

GI SPECIAL 7H25:

**Insurgents Take Parts Of
Two Northern Provinces,
Threatening New U.S.
Military Supply Route
From Central Asia:**

**“The Highway Runs South
Through The Towering Hindu
Kush Mountains To The Main
U.S. Base At Bagram And To
Kabul”**

**“The Senior U.S. Intelligence
Official Confirmed That The
Taliban Have Set Up Shadow
Governments”**

**“They Operate Checkpoints At Night
On The Highway To The North, Now A
Major Supply Route”**

“‘It Could Cause Problems With Our Northern Distribution Network,’ Said The Senior Intelligence Official”



The insurgents “have influence” in all of Baghlan-i-Jadid’s 268 villages, and the local administration’s authority doesn’t extend beyond the district center of the same name.

August 28, 2009 By Jonathan S. Landay, McClatchy Newspapers. McClatchy special correspondent Hashim Shukoor contributed to this article. [Excerpts]

BAGHLAN-I-JADID, Afghanistan — Taliban insurgents have taken over parts of two northern provinces from which they were driven in 2001, threatening to disrupt NATO’s new supply route from Central Asia and expand a war that’s largely been confined to Afghanistan’s southern half, U.S. and Afghan officials said.

The violence has been on the rise in recent months, however, as the Taliban have staged hit-and-run attacks, bombings and rocket strikes on German, Belgian and Hungarian forces in Baghlan and neighboring Kunduz provinces.

The insurgents now control three Pashtun-dominated districts in Kunduz and Baghlan-i-Jadid, a foothold in a region that was long considered safe.

With a force estimated at 300 to 600 hard-core fighters, they operate checkpoints at night on the highway to the north, now a major supply route, local officials said, and are extorting money, food and lodging from villagers.

Baghlan Governor Mohammad Akbar Barezai said “This is a big problem. We don’t have sufficient forces here.”

For U.S. commanders, whose stretched forces have been unable to pacify the south and are taking record casualties, it’s another looming problem.

“What can we do to mitigate the risk? It’s a question of means,” said a senior U.S. defense official, who requested anonymity because he wasn’t authorized to speak publicly. “Clearly, the main effort is in the south.

“But we can’t allow other areas of the country to be destabilized.”

[Absolutely classic arrogant Imperial stupidity. The report makes it clear as day to anybody who has the brain of a gnat that this “other area” has already been “destabilized,” for the U.S. Empire at least, and he dares to babble meaningless impotent silly crap about how the occupation “can’t allow” what has already happened. As if he has the slightest power to stop it. And these are the fools in command sending U.S. troops to their deaths to please the murderous politician in the White House, who knows nothing about war beyond how to make soldiers die in vain. T]

The official said he’s begun discouraging Western aid workers from visiting projects in those areas.

The growing Taliban presence also threatens to aggravate long-standing tensions into violence between the region’s Pashtuns — the ethnic group that dominates the Taliban — and Tajiks.

Many Pashtuns, descendents of settlers from southern Afghanistan awarded lands in the north in the early 20th century, supported the Taliban’s rule of the 1990s, while many Tajiks fought against the religious militia.

The new NATO supply link, established after Pakistani insurgents began attacking the main logistics route from the Pakistani port of Karachi, consists of two roads, one from Uzbekistan and one from Tajikistan.

After merging in Baghan Province outside the city of Pul-i-Khumri, the highway runs south through the towering Hindu Kush mountains to the main U.S. base at Bagram and to Kabul.

“The concern is if we don’t stunt the (Taliban) growth, it could cause problems with our northern distribution network,” said the senior intelligence official, who asked not to be further identified because he wasn’t authorized to speak publicly.

“A couple of years ago, (Taliban leader) Mullah Omar said ‘We need to open up new fronts in the north and cause a dissipation of (U.S.) resources.’ To a degree, it’s working.”

Northern Afghanistan's nine provinces, dominated by ethnic minorities who opposed the Taliban, have mostly been peaceful since local forces aided by U.S. support ousted the militia in late 2001. About 5,700 German-led international troops have been overseeing major aid and reconstruction efforts from their headquarters in Kunduz.

The Taliban infiltration into Kunduz and Baghlan began 18 months ago with the return from Pakistan of insurgent leaders who ran the provinces during the Taliban rule of Afghanistan, U.S. and Afghan officials said.

The establishment of the new NATO supply route may be a factor that drew Taliban from the south. **[Yah think?]**

The Taliban "have become stronger in the last five to six months," said Gul Agha, who heads Baghlan-i-Jadid's criminal investigation department.

"Before, they moved in very small groups. Now they are moving in groups of 30 to 40 and they have a leader of each group. They have a (shadow) governor, district leaders and recruiters."

The senior U.S. intelligence official confirmed that the Taliban have set up "shadow governments," a tactic they've used to exercise control elsewhere in Afghanistan by punishing crimes and settling feuds that usually linger in corrupt, incompetent government institutions and courts.

Agha said that the insurgents "have influence" in all of Baghlan-i-Jadid's 268 villages, nestled amidst lush groves and rice paddies fed by the Southern Salang River, and that the local administration's authority doesn't extend beyond the district center of the same name.

The district shares its northern border with Chahar Dara, which Afghan officials identified as one of the three Kunduz Province districts controlled by the insurgents.

"There is only one mountain between us," said Amir Gul Baghlani, the Baghlan-i-Jadid district chief. "When they are under pressure over there, they come to this side. When they are under pressure here, they cross to the other side. We don't have enough security."

The district has only 90 police officers and has been recruiting and arming tribal militias in an effort to fill the gap, local officials said.

However, several residents charged that the militias, known as arbakai, have become part of the problem.

"These arbakai take food from villagers by force and taxes by force. My relatives went several times to complain to the authorities. When the arbakai found out, they beat my relatives.

"So they joined the Taliban to keep their prestige and honor," said Mohammad Ghulam, deputy director of the district's agricultural high school.

“Now they are fighting the government.”

Several U.S. military officials said Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the recently installed U.S. commander in Afghanistan, hopes to stem the problem by deploying additional Afghan troops accompanied by U.S. military trainers, an idea that appealed to local officials who fear an influx of American soldiers would fuel violence and bloodshed. **[Great idea. Everybody knows how well that notion has worked in the rest of Afghanistan. But hey, when you’ve lost a war, you need some empty, meaningless bullshit to feed the press back home. Duh.]**

Barekzai, the Baghlan governor, said that he only has about 1,400 police officers and 500 Afghan troops to call on. About 200 Hungarian forces deployed to secure aid projects in are barred from conducting offensive operations.



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Naples Marine Killed In Afghanistan

August 10, 2009 By ELYSA BATISTA, RYAN MILLS, LESLIE WILLIAMS, Naples News

NAPLES — Looking for a change of pace, Dennis James Burrow moved from Maryland to Naples a few years back.

After working for a while as a waiter and a bartender, Burrow, 23, joined the U.S. Marines, said his best friend, Jack Hagan, 23.

The Department of Defense announced Monday that Burrow, a lance corporal, had been killed Friday while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. His address was listed as Naples, though Hagan said Maryland was still home.

“It’s like losing a brother,” said Hagan, who has known Burrow since elementary school. “He was the closest thing you could have to a brother without actually being family.”

Two other Marines from his company were killed the same day, according to Defense officials: Lance Cpl. Janier Olvera, 20, of Palmdale, Calif., and Lance Cpl. Patrick W. Schimmel, 21, of Winfield, Mo.

Burrow was an assaultman assigned to Company G, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 3, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade out of Camp Lejeune, N.C.

In a written statement, Marine Capt. Timothy Patrick said that Burrow joined the Marine Corps in June 2006 and was promoted to the rank of lance corporal on Sept. 1, 2007.

Burrow deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from November 2007 to May 2008, and to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in May 2009. His awards include the Iraqi Campaign Medal and Global War on Terrorism Service Medals.

Burrow was home in Maryland for about a week before shipping off to Afghanistan, Hagan said. They went out to a bar to have fun. The last thing Hagan said he remembered telling Burrow was to be careful, to keep his head down, and to call when he could.

“When you hear about this stuff, you never think it’s going to happen to you, especially for your best friend,” Hagan said.

Hagan described Burrow as a “goofball,” who was into computers and good at math.

“He couldn’t have been more of an honest person, and he would drop anything he was doing to help you, for anything that you needed,” Hagan said. “He was there all the time.”

Nick Marsit, commander of the Naples detachment of the Marine Corps League, was struggling to make sense of the loss Monday, especially as community members tried to learn more details about the 23-year-old.

“It’s very sad, and we’re going to do whatever we can to help the family, and if necessary, we’re going to be part of whatever is going to take place,” said Marsit.

Burrow's last known address in Naples is a now-abandoned home on Highlands Drive. A neighbor said Burrow had not lived there in years.

Regardless of Burrow's connection to the area, though, Marsit said, Burrow will always have a home in the hearts and minds of his fellow Marines. "One Marine is never going to forget another Marine," Marsit said. "He's one of us."

Burrow and his fellow Marines who died Friday become part of a rising trend of violence claiming the lives of Americans in Afghanistan.

Another Southwest Florida Marine stationed out of Camp Lejeune died in Afghanistan in July while supporting combat operations.

Sgt. Michael C. Roy, 25, of North Fort Myers, died July 8 in Nimroz province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, Marine Special Operations Advisor Group, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, according to the Defense Department.

Last month was the bloodiest month on record so far for U.S. troops in Afghanistan: 76 international service members were killed in violence in that country in July, including more than 30 U.S. troops, according to the Associated Press.

With that, July topped June, the previous record month with 28 U.S. fatalities. At the same time, the number of U.S. troops in the country is roughly double the presence in Afghanistan one year ago, when 30,000 U.S. service members were stationed there.

Spanaway Man Is Army's Oldest Afghanistan Casualty



August 21, 2009 By DREW MIKKELSEN, KING 5 News

SPANAWAY, Wash. - A Spanaway grandfather is the latest casualty of war from Washington state.

Fifty-nine-year-old First Sergeant Jose Crisostomo was killed in Afghanistan by a roadside bomb Tuesday. He is believed to be the oldest U.S. soldier to die in. During a 24-year military career he served in Vietnam and Kuwait before retiring from the military in 1993.

After 9/11, Crisostomo decided to re-enlist in the U.S. Army.

Crisostomo, who was known to friends as “Joe Sinbad,” was well aware of the risks of combat. During a 24-year military career he served in Vietnam and Kuwait before retiring from the military in 1993.

After 9/11, Crisostomo decided to re-enlist in the U.S. Army. “He insisted going back and serving his country,” said Crisostomo’s wife of 39 years, Patricia.

“That was his passion, his life,” said Patricia, who met her husband on their native Guam.

Crisostomo founded a community organization made up of fellow Pacific Islanders.

“We’re just going to miss him,” said neighbor Norm Ruediger.

Ruediger remembers when Crisostomo found out he was going back to war in April of 2008. “He was proud, he was tickled to go back and serve his country again,” said Ruediger.

Crisostomo is survived by his wife, four children and 10 grandchildren.

Afghan War Claims Life Of Marine From Queens



Marine Lance Cpl. Leopold F. Damas was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan

August 20, 2009 By Ivan Pereira, YOUR NABE.COM

A Queens Marine was killed earlier this week in Afghanistan as the fledgling democracy prepared to hold its annual elections, the U.S. Marine Corps. said.

Lance Cpl. Leopold F. Damas, 26, of Floral Park, died Monday during a combat operation in the Helmand province of Afghanistan, according to the Marines.

"It shocked me," said Master Sgt. Darin Bell, who helped recruit Damas at the Marine's recruiting station on Jamaica Avenue.

Damas, a Jamaica native, was on his first tour of duty in that country and served as a rifleman Company G, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 3, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade, according to the Marines. The Marine, who joined the corps in January 2006, had previously served two tours in Iraq, from March 2007 to September 2007 and July 2008 to February 2009, the Marines said.

He had been in Afghanistan since May, according to the Marines.

Violence from insurgent forces has been on the rise in the last few weeks in the run-up to Thursday's national elections in Afghanistan.

Bell, who did not serve with Damas, said that he was very enthusiastic about his life as a member of the armed services and always wanted to be a Marine.

"He wanted to get out of New York and do something different," Bell said.

The sergeant said that Damas would keep in contact with him via his Facebook and MySpace pages, which were filled with photos of his time overseas.

"He hit me up on Facebook and I saw the photos of him in uniform and I was like, 'Man, he finally made it,'" Bell said.

Bell said that Damas lived with his mother in Jamaica until he enlisted.

Dan Andrews, a spokesman for Borough President Helen Marshall, said that Damas was an alumnus of Newtown High School in Elmhurst.

"On behalf of the people of Queens, I extend condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Lance Cpl. Leopold Damas, who was killed while serving his country in Afghanistan," Marshall said in a statement.

Chesapeake Soldier Killed In Afghanistan A Dad, Husband

August 20, 2009 By Kristin Davis, The Virginian-Pilot

CHESAPEAKE

He joined the Marines at 19 and later served in two wars as an Army Special Forces medical sergeant. He also was a romantic.

Sgt. 1st Class William Brian Woods surprised his girlfriend with a destination wedding to Colorado in January 2007, said Patti Russell, the bride's mother. She thought he was going to propose. He took her to a shop to pick out a wedding gown instead.

Two years later, Woods and wife Elizabeth welcomed baby Ella. Russell said Woods planned to return from a six-month deployment to Afghanistan in January, just as their daughter turned 1.

He died Sunday.

Woods, 31, was shot while on patrol two days earlier in the central Afghan province of Ghazni, the Department of Defense announced Wednesday. He succumbed to his wounds at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Woods was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Glen Arm, Md. The couple had lived in Chesapeake for about a year, Russell said.

"He was a remarkable young man," she said. "I just can't say enough about him."

Woods is also survived by his mother, four brothers and sisters, and a 5-year-old daughter, Lily, from a previous marriage.

"They were very close," Russell said of Woods and his older daughter. "He saw her before he left. It's just very hard to conceive."

She said Elizabeth, who was in Germany on Wednesday, plans to move near relatives in North Carolina to raise Ella.

Woods' deployment was one of many, said his uncle, Robert Woods, and the young soldier was acutely aware of the dangers he faced. Robert Woods visited his nephew in Chesapeake earlier this summer and the two spoke on the phone the night before Woods left.

"Even though he's our nephew, he's a brother in arms," Robert Woods said. "We wanted to tell each other things should be all right.... We told each other we loved each other and got off the phone."

They also spoke of Woods' wishes for his uncle to participate in his funeral as a member of the Ohio Patriot Guard. Robert Woods had attended hundreds of services for military men and women as part of the organization, standing outside with American flags.

Many were for older veterans, but there were young casualties from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, too. Robert Woods said he joined the Patriot Guard four years ago to give troops the recognition that was lacking during the war in Vietnam, where he served for a year hauling helicopter fuel. "We make sure from beginning to end, they are given a hero's burial."

Robert Woods said his nephew came from a family of war veterans - another of his uncles served in Vietnam and one relative served in World War II. He believes that may have sparked Woods' interest in the military.

William Woods grew up in Catawissa, Mo., a suburb of St. Louis, and spent four years in the Marine Corps before joining the Army. He later became a medical sergeant in the Special Forces - "basically they're just field doctors," Robert Woods said.

"The training they have to go through in Special Forces is above and beyond the training I did," he said. "It takes a heck of a guy to muster through that. He showed me that he was truly a better man than I, I can tell you that.

"He definitely rose above the rest of us as far as our military careers go. He was a smart young man who knew he wanted to make a difference in this world if he could.... It's a shame. But you know, war is hell."

St. Louis Marine Killed In Helmand



Patrick W. Schimmel

08/14/2009 By Joel Currier, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Mary Jean Schimmel discouraged her son from joining the military, but she says that becoming a Marine made him a man.

Lance Cpl. Patrick W. Schimmel, 21, of Winfield, died Sunday after being wounded in combat operations in Afghanistan's Helmand province, the Defense Department reported.

"I was just afraid for him," said his mother, also of Winfield. "After joining the Marine Corps, he gained that confidence. It gave him purpose and discipline."

Schimmel was one of four Marines from the same battalion killed in the last week while serving combat operations in the Helmand province, according to the Defense Department. All were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force based in Camp Lejeune, N.C.

His parents said he was hurt in combat and flown to a hospital in Germany, where he died.

"We're still in shock," said his father, Wayne Schimmel, 61.

Schimmel was a rifleman who had joined the Marine Corps in November 2006, after graduating from Winfield High School the previous spring. He fought in Iraq from October 2007 to May 2008 and was redeployed to Afghanistan this past May.

Schimmel drove combat vehicles and worked as a translator of Arabic, said his brother, Matthew Schimmel, 23, of St. Charles.

"He always looked up to me, but I think it's the other way around," he said. "He'll always be my hero."

Patrick Schimmel ran cross-country in high school and was a Boy Scout, his parents said. Schimmel joined the Marines to emulate his father, who served in the Marines in the Vietnam War.

"The first time he shot a .50-caliber machine gun, he was ecstatic," his father said.

His parents and brother said he was a shy, quiet person with a short, wiry frame. Because of his struggles to gain weight, military recruiters had him fatten up on fast food in order to pass the Marine Corps' minimum weight standards, his mother said.

In high school, he collected knives, swords and typically wore baggy, black jeans, black T-shirts and had spiked hair. But boot camp, which he loved, quickly changed him, allowing him to grow physically and mentally, his parents said.

"Everyone says he was a man — a warrior — but I still picture him as my little boy," Mary Jean Schimmel said.

Schimmel's body will return to St. Louis by private jet Friday morning.

Visitation will be 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday at Baue Funeral and Memorial Center in St. Charles. A funeral service will begin at 1:30 p.m. Sunday at Baue, with burial to follow at Jefferson Barracks Cemetery.

Garfield Heights Saddened To Hear Of Death Of Marine Sgt. Adam Benjamin In Afghanistan

August 21, 2009 by Margaret Bernstein, The Plain Dealer

Garfield Heights, which bid goodbye to a fallen soldier in May, has another native son to mourn.

Marine Gunnery Sgt. Adam F. Benjamin, a 1993 graduate of Garfield Heights High School, died Tuesday in combat, military officials said. The 34-year-old career Marine had arrived in Afghanistan only a month ago to serve in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Just four months ago, hundreds lined Garfield Heights' streets to pay respects to Army Spc. Brad Davis, a 21-year-old soldier killed in Iraq. He too had attended Garfield Heights High.

It's a big blow for a small community, said Garfield Heights School District spokeswoman Melissa Thompson.

She said the district will begin the school year Monday with a moment of silence for Benjamin. "The city of Garfield Heights reaches out to support one another during difficult times. This situation with this family will be no different," Thompson said.

Word of Benjamin's death spread quickly across the community where he lived as a boy with his mother and stepfather, Judy and Robert Watters.

Classmates described him as a dedicated Marine.

"Even when we were kids in grade school, he had the passion," said Mark Russo of Garfield Heights, a close friend. "He wanted to be a Marine. Everyone went off to college, and he went to boot camp."

The U.S. military has reported that Benjamin died as a result of a hostile incident while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

He was an explosives ordnance disposal technician assigned to the 8th Engineer Support Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 2, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

He joined the Marines right after graduating from high school. He was promoted to the rank of gunnery sergeant in January 2006.

Benjamin, who was single, was deployed twice to Iraq, from February to October 2007 and again from February to September 2008, according to a Marine spokesman. He received several awards, including commendation medals and achievement medals from both the Navy and Marine Corps.

Benjamin stayed in touch with hometown friends through Facebook and occasional visits to Cleveland.

Benjamin had no regrets about the life he chose. "I envied the fact that he was very dedicated to what he did," said Russo.

Funeral plans for the local Marine haven't yet been released.

Russo, a jazz trumpeter, said that he has offered to play taps in honor of his longtime friend and that Benjamin's parents have accepted.

"I'd be honored to do that for him," Russo said.

West Mich. Soldier Killed in Afghanistan Blast

18 Aug 2009 (AP)

MIDDLEVILLE, Mich. (AP) - An Army corporal from western Michigan was killed in an improvised explosive blast while serving in Afghanistan, the Pentagon said Monday.

Nicholas R. Roush, 22, of Middleville, was injured when the device detonated near his vehicle, the Defense Department said. It said he died Sunday in Herat, Afghanistan.

Middleville is about 20 miles southeast of Grand Rapids.

"What courage and what strength he had to know the danger and have the desire to go and help others," Sara Lee, a neighbor of parents Robert and Donna Roush, told The Grand Rapids Press. "The family has made the ultimate sacrifice and it's a sobering reminder of the dangers of war.

"He's a hero to me."

Robert Roush told WOOD-TV Roush was an "avid car freak" who was "really determined to serve his country."

The soldier signed up for a five-year Army commitment, put on weight and developed language skills he knew would help him as a soldier, the station said.

Roush was part of the 4th Psychological Operations Group, based at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The Thornapple-Kellogg High School graduate was part of an Army special operations unit, Lee said.

Principal Tony Koski said Roush's death was a blow to the close-knit community. Roush was a senior golfer during Koski's first year as the district's athletic director.

"Nick was a solid student, but more importantly he was a nice young man and a great citizen," Koski said. "It's a big loss."

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH;

ALL HOME, NOW



A U.S. Marine vehicle near a dismantled IED in Golestan district of Farah province, May 8, 2009. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic



June 19, 2009: U.S. Marines from 3rd Marines descend from an observation post near Now Zad in Afghanistan's Helmand province. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines from 3rd Marines prepare to enter a mud walled compound during a close-quarter battle against Taliban fighters near Now Zad in Afghanistan's Helmand province Saturday June 20, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines of 3rd Regiment fighting the Taliban in the village of Dahaneh Aug. 12, 2009, in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. Operation Eastern Resolve 2 launched Wednesday morning in an attempt to push Taliban from the village which is a key commerce town in the province. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The casket of Army Staff Sgt. Clayton Bowen, 29, at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in Antonio, Aug. 28, 2009. Bowen was killed in action Aug. 18 after he was struck by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. Bowen was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Airborne Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, Alaska. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

Veteran Says “This Tempo Of No Family Time Is Breaking Up Families And Homes”

8.31.09 Army Times Discussion Board

Soldiers go to war, fight, save lives, turn wrenches and collect data at a high tempo that never ends, even when they get home. I am a noncommissioned officer and my aviation unit has not stopped preparing to go back to war since we got back home.

This tempo of no family time is breaking up families and homes. The younger soldiers are so low on morale that all they do is drink and party to escape the chaos of long, pointless days at work.

There's no time to build strong families, relationships or to bond with kids.

I think a lot of the senior leaders come home, don't turn off the war switch and just keep pushing the soldiers, and then wonder why we have so many suicides.

Not to mention the fact we have new commanders who come in after you return from war, who have their first commands and can't wait to get in the fight.

The bottom line is that soldiers need rest — not just physical rest, but mental and emotional relief from Army life.

SBT

MORE:

“He Has Spent The Past Year Training For His Deployment And Is Burned Out And Exhausted — Not Physically But Mentally”

8.31.09 Army Times Discussion Board

My son complains about doing busy work and having to stay long hours for what he says are stupid reasons.

He is young with a new family, and they don't have enough time together.

He has spent the past year training for his deployment and is burned out and exhausted — not physically but mentally.

He was gung ho for his deployment months ago, but now that it is time to go, all he sees is more long days of work and now no time with his family .

Army Mom

“Soldiers Can Continue To Access Social Networking Sites Like Twitter, Myspace And Facebook Using Most Army Computers”

8.31.09 Army Times By Jim Tice

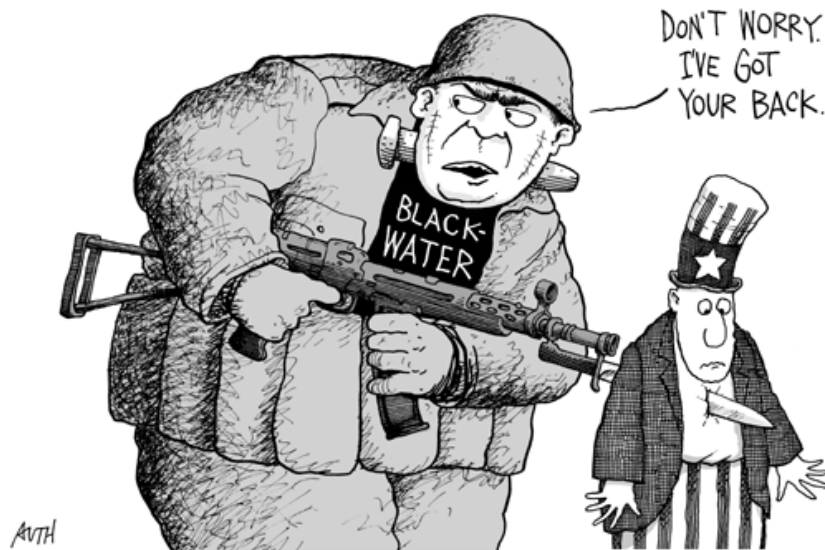
Soldiers can continue to access social networking sites like Twitter, MySpace and Facebook using most Army computers, but a policy review is underway that could limit that practice in the future.

While such sites “provide an excellent opportunity to collaborate and share information, (they) could expose Army networks to malicious software and create cyber-security problems,” according to an Aug. 14 message issued by the Office of the G3.

Noting that the service is reviewing its policies on social networking sites, the message said, currently “there is no Department of the Army directive that prohibits users from accessing sites.” The message came in the wake of a Marine Corps message prohibiting its members from accessing such sites with work computers unless they are granted a special waiver to do so.

Marines are allowed to access personal accounts for social networking sites using home computers.

Officials expect that new policy guidance from the Defense Department for all the services will be issued by Oct. 1, the beginning of fiscal 2010.



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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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

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

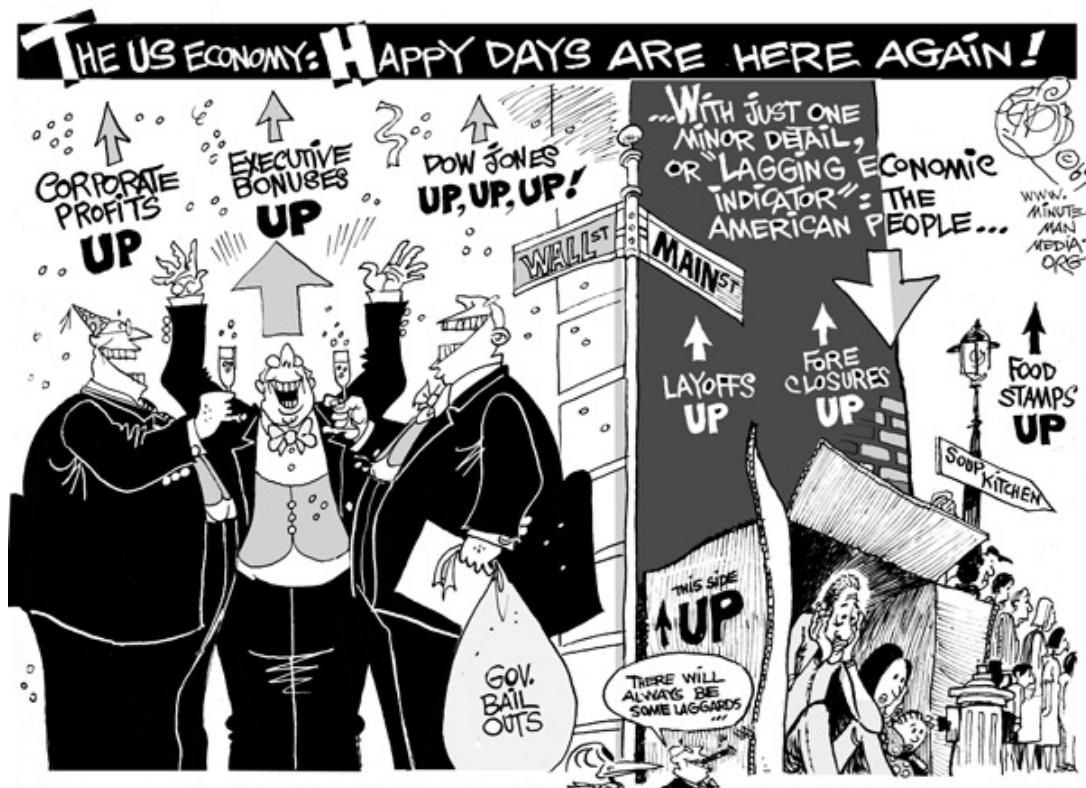
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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/)

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**Trailer Park Residents Fight
Eviction By Greedy Landlord
And Win:
Retired U.S. Marine Organizes
Them For Combat:
Marine Says “All The Rich People In
This Country Forget They Wouldn’t
Have All That Money If Not For
Working People”
“We Should Fire ‘Em All From Their
Positions And Replace Them With
Workers”**



“They never have the money for what you want...but when they need to put a building up, or raise their pay, there’s money.

“I’m not anti-American, but I’m scared of this government. You never know if one day they’re gonna just come in here and throw you on the street.”

August 26, 2009, By Matt Hoke, Socialist Worker

WOODBINE, N.J.--When Carol Lynn trailer park resident Al Ripa received a letter in the mail kicking him off his land, it didn't surprise him.

Ripa had never received as much as a friendly word or even a notice in the mail from his landlord, Anthony Saduk, in more than 16 years of living at Carol Lynn.

But to other residents of the southern New Jersey trailer park, the letter was completely unexpected.

One older woman suffered a heart attack upon reading it.

Technically, the letters weren't eviction notices, but they might as well have been. Carol Lynn Resorts had been advertised as the only year-round trailer park in the area--which by the letter of the law was false advertising.

For whatever reason, Carol Lynn exists in a legal limbo. On paper, it's a seasonal resort, but with the strange requirement that during three months of the year, residents have to be off their sites for a one-week period during each one.

In reality, Carol Lynn is home to about 300 permanent households, consisting mainly of disabled senior citizens and low-income workers.

The letters sent out to residents in July informed them that New Jersey state Department of Community Affairs (DCA) now designated the wiring in certain trailers as a fire safety issue if inhabited permanently.

Saduk, also a member of the Woodbine City Council, wrote that he intended to enforce these designations--and that as of November 1, 2009, the water would be shut off and the front gate would be locked.

Carol Lynn residents--most without the money to get up and go, and living in trailers that weren't built to be moved easily--were surprised to learn that they had been living at a seasonal resort with restrictions on year-round occupancy that had never been enforced before.

One Tennessee woman had sold her home and moved to Carol Lynn just before summer, believing it was a year-round site. Residents observed that Carol Lynn seemed to be the only site in the state where the regulations were being actually enforced.

Residents think the real motive for Saduk's move is financial--that he hoped to push residents of Carol Lynn off of their sites while real estate values were going up. They said heavy construction equipment loomed ominously around the park, ready for "renovations."

Al Ripa, a retired U.S. Marine, wasn't about to roll over and take it.

Though he had the money to move and had been planning to head to Florida anyway, Ripa couldn't stomach the idea of walking away. He was concerned for his friends who couldn't afford to move, financially and physically.

"What if I threw my dogs out on the street?" he said. "They'd arrest me for animal abuse. That's exactly what he's doing to these senior citizens."

Besides, he said, the evictions were one more example of trends he had witnessed in recent years:

"All the rich people in this country forget they wouldn't have all that money if not for working people.

"We should fire 'em all from their positions and replace them with workers.

"They never have the money for what you want...but when they need to put a building up, or raise their pay, there's money.

"I'm not anti-American, but I'm scared of this government. You never know if one day they're gonna just come in here and throw you on the street."

ON THE day the notices came out, Ripa began going door to door with a plan to crash the next Woodbine City Council meeting.

Most residents agreed right away, and began going door to door themselves.

Within two days, much of the trailer park had gone from despair and outrage to determined anger.

Ripa's trailer became the movement's headquarters, a hive of visitors coming and going with ideas about what to do, questions and doubts. Ripa said that a handful of residents half-jokingly named him "the mayor."

When the City Council meeting came on July 17, more than 50 angry Carol Lynn residents packed the usually empty chamber.

As if trying to provoke a response, landlord and council member Saduk opened the public comment session by saying that he couldn't speak on any discussion related to the trailer park. This was followed by an immediate outburst from the gallery.

At the meeting, one resident after resident took their turn on the floor, challenging Saduk for his cruelty and greed, while the council members fidgeted over the relatively light security.

Cameras flashed and journalists from local papers jotted down quotes. The mayor of Woodbine, William Pikolycky, made the sad mistake of going to bat for Saduk, who refused to speak had excused himself from the conversation on cheap legalistic grounds.

In the weeks that followed, Ripa had phone conversations several state officials, including the head of the DCA, Joseph Doria. Ripa said he warned the officials, "Don't you know that this is on YouTube?"--and that election season was coming.

Even as Ripa was talking to these officials, New Jersey was rocked by a state corruption scandal that led to 44 mayors, lawmakers and others being arrested for taking bribes, laundering money and even selling a black-market kidney in one case. Gov. Jon Corzine asked Doria to resign, and he complied.

The next gathering for the Carol Lynn residents was at the office of New Jersey state Sen. Jeff Van Drew, a Democrat who had pledged to help out the situation. About 80 people gathered to see what this man who claimed to be on their side would say. Some were wearing uniforms from low-paying jobs--many leaned on canes and walkers, or sat in wheelchairs.

Van Drew said that with Doria's resignation, the DCA would be more pliant to popular demands. He also said that it was really up to the municipalities to define regulations for seasonal sites.

The Woodbine mayor also attended, and he said the regulations would revert to the old rules, which effectively made Carol Lynn a year-round trailer park once again.

Residents asked a few questions to clarify the legalese, wondering if at the bottom of the doublespeak, they were being told that they stay in their homes. The answer was yes, and relief spread through the group.

One Carol Lynn resident said that the change in regulations was good, but the fight wasn't over yet.

"Saduk is vindictive," he said, "he's retaliatory...he wants his money." He then went from person to person spreading the idea of a tenants' union.

IN MID-August, residents voted to create a chapter of the New Jersey Tenant's Organization in order to take on other grievances that had been building over time.

Not the least of these complaints is a \$700 increase in maintenance fees in the course of one year (with maintenance often not done), which some residents believe is also part of Saduk's plan to clear people out.

A few residents have also faced harassment, such as one who was told that his shed was two feet in height over regulation--and then after working on it was told that it was still two inches too tall, and that it had to be reduced in two days, or he would be evicted.

But all in all, the people of the trailer park stood their ground.

The threatening construction machines disappeared.

Those who seemed at first to be powerless flipped the situation around, resisting a landlord politician and the New Jersey state government.

Ripa said he wants the world to know what the residents' victory means: "I've been saying for years that we have to stand up, we have to take it back, and it's not going to take one or two people.

"If it was one or two people they'd laugh at you, ignore you. But this is an example of lots of people getting together and making it happen.

Got an opinion? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.



"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops." Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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END THE OCCUPATIONS**

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