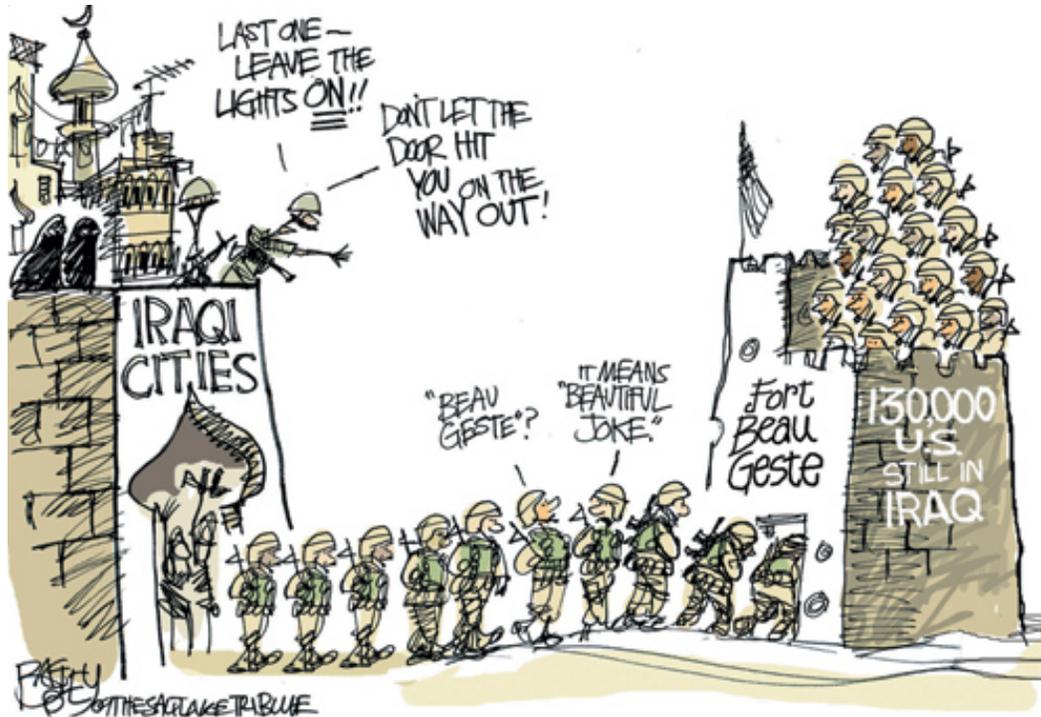


## GI SPECIAL 7G8:



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

# The One Flag Pole Salute

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: July 11, 2009  
Subject: The One Flag Pole Salute

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

\*\*\*\*\*

**The One Flag Pole Salute**

Johnny always wanted to be in the Army  
he played war video games over and over  
he was in Jr ROTC in high school  
he really liked the uniform  
Johnny would come home  
after a tour proudly wearing his uniform  
with the beret, he would tell anybody  
who would listen  
about the fire-fights he was in  
he was a good boy and we will miss him  
his parents would say  
During Vietnam when the draftee  
didn't want to be there and  
neither did his parents  
when he was killed  
they would give the parents \$10,000  
and a military picture to hang  
on the wall, even a bronze star although  
he stepped on a land mine  
the parents would grieve  
and then buy a new Buick  
the fishing boat Dad always wanted  
the remodeled kitchen Mom longed for  
just made it easier, they always  
put flowers on his grave  
on Memorial Day and the VFW  
would always put a little flag pole  
with a little flag there too  
they bought a new TV  
the old one was getting snowy  
couldn't see good or enjoy it  
new living room furniture  
because when you buy something new  
it makes everything around it look old  
So when Johnny was killed  
the pay out now is \$100,000  
to his parents to buy whatever  
they wanted  
but a new car now costs \$25,000  
new fishing boat with a trailer \$15,000  
adding a new family room  
with a big screen HD TV  
a fireplace ate up the rest  
except that his Dad had a flag pole  
put up in the middle of the front yard  
to fly the American flag

because he knew his son Johnny  
would want it that way  
everyday it reminded him  
what Johnny fought for  
in the home of the free  
in the home of the brave

MORE:

## The Edsel

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade,  
purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War,  
United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Edsel

Listen to the TV dead men talking  
One said ask not what your country  
can do for you but ask what you  
can do for your country  
like fighting bleeding and dying  
in a little country called Vietnam  
Now Secretary of Defense  
McNamara during Vietnam has died  
at the age of ninety three years old  
after he sent nineteen year old Soldiers  
to their death in his  
Ford Car Company President War  
But it went wrong so "Terribly Wrong"  
draftees died like they were on  
an assembly line sometimes 500  
a week would roll out the back door  
under LBJ who couldn't understand  
the war either from the "Fog of War"  
the best and brightest  
dumbest so bolt on a gun like hood  
ornament weld on the fins from a jet  
Don't you know that once you have  
done anything wrong you can't take  
it back just ask any old Vietnam Grunt  
Yet, you have them fit the windshield  
on a B-52 Galaxie so you could kill  
hundreds of thousands millions

of Vietnamese with a warranty  
bolt on the wheels and tires  
on a deuce and a half Army truck  
as it rolls down the assembly line  
and you surely had the red button  
in your Office to speed up  
the assembly line of dead Soldiers  
as you Yes-manned the escalation  
by LBJ but your Vietnam War  
was an Edsel doomed to die  
it had no chance because it was wrong  
to begin with and if there is a hell  
you will go there but you will never  
see the Soldiers and Vietnamese  
that you killed and  
if there is no hell then you made a hell  
on earth as a front man for the Masters  
Of War and your grave will be shallow  
like your confession that the war was  
“Terrible Wrong” but it  
is too late and you will never  
be forgiven by the brothers and sisters  
who still have a picture of their brother  
on the Wall who died in Vietnam and  
the Vietnamese who still suffer from  
land mines and agent orange  
No, All are happy that you are dead  
but unhappy that it took so long

---

## IRAQ WAR REPORTS

### **Tyrell Manakaja Wounded While On Patrol In Baghdad June 25**

July 10, 2009 Erin Taylor, Miner Staff Reporter; Kingman Daily Miner

PEACH SPRINGS - Edison Manakaja was at work June 25 when he got the call every parent of a military serviceman dreads.

His son, 24-year-old Cpl. Tyrell Manakaja of Peach Springs, was seriously injured by an Improvised Exploding Device (IED) while patrolling with his unit in Baghdad, Iraq.

“I was devastated,” Edison Manakaja said. “I dreaded this day, to receive this call. I wanted to be right there with him.”

Tyrell was flown to Germany in serious but stable condition. A piece of shrapnel had severed a main artery in Tyrell’s neck. He also received numerous shrapnel injuries to his arms, legs and right eye and suffered facial burns.

On Thursday, Tyrell underwent surgery to repair nerves and tendons in his right forearm at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. Tyrell is doing his best to remain positive, Edison said.

“After he saw his family, I think that really boosted him up that we were there with him,” Edison said.

Tyrell was on his second tour of duty in Iraq, according to his father. He enlisted in October 2005. His father thinks he joined after growing up listening to Tyrell’s grandfather, Everett Manakaja Sr., tell stories about his experience as a soldier in World War II.

Tyrell’s parents, Edison and Deborah, along with Tyrell’s wife, Tasha, are in San Antonio at his bedside. Tyrell’s two brothers and three sisters were unable to make the trip and remain in Peach Springs, where the community has come together to support the family.

Diamond Creek restaurant in the Hualapai Lodge hosted a benefit dinner June 30 that raised \$1,342.08 for the family. An additional \$368 was raised through cash donation jars throughout the lodge.

Edison said his son has a long road ahead of him. Vision in his right eye is blurry, and a severe injury to his left leg has resulted in loss of feeling below the knee. Edison was unable to put an estimate on Tyrell’s recovery.

“We’re here with him hoping for the best,” Edison said. “We just thank the community for all their support and prayers.”

---

## Resistance Action

July 8 (Reuters) & By MAZIN YAHYA, (AP) & 7.9.09 AFP & Reuters & Mike Tharp - McClatchy Newspapers & CNN & 7.11.09 AP

**In Ramadi in Anbar province, a city that the U.S. military has hailed as a success story in counterinsurgency, a car bomber wounded four police officers.**

An Iraqi soldier was killed at an army checkpoint in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents shot and injured a member of the local infrastructure police just south of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

One police was wounded when insurgents opened fire on a checkpoint in Mosul, police said.

MOSUL - Insurgents opened fire on Iraqi soldiers, wounding one, police said.

South of Baghdad, a bomb planted on a well-wisher's car at a wedding celebration exploded outside the house of the groom, a police lieutenant, authorities said. Four people died and 16 others were injured.

A roadside bomb targeting the convoy of the Iraqi Central Bank's governor, meanwhile, killed one civilian and wounded two members of the security forces, in the Karrada business district of Baghdad. The governor was unhurt.

Bombers targeted the home of a police sergeant and his brother, who also worked for the security forces, in the northern town of Tal Afar, provincial police chief General Khaled Hamdani told AFP. The first attacker was wearing a police uniform and he blew himself up after his intended victims answered a knock on the door, killing the police sergeant, his wife and young daughter, and seriously wounding his brother, Hamdani said.

A roadside bomb targeting an army patrol wounded one soldier, in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Two police, were wounded by a roadside bomb in southern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed an off-duty soldier in Kirkuk, police said.

On Wednesday, a roadside bomb wounded three policemen in central Kirkuk, police said.

Insurgents in a speeding car in western Baghdad opened fire on a checkpoint run by the U.S.-allied Sons of Iraq militia, killing two of their members, an Interior Ministry official told CNN.

A bomb in the central district of Karrada, Baghdad, wounded four police on patrol.

In southwest Baghdad, a bomb planted on a car killed two people, including a junior Cabinet official, and injured 11 others, including the wife and child of the official, police and hospital officials said.

A roadside bomb near an Iraqi police checkpoint killed one policeman in western Mosul on Friday, police said.

Insurgents open fire on Iraqi police checkpoint killed one policeman in the town of Baaj, 375 km (233 miles) northwest of Baghdad, police said.

---

# Iraqi Insurgents Turn To Small But Deadly New Weapon



RKG-3 grenades in Salah ad-Din province May 29, Courtesy U.S. Army

July 11, 2009 by Quil Lawrence, NPR

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have forced the U.S. military to rapidly innovate. First came a plea from soldiers to get better-armored Humvees to protect against roadside bombs. Then, Defense Secretary Robert Gates made a push to bring out a huge armored truck called a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle, or MRAP, which can survive almost any bomb buried under the road.

But as the military has been innovating, the insurgency has, too.

Recently, insurgents have been using a portable, powerful weapon called the RKG-3, says U.S. Army intelligence officer Maj. Chuck Assadourian.

“Basically, it’s a grenade that’s thrown, and it’s got an armor-penetrating (element),” he says.

U.S. military officials are hard at work on a strategy to defend against this small but deadly weapon.

For several years, Iraqi insurgents have been using shaped charges that the U.S. military calls EFPs, or explosively formed penetrators. They are essentially armor-piercing anti-tank mines.

The RKG-3 is “kind of like a mini-EFP shaped charge on a stick,” Assadourian says.

The grenades, developed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War and copied and produced by numerous countries, have been seen mostly in the northern Iraqi cities of Mosul, Kirkuk, and in nearby Diyala province.

An RKG looks like a tin can on a long stick and is easily concealed in a crowd.

The Iraqi government has been running television ads against aiding the insurgents or carrying weapons — including an ad about the RKG.

But the weapon has an appeal to those who attack only Americans and not harm Iraqis.

It can be used almost surgically to strike one American truck in the middle of a mixed Iraqi-American convoy.

Abu Haider — not his real name — is a former tank officer in the Iraqi army. He admits that he has acquaintances who have fought against the Americans. He says the RKG is perfect for hitting and running, though it has to be thrown correctly for the charge to have its full effect.

**One or two RKGs can cut most of the American armored vehicles in half, he says, adding that when he was riding a tank in the Iran-Iraq war, these were the weapons that scared him the most.**

Assadourian says Iraq had plenty of them in stock.

“I think it was the fourth-most-armed country in the world prior to our arrival,” Assadourian says. “And so, you know, there’s tons of stores. Sometimes they get pulled out of where Saddam had them, put somewhere else, and then the person who did the moving may have been detained.”

They are most commonly used by the Naqshbandi army, an insurgent force connected to former vice president, Izzat al-Douri.

The Naqshbandi group has posted video online showing stockpiles of the grenades and even a few attacks on American convoys.

---

## “Insurgent Group Urged Militants To Continue Attacks Against U.S. Forces”

July 8, 2009 (Reuters)

An insurgent group urged militants to continue attacks against U.S. forces even after combat troops were pulled from city centers, according to an audiotape released on Wednesday.

“Even if the Americans remain nowhere but a small spot in the Iraqi desert ... so every Muslim should battle them until they are expelled,” the voice, reported to be Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, head of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq, said in the recording posted on a website used by jihadists.

The Iraqi government heralded the capture this spring of a man they identified as Baghdadi, just as an uptick in major attacks raised troubling questions about whether Iraq would be able to maintain a sharp decline in the violence unleashed by the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

**It was not the first time Iraqi officials had announced the capture of someone identified as Baghdadi, and the insurgent group has since denied his arrest.**

The speaker called on Arab militiamen began collaborating with American forces in 2006, to rejoin the insurgency and battle Iraq's government.

"We tell them 'Come back to your senses ... Nothing better than repent and return to the ranks of jihadists and to leave the infidels," the tape said.

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

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

## **Nationalists Block Plan To Continue British Occupation; The Deal "Is An Extension Of Occupation Forces Which No Noble Person Can Accept"**

Jul 11, 2009 (Reuters)

Nationalist lawmakers held up a vote on Saturday to approve a deal allowing British troops to remain in Iraq longer than previously agreed to help the local navy protect oil platforms.

The deal would permit up to 100 British troops to remain beyond June 30, the withdrawal date set in a previously approved British-Iraqi security pact.

A source close to deputy speaker Khalid al-Attiya said that the session was suspended shortly after it began when lawmakers who galvanized opposition to the U.S.-led foreign presence in Iraq, walked out before a planned vote on the deal.

With no quorum, the session could not formally continue, but parliament is likely to take it up again at a later date.

Aqeel Abdul-Hussein, head of the bloc in parliament associated with resistance to foreign occupation, told reporters afterwards that they opposed any agreements backing the presence of foreign troops.

The deal "is an extension of occupation forces which no noble person can accept ... We call upon our people to support us in this challenge," he said.

---

## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Five British Soldiers Killed In Helmand**

10 Jul 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that five soldiers from The 2nd Battalion The Rifles have been killed in two separate explosions in Helmand today, Friday 10 July 2009.

The two explosions, which occurred during the same patrol, happened near Sangin, Helmand Province this morning.

---

### **3 Illinois Soldiers Die In Afghanistan**



(AP Photos/Illinois National Guard)

Illinois National Guard, Spc. Chester Hosford, 35, of Ottawa, Ill., [left] killed July 6, 2009, when the vehicle he was in hit a roadside bomb in Kanduz, Afghanistan.

Illinois National Guard, Spc. Christopher Talbert, 24, of Galesburg, Ill., [right] died July 7, 2009, in an attack near Shinbad, Afghanistan. Talbert was a member of the Guard's 33<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade.

\*\*\*\*\*

07/08/09 Caroline K. Smith, Chicago Breaking News

Three soldiers of the Illinois Army National Guard have been killed in Afghanistan when their vehicles struck roadside bombs since Monday.

Lt. Derwin Williams, 41, Spc. Chester Hosford, 35, and Spc. Christopher Talbert, 24, were all deployed to the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team to provide police mentor teams to train and mentor Afghan National Police, according to a Department of Military Affairs spokeswoman.

Hosford was killed with Williams when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb Monday near Konduz, Afghanistan.

This was Hosford's first deployment to Afghanistan. Hailing from Ottawa, Ill., Hosford enlisted with the U.S. Marine Corps in 1993. He joined the Minnesota Army National Guard as a cavalry scout in 2006 and transferred to the Illinois Army National Guard in 2008 as part of the Illinois Training Site Detachment in Marseilles. He was not married, according to the spokeswoman.

Talbert, 24, of Galesburg, was deployed with Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Battalion. Talbert died Tuesday from a roadside bomb near Shindad, Afghanistan. This was also his first deployment, and he was not married.

There are 30 units within the 33rd IBCT deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to form Task Force Phoenix VIII.

A photo of Talbert was not immediately available. There is no information available on funeral arrangements for any of the soldiers.

**These are the 31st, 32nd, and 33rd casualties the Illinois National Guard has suffered since operations began in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

---

## **Two U.S. Soldiers Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan;**

July 9, 2009 By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press Writer

Two American troops were killed in a roadside bombing incident Wednesday in southern Afghanistan, said Capt. Elizabeth Mathias, a U.S. military spokeswoman, without providing any other details.

---

# **Two British Soldiers Killed In Helmand On 9 July**

7.9.09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that two British soldiers were killed in Helmand province in separate incidents yesterday, Thursday 9 July 2009.

In the first incident, a soldier from 4th Battalion The Rifles was killed in a contact explosion. The incident took place whilst he was on a foot patrol near Nad e-Ali, Helmand province, on the afternoon of 9 July 2009.

In a second incident, a soldier from The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment attached to 1st Battalion Welsh Guards was killed as a result of a gunshot wound. The incident took place as part of Operation PANCHAI PALANG (Panther's Claw) in an engagement with insurgent forces near Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, on the evening of 9 July 2009.

---

## **U.S. Soldier Killed In Farah**

July 8, 2009 By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An American service member was killed Wednesday in Farah Province. The American, who was not identified, was killed during "a combat reconnaissance patrol.

---

## **Soldier Of The 2nd Royal Tank Regiment Killed Near Nad-e-Ali**

10 Jul 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a soldier from The 2nd Royal Tank Regiment has been killed in Afghanistan today, 10 July 2009.

The soldier was killed as a result of an explosion that happened during a deliberate operation near Nad-e-Ali, central Helmand province this morning.

---

## **British Soldier Killed Near Gereshk**

July 8, 2009 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a soldier from The Light Dragoons was killed in Helmand province yesterday, Tuesday 7 July 2009.

The soldier was killed in an explosion whilst on Operation Panther's Claw near Gereshk.

---

## Local Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

July 9, 2009 By Barrett J. Brunzman, The Enquirer

UNION TWP. – A Clermont County soldier has died of wounds suffered in Afghanistan.

Word was received this morning that Gregory James Missman died from injuries suffered from an improvised explosive device, said Keith Maupin of the Yellow Ribbon Support Center here.

A 1993 graduate of Amelia High School, Missman was 36.

The soldier's father, Jim Missman, lives in Pierce Township, said Maupin, whose own son, Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Matt Maupin, died in Iraq.

"He was in here yesterday," Maupin said of Jim Missman. "He told me his boy was in a convoy and got attacked, and one of those IEDs went off.

"He called me this morning and said he had passed away," Maupin said. "You need to pray for him."

Jim Missman said he was at a local funeral home this morning making arrangements.

It's unclear when Gregory Missman's body will be returned to Clermont County, Maupin said, but his organization plans to decorate local roads with yellow ribbons to show support for the soldier and his family.

"He wants to see a lot of yellow bows and ribbons when he gets home," Maupin said of Jim Missman. "That's what we're going to do. This is the cost of freedom."

Clermont County Commissioner Bob Proud, founder of the Whole in My Heart support group for the families and friends of men and women serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, said he would like to organize a celebration of life for Gregory Missman.

"We in Clermont County will make sure that his sacrifice and service will never be forgotten," Proud said.

Missman would be the first Clermont County resident to die while serving his country in Afghanistan, Proud said. Six other residents died in Iraq. Two other members of the military killed in Iraq had parents who live in the county.

"We stand ready to help the family in any way we can," Proud said of the Missmans. "Not just our support group, but the county as well. We want the family to know that we're there for them. We want to do whatever we can to help them and help in honoring Greg Missman."

Gregory Missman was a member of American Legion Post 72 in Union Township's Mount Carmel neighborhood, where Jim Missman is a member and past commander, said member Norm Nedeau.

Also members of the post were Matt Maupin and Marine Staff Sgt. Mark Anthony "Tony" Wojciechowski, 25, of Union Township, who was killed in Iraq on April 30, Nedeau said.

---

## **Amherst Man Loses Leg In Afghanistan**

July 11, 2009 By SANDRA E. CONSTANTINE, The Republican

GRANBY - A former Amherst man now serving in the Marine lost a leg and suffered other injuries in a bomb blast while on patrol in southeastern Afghanistan, his parents said Friday.

Sgt. Joshua J. Bouchard, the son of James J. and Suzann C. Bouchard, of Granby, was hurt Tuesday when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device while leading a convoy, his mother said Friday.

He lost a leg, and suffered a fractured right arm and injuries to his back, she said.

Two other Marines in his vehicle were killed and two others were injured, she said.

"We are asking for prayers for Joshua. He was with two men who didn't make it and we'd like prayers for them, too," Bouchard said.

The family was told he was taken to Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, where American service people wounded in Afghanistan and Iraq receive treatment.

Bouchard said doctors there are evaluating her son to decide whether to send him on to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for further medical attention.

If he is not ready to be sent stateside, Bouchard said, the government will fly her and her husband as soon as possible to see their son in Germany.

Joshua J. Bouchard, is a 2002 graduate of Amherst Regional High School. He enlisted in the Marines in 2004 and recently signed up for another four years of service, his mother said.

He had already done two tours of Iraq before being sent to Afghanistan.

"We're still in shock. We are starting to digest it a little bit today," Bouchard said.

His father, James J. Bouchard, served in the Marines in Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

---

# Two Australian Soldiers Wounded By IED Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan

July 8, 2009 AAP

Two Australian soldiers have been wounded in Afghanistan after their vehicle was hit by a large roadside bomb, defence says.

The diggers were travelling in an armoured truck when it was struck by the bomb on Tuesday afternoon Australian time.

“While their wounds are not life threatening they are continuing to receive medical treatment.”

The Bushmaster armoured vehicle was badly damaged in the explosion.

The wounded soldiers were part of the 2nd Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force.

Army joint operations chief Lieutenant General Mark Evans said the injured diggers were flown by helicopter to the Dutch military hospital at Tarin Kowt.

---

## **Notes From A Lost War:**

**“The Taliban Were Able To Attack And Stall The British Advance”**

**“They Are Well Trained And Well Armed”**

**“The Area Is Riddled With Insurgent Bombs And The Taliban Are Laying More, Using Increasingly Sophisticated And Hard To Detect Techniques”**

Progress is slow precisely because of the threat from IED's and the British army's advance is dependent on hand-held metal detectors.

Often, having slowed the troops down, the Taliban then open fire.

9 July 2009 By Ian Pannell, BBC [Excerpts]

Seven soldiers dead in seven days.

It is a grim statistic, but it is also the reality of British losses in the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

Six of the seven died in operation Panchai Palang, or Panther's Claw, in Helmand in the last week.

We had been travelling on the front line with the troops from A Company, 2 Mercian, part of the Light Dragoon Battle Group.

This is a brutal, bloody struggle.

Up to 700 troops have spent the last week moving through the fields and alleyways of the "Green Zone", chasing an enemy who has chosen to stand and fight.

The progress has been slow and painful.

Almost every morning within a few metres of leaving our overnight camp, we were attacked.

Despite the NATO-led mission, the Taliban were able to attack and stall the British advance.

As the troops moved out of cover, heading over a field, the crackle of gunfire sent the soldiers scattering into ditches, streams and behind walls.

Close air support was called in; Apache helicopter gunships and F-18 fighter jets unleashed their fearsome firepower on insurgent compounds.

For a while there was silence and the soldiers tentatively edged forwards again, but all too soon the same scenario unfolded.

We waded waist deep in a stream, trying to get close to where the shots had come from.

But within seconds of crawling up a slippery bank to dry land, a rocket-propelled grenade exploded overhead, followed by more gunshots.

The daytime temperature reaches 45C.

As well as body armour, guns and ammunition, the soldiers haul packs and kits that can weigh more than 50 kilos. This may be infantry work, but it is far from light.

The insurgents have incurred losses but there are no figures for how many have been injured or killed.

They are well trained and well armed and seem to have little fear in the face of overwhelming force.

The biggest danger is from homemade bombs, buried in the road or walls. Almost 90 have been discovered in recent days. They are the main cause of British casualties, responsible for five of the seven deaths in recent weeks.

**Progress is slow precisely because of the threat from IED's (improvised explosive devices) and the British army's advance is dependent on hand-held metal detectors.**

**Often, having slowed the troops down, the Taliban then open fire.**

The area is riddled with insurgent bombs and the Taliban are laying more, using increasingly sophisticated and hard to detect techniques.

At just 18, Trooper Martin Watson is one of the youngest soldiers in the Light Dragoons. He was standing near a Scimitar combat vehicle when he drove on to an IED the other day.

"I didn't know what to do, I just stood there in shock. I just didn't have a clue where I was, it was just mad," he said.

Two days later one of his best friends was killed in an explosion and Martin himself had to be evacuated from the front line.

---

## **“A District In Afghanistan’s East Was In Danger Of Falling Into Taliban Hands”**

Jul 8 By Rafiq Sherzad Rafiq Sherzad, JALALABAD, Afghanistan (Reuters)

A district in Afghanistan's east was in danger of falling into Taliban hands after pitched gunbattles with insurgents killed at least eight police, a senior official said on Wednesday.

The fighting erupted late on Tuesday in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nuristan bordering Pakistan.

The police were killed when insurgents attacked government buildings in Nuristan's Barg Matal district late on Tuesday.

Another eight police were captured during gunbattles lasting several hours, Nuristan's governor Jamaluddin Badr said.

"The district headquarters is with the government, but if we do not get reinforcements it will fall to the Taliban," Badr told a Reuters reporter in eastern Afghanistan by telephone.

The Taliban said on a website that they had surrounded the building.

The Defense Ministry in Kabul said an additional 130 soldiers and police would be sent to Barg Matal to counter the Taliban attack.

Fighting had subsided, officials said late on Wednesday.

---

# **“What I Need Is More Afghans” “The Net Increase In Afghan Security Forces Is Zero” “They’re Just Not Available Right Now”**

**[Be careful what you wish for. The silly General will get his “more Afghans,” but they’re not going to be the kind of U.S. Empire loving Afghans he’s hoping for. They’ll be “more Afghans” fighting against occupation by the U.S. Empire, and for their national independence, and they are right to do so. T**

July 8th 2009 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS & By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr., The New York Times Company & 07/09/2009 Agence France-Presse

NAWA, Afghanistan — One week after several battalions of Marines swept through the Helmand River valley, military commanders appear increasingly concerned about a lack of Afghan forces in the field.

“What I need is more Afghans,” said Brig. Gen. Larry Nicholson, commander of the Marine expeditionary brigade in Helmand Province. He accompanied the top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, during a visit with troops at Patrol Base Jaker here on Monday.

“The net increase in Afghan security forces is zero” since the brigade arrived a few months ago, he said.

The lack of Afghan forces “is absolutely our Achilles’ heel,” added Capt. Brian Huysman, commander of Company C of the First Battalion, Fifth Marines in Nawa.

Captain Huysman said the Afghan forces were critically important in establishing trust and communication with citizens.

“We can’t read these people; we’re different,” he said. “They’re not going to tell us the truth. We’ll never get to build and transition” — the last phase of the operation — “unless we have the Afghans.”

American military officials say they want at least a full brigade of Afghan forces in Helmand, thousands more than are here now.

The commander of US Marines in southern Afghanistan said Wednesday there was an urgent need for more Afghan security forces as well as civilian experts to back up a major offensive against Taliban insurgents.

“I’m not going to sugarcoat it. The fact of the matter is we don’t have enough Afghan forces, and I’d like more,” Brigadier General Nicholson told reporters in a teleconference.

A week after 4,000 Marines launched a large-scale operation against insurgents in Taliban strongholds in the Helmand River valley, only about 650 Afghan security forces were accompanying the US troops, Nicholson said.

While there is a plan to send more Afghan troops to the region, Nicholson said, “they’re just not available right now.”

---

## **THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; ALL HOME, NOW**



U.S. Marines use metal detectors to check a road for explosives in Golestan district, Farah province, May 3, 2009. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

---

## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

### **Fresh Fighting Breaks Out In Mogadishu**

7/9/2009 MOGADISHU (Sh. M. Network)

Fresh fighting between the transitional government soldiers and Islamist forces has broken out in Derkenley district in the Somali capital Mogadishu, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Thursday.

Residents said that the fighting started on Thursday morning in parts of the neighborhoods in Derkenley district in south as both sides are using heavy gunfire in the clashes.

It is unclear the real casualty of the war which caused more residents near where the clashes erupted to flee from their houses due to the shelling between the two sides who are currently fighting there.

Derkenley is a large district in the south of the Somali capital Mogadishu and is where the two rival sides have military bases.

Locals said that there are some casualties reached both the warring sides, said that it could be confirmed the exact figure.

The fighting between the government soldiers and the Islamist forces comes as it is the last day of the (Amir) leader of Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen's ultimatum for the soldiers to surrender their weapon to the Islamist forces and leave the frontlines of the warring zones.

---

## **Ugandan Occupation Troops Secretly Selling Guns And Ammunition To Somalia's Government "On Behalf Of The United States Government"**

7/9/2009 KAMPALA (Sh. M. Network)

Ugandan troops in Mogadishu have been secretly selling guns and ammunition to Somalia's struggling Transitional Federal Government on behalf of the United States government, Daily Monitor can reveal.

Explaining American assistance to the TFG during a recent press briefing to US journalists in Washington, D.C., a top US State Department official said Uganda has been supplying arms to Somali troops and picking dollars from Washington.

"We have gone to the Ugandans when the TFG (Transitional Federal Government) has run short of weapons and ammunition and told the Ugandans to provide what TFG needs," the official, who was not named in the partly classified June 26 briefing, said.

"When the Ugandans provide those weapons, they give us a bill and an accounting for what they have turned over (to Somali government) and we then give them the money to replace the stores and the arms."

The official said the UPDF has mostly supplied small arms and ammunition and had increased its supplies in May when Somali Islamic extremists increased their attacks on the TFG and government forces.

The UPDF, which is in Somalia as part of an African Union peacekeeping force to the country, is said to have been paid up to \$10 million (Shs21b) for arming and training the TFG fighting force.

**This is the first time the arms-for-cash deal is being made public and the revelations could mean that the UPDF was violating the neutral terms of its peacekeeping mandate by arming one of the combatants.**

---

## **TROOP NEWS**

**NOT ANOTHER DAY  
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR  
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



June 7, 2009: Medical equipment attached to a wounded U.S. soldier at the emergency room of the U.S. military hospital at Bagram Air Base, north of Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

**GI Special Available In PDF Format**

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org)

## 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 futility 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.**

**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**

## **“Credible Polls Have Long Confirmed That More Than Two-Thirds Of Americans Hold Progressive Views” “They Are The People With A Wakeful Conscience, The Best Of America’s Citizens”**

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Project, for sending.]

July 09, 2009 By John Pilger, New Statesman [Excerpts]

What is most extraordinary about the United States today is the rejection and defiance, in so many attitudes, of the all-pervasive historical and contemporary propaganda of the “invisible government”.

**Credible polls have long confirmed that more than two-thirds of Americans hold progressive views.**

**A majority want the government to care for those who cannot care for themselves.**

**They would pay higher taxes to guarantee health care for everyone.**

**They want complete nuclear disarmament; 72 per cent want the US to end its colonial wars; and so on.**

**They are informed, subversive, even “anti-American”.**

I once asked a friend, the great American war correspondent and humanitarian Martha Gellhorn, to explain the term to me.

“I’ll tell you what ‘anti-American’ is,” she said.

“It’s what governments and their vested interests call those who honour America by objecting to war and the theft of resources and believing in all of humanity.

“There are millions of these anti-Americans in the United States. They are ordinary people who belong to no elite and who judge their government in moral terms, though they would call it common decency.

“They are not vain. They are the people with a wakeful conscience, the best of America’s citizens. They can be counted on. They were in the South with the civil rights movement, ending slavery.

“They were in the streets, demanding an end to the wars in Asia.

“Sure, they disappear from view now and then, but they are like seeds beneath the snow.

“I would say they are truly exceptional.”

**Quit Whining And Pissing On Everybody In Sight  
With Your Condescending Bullshit About How  
Stupid & Apathetic Americans Are:  
If You Don’t Spend Time In The Real World Reaching  
Out To Real Troops, You Have Nothing Whatsoever To  
Sneer At Others About.**

**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

**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

FOR MORE NEWS VISIT US ONLINE AT  
WWW.NEWSTATESMAN.COM



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

---

**“From His Early Political Days,  
Obama’s Unerring Theme Has Been  
America’s Right To Rule And Order  
The World”**

**“Rewarding Crooked Banks And An  
Obese Military, Essentially Protecting  
George W Bush’s Turf”**

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Project, for sending.]

July 09, 2009 By John Pilger, New Statesman [Excerpts]

From his early political days, Obama’s unerring theme has been not “change”, the slogan of his presidential campaign, but America’s right to rule and order the world.

Of the United States, he says, “we lead the world in battling immediate evils and promoting the ultimate good . . . We must lead by building a 21st-century military to ensure the security of our people and advance the security of all people.”

And: “At moments of great peril in the past century our leaders ensured that America, by deed and by example, led and lifted the world, that we stood and fought for the freedoms sought by billions of people beyond their borders.”

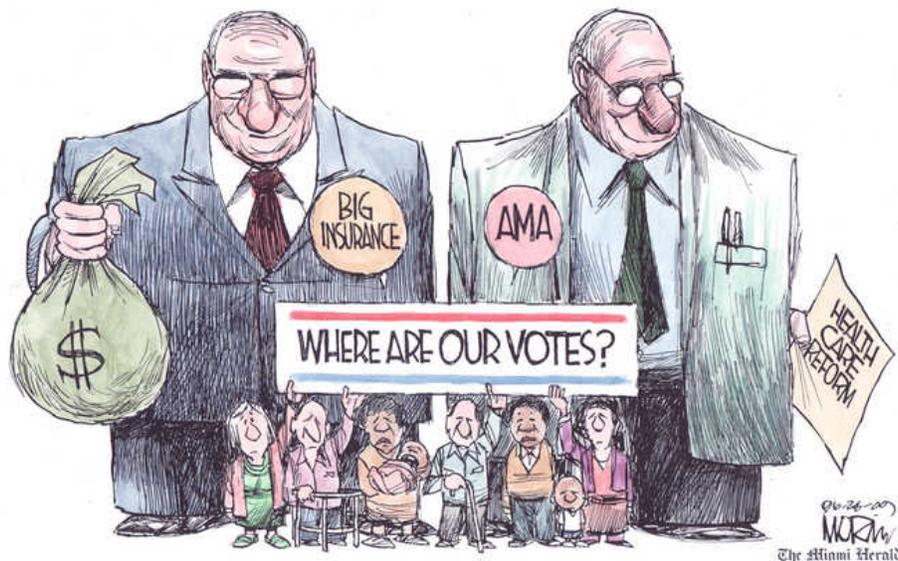
Millions of angry emails from ordinary people have flooded Washington, expressing an outrage that the novelty of Obama has not calmed.

On the contrary, those whose jobs have vanished and whose homes are repossessed see the new president rewarding crooked banks and an obese military, essentially protecting George W Bush’s turf.

**POLITICIANS CAN’T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT  
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE  
WARS**

## CLASS WAR REPORTS



# **500 South African Miners Take Supervisors Hostage: “They Are Demanding That Mine Managers Should Come Down The Shaft And Address Them”**

7.10.09 By: Chanel Pringle, Mining Weekly & (AFP)

About 500 South African miners have taken five supervisors hostage at a mine owned by Canadian mining group Eastern Platinum, demanding the company give them permanent jobs, police said Friday.

A total of eight supervisors at the Crocodile River Mine in North West province were taken hostage at the chrome and platinum mine on Thursday, but three of them escaped to the surface, provincial police spokesman Lesego Metsi said.

The last of the hostages were released at around 18:00 local time, but the workers themselves still refused to leave the mine on Friday evening.

Two days worth of production had, by Friday afternoon, been lost at the Zandfontein section of Canadian platinum-miner Eastern Platinum's (Eastplats') Crocodile River mine (CRM), near Brits, in South Africa's North West province.

The 500 contract workers from JIC and Sindele had started an illegal sit-in at the Zandfontein underground area, close to the entrance of the mine, at the start of the first shift on Thursday morning, taking a number of supervisory staff members from the contract mining companies hostage.

The contract workers were demanding that CRM and not the mining contractors directly and permanently employ them. They claimed that management had promised them this.

The hostage-takers “are temporary workers demanding to be employed permanently,” Metsi told AFP

“They are demanding that mine managers should come down the shaft and address them. We can't allow anyone to go down there. We don't know what the situation is like,” he said.

“We are trying to reason with them to come up instead but they have switched off a two-way radio sent to them by negotiators,” Metsi added.

National Union of Mineworkers spokesman Shane Choshane said the contract workers had independently embarked on “some kind of strike” over the labour dispute.

“They decided among themselves to strike, we are trying to negotiate with them to come so we can resolve the issue,” Choshane said.

Crocodile River Mine chief executive Ian Rozie in a statement that the mine was seeking a court order demanding that the workers leave the mine shaft.

“The workers participating in the illegal ‘sit-in’ have refused to vacate the mine and have detained five supervisory employees of the mining contractors against their will,” Rozier said.

Metsi said the two managers that had escaped on Friday morning received medical attention and counselling.

“They were very cold, hungry and depressed when they came up but they did not have any physical injuries. We don’t know whether the workers are armed but we believe they are using their equipment as weapons,” he said.

Meanwhile, labour union Solidarity commented that the hostage drama, once again, put the spotlight on the “use and abuse” of contract workers.

It emphasised that a bargaining council specifically for contractors and contract workers urgently had to be implemented to tackle the issues of these contract workers.

“Trade unions have been warning for quite some time that employers are abusing contractors. Workers want stability and permanent jobs, and that is exactly why the regulation of the industry is now urgently needed,” said Solidarity spokesperson Jaco Kleynhans.

### **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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057**

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

**GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> . The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others: <http://williambowles.info/gispecial/2008/index.html>; [news@uruknet.info](mailto:news@uruknet.info); [http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/)**

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a “fair use” of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to**

facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice. Go to: [www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml) for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.



If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.