

GI SPECIAL 7F8:



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

“We’ve Had More Injuries From Machine Gun Fire Than From IEDs”

“Reports Of Insurgents Displaying Unusually Good Marksmanship And Other Tactical Skills”

**“Insurgents Wore Body Armor
And ‘Kevlar Helmets’ And Used
Smoke Grenades To Conceal Their
Movement As They Broke”
“Insurgents Displaying Improved
Shooting Skills With AK-Series
Assault Rifles”
“Insurgents Using ‘Very Accurate PKM
Fire’ At A Range Of 600 To 800 Meters”**

6.15.09 By Sean D. Naylor, Army Times [Excerpts]

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LAGMAN, QALAT, Afghanistan

U.S. troops reported a fierce firefight May 28 against Farsi-speaking insurgents who wore body armor and “Kevlar helmets” and used smoke grenades.

The U.S. soldiers killed an estimated 35 insurgents **[really stupid lying bullshit: as you will see below, the actual U.S. troops doing the actual fighting honestly report they do not know what the opposing casualties were]** and suffered no casualties, but say the battle demonstrated the increasing sophistication of some guerrilla groups here.

The battle, in northern Zabul province’s Deh Chopan district, marked the first time that insurgents have been reported speaking Farsi and using such protective gear in this part of Afghanistan, and indicated the presence of a large, well-trained foreign force in the area, according to U.S. troops.

It was the largest engagement of the most violent month in Zabul since at least 2004, they said.

The firefight erupted when a company-size force that combined infantry platoons from B Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, and Special Forces A-teams moved north from Forward Operating Base Baylough, a tiny position that represents the only coalition or Afghan government presence in Deh Chopan.

“We were doing reconnaissance,” said Maj. Greg Cannata, who, as the senior 1-4 Infantry officer in Afghanistan, monitored the battle from Task Force Zabul headquarters at this base about 60 kilometers south of Baylough.

“We had reporting of enemy activity to the north of Baylough in a fairly large size, so we massed forces into Baylough to basically conduct reconnaissance of the area and confirm or deny the intelligence that we had,” he said.

Cannata said the U.S. troops reported coming under fire within six kilometers north of Baylough from insurgents who wore body armor and “Kevlar helmets” and used smoke grenades to conceal their movement as they broke.

An AH-64 Apache attack helicopter broke off from escorting a supply helicopter run to Baylough to support the U.S. troops in contact and fired off almost all its ammunition.

Cannata expressed disappointment that although U.S. forces killed about three dozen insurgents **[the silly stupid fuck just can’t keep from lying every time he opens his stupid fucking lying mouth and moves his stupid fucking lying tongue: read on.]** without taking any casualties, neither the 1-4 troops nor the SF soldiers had moved forward to conduct any “exploitation” of the bodies to determine the type and origin of their equipment.

But in a May 17 interview, B Company’s 2nd Platoon leader, 1st Lt. Jason Basilides, who is the senior U.S. officer permanently stationed at Baylough, said the insurgents typically made it difficult to conduct any sort of assessment of their casualties.

“After they break contact, they usually take their dead and their wounded away,” he said.

The insurgents’ modern gear and the relative sophistication of their tactics and marksmanship indicated that these were not local guerrillas. The use of body armor, helmets and smoke grenades is “fairly rare” anywhere in Afghanistan, and “most likely indicates a skilled group ... foreign fighters with funding and previous experience (and training,” an Army source in Afghanistan said.

The Army source in Afghanistan cautioned against taking the interpreters’ word that the language was Farsi. What they heard was “likely not a known language to the ‘terps, but difficult to identify due to the variety of dialects, especially in the remote valleys of Afghanistan,” the Army source said.

The tactical skill displayed by the insurgents in the May 28 battle, particularly in marksmanship, is part of a trend in Zabul, which has been a Taliban stronghold.

“Having been in direct-fire engagements with the Taliban here, I can tell you they’re not particularly well trained,” said Maj. Paul Darling, the senior mentor of the Afghan National Police in Zabul. That is still the overwhelming view held by troops here.

But as the level of violence has risen, so have reports of insurgents displaying unusually good marksmanship and other tactical skills.

“They’ve got marksmanship training somewhere that is making it much more accurate than normal,” Cannata said, adding that the insurgents were displaying improved shooting skills with AK-series assault rifles and PKM machine guns.

“We have reports of training camps in Deh Chopan,” he said. “They are doing training there. Where the training camps are, we’re working on, and what specifically they’re training, we’re working on.”

Capt. Andrew Webber, a mentor to the Afghan National Army’s 1st Kandak (Battalion), 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, based at FOB Sweeney in southern Zabul’s Shinkay district, said this year he, too, had observed insurgents using “very accurate PKM fire” at a range of 600 to 800 meters.

“On numerous occasions we’ve been hit with accurate machine gun fire,” Webber said. “We’ve had more injuries from machine gun fire than from IEDs.”

MORE:

Insurgent Attacks Up 800% From 2004; “Last Week, There Were About 400”

June 11, 2009 By STEPHEN CASTLE, New York Times & By LARA JAKES, Associated Press Writer & June 12, 2009 By ADAM B. ELLICK: The New York Times [Excerpts]

Gen. David H. Petraeus, the senior American commander for Iraq and Afghanistan, said this week that violence here had reached a new high and warned of increasing difficulties.

Last week, there were about 400 insurgent attacks including ambushes, small arms volleys, assaults on Afghan infrastructure and government offices, and roadside bomb and mine explosions, compared with slightly fewer than 250 each week in June of last year and with about 50 per week in 2004.

MORE:

“A Huge Increase In Insurgent Activity Has Been Recorded In Helmand” Deaths Of Foreign Troops Up 78% On A Year Ago;

Obama Regime Sending U.S. Troops There, UK Government Rejects Plan To Send More

Plans drawn up by UK defence chiefs for an extra 2,000 British troops to be deployed to Helmand have been rejected by Gordon Brown, partly because of Treasury concern about the cost, and partly, say Whitehall officials, because the plans were not convincing.

11 June 2009 Richard Norton-Taylor, Guardian News and Media Limited

A huge increase in insurgent activity has been recorded in Helmand, the Afghan province where British soldiers are based and where the Taliban is concentrating its attacks, according to NATO figures released today.

Deaths of foreign troops across Afghanistan rose by 78% over the first three months of this year compared with the same period in 2008. The number of British soldiers killed continued at a high rate, with 12 killed last month.

During the first quarter of 2009 there was an average of more than 11 attacks in Helmand a day, many of them improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This was far more than anywhere else in Afghanistan.

Neighbouring Kandahar province accounted for the second highest number with just over four daily attacks on average.

“The Taliban's principle military effort is directed at Helmand,” a senior British defence source said.

To meet a threat which shows no real signs of lessening the US is deploying thousands of its soldiers to Helmand to help out the British.

There will soon be about 12,000 US troops in the province, more than the number of their British counterparts there.

Many of them will be based in the south of the province, in Garmsir district, towards the border with Pakistan.

Plans drawn up by UK defence chiefs for an extra 2,000 British troops to be deployed to Helmand have been rejected by Gordon Brown, partly because of Treasury concern about the cost, and partly, say Whitehall officials, because the plans were not convincing.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

The Iraqi-U.S. Joint Military Dictatorship Cancels Right Of Iraqis To Vote In July On Immediate Withdrawal Of U.S. Troops: “It Is Possible That A Vote On The Referendum Won't Be Held At All”

[Anybody who thinks this decision was made without the prior consent of Emperor Obama has the IQ of a lump of dog shit. If you think not, kindly email in the protest from the White House of this latest rape of “democracy.”

[How many fake “anti-war” groups in the USA even mention this outrageous scheming? How many organizations howling about election fraud in Iran condemn this latest election fraud in Iraq designed with one and only one purpose: to keep U.S. troops dying in Iraq forever? Three guesses. T]

JUNE 12, 2009 By GINA CHON, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

Iraqi government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh said in a statement issued Thursday that the country would allocate almost \$100 million for a referendum on a U.S.-Iraqi security agreement that went into effect earlier this year. **[This lameass “reporter” doesn't bother to mention the July 1 referendum was to vote on whether or not Iraqis wanted U.S. troops to get out of Iraq immediately or stay until 2011! T]**

A referendum was a condition demanded by a Sunni bloc of politicians, in exchange for voting for the pact in parliament last year.

The referendum was supposed to be held in July, but is now being delayed to take place at the same time as the national elections on Jan. 31.

But elections are often delayed in Iraq and it is possible that a vote on the referendum won't be held at all.

POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

U.S. Soldier Killed Defusing Samarra IED

June 13, 2009 Aswat al-Iraq

One U.S. serviceman on Saturday was killed and three others, including two Iraqis, were wounded while trying to defuse an explosive device in Samarra city, according to a local security official.

“The wounded personnel included one American and two Iraqis,” an assistant to Samarra operations’ commander, Brig. Abdulbaset Hassoun, told Aswat al-Iraq news agency. The blast occurred in al-Dubbat neighborhood, downtown Samarra.

Family Members Share Fond Memories Of Dalton Soldier Killed In Iraq

June 2, 2009 by Nordia Epps, WDEF-TV

Thomas Edward Lee the third died Friday in Mosul, Iraq in an explosion.

His family remember his accomplishments and celebrate his life.

Katie Lee, Sister, “He was always watching out for me you can tell there.”

Ever since her birth, 14 year old Katie Lee has looked to her brother as her protector.

Katie, “He basically, he took care of me. He and my momma took care of me. He was like the father in the picture.”

Until Friday when Private Tommy Lee's mother Shirley got devastating news.

Billy Hobbs, Grandfather, “She was there by herself and she seen this military vehicle come up and when the two got out she knew. She knew, she said her heart just dropped sure enough that's what it was.”

The grandson, father figure, soldier and friend had died from an explosion in Iraq...leaving a family heart sick.

Ashley Lee Sister, “We'll miss him greatly. He was a great man. Katie, “He's safe now but he knew what he was doing up there and he died doing what he loved to do playing GI Joe. He wanted to do that since he was 8 years old.”

Lee joined the army at age 18 and had been deployed since December.

He'd just returned home for leave in April.

Hobbs, "The last thing I remember was he stood up and gave me the biggest hug you've ever seen in your life we hugged each other. We told each other we loved each other. He looked me right in the eye and said Boo Boo I love you. I never did see him again."

Though gone at just 20 years old, family members vow they'll never forget Tommy and ask for prayers.

Ashley, "Just pray for all the other families because it's just going to keep happening. It's pretty bad over there and keep them in your prayers because they're still fighting and they're heroes they're fighting for our freedom so just keep al of them in your prayers."

Ponders Funeral Home is handling Private Lee's arrangements.

U.S. Soldier Wounded By Hurriyah IED



June 9, 2009: Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment based at Fort Riley, Kan. watch a medevac helicopter take their comrade after he was wounded in a road side bomb blast on their convoy in the Hurriyah neighborhood of Baghdad, Iraq. (AP Photo/Dusan Vranic)

U.S. Soldier Wounded By Rusafa IED

June 11 AFP

An Iraqi man was killed and an American soldier was among those wounded in an attack on a US military patrol in eastern Baghdad on Thursday, security forces and military officials said.

The US military confirmed that a patrol was hit in the Rusafa neighbourhood of the capital, but gave a different toll, saying one American soldier and one Iraqi citizen had been wounded.

Resistance Action

08 Jun 2009 DPA & Reuters & June 10 (Reuters) & June 11 (Reuters) & DPA & June 13 (Reuters)

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed when a car packed with explosives detonated close to their patrol near the northern city of Kirkuk, Iraq's Yaqin news agency reported Thursday morning. Nine other soldiers were injured in that attack, which took place in the enclave of Huwajja, south-west of the city, Yaqin said, citing local police.

Three police were wounded when a car bomb exploded south of Mosul. A police patrol passing through the district of Sailu was the apparent target of the attack, police told the German Press Agency dpa.

A bomb targeting a police patrol exploded in eastern Mosul. Three policemen were injured in that attack, police there told the German Press Agency

Two policemen were killed in an ambush in Mosul late on Sunday, police said.

A roadside bomb killed two policemen and wounded a third late on Sunday in Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in central Falluja on Tuesday, police said.

A car bomb targeted an Iraqi army patrol and wounded three soldiers and one civilian in southern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded two policemen in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of the capital, police said.

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

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!**

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Marine Killed In Farah

June 11, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 417-09

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ricky L. Richardson Jr., 33, of Franklin, Mo., died June 10 while supporting combat operations in Farah province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Okinawa, Japan.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed By IED Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan; Nationality Not Announced

13 June 2009 (DPA)

Friday, a soldier serving under the banner of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force was killed by a roadside bomb, the alliance said in a statement.

The statement did not reveal the nationality of the soldier, nor say where exactly in the region the incident took place.

Soldier From 2 RIFLES Killed In Action Near Sangin

13 Jun 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a British soldier from The 2nd Battalion the Rifles was killed as a result of an explosion during a deliberate operation near Sangin, northern Helmand Province, Afghanistan on the morning of 12 June 2009.

Black Watch Soldier Killed In Action Near Kandahar

12 Jun 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a British soldier from The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, was killed in Afghanistan on the morning of 11 June 2009.

The soldier was killed as a result of an explosion whilst on a deliberate operation near Kandahar, in Kandahar province.

Local Soldier Dies In Attack

June 5, 2009 Chad Livengood, News-Leader

After bouncing around in foster homes across southwest Missouri during the latter half of childhood, Pfc. Matthew W. Wilson wanted to be a family man.

He got married last August and in December, his new bride, Ashlynn, gave birth to a boy, Matthew Gunnar.

In January, the 19-year-old ammunition handler was deployed to Afghanistan. He did not plan to re-enlist once he returned home, so he could be with his family full time, said his wife's relatives.

“When he formed a family with Ashlynn, that was the core of his existence,” said Trish Gore, an aunt of Ashlynn's who lives in New Mexico.

But Wilson did not live to see his first Father's Day. He died Monday from wounds suffered from a roadside bomb explosion.

Wilson listed the town of Miller, in Lawrence County, as his hometown with the military, though he lived there only during his junior year of high school, according to friends and family.

Wilson and two other soldiers died after an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle while he was on patrol near the city of Nerhk.

He is survived by his wife, Ashlynn, and baby son, who was born Dec. 8, 2008. The Wilsons married Aug. 7, 2008.

“My daughter became a wife, a mother and a widow all in less than a year ... she's 19 years old and has lost her best friend, her husband and her baby's father,” Wilson's mother-in-law, Chris Baldwin, wrote in a blog post on a Web site her sisters started to generate care packages for U.S. troops overseas.

On Jan. 12, Wilson deployed for Afghanistan with the 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, an Army unit based in Fort Drum, N.Y., according to his widow.

Ashlynn Wilson, who lives near Fort Drum, said after having a rough childhood, her husband was proud to serve his country and be a father and husband.

“Every time we spoke he said, 'How's my little man?' “ Ashlynn Wilson told the News-Leader. “He was a proud father.”

Ashlynn Wilson said while she was pregnant, her husband always knew how to comfort her when she wasn't feeling good.

"He came home and if he said anything, it always made me smile," she said.

Funeral arrangements have not been finalized, but Ashlynn Wilson said her husband will eventually be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Because of a backlog of military funerals at the cemetery, it could take two to three weeks before a service can be held, according to Wilson's family.

As a teen, Wilson bounced around the foster care system across the region, living with families in Cassville, Aurora and Miller, according to friends.

He was enrolled in Miller High School from April 2006 to May 2007, according to school counselor Vicki Baker.

Wilson played on the high school football team for one season and had an interest in computers, but serving in the armed forces was his true passion.

"That was his goal, he wanted to be in the military and serve his country," Baker said Thursday.

Ashlynn Wilson said mutual friends introduced her and Matthew to each other. Her brother, Thomas, was in the same unit as her husband, riding a few vehicles behind Matthew Wilson's Humvee when the roadside bomb exploded.

"I know my brother's tore up," she said. "He's coming home."

Matthew Wilson went into foster care before his mother, Carol Wilson, died in 2003, his wife said. He also is survived by a sister, Amy Baldwin of Kimberling City, and two brothers, Mark and Andrew Riedl and their families. Both of his brothers currently serve in the military, Ashlynn Wilson said.

Before he arrived in Miller, Wilson lived with one of his brothers in Idaho.

Prior to heading off for basic training in early 2008, Wilson spent a few months living at the home of Lisa Jester of Stotts City. He was friends with Jester's sons, Garrett and Grant.

Jester described Wilson as a "very nice kid" who was "easygoing."

When Wilson left Miller for basic training, he left behind his mother's shawl, the only item he had to remember her by, Jester said.

"I still got it in my cedar chest," Jester said. "He wanted to make sure it was safe."

Wilson also married into a military family, whose members have made many sacrifices for their country. Gore's husband and daughter were both in the service.

His wife's other uncle, Army Staff Sgt. Phillip Baldwin of Roxana, Ill., suffered critical wounds during his second deployment to Afghanistan in June 2006.

Two of Ashlynn's aunts started a Web site, Treasure OurTroops.org, as an off-shoot of sending their nephews Wilson and Thomas Baldwin care packages.

On Thursday, Ashlynn Wilson's mother, Chris Baldwin, posted a lengthy message about her son-in-law. "We simply take for granted all the freedoms that we have in the United States. I too was guilty of this... until last night... when we were notified that our son-in-law paid the ultimate price for you and I... for our freedom... for our children & their children's freedom. He gave his life for the freedom we all are guilty of taking for granted," Chris Baldwin wrote.

Three Foreign Occupation Troops Wounded In Bala Boluk; Nationality Not Announced

June 11 (Reuters)

Two Afghan soldiers were killed and three foreign soldiers wounded in a clash with Taliban-led insurgents in the western province of Farah, provincial governor Ruhol Amin said.

The Afghan and foreign troops were carrying out an operation in Shewan village in Bala Boluk district when a gunfight broke out, he said. A Taliban spokesman in west Afghanistan would not say whether any insurgents were killed.

Two Occupation Copters Damaged By Ground Fire

June 11 (Reuters)

In northwestern Badghis province on Wednesday two NATO helicopters were damaged by small-arms fire but were able to continue flying.

Resistance Attack On U.S. Occupation Fuel Supplies Destroys 8 Tankers in Gereshk

13 June 2009 Written by Baryalai Rahimi, Quqnoos & (DPA) & Reuters

A bomber attacked a supplying-convoy of foreign forces late Friday, killed eight Afghan drivers and wounded 21 others, officials said Saturday

The delivery vehicles were parked outside a military base in Gereshk district – 35 km north of Lashkar Gah, the capital of the restive Helmand province – when the bomber struck the vehicles.

Taliban militants claimed responsibility for the night attack.

Helmand Police Chief, Gen Asadullah Shirzad, confirmed that five Afghan security forces have been killed and eight others were injured in the shocking explosion.

Eight tankers and four pickup trucks used by the guards for the convoy were burned.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Mohammad Yousuf Ahmadi said that at least 33 guards were killed and 13 others were wounded in the bombing, carried out by a Taliban militant. Ahmadi, speaking by phone from an undisclosed location, said 17 vehicles were destroyed in the blast.

Four Afghan police were wounded in a blast in southern Kandahar city, the capital of Kandahar province, on Friday night, police official Abdul Khaliq Hamdard said.

Resistance Action



A pile of destroyed police patrol cars which were blown up by resistance fighters at an Afghan police station in the center of Kandahar city June 9, 2009. REUTERS/Jorge Silva

June 8 (Reuters) & United Nations News Service & 06/11/09 Reuters

In southern Zabul province one policeman was killed and two wounded when a roadside bomb hit their convoy.

The office of the United Nations agriculture agency was attacked in northern Afghanistan over the weekend, with a rocket-propelled grenade having been fired at the compound.

Four Afghan police were killed in a clash with Taliban insurgents in northern Baghlan province on Wednesday, a provincial official said. In other parts of Baghlan on Wednesday, the defence ministry said one soldier was killed and three wounded.

A roadside bomb killed three private bank guards and wounded two more in southern Kandahar city, the interior ministry said.

A roadside bomb killed two guards working for a private construction firm in southeastern Paktika, the interior ministry said.

Three Taliban fighters and three Afghan soldiers were killed in a clash in Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, a provincial official said.

“Many In The Government And The Business Community Provide Favors For The Taliban” Insurgent Group Expanding “Across The East And South Of The Country And Well Into The West And Northwest”

[Thanks to Carl Foster, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

Jun 9, 2009 By Philip Smucker, Asia Times Online [Excerpts]

SHARANA, Afghanistan - A white Toyota with tinted windows screeched to a halt in the Khojak Baba district of Kandahar City. Armed men forced a prominent fuel dealer, Haji Mohammed Sadiq, into the car and sped off.

Weeks later after a ransom payment of US\$250,000 in a “dead drop” to local Taliban officials, Sadiq was released, said Naseem Pashtun, the Afghan-American owner of the Red Mountain newspaper in Kandahar, who with other Afghan businessmen had petitioned the government to no avail to help with Sadiq's release.

Pashtun has been threatened by both the Taliban and Afghan government officials, who do not like his newspaper's critical view of a deteriorating situation and so he prefers, he said, to spend most of his time now in the United Arab Emirates.

“Many in the government and the business community provide favors for the Taliban and it is difficult to know who does and who doesn't, which makes it

almost impossible to 'tip off' the authorities about the Taliban's activities or whereabouts for fear of betrayal," he added.

Phone and text message threats as well as “night letters” warning persons not to cooperate with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and US forces have been common, often accompanied by kidnappings and outright assassinations in the same regions.

The campaign, blessed by the one-eyed Taliban leader Mullah Omar, has had the effect of expanding the insurgent group's “footprint” across the east and south of the country and well into the west and northwest, said Waheed Mozhdah, a respected Afghan historian and Taliban expert, who also served as a Foreign Ministry advisor for the Middle East to the Taliban in the late 1990s.

Taliban fighters started launching military strikes from Afghan villages and recruiting more local fighters to bolster their ranks. “Now, they don't think twice about it because many of their fighters are from these villages they sleep in at night.”

The Taliban's broader strategy to embed themselves with the local population has paid considerable dividends, according to Pashtun and Mozhdah.

Coalition and Afghan forces began to launch major sweeps of the countryside, which sometimes led to aerial bombings of several “suspected” villages at a time. Taliban fighters would melt into the local farming communities and - in addition to Afghan civilian casualties from air strikes - the wrong “suspects” would be rounded up, angering locals, but also serving to enhance the Taliban's own recruiting pool.

In most cases, Afghans in the Pashtun countryside were “not terrified” of the Taliban despite their reputation for brutality, said Mozhdah.

Indeed, they remembered that the Taliban had come to power in the mid-1990s as an antidote to raging chaos and wartime horror sown by greedy Afghan warlords.

Afghans “are slaughtered every day for working with us and their government, even if they are only related to someone who is simply trying to feed their family”, said one senior US intelligence officer, who said Afghans he knew personally had been murdered by the Taliban. “They are unprotected and slowly slaughtered for even the mere presumption of US support.”

Analysts who have closely observed the Taliban's revival as a guerrilla force say that the group has consolidated its power and is likely to continue to challenge the US and NATO forces for supremacy in villages as well as in cities.

The ICG recommends that Western and Afghan forces take on the Taliban on its own turf, amid the broader Afghan population. “US security forces must (also) focus on securing and protecting population centers,” reads a recent report by the group, advising against “large-scale sweeps through areas with a limited Afghan institutional presence”.

The analytical group stated in the same March report that “while such sweeps may temporarily disrupt some insurgent networks, their effectiveness is limited against an enemy that can disperse or disappear into the civilian population. Areas that are not

permanently secured provide propaganda victories to the insurgents who may retaliate against the local populace.”

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



April 26, 2009: U.S. soldiers of 10th Mountain Division patrol in Tangi valley of Wardak province west of Kabul, Afghanistan. There were few villagers waving as the new American forces patrol deep into this valley known for resistance to foreign troops. As the soldiers of the New York-based 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division moved slowly on the road that cuts through high cliffs and fertile land in the central Wardak province, a roadside bomb awaited them instead. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

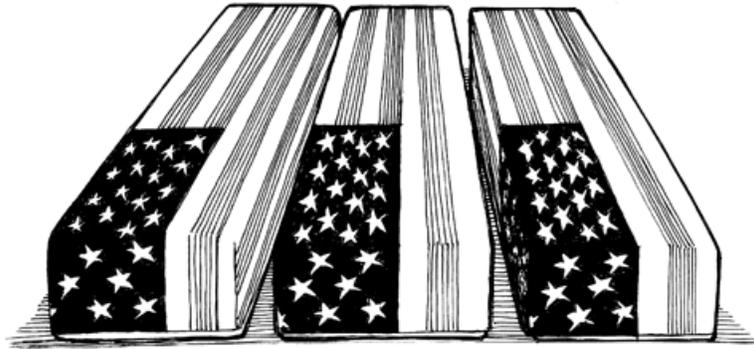
Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

TROOP NEWS

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WHICH IS THE GAY ONE ?

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project, who sent this in.]

KIA BY KBR: The Iraq Burn Pits: “I Think There Are Troops Out There ... Who Are So Clueless,’ Said His Widow, Jill Wilkins”

6.15.09 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

After a few months at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Army Staff Sgt. Danielle Nienajadlo lost her appetite.

As she breathed the heavy black smoke that settled around her living area, she started to feel nauseated.

She began coughing and blowing out black sputum. She felt tired and had problems breathing.

Every day, she went to the motor pool to work — right next to an enormous burn pit that spewed the hazy residue of the 240 tons of trash fed into it each day: 90,000 plastic water bottles, petroleum products, Styrofoam cups from the dining facility, cooking oil, unexploded ordnance and even medical waste from the base hospital.

One morning, after a sleepless night of hot sweats and fever, Nienajadlo went to the emergency room and begged doctors to draw her blood. Almost immediately, they determined she had leukemia.

“I know I got it there,” she said in November, explaining that the disease attacked her lungs.

After a full course of chemotherapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., her cancer went into remission.

Nienajadlo talked to Military Times after seeing a story in the paper about the possible harmful effects of the burn pit at Balad.

“I don’t want anyone else to go through this,” she said.

On March 20, the 32-year-old mother of three died while waiting for a bone marrow transplant.

Statistics gathered by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center seem to indicate something is up. While a direct correlation to the burn pits can’t be made, the data show that respiratory problems are rising in the ranks in recent years.

And while leukemia and lymphoma rates have stayed fairly stable, neoplasms — tumors — have nearly doubled since 2001.

Of 400 service members who have contacted Disabled American Veterans to say they’ve become ill since returning from deployment — part of the generally young, normally healthy military demographic — almost 70 have cancer, while the rest have frequent headaches and respiratory problems.

“I really think the respiratory issues are the link,” said attorney Elizabeth Burke, of Burke O’Neill LLC.

Her firm is representing 190 people in 34 class-action lawsuits against KBR, the Pentagon contractor that operated many of the larger burn pits in the war zones.

Army 1st Sgt. Lynette Streitfield was at Balad, the largest U.S. base in Iraq, for three weeks before she had her first-ever asthma attack.

“That just scared the bejeezus out of me,” she said. “I’ve never had breathing problems before.”

Her voice has gone down an octave. Her lungs make “popping noises.” Her large muscles feel weak. “I just don’t feel right,” she said. “It’s almost like not getting enough oxygen.”

An Air Force master sergeant still on active duty who asked that his name not be used showed his medical records to Military Times.

After serving in Balad for about three months, he developed a cough and felt tired. A doctor X-rayed his chest, then immediately called him back in for a CT scan. The next day, the doctor sent the 40-year-old airman to Landstuhl Regional Army Medical Center, Germany; he had a tumor in his chest measuring 6 inches by 2 inches and a diagnosis of Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"It's as if they've seen this before and knew what to look for," the airman said.

"How else would they be able to give such a quick diagnosis?"

A diagnosis did not come quickly enough for Air Force Maj. Kevin Wilkins. After serving at Balad in 2006 and again in 2007 as a nurse, he went to see a doctor for headaches that had become so bad they made him vomit. A CT scan showed he had a brain tumor.

Five days later, Wilkins died.

"I think there are troops out there ... who are so clueless," said his widow, Jill Wilkins.

"They need to see a doctor if they have symptoms."

MORE:

Did Killing U.S. Troops With Toxic Burn Pit Fumes Interfere With KBRs War Profiteering In Combat Zones? Never Happen GI: "The Services Could Have Been Delivered For Billions Of Dollars Less"

June 10 By Tony Capaccio (Bloomberg) [Excerpts]

KBR Inc. wasted billions of dollars through inefficiencies, lax oversight and poor management of its contract to support U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to an independent, bipartisan panel.

The contract -- to provide housing, food, laundry, mail delivery and fuel for U.S. troops -- was ultimately worth \$31.7 billion, with most of the work being done in Iraq and Kuwait.

"The services could have been delivered for billions of dollars less," the commission stated in a report released today at a hearing of the House Oversight and Government

Reform's national security panel. "Substantial evidence supports the view" that KBR's services "cost too much."

The Wartime Contracting Commission, in its first report since Congress established it last year, gives the most critical assessment to date of the contract that Houston-based KBR, then a unit of Halliburton Co., won in December 2001, shortly after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan.

KBR's record may be hurting its chances to win work under a new program for awarding contracts to support U.S. troops.

That competition, begun in April 2008, pits KBR against Falls Church, Virginia-based DynCorp International Inc. and Irving, Texas- based Fluor Corp. KBR hasn't won any of the five orders awarded so far, according to the U.S. Army Sustainment Command.

MORE:

While U.S. Troops Die, Hog Heaven For War Profiteers: "The Environment In Iraq And Afghanistan Has Been And Continues To Be Susceptible To Waste, Fraud And Abuse"

June 10, 2009 (CNN)

The U.S. government's process for awarding contracts for construction and other needs in Iraq and Afghanistan continues to be vulnerable to fraud and waste, according to a government-ordered review released Wednesday.

The interim report by the Commission on Wartime Contracting, created last year, found a lack of proper oversight in how the U.S. military contracts support services at a time when major resources are being shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan.

"In short, the environment in Iraq and Afghanistan has been and continues to be susceptible to waste, fraud and abuse," commission Co-chairman Michael Thibault said at a hearing of the House National Security and Foreign Affairs subcommittee.

Of the \$830 billion the government has spent in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001, more than \$150 billion has gone for contracts, said commission Co-chairman Christopher Shays, a former congressman. Those contracts have employed 240,000 workers in the two war theaters -- more than the number of U.S. troops.

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 send email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

Army Releases May Suicide Data

June 11, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 415-09

The Army released suicide data for the month of May today, reporting one confirmed suicide and 16 potential suicides among active duty soldiers.

In the April report, the Army reported seven active duty potential suicides. Since that time an additional suicide was reported, for a total of eight April potential suicides, three of which have been confirmed and five remain under investigation.

There have been 82 reported active duty suicides in the Army during calendar year 2009. Of these, 45 have been confirmed as suicides, and 37 are pending final determination of manner death.

For the same period in 2008, there were 51 suicides among active duty soldiers.

OOPS: SecDef Says “The Army Has Trouble Filling Some Of The Units That They Already Have In Terms Of Deployments”

6.15.09 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpt]

The Army on June 2 identified the three brigade combat teams that had been planned but will not be built, in accordance with Defense Secretary Robert Gates' plan to hold active Army growth to 45 BCTs.

The three canceled BCTs were scheduled for activation in fiscal 2011. They were: 5th BCT, 3rd Infantry Division, at Fort Stewart, Ga.; 5th BCT, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Carson, Colo.; and 6th BCT, 1st Armored Division, at Fort Bliss, Texas. Each BCT would have about 3,500 soldiers.

“The Army has trouble filling some of the units that they already have in terms of deployments,” Gates said when he announced his decision April 6.

“They have problems with dwell, and they have problems in terms of the number of people not available to be deployed,” Gates said.

“It seems to me that if you keep expanding the force structure, with the same number of people, you’re going to get thinner in the ranks.”

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.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

“Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies.”
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the utility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

“While there is a lower class I am in it; while there is a criminal element I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free”
-- Eugene V. Debs

“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.

“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”
-- Camille Desmoulins

Firearms are second only to the Constitution in importance; they are the peoples' liberty's teeth.
-- George Washington

The Poor Side of Town



From: Mike Hastie

To: GI Special
Sent: June 08, 2009
Subject: The Poor Side of Town

The Poor Side of Town

4% of the world's population, which is the United States, represented by the 4 pennies on the left, controls 20-25% of the world's wealth.

This is called Empire, the likes of which the world has never seen.

That equates to great suffering for millions of people around the world, who cannot defend themselves in a world controlled by great greed, and incomprehensible military power.

The other 96% of the world's population, excluding a small percentage of wealthier countries, lives on the poor side of town.

This will not go on forever.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
June 8, 2009

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) 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**

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to:

The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.
Phone: 917.677.8057

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project, who sent this in.]

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

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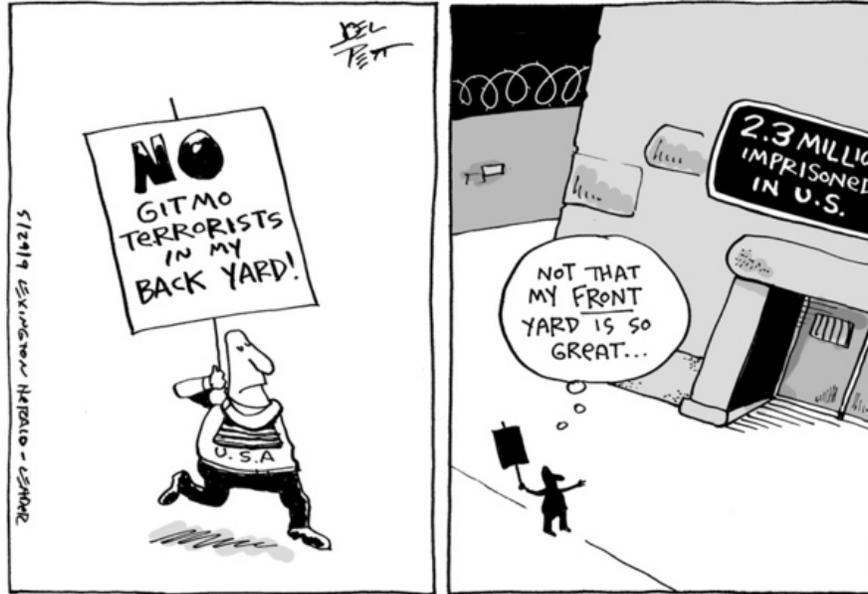
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Please say how many you wish sent.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project, who sent this in.]



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