

## **Military Resistance 14H8**



### **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

**American Service Member  
Killed In Helmand And Another  
Wounded Tuesday By A  
Roadside Bomb:  
“The Government Is Only Present  
In The District Administrative  
Center And All Around Are Under  
The Control Of The Insurgents”**

# “One Afghan Official Has Said The District Is On The Verge Of Being Overrun”

## “80 Percent Of Helmand Province Is Back Under Taliban Control”



One American service member was killed and another wounded by a roadside bomb blast Tuesday, Aug. 23, in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province. Photo Credit: Google Maps

August 23, 2016 By: Andrew deGrandpre and Andrew Tilghman; Military Times & August 22, 2016 The Associated Press. [Excerpts]

One American service member was killed and another wounded Tuesday by a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan.

Neither American has been identified. The wounded service member is in stable condition, according a statement issued by command in Kabul.

Six Afghan soldiers also were hurt. The American soldiers were conducting a walking patrol when the bomb exploded, said Army Col. Michael Lawhorn, a Kabul-based Defense Department spokesman.

The attack occurred in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, which has experienced growing violence in recent weeks as resurgent Taliban forces have reclaimed large swaths of territory previously secured by U.S. personnel.

**One Afghan official has said the district is on the verge of being overrun.**

The Taliban have seized a number of nearby districts in recent weeks.

Around 100 American troops have been deployed to a southern Afghan city at risk of falling to the Taliban, the spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan said Monday.

The head of Helmand's provincial council, Kareem Atal, told The Associated Press that battles were underway "on several fronts" in the province, closing off roads and highways.

**"Around 80% of the province is under the control of the insurgents," he said. "There are a number of districts that the government claims are under their control, but the government is only present in the district administrative center and all around are under the control of the insurgents."**

Tuesday's improvised explosive attack occurred during a joint U.S.-Afghan patrol, the NATO statement says. Officials said the mission was part of NATO's broad "train, advise and assist" activities.

The unit struck by the roadside bomb was not a part of the additional 100 troops deployed Monday, Lawhorn said.

Helmand province has been the scene of ferocious violence throughout the Afghanistan war, which marks its 15th anniversary this fall. Tens of thousands of U.S. Marines spent several years fighting to secure the region, which is home to a lucrative poppy trade that continues to fund a robust insurgency.

There are about 700 U.S. troops in Helmand. They are based at Camp Shorab, formerly known as Camp Bastion, which is connected to the facility formerly known as Camp Leatherneck. The troops are conducting a train, advise and assist mission with an Afghan Army Corps headquarters and an Afghan Police Zone headquarters.

**The recent casualties and additional deployments to Helmand come just a few weeks after Nicholson [Gen. John Nicholson], the top commander in Afghanistan, expressed optimism about the situation there.**

**MORE:**

## **U.S. Staff Sgt. Killed In Helmand:**

Aug. 24, 2016 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No: NR-302-16

Staff Sgt. Matthew V. Thompson, 28, of Irvine, California, died Aug. 23 in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, of injuries caused by an improvised explosive device that

detonated near his patrol while conducting dismounted operations. The incident is under investigation.

Thompson was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

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## **Insurgents Storm American University In Kabul: Twelve Dead**

8.24.25 by Sultan Faizy, Los Angeles Times & 08/25/16 Reuters & By LYNNE O'DONNELL, Associated Press

Twelve people, including seven students, three police and two security guards, were killed in an attack by gunmen on the American University in the Afghan capital, Kabul, police said on Thursday.

Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said "Most of the dead were killed by gun shots near the windows of their classrooms."

Security forces killed two suspected militants to end the attack on the compound, which began on Wednesday evening with a large explosion followed by gunfire, a police official said earlier.

Fraidoon Obaidi, chief of the Kabul police Criminal Investigation Department, told Reuters 44 people were wounded, including 35 students.

The attack began before 7 p.m. Wednesday with a car bomb attack at the university entrance that breached the walls and enabled "terrorists" to enter the campus, he said.

They were armed with grenades and automatic weapons.

Earlier, the Kabul police chief, Abdul Rahman Rahimi, said one foreign teacher was among the wounded.

Insurgents attacked during classes, setting off an explosion and trapping students and professors inside the building for several hours while dozens fled to safety, witnesses and officials said.

**AP photographer Massoud Hossaini was in a classroom with 15 students when he heard an explosion on the southern flank of the campus.**

"I went to the window to see what was going on, and I saw a person in normal clothes outside. He shot at me and shattered the glass," Hossaini said, adding that he fell on the glass and cut his hands.

The students then barricaded themselves inside the classroom, pushing chairs and desks against the door, and staying on the floor. Hossaini said at least two grenades were thrown into the classroom, wounding several of his classmates.

Hossaini and about nine students later managed to escape from the campus through an emergency gate.

"As we were running I saw someone lying on the ground face down, they looked like they had been shot in the back," he said.

Hossaini and the other students took refuge in a residential house near the campus, and were later safely evacuated by Afghan security forces.

About 40 students had managed to escape the building after the attack began around 7 p.m., a police source said.

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## **Explosion Targets Afghan, U.S. Forces Patrol; 3 Police Wounded**

Aug 23 2016 By Khaama Press

An explosion targeted the Afghan and the NATO forces in Bagram district of northern Parwan province late on Monday evening, local officials said.

The NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission confirmed an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack targeted the Afghan army vehicle during a partnered patrol.

RS further added that no Resolute Support or US soldiers were hurt in the attack.

In the meantime the local security officials in Bagram district said a suicide bomber detonated a Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) near a convoy of the US forces.

The officials further added that three policemen sustained injuries in the attack that took place around 6 pm local time in Qala-e-Nasro area.

According to the officials, the police forces were escorting the convoy when it came under the attack.

The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban insurgents have not commented regarding the report so far.

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**Afghan City Of Kunduz,  
Captured By The Taliban Last  
Year, In Danger Again:  
“Afghan Forces In Kunduz Fled  
The Advancing Taliban”  
“Militants Also Blew Up A Bridge To  
The North That Connects The  
Province To Tajikistan And Is An  
Economic Lifeline For The Area”  
“The Taliban Could Not Have Chosen  
A Better Time For Their Attacks Than  
Now”**



An Afghan police officer mans a checkpoint after clashes between Taliban and Afghan security forces in Kunduz on Aug. 22. (Jawed Kargar/European Pressphoto Agency )

8.21.16 by Sultan Faizy. Los Angeles Times & August 22 By Pamela Constable and Sayed Salahuddin, Wshington Post

The Taliban and Afghan government forces were wrestling for control of districts in northern Afghanistan on Sunday as officials vowed not to let the strategic city of Kunduz fall back into militant hands.

"It is a fighting situation up here," the Kunduz police chief, Qaseem Jangalbagh, said in a brief telephone interview Monday, as loud sounds of gunfire and heavy weapons could be heard in the background.

**Mohammed Yusuf Ayobi, head of the provincial council, described a more chaotic and dire situation when reached by phone.**

**He said that government helicopters were "pounding Taliban positions" but that the insurgents still controlled 80 percent of Khan Abad.**

Taliban spokesmen have also said they seized weapons and vehicles from retreating Afghan -forces.

**"There are lots of civilian and military casualties," Ayobi said.**

**"Hundreds of people who can are fleeing day by day."**

**He said that the insurgents were attacking the north and northwest sectors of the city and that the roads linking Kunduz to three neighboring provinces and Tajikistan "are all closed, mostly because of the fighting."**

Kunduz, the country's fifth-largest city, was briefly captured by the Taliban nearly one year ago. At the time, the loss marked a devastating blow to the struggling Kabul government and its beleaguered security forces, and prompted the U.S.-led military coalition to deploy dozens of troops and airstrikes to help the Afghans regain control of the city.

**Early Saturday, the Taliban launched another major effort to take Kunduz, attacking two districts on its eastern flank. The militants were then able to capture Khanabad.**

**While Afghan ground forces backed by airstrikes late Saturday recaptured the district of Khanabad, east of Kunduz, militants seized the district of Qala-e-Zal, west of the city, officials said.**

**"Unfortunately, the center of Qala-e-Zal district fell to the militants last night, but we will soon retake the district," Gen. Murad Ali Murad, deputy chief of army staff, told reporters**

**[Official definition of the United States Department of Defense military term "diversion". The act of drawing the attention and forces of an enemy from the point of the principal operation; an attack, alarm, or feint that diverts attention. T]**

The militants also blew up a bridge to the north that connects the province to Tajikistan and is an economic lifeline for the area.

**Officials said the Taliban began its operation against Kunduz on Wednesday, cutting power to the city the day before commemorations were being held nationwide to mark Afghanistan's independence.**

"The Taliban took the opportunity of the national independence day celebrations and increased their movements," said Asadullah Omarkhel, governor of Kunduz.

**With the Taliban threatening the city, several provincial officials and hundreds of residents fled.**

Omarkhel warned his staff members that they would be suspended from their posts if they did not show up for work.

**Afghan forces in Kunduz also fled the advancing Taliban.**

The governor of neighboring Takhar province led about 50 police into Khanabad to drive out the militants by late Saturday, officials said.

Afterward, the governor, Yasin Zia, lamented the performance of the Afghan army.

"The army didn't provide us with a single tank to expel the Taliban from Khanabad," Zia said.

Murad, the deputy army chief, traveled to Kunduz from the southern province of Helmand, where Afghan forces backed by U.S. airstrikes have been battling for weeks to keep the Taliban from capturing the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah. He said 43 Taliban fighters had been killed in the battle in Kunduz.

Analysts said Kunduz would be an important strategic prize for the Taliban for several reasons: It is close to the border and an important corridor to Central Asia, it produces an abundance of wheat and rice for domestic consumption, and it is an important city in the northern region far from the insurgents' traditional home base in southern Afghanistan.

**They also said the latest Taliban assaults are especially destabilizing for the Afghan government, which is facing strong public criticism and a crisis of legitimacy amid growing disputes between its two top leaders.**

**Its most vocal critics include former militia commanders from the northeast who control numerous troops in the Kunduz region.**

**"The Taliban attacks on Kunduz come at a very sensitive time politically," said retired Afghan army general Atiqullah Amarkhel. The insurgent advances and the discord between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah "can demoralize the army and security forces- in general," he said.**

**"The Taliban could not have chosen a better time for their attacks than now."**

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# **Main Bridge Totally Destroyed By Taliban In Kunduz Province**

## **“One Of The Main Connecting Points Between The Northern Provinces And The Central Asian States”**



Aug 22 2016 By Khaama Press

The Taliban militants have totally destroyed one of the main bridges connecting the northern provinces with the main Sher Khan port in north of Afghanistan.

According to the local security officials, the main Alchin bridge was totally destroyed by the Taliban militants in Kunduz late on Sunday night.

A commander of the Afghan armed forces in north Gen. Sher Aziz Kamalwal said the bridge has been totally destroyed and no vehicle can pass through the bridge at the moment.

The main Alchin bridge had 300 meters of length and was connecting the northern provinces with the Sher Khan port that was one of the main connecting points between the northern provinces and the Central Asian states.

Kunduz has been witnessing deteriorating security situation in the past one year amid rampant Taliban-led insurgency across the country.

The Taliban insurgents have intensified attacks on Kunduz province and launched numerous attacks on key districts of the province during the past several months.

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**Afghan Army Sends  
Reinforcements As Taliban  
Close In On Lashkar Gah:  
“Militants Have Captured Territory  
A Few Miles From City In Helmand,  
Blown Up Bridges Leading Into  
Town And Repeatedly Cut Off  
Main Road”  
“The Situation In Helmand Is  
Worse Than Ever”  
[Earlier Report Than Those Above]**

11 August 2016 by Sune Engel Rasmussen in Kabul, The Guardian [England].  
Additional reporting by Abdurrauf Mehrpoo. [Excerpts]

The Taliban are closing in on Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, after a string of gains in recent weeks.

Despite a drastic increase in US airstrikes, militants have captured territory a few miles from the city, blown up bridges leading into town and repeatedly cut off the main highway.

On Wednesday the Afghan army rushed reinforcements to Helmand to try to stem the advance.

The inability so far of the Afghan forces to secure a province where more international troops were deployed – and killed – than any other raises concern about their capability and the effectiveness of an international training mission.

**The Taliban have seized areas long under government control, taking most of Nad Ali and Nawa districts, on the edge of Lashkar Gah.**

**For years, Nawa was considered one of the safest Helmand districts.**

“The situation in Helmand is worse than ever,” said Ghulam Sakhi, a local police commander who last week had to surrender his village, Sayedabad, in Nad Ali.

In an apparent change of tactics, the Taliban have deployed a new “commando” force of several hundred elite fighters, according to the Associated Press. The Kandahar police chief, who has fought the Taliban for more than a decade, said the commandos were “well-equipped and highly armed”.

Brig Gen Charles Cleveland, spokesman for the international forces in Kabul, said that in the past two weeks US forces had conducted more than 25 airstrikes in Helmand. “Prior to the uptick in Taliban operations in late July, there really weren’t any strikes in Helmand,” he said. The US also has hundreds of troops in the province, deployed six months ago.

Helmand is Taliban heartland and of pivotal, symbolic importance to the western coalition, which concentrated more troops there than anywhere else in the country, despite Helmand housing only about 3% of the population.

Seizing Lashkar Gah would give the Taliban an even bigger propaganda victory than their temporary capture of Kunduz in the north last year.

In the ensuing defence of Kunduz, a US airstrike destroyed a hospital run by Doctors Without Borders (MSF).

On Wednesday, MSF said it had shared GPS coordinates of the 300-bed public hospital it supports in Helmand with all warring parties.

“We are concerned by the evolution of the situation, obviously,” said Guilhem Molinie, MSF’s Afghanistan director, adding that he had relocated a number of non-medical foreign staff but maintained operations.

“The war could reach urban areas that are populated by a lot of civilians,” he said. “The evacuation possibilities of civilians are limited.”

**Fleeing Lashkar Gah has become difficult, as the Taliban have repeatedly blocked, mined or ambushed outgoing roads, including the highway to Kandahar.**

Lashkar Gah presents a different kind of battleground than Kunduz.

What the two cities have in common, though, is a security force struggling to maintain unity. In Kunduz, most government forces fled the city without a fight. In Helmand, pockets of security forces have defected to the Taliban in the heat of battle.

Moreover, Helmand’s forces have been beset by accusations of corruption and poor performance.

**A government investigation this year revealed that at least 40% of enlisted troops in Helmand did not exist.**

A recent change in leadership in the 215th Corps has failed to deliver tangible security.

Raz Mohammad, a resident of Marjah who fled with his family to Lashkar Gah, said: "Bullets were flying around us 24 hours a day. We couldn't live in our houses or work in the fields, so we decided to leave our house and properties behind."

His family is now holed up in an old house in the provincial capital without water or toilet facilities.

**"If the government forces fight well, Taliban will not capture Lashkar Gah. But if they don't fight, like they didn't in Nawa where they left the checkpoints for Taliban, of course the Taliban will capture Lashkar Gah," he said.**

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## **POLICE WAR REPORTS**

**State Trooper Kills An Unarmed Deaf Father Who Was Trying To Communicate Via Sign Language After Being Pulled Over For Speeding Violation: "He Could Not Hear Their Warnings. He Could Not Hear Their Commands"**

**"If Reports From Neighbors Are Accurate, It Doesn't Appear The Officer Even Tried, But Pretty Much Shot And Killed Harris Mere Seconds After He Got Out Of The Car"**

# “Neighbors Blasted The Decision To ‘Shoot First, Ask Questions’ Later”



Harris' family (above, with Harris second from left)

22 August 2016 By KHALEDA RAHMAN FOR DAILYMAIL.COM

A North Carolina state trooper shot dead a deaf father who was apparently trying to communicate using sign language after he was pulled over for a speeding violation.

Daniel Kevin Harris, 29, who has a four-year-old son, was killed just feet from his home in Charlotte by trooper Jermaine Saunders on Thursday evening.

Police say Saunders tried to pull Harris over for a speeding violation on Interstate 485 at around 6.15pm, but the driver led authorities on a brief pursuit before stopping.

Officials said that's when the driver got out of his car and an encounter took place between the driver and the trooper, causing a shot to be fired. Harris died at the scene.

But witnesses said Harris – who was unarmed – was shot 'almost immediately' after he exited his vehicle, WCNC reports.

They also say he appeared to be trying to communicate with the trooper using sign language.

However, Saunders has said he shot Harris because he was advancing and not following commands, WCCB reports.

But Harris' immediate family, who are also hearing impaired, think he was 'just afraid' and not understanding the situation.

Jay Harris, who spoke to the local station through a sign language interpreter, believes his brother was not aware that troopers were trying to pull him over.

'He was unarmed - and he is a deaf individual, and I think that he was just afraid,' he said.

'He could not hear their warnings. He could not hear their commands to stop or to stay away from them.'

He added that his mother has been in the hospital with a heart issue since the shooting. 'He was shot, and now we're left with nothing,' Jay said.

Neighbors blasted the decision to 'shoot first, ask questions' later.

'You're pulling someone over who is deaf, they are handicapped. To me, what happened is totally unacceptable,' neighbor Mark Barringer told the local station.

'They should have de-escalated and been trained to realize that this is an entirely different situation.'

A Charlotte-Mecklenburg police report identified Harris as hearing and speech impaired, but did not give further details about his impairments.

Saunders was placed on administrative leave, which is standard procedure after an officer-involved shooting.

State Bureau of Investigation spokeswoman Audria Bridges said agents will interview Saunders this week.

However, the SBI report doesn't mention that Harris is impaired.

The police report identifies Harris as white. Bridges said she was uncertain of the trooper's race.

Harris' family have set up a fundraising page since his death, which has raised almost \$5,000 so far, for his memorial and cremation costs.

In a post on the page, they say: 'He was unarmed when shot and killed by a state trooper. 'His tragic death could have been prevented. Police brutality ends NOW.'

They also plan to set up a foundation in his name to 'educate and provide law enforcement proper training on how to confront deaf people.'

The family also hope to change the DMV registration system to require states to set up a 'DEAF' alert to appear when a car's license plate is looked up.

'With this change, Daniel will be a hero in our deaf community,' they add.

Activist Shaun King notes that it's not clear if Harris understood what was happened in the moments before his death 'since he could not have heard the sirens' in his New York Daily News column.

He adds that while some cases of police shootings pose genuine threats to law enforcement, this case is 'hard to justify.' 'Beyond being unarmed, deaf and mute, Daniel Harris appears to have been a rather small, thin man,' he wrote in his column.

King insists opening fire could not have been the trooper's only option.

'What threat did Harris pose? Was a Taser or pepper spray used? Could the officer truly not subdue Harris on his own?

**'If reports from neighbors are accurate, it doesn't appear the officer even tried, but pretty much shot and killed Harris mere seconds after he got out of the car.'**

**He added: 'Virtually any other option the officer could've considered was better than what he chose in this case, but here we are with another avoidable casualty of police violence.'**

**'Daniel Harris should be alive with a speeding ticket, but instead his family is raising funds for his cremation.'**

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## **MILITARY NEWS**

**Top General Testifies At  
Bergdahl Hearing:  
"In October 2015, McCain Told A  
Reporter That If Bergdahl Wasn't  
Punished, '... We're Going To Have  
To Have A Hearing In The Senate  
Armed Services Committee'"**

# **“Weeks Later, Abrams Sent Bergdahl’s Case To A General Court-Martial, Rejecting A Hearing Officer’s Recommendation For A Lower-Level Tribunal”**

## **“Abrams Has Given Different Explanations Of Destroying Letters And Considering The Defense Objections In An Earlier Interview And A Written Affidavit”**



August 24, 2016 By: Jonathan Drew, The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — The Army general who ordered Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl’s court-martial testified Wednesday that he wasn’t swayed by negative comments from a powerful U.S. senator, saying that he takes his duty "very, very seriously."

Gen. Robert B. Abrams, the four-star head of U.S. Army Forces Command, found himself in the unusual position of defending his objectivity against a defense effort to remove him from the case.

**Abrams referred the case to a general court-martial rather than a lower-level tribunal in December, weeks after U.S. Sen. John McCain indicated there would be repercussions if Bergdahl weren’t punished.**

He grew testy when a defense attorney asked him to explain why he wasn’t afraid of McCain, who leads a Senate committee with the power to approve or scuttle assignments for top military commanders.



"I have served my country for 34 years. I am at the highest rank I am ever going to attain," he replied, adding that he has a mandate to ensure a fair trial for Bergdahl. "I take that duty and responsibility very, very seriously."

Addressing defense attorney William Helixon as "counselor," Abrams added, "Up to this point no one — and I mean no one — has tried to influence me in any way."

**In two motions, the defense had questioned whether Abrams faced improper conflicts. The judge, Army Col. Jeffery Nance, ordered Abrams to testify because of a reference in one of the motions to the general destroying dozens of letters from Bergdahl supporters and critics.**

It's unusual for a four-star general to testify in a court-martial hearing, said Eric Carpenter, a former Army lawyer who teaches law at Florida International University.

The defense motion to disqualify Abrams cites his prior role advising former U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel during efforts to return Bergdahl from captivity. It also raises questions about whether Abrams considered defense objections to the findings of a preliminary hearing. If granted, a disqualification would allow a different commander to decide whether a court-martial is needed.

Under the judge's questioning, Abrams said he consulted with a military lawyer and concluded he didn't need to keep the approximately 100 letters. He said it's common for officers to send trash to shredders or incinerators.

Abrams said he wasn't influenced by the letters and none came from government officials, current service members or anyone with firsthand knowledge.

"I can tune out all of that outside noise because I understand my duty and my accountability," he said.

**The judge, who called the superior officer "Sir," then turned to McCain's comments.**

**In October 2015, McCain told a reporter that if Bergdahl wasn't punished, "... we're going to have to have a hearing in the Senate Armed Services Committee." Weeks later, Abrams sent Bergdahl's case to a general court-martial, rejecting a hearing officer's recommendation for a lower-level tribunal.**

**When asked whether McCain's comments affected his decision, Abrams replied, "Absolutely not."**

Under questioning from Helixon, Abrams said he was aware of McCain's comments but disapproved of them. "Making public statements about the disposition of a very high-profile case by anyone is inappropriate," he said. He added that as the court-martial convening authority, he worried his pool of military jurors could be affected by what McCain said.

A separate defense motion argues the charges against Bergdahl should be thrown out because of McCain's comments. A spokesman for McCain said the senator would not comment on the pending case.

Bergdahl, who is from Hailey, Idaho, walked off his post in Afghanistan in 2009 and wound up a captive of the Taliban and its allies until 2014 when the Obama administration won his release by trading Guantanamo Bay detainees. Bergdahl faces charges of desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, the latter of which carries up to a life sentence. His trial is scheduled for February 2017.

**Abrams also further explained his role advising Hagel during the Bergdahl recovery efforts. Prosecutors have argued that he played no substantive role. The defense secretary would ask questions about technical aspects of plans to recover Bergdahl, Abrams testified.**

**He said he'd offer a response such as: "Yes, Mr. Secretary, I have reviewed the plan multiple times ... I think it's a sound plan."**

Lawyers for Bergdahl say Abrams was too closely involved in efforts to recover Bergdahl to oversee the case now.

**Lt. Col. Frank Rosenblatt, a defense attorney, also argued Abrams has given different explanations of destroying the letters and considering the defense objections in an earlier interview and a written affidavit.**

**"We should not accept Gen. Abrams' self-serving summary that he was not influenced by anyone," Rosenblatt told the judge.**

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



**“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.**

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

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

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

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

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

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

## **The Truth Behind Agent Orange**



Pittsburgh, Pa. 2008. Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Sent: May 13, 2016  
Subject: The Truth Behind Agent Orange

**Full Disclosure**

A picture is worth a thousand lies.

Jay Wenk

WWII Combat Veteran

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

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

## **“Whilst Large-Scale Industry Preached Freedom And Peace Between Nations It Also Turned The World Into An Armed Camp As Never Before In History”**

**Comment: T**

As may be seen in the article below, the enemy of every American soldier is the Imperial Government in Washington DC.

The class of capitalists who command the political power of this society have heaped up the wealth on top, and keep grabbing for more, using their government to do it, while the rest of us try to scrape buy, unable to buy what capitalism could produce.

Thus we see the present mountain of idle productive capacity worldwide, while trillions of \$ of the wealth our labor produces are appropriated by their class and sits hoarded in their banks, finding no profitable investment for them anywhere, as they will only produce what we need if there is profit in it for them.

Those who are not rich and powerful have nothing to gain from Imperial wars of invasion and occupation, earnestly work for their defeat, and offer every possible assistance to the soldiers organizing against Imperial war.

There are many U.S. soldiers today who understand who their enemy is: the Imperial domestic enemy headquartered in Washington DC.

Americans who have nothing to gain from Wars of Empire -- civilians and troops together -- will strike down the Imperial regime that infests Washington DC, thereby regaining our liberties and wellbeing.

That storm will come.

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From: KARL MARX; The Story of His Life  
By Franz Mehring, 1918  
Translated from the German by Edward Fitzgerald

The capitalist mode of production, an embodied contradiction, both produces and destroys modern states.

It intensifies all national antagonisms to the utmost and at the same time it creates all nations in its own image.

So long as the capitalist mode of production exists, these contradictions are insoluble, and therefore the brotherhood of man about which all bourgeois revolutions have sung so sweetly has suffered defeat again and again.

Whilst large-scale industry preached freedom and peace between nations it also turned the world into an armed camp as never before in history.

However, with the disappearance of the capitalist mode of production its contradictions will vanish also. It is true that the proletarian struggle for emancipation must develop on a national basis because the capitalist process of production develops within national limits, and in the beginning therefore the proletariat in each country finds itself face to face with its own bourgeoisie.

Despite this, however, the proletariat need not submit to the merciless competition which has always destroyed all bourgeois dreams of international peace and freedom.

As soon as the workers realize that they must get rid of competition in their own ranks if they are to offer effective resistance to the superior power of capital — and this realization coincides with the first awakening of their class-consciousness — then it is only a step to the deeper realization that competition between the working classes of the various countries must cease too, and still further that the working classes must cooperate internationally if they are to overthrow the international dominance of the bourgeoisie.

Very early in the history of the modern working-class movement therefore, a tendency towards internationalism made itself felt.

**What the bourgeoisie, thanks to the narrowing of its horizon by its profit interests, regards as unpatriotic, as ignorance and lack of understanding, is in reality a vital condition for the very existence of the proletarian struggle for emancipation.**

Although this struggle can solve the antagonism between nationalism and internationalism, whilst the bourgeoisie is condemned to writhe under it as long as it lives, the workers possess no magic wand in this respect any more than in any other, and they are not able to turn the hard and difficult climb into a level and easy path.

The modern working class has to fight its battles under conditions created by historical development.

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

### **How Israel Incites Palestinian Violence:**

**“It Is Not Just Soldiers And Guns”  
“A Structure That Affects All Aspects  
Of Palestinian Life”**

**“Checkpoints, Travel Restrictions,  
Permits, Walls And Fences, Courts And  
Prisons, Home Demolitions, Land  
Appropriations, Expropriation Of Natural  
Resources, And, Too Often, Lethal  
Force”**

June 14, 2016 By Ben Ehrenreich, POLITICO LLC. Ben Ehrenreich is a freelance journalist and novelist. This article has been adapted from his latest book, *The Way to the Spring: Life and Death in Palestine*, which will be published on June 14 by Penguin Press.

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The news was familiar but no less alarming for the ugly déjà vu: four Israelis killed on Wednesday night by Palestinian gunmen in the heart of Tel Aviv. Israel's government, the most right-wing in the country's history, responded with measures that the UN

promptly warned might count as collective punishment: flooding the West Bank with troops, sealing off the West Bank and Gaza, and revoking entry permits that had allowed 83,000 Palestinians to cross into Israel for work, worship and medical care.

**On Thursday, the day after the shootings, Tel Aviv's Mayor Ron Huldai found the courage to state the obvious—that violence will persist until the occupation ends. Israel “is perhaps the only country in the world holding another nation under occupation without civil rights,” Huldai said.**

Such frankness counts as bravery these days, but even Huldai was understating the truth.

It's not the mere fact of a military occupation, of Israeli troops on Palestinian territory, that provokes such attacks. It can be difficult to comprehend from across the Atlantic, or even from usually tranquil Tel Aviv, but the occupation, as I have observed while reporting from the West Bank since 2011, functions as a massive mechanism for the creation of uncertainty, dispossession and systematic humiliation.

**It is not just soldiers and guns, but a far-reaching structure that affects all aspects of Palestinian life—a complex web of checkpoints, travel restrictions, permits, walls and fences, courts and prisons, endless constraints on economic possibilities, home demolitions, land appropriations, expropriation of natural resources, and, too often, lethal force.**

No amount of preventive repression or collective punishment will bring an end to the bloodletting in Tel Aviv or elsewhere. As long as this oppressive system stands, and the United States continues to support it with billions of dollars a year in military aid, despair will spread, and with it death.

A conversation I had two summers ago with a former Israeli soldier named Eran Efrati opened one small window onto how the occupation works.

We met in Jerusalem at the beginning of a war on Gaza that would leave more than 2,000 Palestinians dead.

Efrati had long since left the army and become an anti-occupation activist, but he spent most of 2006 and 2007 stationed in the southern West Bank city of Hebron. He was 19 when he arrived there and at the time saw little reason to question the Israeli military's presence in the city.

**At his first briefing, he recalled an officer asking the troops what they would do if they saw a Palestinian running at a settler with a knife.**

**“Of course the answer was you shoot him in the center of his body,” Efrati said.**

**The officer posed the question in reverse: What if it was the settler with a knife? “And the answer was you cannot do anything. The best you can do is call the police, but you're not allowed to touch them.**

**From day one the command was, ‘You cannot touch the settlers.’” This made sense to him, Efrati said. Palestinians were the enemy. The settlers seemed a little crazy, but they were Jews.**

A few days later, thousands of settlers arrived from all over the West Bank to celebrate a religious holiday. The army imposed a curfew to keep Palestinians off the streets.

**Efrati’s first task as a soldier in Hebron was to throw stun grenades into an elementary school to announce the beginning of the curfew.**

“I just did it, like everyone else,” he said, “and within seconds, hundreds of kids ran outside. I was standing at the entrance and a lot of them looked at me in the eyes—that was the first time that it hit me. All of a sudden I understood what I was doing. I understood what I looked like.”

That weekend, Efrati recalled, settlers filled the central city. He was assigned to escort a group of them into the Patriarchs’ Tomb, a site holy to both Islam and Judaism, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their wives Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah are believed to be buried. The settlers were allowed into the Palestinian side of the site, into the mosque.

What he saw there shocked him: Israeli children were peeing on the floors and burning the carpets. Their parents were there—the mosque was packed with settlers—but no one was stopping them.

He and another soldier grabbed one of the children and took a cigarette lighter from his hand. “He started screaming at us,” Efrati said. “We laughed at him.” Five minutes later, “one of our very, very high-ranking officers came inside the mosque and said, ‘Did you steal something from the kid?’” They tried to explain, but the officer only repeated the question. “We said yes.”

The officer ordered them to give it back and apologize. They found the child, apologized and returned the lighter. The boy ran right into the next room, Efrati said, and resumed setting fire to the carpets.

**“If He’s Saying Something, Hit Him. If He Turns Around, Hit Him. Just Make Sure That You’re Completely In Control”**

Things got weirder.

Efrati was put in charge of a checkpoint separating the area of Hebron inhabited by settlers from the larger Palestinian city. He described it as grueling, mind-numbing work, standing in the cold for as long as 16 hours, usually hungry and always sleep-deprived.

**Inflicting humiliation was part of the assignment. Schoolteachers would cross dressed in suits and ties. The soldiers would make them strip in front of their students. “Sometimes we would make them wait for hours in their underwear,” Efrati said.**

**The pretext was to check them for weapons.**



“Nobody thought that anything would happen to them,” he said, but the troops were told again and again by their officers that all Palestinians were potential threats, that anyone might stab them if they dropped their guard for a moment. That notion, Efrati said, “made us very, very aggressive. So you would push them against the wall, undress them, take your weapon and hit them a few times.

“If he’s saying something, hit him. If he turns around, hit him. Just make sure that you’re completely in control.”

His conscience began to nag at him. He started bringing bags of Bamba—a popular Israeli snack food, like Cheez Doodles, only peanut flavored and not phosphorescent orange—to the checkpoint and offering them to children. After a few days, “the first brave kid came up, grabbed a bag of Bamba and ran away.” Efrati was thrilled. Not long after, a Palestinian boy of about eight years old asked him for a treat. This boy didn’t run.

He opened the bag, and offered some to Efrati. They sat and ate the chips together. When the boy walked off, Efrati felt ecstatic. He could finally be the man he wanted to be, a soldier who was loved for his kindness and who at the same time, as he put it, “was protecting my country from a second Holocaust.”

When he got back to the base that night, he was ordered to eat quickly and prepare for another shift, not at the checkpoint but on a “mapping” expedition into into the section of the city governed by the Palestinian Authority.

He was still so high from his success with the Bamba that he didn’t mind the extra work.

**The routine was simple: “You go into houses in the middle of the night, get everybody outside, take a photo of the family, and start going around the house, destroying things.”**

**The idea was to search for weapons, “but we also needed to send a message,” Efrati said, to make sure the residents never lost “the feeling of being chased.”**

(It’s awkward in English, but it’s a single word in Hebrew. His officers used it a lot, Efrati said.) His job was to draft maps of each house, charting the rooms, the doors and the windows. “If at some point there was a terror attack from that specific house,” the army would be ready.

That night, they searched, trashed and mapped two houses in the neighborhood of Abu Sneineh.

It was snowy and cold. When they were done, the sun had not yet risen, so their officer chose one more house, apparently at random. They forced the family outside and into the snow and went in and started searching. Efrati opened the door to a child’s room—he remembered seeing a painting of Winnie-the-Pooh on one wall—and had begun sketching when he realized that there was someone in the bed.

A young boy leaped out from under the covers. He was naked. Startled, Efrati raised his gun, aiming at the child. It was the kid from the checkpoint that afternoon. “He started

peeing himself,” Efrati said, “and we were just shaking, both of us, we were just standing there shaking and we didn’t say a word.”

The boy’s father, coming down the stairs with an officer, saw Efrati pointing a rifle at his son and raced into the room. “But instead of pushing me back,” Efrati said, “he starts slapping his kid on the floor. He’s slapping him in front of me and he’s looking at me saying, ‘Please, please don’t take my child. Whatever he did, we’ll punish him.’”

In the end, the officer decided that the man’s behavior was suspicious, that “he was hiding something.” He ordered Efrati to arrest him.

“So we took the father, blindfolded him, cuffed his hands behind his back and put him in a military jeep.” They dumped him like that at the entrance to the base. “He stayed there for three days in a very torn-up shirt and boxer shorts. He just sat there in the snow.” Eventually, Efrati summoned the courage to ask his officer what would happen to the boy’s father. “He didn’t even know what I was talking about,” Efrati said. “He was like, ‘Which father?’” Efrati reminded him. “You can release him,” the officer said. “He learned his lesson.”

After cutting the plastic ties that bound the man’s wrists, untying the blindfold and watching him run off barefoot in his underwear through the streets, Efrati realized that he had never given his commander the maps he had drawn. He hurried back to the officer’s room. “I really fucked up,” he told him, apologizing for his negligence.

The officer wasn’t angry. “It’s okay,” he said. “You can throw them away.”

Efrati was confused. He protested: wasn’t mapping a vital task that might save other soldiers’ lives?

The officer got annoyed. “He says, ‘Come on, Efrati. Stop bitching. Go away.’” But Efrati kept arguing. He didn’t understand.

**“If We Go Into Their Houses All The Time, If You Arrest People All The Time, If They Feel Terrified All The Time, They Will Never Attack Us. They Will Only Feel Chased After”**

When it became apparent that he wasn’t going anywhere, the officer told him: “We’ve been doing mappings every night, three or four houses a night, for forty years.” He personally had searched and mapped the house in question twice before with other units.

Efrati was even more confused.

**The officer took pity, and explained: “If we go into their houses all the time, if you arrest people all the time, if they feel terrified all the time, they will never attack us. They will only feel chased after.”**

That, Efrati said, “was the first time I understood that everything I was told was complete bullshit.” From then on, he said, “I didn’t stop doing the things I did, I just stopped thinking.”

**Of course Efrati’s officer was wrong.**

**If you terrorize people long enough, they eventually lose their fear. They hold onto the anger.**

This last October, after a year of relative calm, young Palestinians began attacking Israeli soldiers, police and civilians, occasionally with guns or cars but most often with household implements: knives, scissors, screwdrivers.

The attacks were uncoordinated and outside the control of the Palestinian leadership or the traditional armed factions. Many occurred in or near Hebron, often at checkpoints or other sites of friction between Palestinian civilians and the Israeli military, but also on buses and trains in Jerusalem, in supermarkets and in the streets.

**In November, Major General Herzl Halev, Israel’s highest ranking military intelligence officer, explained to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s cabinet that the attacks were not primarily ideological.**

**They were, he said, motivated by rage and frustration and carried out by youth—mainly teenagers—who “felt they had nothing to lose.” In fact, they had a great deal to lose, as much as anyone, their whole lives ahead of them. But the fact that so many were willing to throw it away, and to take others with them, testifies to the depths of the despair bred by Israel’s occupation.**

**When I was back in Israel and the West Bank earlier this month, the violence appeared to be ebbing. Until Wednesday’s shootings, no Israelis had been killed by Palestinians since February 18.**

**In the same period, Israeli security forces killed 34 Palestinians, including a six-year-old girl and her 10-year-old brother who died when an air strike hit their family’s home in the Gaza Strip.**

**Their names were Israa and Yasin Abu Khussa.**

**Such deaths rarely make headlines here, but Palestinians are well aware of them. So long as they continue, and the occupation drags on, we can all expect many more opportunities to grieve.**

**To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:**

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