspector general had concluded that similar faults compromised care in other cases, according to the letter from Ms. Lerner.

Referring to the Brockton psychiatric unit, the Office of the Medical Inspector wrote, "OMI feels that in some areas (the veterans') care could have been better, but OMI doesn't feel that their patient's rights were violated," according to OMI documents cited in Ms. Lerner's letter.

"This approach has prevented the VA from acknowledging the severity of systemic problems and from taking the necessary steps to provide quality care to veterans," wrote Ms. Lerner.

"I am deeply disappointed not only in the substantiation of allegations raised by whistleblowers, but also in the failures within VA to take whistleblower complaints seriously," he said in a written statement.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Pasadena Community Mourns Fallen Soldier

Jun 13, 2014 By Kelly Goff and Adrian Arambulo, NBCUniversal Media

Flags are flying at half staff in Pasadena in honor of resident Scott Studenmund, 24, a soldier who was among the five American troops killed in a friendly fire incident in Afghanistan earlier this week.

A 2008 alumnus of Flintridge Preparatory Academy, where he played several sports, and former Pitzer College student, Studenmund had close ties to many in the community.

“He was tenacious and strong and a great leader for the younger runners,” said Ingrid Herskind, a history teacher and boys cross country team coach at Flintridge Prep.

“I’m sure he was a fine leader for his troop mates and served them with all of his humor and support.”

Studenmund left Pitzer College after one year to enlist, something family friends said was a life-long dream. The Special Forces sniper spoke Arabic and was due home in August, according to a statement from his mother.

“It’s just very raw right now,” said family friend Mary Lyons, who spoke for the family Tuesday. “You know when you send your child off to serve in the military, this is always the risk. But you just hope and pray that it doesn’t happen. But, you know, he wanted to do this.”

Studenmund will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery near his grandfather, Sen. Jack Miller of Iowa, and his grandmother, Isabelle Miller. The family will travel to the East Coast.

Pitzer College, with just more than 1,000 students, also said in a statement that its students and faculty were also saddened by the news.

“We remember him as a brave, intelligent and honorable young man who followed through on all of his commitments with excellence and integrity. He is fondly remembered for his big smile and engaging personality,” read the statement.

The flags in Pasadena will fly at half mast until next Tuesday, when the City Council will honor Studenmund, said Mayor Bill Bogaard.

“He’s an inspiration to me and as this city completes grieving over his loss, I know he’ll be an inspiration to the entire community,” Bogaard said.

“800 Taliban Fighters Have Targeted Government Offices And Police Outposts In The Sangin District Of Helmand Province”

Jun 25 2014 and Jun 24 2014 By Ghanizada, Khaama Press & Reuters

Taliban militants have been locked in fighting with Afghan forces this week to wrest control of a southern district, provincial authorities said on Wednesday, in a struggle that has killed or wounded dozens of people.

As many as 800 Taliban fighters have targeted government offices and police outposts in the Sangin district of Helmand province, said provincial government spokesman Omar Zwak.

According to local authorities in southern Helmand province of Afghanistan, clashes in southern Helmand provinces have spread to three other districts.

Provincial governor spokesman, Omar Zwak said the clashes have spread to Mosa Qala, Kajaki and Nawzad districts.

Zwak called on government to deploy further troops in order to take control and maintain security in the named districts.

The gunbattle between the Taliban militants and Afghan security forces broke out in Sangin district five days ago and reports suggest that clashes are still continuing between the two sides.

Provincial governor spokesman, Omar Zwak confirmed that the clashes are still going on between the two sides in Sangin district.

Heavy explosions were heard in capital Kabul late Tuesday night. Preliminary reports suggest a number of rockets landed near Kabul airport and a number of people were injured following the attack.

A security official said a rocket fired from Dehsabz area, landed close to the vicinity of the airport. He said it is yet not clear if the rocket attack incurred any casualties or not.

Eyewitnesses in the area had earlier said that one of the rockets landed in the house of a security official and five members of the same family were injured.

MORE MILITARY NEWS

**Iraqi Military Facing
'Psychological Collapse' After
Losses, Desertions:
"The Iraqi Army Has No Ability To
Defend Itself"
"The Reverses This Month Has Been
"Catastrophic"
"Sycophantic Generals, You Have Low
Morale And A Volunteer Force"**



Members of an Iraqi government volunteer force put on their newly issued boots in the city of Karbala, 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of Baghdad, Iraq, June 24, 2014.

June 22 By Loveday Morris and Karen DeYoung, Washington Post [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — The 300 U.S. advisers authorized to assist the Iraqi security forces will find an army in crisis mode, so lacking in equipment and shaken by desertions that it may not be able to win back significant chunks of territory from insurgents for months or even years, analysts and officials say.

After tens of thousands of desertions, the Iraqi military is reeling from what one U.S. official described as “psychological collapse” in the face of the offensive from militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

The desperation has reached such a level that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is relying on volunteers, who are in some cases receiving as little as a week’s military training, to protect his ever-shrinking orbit of control.

“Over time, what’s occurred is that the Iraqi army has no ability to defend itself,” said Rick Brennan, a Rand Corp. analyst and former adviser to U.S. forces in Iraq.

The government’s dire situation was evident Sunday at the Baghdad Operations Command, the nerve center of the capital’s security operations, run jointly by the Interior and Defense ministries.

Standing in front of an illuminated map, spokesman Brig. Gen. Saad Maan gestured toward the broad swaths of land outside the city’s boundaries that are now considered hostile territory.

“We treat all these areas surrounding us as hot zones,” he said.

Though Maan claimed that security forces were taking the offensive in some areas, advances by the Sunni insurgents in the western province of Anbar over the past few days have raised concerns that the armed forces may crumble further.

In recent weeks, ISIS has seized hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of military equipment from the Iraqi army, much of which has been smuggled back across the border to Syria, according to Iraqi officials.

Much of that equipment came from the United States.

Lt. Gen. Rasheed Fleih, head of the Anbar Operations Command, in the critical western province bordering Syria, put on a stoic front Sunday, claiming in a televised statement that “security forces are reviving” and that volunteers are being deployed to the area.

But the addition of tens of thousands of volunteers to the security forces has been chaotic.

Many are joining under the banners of militias, though Maan argued that they will not be able to function as such.

When they sign up, they will be given a “week or less” of training and be deployed where they are needed, he said.

“The basic problem with the Iraqi military is that it’s a sectarian force,” said James Jeffrey, a former U.S. ambassador to Iraq.

“That’s combined with the fact that you have sycophantic generals, you have low morale and a Shiite volunteer force. They didn’t do very much training. They don’t have the equipment or skills of the (ISIS) guys.”

The crisis in the armed forces is a result of corruption, poor leadership and intelligence, and severe inattention to training, said a former U.S. adviser to the Iraqi armed forces who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Those problems have turned what was a functioning military when U.S. troops withdrew in 2011 into an “empty shell that is resorting to a call to arms of men and boys off the street,” he said.

He added that the scale of the reverses this month has been “catastrophic.”

“It’s the fault of the people higher up. They should have done something,” said an Iraqi police officer who fled Mosul for the Kurdish territories when ISIS swept in. He gave his name only as Taha.

Taha, who had been a police officer for eight years, said commanding officers in the Iraqi security forces had ignored a surge in extremist violence in Mosul in the months leading up to the city’s fall.

The bleak situation in the Iraqi military looks unlikely to change soon.

Some of the most effective tools in the Iraqi arsenal are propeller planes and helicopters mounted with U.S.-supplied Hellfire missiles.

But two Iraqi officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media, said Sunday that they have run out of missiles, although a delivery is expected within days.

The army is attempting to regroup, though it will probably take years to restructure.

Troops and police officers who have sought to return to the security forces are quietly being organized on the border of Iraq’s Kurdish region, said Maan and Maliki.

“We are opening new bases and reconstructing units that collapsed in occupied areas,” Maliki said. Maan said the new forces include army, police and local volunteers. “Now is not a time to distinguish between army and police, anyone who is willing to work will work,” he said.

But Jabar Yawar, a spokesman for the Kurdish pesh merga security forces that control the front line between the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan and ISIS-occupied Mosul, denied that Iraqi forces were reconstituting units in that area.

“In Mosul and Salaheddin provinces, there is no Iraqi army or police or anything,” Yawar said.

And each day, ISIS appears to be capturing more ground, expanding its control to the villages at the margins of its burgeoning state, and along Iraq's border with Syria.

"There is no resistance from the Iraqi army because it has no nationalism, no leadership," he said. "There is no sense of protection for the nation."

Insurgents Attack Police Convoy 20 Miles From Center Of Baghdad; Rebels In Control Of Most Of The Military Airport In Tal Afar: "The Truce Came After The Army Abandoned Us. We Were Surrounded"

June 23, 2014 By Maria Abi-Habib, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]. Leith al-Haydair and Ali A. Nabhan in Baghdad contributed to this article.

BAGHDAD—Sunni militants brought their campaign against the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki closer to Baghdad on Monday, attacking a police convoy just 20 miles from the center of the capital and triggering a shootout that left at least 81 people dead.

Rebels of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham struck the convoy in Babil province on the main highway leading south from Baghdad. In the exchange of fire that followed, at least 71 prisoners in police custody, five policemen and five insurgents were killed, security officials said.

Nour al-Dine Kablan, an official in Mosul, said Monday that ISIS rebels were in control of most of the military airport in nearby Tal Afar. Rebels and government forces have been fighting for control of the city of 200,000 people, located 270 miles northwest of Baghdad, near Iraq's border with Syria.

The Iraqi Army commander in charge of Tal Afar, Maj. Gen. Mohammed al-Quraishi, fled the ISIS offensive to the semiautonomous region of Kurdistan. There, local TV stations have shown him posing with Kurdish Peshmerga forces.

The retreat is widely seen here as a personal humiliation for Mr. Maliki, who ordered Gen. Quraishi to Tal Afar to retake the city after dismissing the general's predecessor for poor performance in battle.

In another notable setback for Mr. Maliki and his Shiite-dominated government, one of the few Sunni towns in the country that supports him surrendered to insurgents on Monday after days of fighting with ISIS-led militants.

A delegation from Al Alam in northern Tikrit province, surrendered to insurgents and handed over government-issued weapons and vehicles to them, security officials said.

“The truce came after the army abandoned us. We were surrounded,” said a resident of the town, sounding a now-familiar scenario since ISIS insurgents attacked and took over Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, two weeks ago.

The truce with the rebels, who now occupy the president palace in Tikrit, called for the merger of the insurgents, able-bodied residents and police into one military force, the town resident said, adding that the police were first required to ask ISIS for redemption.

Besides expelling government forces from key cities and towns between Baghdad and Mosul in the north, ISIS rebels have seized most of the Iraqi towns that border Syria.

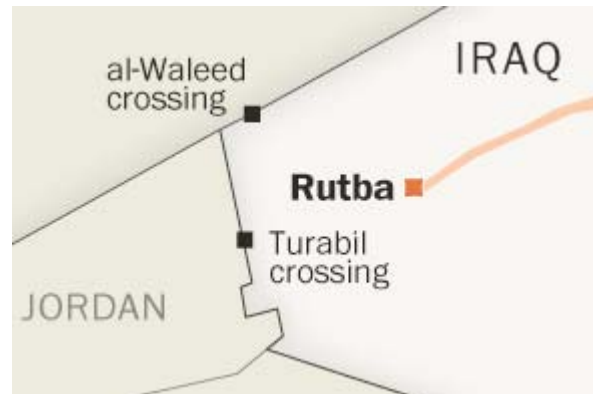
On Sunday, they took over the Turaibil border outpost, Iraq's only crossing with Jordan, only hours after capturing the al Walid crossing, the last Syrian-Iraqi border outpost in the Iraqi government's hands.

Iraqi Army Kills Civilians In Tikrit Airstrike:

**“Civilians Were Killed As They
Were Sleeping In Their Cars At
About 4 A.M., Waiting For Gas
Station To Open”**

**“If Maliki Thinks He Is Doing Well
Militarily, He Is Mistaken. His Strategy
Is A Mess”**

**“The Weekend's Gains Have Allowed
Antigovernment Forces To Create A
Ring Around Baghdad From The
North, West And South”**



[Washington Post graphic]

June 22, 2014 By Maria Abi-Habib, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD—

An Iraqi army airstrike in the country's north killed at least seven civilians and wounded 12 more, residents said Sunday, further inflaming antigovernment sentiment among the country's Sunnis that insurgents are thriving on as they continue to take territory.

Iraqi army helicopters fired on civilian cars lined up outside a gas station in the city of Tikrit in the early hours of Sunday morning, residents said, while the government said the only people killed in the attack were 42 insurgents.

“Maliki is a liar, he is untrustworthy. Those poor civilians were only trying to get gas for their cars,” said Alaa Abu Karam, a resident of Tikrit and a former army officer in Mr. Hussein's army before it was disbanded in 2003 after the U.S. invasion.

“If Maliki thinks he is doing well militarily, he is mistaken. His strategy is a mess.”

Mr. Abu Karam said the civilians were killed as they were sleeping in their cars at about 4 a.m., waiting for the gas station to open later that morning.

By Sunday afternoon, insurgents had also overrun towns and cities in western Iraq, advancing on the Jordanian and Saudi borders in Iraq's southwest.

ISIS overtook the desert area of Nukhayb, some 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of the Saudi border and about 150 kilometers south from Kerbala, a major Shiite town and the site of the Muslim sect's most holy shrines.

The militant group also seized the town of al Rutba on Saturday night, about 150 kilometers away from the Jordanian border, according to security officials in Anbar province.

The group captured the Al Jazeera Command Center, a crucial military installation, in the town of Rawah in al Anbar province on Sunday morning.

The weekend's gains have allowed antigovernment forces to create a ring around Baghdad from the north, west and south.

“They only need to demonstrate the ability to maneuver ground forces into (Baghdad's) city center, past the best that the Iraqi security forces can muster, and touch the flagpole,” the Institute for the Study of War, a think tank, said in a weekend report.

“ISIS Has Continued To Outthink And Outmanouvere The Iraqi Military, Despite Its Vastly Inferior Numbers”

Baji Refinery Captured; “They Have Captured All Border Crossings To Syria And Jordan”

23 June 2014 Martin Chulov in Baghdad, The Guardian & Jim Muir, BBC News, Irbil [Excerpts]

Sunni rebels in Iraq say they have fully captured the country's main oil refinery at Baiji, north of Baghdad.

It's been a really to-and-fro battle for Baiji. Now the rebels say it has finally been decided and they have taken over the whole complex.

There are reports that they are now handing the refinery over to local tribes and technicians with the aim of getting fuel production going again.

It has been disrupted for several days to huge effect.

If true, the capture of the complex would enable the rebels to supply Mosul with energy, which is seen as vital to the viability of the region they are carving out.

The refinery had been under siege for 10 days with the militant offensive being repulsed several times.

The Baiji refinery, in Salahuddin province, supplies a third of Iraq's refined fuel and the battle has already led to petrol rationing.

The insurgents have advanced from Anbar province in the west to the Haditha dam in central Iraq, which is the epicentre of the country's electricity grid. Iraqi reinforcements have been rushed to the area and the dam appears to be at no immediate risk of falling.

However Isis has continued to outthink and outmanouvere the Iraqi military, despite its vastly inferior numbers.

Isis has taken two key border crossings in Anbar province that link Iraq with Syria, pursuing its goal of forming a "caliphate" straddling both countries.

Further south they have also seized the Traybil crossing, the only legal crossing point between Iraq and Jordan.

They have captured all border crossings to Syria and Jordan.

Some Isis cells are now on the eastern outskirts of Baghdad.

Syria: Insurgents Cut High Voltage Supplying Damascus

6.23.14 Syrian Observatory for Human Rights [Excerpt]

Reef Dimashq province: unknown gunmen detonated a high voltage line, which supplies Damascus city and the southern area, what cut the power in them for few hours.

violent clashes took place between regime forces and Islamic battalions around al-Taiba town near al-Keswa.

YOUR INVITATION:

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.

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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed.

“Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

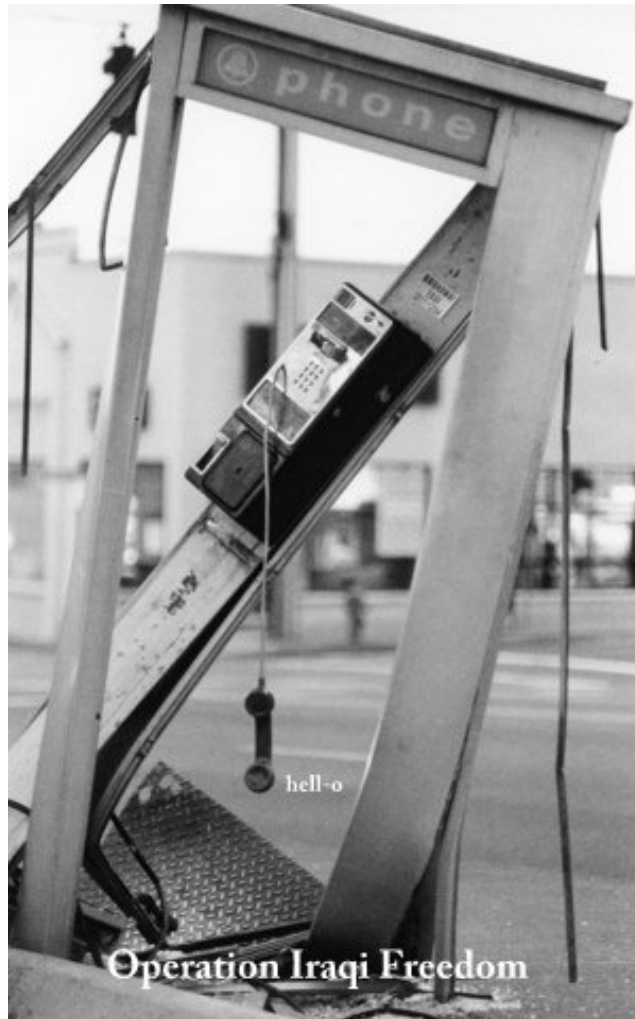
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**There is no democracy without socialism and no socialism without democracy.
-- Rosa Luxemburg**

The Final Call



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: June 22, 2014
Subject: Hell-o, Hell-o, Hell-o... (The Final Call)

The Final Call

President Obama encouraging Nouri al-Maliki to hang on in Baghdad as he promised that the U.S. Government would never abandon his courageous cause for democracy...

Hell-o, Hell-o, Hell-o...

The final image of America's cause in Iraq

**Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam**

Saigon 1975
Hell-o, Hell-o, Hell-o...

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

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

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

Unorthodox Iraqi General Considers Fighting The Enemy



Getty Images; Anadolu Agency

June 24, 2014 by Drew Ferrol, The Duffel Blog

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Desperate to stem the tide of ISIS militants overrunning the country, an Iraqi general has put forth a radical proposal of telling his soldiers and fellow officers they should try to defend themselves, and — most shockingly — in some instances, actually counterattack, Duffel Blog has learned.

“We have a quarter of a million troops, while ISIS only has 7,000,” Brig. Gen. Haddad said, trying to plead his case. “We also have tanks, artillery, and air power while they do not. We can put 35 soldiers up to every one of theirs. We would win a crushing victory even with just a half-assed plan of attack.”

While making an interesting case, Brig. Gen. Gabar Haddad has come up against stiff resistance from his fellow generals, who prefer to keep surrendering until American troops come in and fight for them. His suggestion flies in the face of the Iraqi Army's established doctrine of Flee, Surrender, or Do Both.

"Fight back?" Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki asked amidst shock and laughter. "That's a good one! We haven't done that since 1988!"

The numerically-superior Iraqi Army was defeated in Mosul, the country's second-largest city, in what one general said would be remembered as "a glorious moment for Iraq."

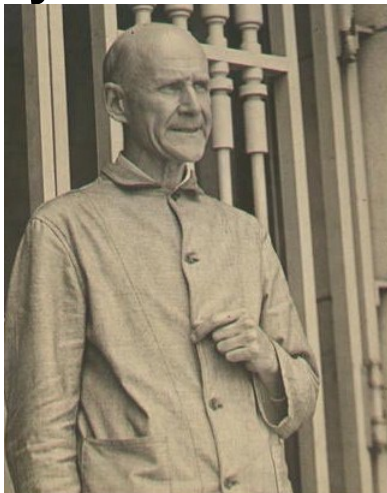
For now, the strategy of the Iraqi Army is to follow established doctrine of stripping off their uniforms and fleeing in terror, then once the Americans return to implement counterinsurgency doctrine, Iraqi soldiers are to implement insurgency doctrine and bomb them.

"Once they defeat ISIS we will bomb them again," Gen. Qanbar said of his "friends" the Americans. "It'll just be like old times. So for now, any Iraqi soldier holding a weapon and wearing a uniform is in violation of a direct order. Our men will give every inch of ground until they reach the sea, and then they will swim."

In a related story, the Kurdish Peshmerga has vowed to fight ISIS to the death, has taken ground from them, and still cannot be recognized as an actual country.

ANNIVERSARIES

June 26, 1918: Anniversary Of A Political Atrocity



Eugene V. Debs when he was a prisoner at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, sentenced for opposing U.S. entry into World War I.

U.S. Department of Labor, "Labor Hall of Fame Honoree"

Carl Bunin Peace History June 25 - July 1

[S]ocialist organizer Eugene Debs was arrested June 26, 1918, for giving an anti-war speech in Canton, Ohio, 10 days earlier.

He was charged with “uttering words intended to cause insubordination and disloyalty within the American forces of the United States, to incite resistance to the war, and to promote the cause of Germany,” despite his repeated and vehement criticism in the speech of Germany and its landed aristocracy, known as the Junkers.

“And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles.

“The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose — especially their lives.”

June 26, 1894: A Man Begins A Journey That Will Change The World



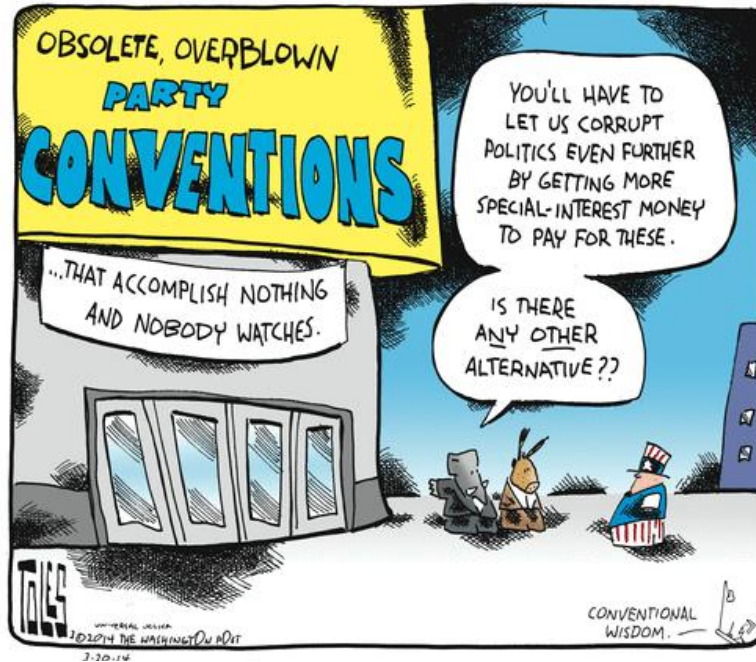
Mohandas Gandhi (center) as a young lawyer in Durban, South Africa in 1894

Carl Bunin Peace History June 22-29

Mohandas Gandhi, a young Indian lawyer from Porbandar in Gujarat province, urged the Natal (a province in South Africa) India Congress to run a campaign of education and peaceful noncooperation to assert and protect their rights as ethnic Indians in South Africa. Within days of Gandhi's arrival in South Africa the previous year, though he was a British subject and South Africa was under British rule,

He had been thrown off a train, assaulted by a white coachman, denied hotel rooms, and pushed off a sidewalk because his skin color defined his status and limited his rights.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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