

## **Military Resistance 7K6**

### **WELCOME TO OBAMA'S WAR**



U.S. soldiers take cover as Taliban fighters ambush U.S. soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division during a patrol in the Pech Valley of Afghanistan's Kunar province Nov. 3, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

# **Pain**

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: Military Resistance  
Sent: November 04, 2009  
Subject: Pain  
Written by Dennis Serdel, Military Resistance 2009

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

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**Pain**

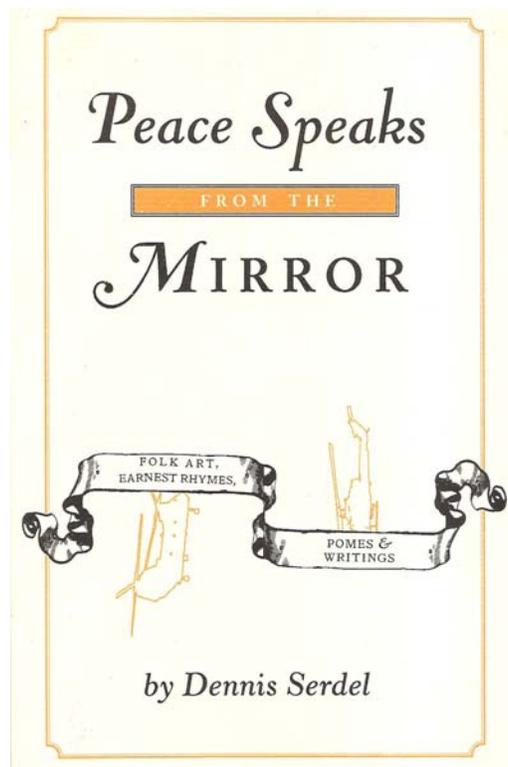
Probably the Soldiers of today can not relate to this  
the badly wounded in Vietnam were flown to Japan  
in this multi-story hospital with long wards  
in Tokyo bed ridden and heard the crowds clash down  
below it is the Japanese protesting that we are here  
then this young black kid is wheeled in through  
the door and shouts I have to shit in a bag  
for the rest of my life  
the pain shots help but there are just  
walls to look at they showed us a movie on a sheet  
sometimes at night  
the wounds are left open and swabbed everyday  
with some sort of yellow medicine  
and that hurt like the reason we are here  
no one gave a damn why we were there  
maybe it's like Germany too  
without the protesters we didn't have computers  
to play we didn't have TV  
but I think the wounds are still the same  
I mean I don't know how it is today to be wounded  
they say you are all heroes  
must be a good feeling to you alright  
they finally sewed me up and I could move around  
in a wheelchair  
copped \$15 from the Red Cross  
to buy me some cigarettes  
I found there were floors of Soldiers some more  
some less wounded than me  
I don't know why they don't send TV of you  
of course they didn't take TV of us either  
Walter Cronkite never interviewed me  
they don't show that part of war  
all the Soldiers not wounded or wounded a little  
never see the hospital side of war  
so from Germany to the USA the wounded are left  
on their own  
gimping hobbling wheeling prosthesis a head wound  
that hair or a hat won't cover up at all  
a wife who leaves you one year  
after coming back "home" because she  
can't stand looking at you  
or for the young Soldier no wife at all ever  
and everybody says that he is mad because  
he is wounded so bad with no welcome home  
and that is why he is against the war  
those are the kind you would like to shoot  
in the gut in the leg in the arm  
shoot off a hand shoot off a foot  
shoot in their side and shoot in their head  
put them in a wheelchair and roll them  
down the Congress steps

introduce the most beautiful girl  
in the world and have her say  
thanks for serving and  
turn and walk away  
have young kids laugh at you  
as you gimp up some stairs  
frag the people at work  
who make fun of you  
put them on an elevator heading down  
ten floors  
then pull the electric switch  
and cut the cable  
and scream in Obama's big ears  
can you hear me now  
how do you like the wars ?

**MORE:**

MORE OF DENNIS SERDEL'S WORK IN *PEACE SPEAKS FROM THE MIRROR*:  
**Get Some While There Still Are Some To Get:**

[You know the power of the poems by Dennis Serdel from the front pages of GI  
Special: now they're in book form: Ordering information below: T]



**DENNIS SERDEL:**  
Shipped to Vietnam in November 1967.

**Returned home in October 1968 to Kalamazoo, Michigan.  
Joined Veterans For Peace in January 1990.  
Joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War when Iraq and Afghanistan War started.**

Books are \$15 Post Paid:  
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Dennis Serdel  
339 Oakwood Lane  
Perry,  
Michigan 48872

**Walt Whitman  
Carl Sandburg  
Allan Ginsberg  
Dennis Serdel  
T**

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?**

**Forward Military Resistance 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 Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Resistance Action**

Nov 5 (Reuters) & 11/07/09 Reuters

A roadside bomb killed a police officer and wounded three others when it struck a police patrol in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb struck an Iraqi police patrol on Friday, wounding three policemen and two civilians in western Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb targeted a police patrol on foot, killing one policeman and wounding another in central Mosul on Friday, police said.

Guerrillas shot dead an Iraqi policeman at a checkpoint in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas shot dead a local pro-government militia member in southwest Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad on Friday, police said.

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

**ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT;  
ALL HOME NOW**



Spc. Eric Marquez, an infantryman and native of El Paso, Texas, assigned to Co. A, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, during a search for hidden contraband in a field in northwestern Baghdad November 1, 2009. REUTERS/U.S. Army/Sgt. Mark Burrell/Handout

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

**Two U.S. Troops Killed Somewhere Or  
Other In Afghanistan**

November 6, 2009 By Alexandra Zavis and Karim Sharifi, The Los Angeles Times

NATO force announced the deaths of two American troops Thursday by bombing in southern Afghanistan.

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## **Taliban Recover Bodies Of Two U.S. Soldiers After Drowning**

Nov 6 By Sharafuddin Sharafyar, Reuters & AFP

HERAT, Afghanistan – Two U.S. soldiers transporting supplies in Afghanistan were reported missing on Friday and the Taliban said they were holding the bodies of two drowned foreign soldiers.

The Islamist militants' spokesman, Qare Yousuf, told Reuters by telephone from an undisclosed location that they had recovered the bodies of the drowned soldiers on Wednesday in the western Badghis province.

The province's police chief, Abdul Jabar, said the two service members were Americans, who drowned in a river after arriving in the area during a gunbattle on Wednesday.

U.S. military sources confirmed they were Americans.

"Two days ago, a U.S. aircraft dropped some logistical packages for a U.S. base in the province and a number of these packages went into the river nearby," the deputy police chief of Badghis province, Abdul Jabar, told AFP.

"Two soldiers went to take these packages from the river and drowned," he said.

**MORE:**

### **More Than 25 Occupation Troops Wounded During Search For Dead U.S. Soldiers:**

**"Abdul Jabar, Said NATO Aircraft Had Struck Their Own Troops During The Search And That Several Americans Had Died In The 'Friendly Fire' Air Strike"**

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

November 6, 2009 By Alexandra Zavis and Karim Sharifi, The Los Angeles Times & By Sharafuddin Sharafyar, Reuters & By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer  
[Excerpts]

More than 25 international and Afghan troops were wounded Friday in western Afghanistan -- possibly by friendly fire -- during a search operation for two U.S. Army paratroopers who had gone missing, according to the military.

**The chief of police in Badghis province in western Afghanistan, Abdul Jabar, said NATO aircraft had struck their own troops during the search and that several Americans had died in the “friendly fire” air strike.**

**Neither NATO nor Afghan officials immediately explained how their forces got into the firefight, nor did they provide a breakdown of the casualties.**

**Qari Yousef Ahmadi, a Taliban spokesman reached by telephone, claimed the militants ambushed the joint forces in the same district where the soldiers went missing. He said three Taliban insurgents were killed in the clash.**

**Lieutenant Darin Russell, a spokesman for NATO forces, said the troops were wounded “by insurgent activity”. He declined to give further details of the incident, which he said was under investigation.**

**He was unable to say how many of the wounded were NATO troops and how many were Afghans, or whether any of them had been killed.**

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## **Castle Rock Marine Injured In Afghanistan Improving, Mother Says**

November 5, 2009 By Barbara LaBoe, The Daily News

Sgt. Jason Swofford, the Castle Rock Marine and young father injured in Afghanistan last week, is badly hurt but is “very strong” and expected to pull through, his mother said Thursday.

Swofford, 25, was leading a patrol in the Nawa district of Helmand province of Afghanistan on Oct. 30 when an improvised explosive device detonated.

He suffered severe injuries to his face and right arm and will need surgeries to reconstruct those areas. He’s still getting help breathing and is heavily medicated for pain. A muscle from his back will be put in his arm to help him regain movement, his mother, Starla Braga, said by telephone from the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

“He’s a strong, strong, strong guy both mentally and physically,” said Braga, of Castle Rock. “He has a long road ahead of him, but he’s going to pull through.”

Also in Maryland are Swofford's wife, Alissa, of Portland; 10-month-old son, Logan; father, Marty Swofford Sr., also of Castle Rock; and brother Marty Swofford Jr. His brother is in the Navy and both his parents were in the Army.

Prior to his Afghanistan tour, Swofford spent a year in Iraq. He was due home next month, which would have been the first time he saw his son since he was four months old, Braga said.

Swofford grew up in Castle Rock and attended Castle Rock High School as a member of the Class of 2001. He later got his GED. In 2004 he earned an associate's degree from Lower Columbia College before joining the Marines. He has numerous relatives in the area.

Family and friends who want to send letters and cards to Swofford can do so at the following address: Sgt. Jason A. Swofford, National Naval Medical Center, 8901 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD, 20889-5600.

Braga said doctors expect Swofford to remain at the hospital "indefinitely."

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## **Foreign Troops Help The Afghan Resistance: Occupation Forces Attack Their Own Base And Kill Afghan Collaborators: Others Attack Red Crescent Charity Office**

Nov. 7, 2009 The Associated Press & CNN

Afghanistan's Defence Ministry said Saturday that a U.S. airstrike in the western province of Badghis mistakenly hit a joint base housing foreign troops and Afghan security forces, killing four Afghan soldiers and three policemen.

Defence Ministry spokesman Gen. Mohammad Zahir Azimi said an Afghan army commando unit, district police members and foreign forces were in the base in the Bala Marghab district at the time of the airstrike Friday afternoon. Roauf Ahmadi, a spokesman for the western regional police commander, said the airstrike also wounded 15 Afghan soldiers and one policeman.

"During an air attack by U.S. forces in Badghis province, seven Afghan forces were killed," the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

The deputy governor of the southern province of Zabul, Ali Khail, said foreign forces raided an Afghan Red Crescent office in the city of Qalat early Saturday, killing a security guard and arresting three local Red Crescent employees.

Red Crescent spokesman Walid Akbar confirmed that international forces had raided the office, but said he had not received any reports of deaths.

Akbar said his organization was negotiating with provincial authorities for the release of the three arrested men, whom he identified as a driver, a communications officer and a guest.

“We are a neutral organization. We help both parties. We help the victims of the war,” he said.

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

## **Taliban-Led Insurgents Have Devised Ways To Destroy MRAPS:**

**“Rocket-Propelled Grenades That  
Penetrate Their Steel Armor”**

**“Pentagon Officials Note That  
Insurgents Are Building Larger IEDs  
And Are Finding Better Ways To  
Conceal Them”**

**“The Notion Of A Wheeled Armored  
Constabulary Force As A Prescription  
For A Close Combat Situation Is  
Nonsense”**

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

Nov 5 By Jonathan S. Landay, McClatchy Newspapers Jonathan S. Landay, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — Taliban-led insurgents in Afghanistan have devised ways to cripple and even destroy the expensive armored vehicles that offer U.S. forces the best protection against roadside bombs by using increasingly large explosive charges and rocket-propelled grenades, according to U.S. soldiers and defense officials.

The insurgents' success in attacking the hulking machines, which can cost as much as \$1 million each, underscores their ability to counter the advanced hardware that the U.S. military and its allies are deploying in their struggle to gain the upper hand in the war, which entered its ninth year last month.

**The attacks also raise questions about how vulnerable a new, lighter MRAP, the M-ATV, which is now being shipped to Afghanistan, are to the massive explosive charges that Taliban -led insurgents have been using against its bigger cousin.**

**The insurgents are also hitting MRAPs with rocket-propelled grenades that can penetrate their steel armor, according to U.S. troops in Afghanistan, several of whom showed McClatchy a photograph of a hole that one of the projectiles had punched in the hull of an MRAP.**

The Pentagon has spent more than \$26.8 billion to develop and build three versions of the largest MRAPs, totaling some 16,000 vehicles, mostly for the Army and Marine Corps, according to an August report by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service.

Another \$5.4 billion is being spent to produce 5,244 M-ATVs, the smaller version that U.S. defense officials contend offers as much protection as the large models do, but is more maneuverable and better suited to Afghanistan's dirt tracks and narrow mountain roads.

However, retired Army Col. Douglas A. MacGregor, a former armored cavalry commander and combat veteran and an expert on armor warfare, said that vehicles such as the MRAP have "very limited utility" in a war against a guerrilla group such as the Taliban .

"The notion of a wheeled armored constabulary force as a prescription for a close combat situation is nonsense," he said.

"Pentagon officials note that insurgents are building larger IEDs and are finding better ways to conceal them," the Congressional Research Service report said.

"The biggest question is what took them so long," said a senior Pentagon official with extensive experience with the MRAP program and familiarity with the weapons and techniques that the militants in Afghanistan have developed to "compromise" the vehicle.

The fact that the large MRAPs — which range from 7 tons to 24 tons depending on the model — often are confined to narrow mountain roads and valleys in Afghanistan has

made it easier for insurgents to prepare ambushes using anti-tank mines, IEDs or rocket-propelled grenades capable of penetrating armor, the official said.

**U.S. defense officials in Washington and Kabul declined to reveal the number of MRAPs that have been crippled or destroyed since the first vehicles were deployed in Afghanistan in 2003, saying they didn't want to provide the Taliban with information on the effectiveness of their tactics.**

**McClatchy is voluntarily withholding some U.S. soldiers' descriptions of insurgent tactics out of concern that they may not be known by all of those fighting U.S.-led forces.**

**[What a matched pair of stupid, lame liars. The resistance knows exactly what effect their attacks have. They're watching. Duh. And the insurgents have better networks for passing along information about their own "tactics" than the "U.S. defense officials" or this reporter busy pretending what he didn't report is unknown to the resistance fighters. Propaganda lies, and ass kissing, are endemic in a defeated occupation army and among reporters desperate not to get un-inbedded. T]**

The soldiers spoke out of what they said was a heightened concern about the vehicles' vulnerability to ambushes, especially on mountain roads where there's no room for the vehicles to turn around. **[Translation: the soldiers are desperately trying to get the truth out any way they can about how they're getting slaughtered by command's tactical stupidity. Obviously, they picked the wrong reporter to try to use to get help. This one cares most about staying on the good side of the officers giving the orders killing the troops. T]**

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## **The Interpreter Told Wyant That The Afghan National Army Troops Had Actually Threatened To Kill Not Only Their Dog, "But All Of The U.S. Soldiers In The Village As Well" "We Kind Of Shadow The ANA And Drive Around And Get Blown Up"**

November 5, 2009 By Drew Brown, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

SHAH JOY DISTRICT, Afghanistan — An Afghan army commander whom American troops had dubbed "Snoop" was angry, accusing a U.S. dog handler of allowing his Labrador retriever to sniff a copy of the Quran while searching a cluster of villages that U.S. forces suspect is a Taliban stronghold.

The commander — named for his resemblance to the rapper Snoop Dogg — warned 2nd Lt. Blake Wyant of Company C, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment that he and his men were ready to quit the village and never work with American forces again.

Wyant, 24, of Sioux City, Iowa, listened patiently until Snoop threatened to kill the dog if the incident happened a second time. Muslims consider dogs to be unclean.

Speaking through an interpreter, Wyant looked evenly at the Afghan commander.

“You tell him that’s not going to happen,” he said. “You tell him that shooting that dog would be just like shooting an American soldier.”

Later, after Snoop and his men had moved on, the interpreter told Wyant that they had actually threatened to kill not only the dog, but all of the U.S. soldiers in the village as well.

But during their mission here, U.S. soldiers complained frequently that when Afghan troops came across a locked door, they left it alone if they couldn’t find anyone to let them inside — a practice that many soldiers said works in the Taliban’s favor.

“The ANA (Afghan National Army) is supposed to do that, but they don’t want to,” said Wyant. “You could probably put a lot of stuff in a room and lock it up, and we wouldn’t be able to get to it.”

“The rules of engagement here are so strict there is nothing we can do,” said Staff Sgt. Gary Grose, 31, of Alexandria, La. “We kind of shadow the ANA and drive around and get blown up.”

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**The Great Afghan Troop  
Training Goatfuck:  
“The Number Of Afghan Battalions  
Able To Fight Independently  
Actually Declined In The Past Six  
Months”  
[As You Read, Please Remember  
That The Armed Resistance Has  
None Of These Problems]**

# [Now Why Do You Suppose That Is?]

November 5, 2009 By THOM SHANKER and JOHN H. CUSHMAN Jr., The New York Times [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — A series of internal government reviews have presented the Obama administration with a dire portrait of Afghanistan's military and police force, bringing into serious question an ambitious goal at the heart of the evolving American war strategy — to speed up their training and send many more Afghans to the fight.

The latest reports offer new details that show just how tough it will be to meet General McChrystal's training goal.

Among the previously undisclosed conclusions: one out of every four or five men in the security forces quit each year, meaning that tens of thousands must be recruited just to maintain the status quo.

The number of Afghan battalions able to fight independently actually declined in the past six months.

Another September report, the Pentagon inspector general's annual review of the training program, warned that any acceleration "will face major challenges. "

A third assessment, a quarterly report sent to Congress last week, revealed that despite the formation of new army battalions, fewer of them were capable of operating independently. One reason may be that the Afghan Army's jerry-built logistics system, a relic of the Soviet era and one of the training program's orphans, has become a drag on the combat forces.

Among other problems, one of the reports found, the United States military's training headquarters simply does not have enough people to do all it is already being asked to do, a flaw that "has delayed and will continue to delay" building the Afghan forces and that unless corrected would only prolong the American presence in Afghanistan.

Construction is also falling behind, leaving recruits living in tents and making a boom in barracks-building problematic, since there are not yet enough qualified engineers.

And attempts to draw Afghan businesses into the war effort have backfired.

**One local start-up company assigned to do basic weapons maintenance for the Afghan Army tried to use hammers and nails to hold grenade launchers together and ultimately had to be trained by an American contractor.**

The Americans are sometimes stymied by delays in training that sprout unexpectedly from profound cultural differences.

Costly delays in the building of barracks for new recruits, for example, are a result not just of scarce labor and materials, but also of time-consuming repairs of damage that occurs as soon as the troops move into their new quarters.

Afghan soldiers reportedly ripped sinks from barrack walls and used them to wash their feet before praying, an important custom. They also built fires on barrack floors for heating and cooking, even in buildings with furnaces and kitchens, according to the reports.

**Today, only about one in 10 Afghan police units is capable of operating wholly independently, according to the latest report to Congress.**

Despite that, the police force is constantly attacked and is taking casualties at an even greater rate than the Afghan or American military, it said.

**The Afghan National Police currently fields 92,000 people, but only 24,000 have actually completed formal training, according to Pentagon records.**

The attrition rate is 25 percent, the training command in Afghanistan reported.

The situation is not much better in the army, with 19 percent attrition.

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**“What Have The Americans  
Done In Eight Years?”**

**“In The First Days Of The War, The  
Americans Defeated The Taliban  
In Just A Few Days”**

**“Now They Have More Than 60,000  
Forces And They Cannot Defeat  
Them”**

**“The Feeling Is Particularly Acute In The  
Pashtun South, But It Is Spreading To  
Other Parts Of The Country”**

Alex Thier, an analyst at the United States Institute of Peace, who has spent years working in Afghanistan, said the country’s mood was shifting.

**“What’s changed fairly recently was the confidence of the population as to whether we can actually achieve the job, even with more resources,” he said.**

November 6, 2009 By ALISSA J. RUBIN, The New York Times [Excerpts]

CHARIKAR, Afghanistan — As Americans, including President Obama's top advisers, tensely debate whether to send more American troops to Afghanistan, Afghans themselves are having a similar discussion and voicing serious doubts.

In bazaars and university corridors across the country, eight years of war have left people exhausted and impatient. They are increasingly skeptical that the Taliban can be defeated.

"What have the Americans done in eight years?" asked Abdullah Wasay, 60, a pharmacist in Charikar, a market town about 25 miles north of Kabul, expressing a view typical of many here.

Such sentiments were repeated in conversation after conversation with more than 30 Afghans in Kabul and nearby rural areas and with local officials in outlying provinces.

If the foreign forces are not seen so by Afghans already, they are on the cusp of being regarded as occupiers, with little to show people for their extended presence, fueling wild conspiracies about why they remain here.

The feeling is particularly acute in the Pashtun south, but it is spreading to other parts of the country.

More American troops could tip the balance of opinion, particularly if they increase civilian casualties and prompt even more Taliban attacks.

Interior Minister Hanif Atmar said he was in "full agreement" with Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the American commander of forces in Afghanistan, that a full-blown counterinsurgency strategy was necessary, including more forces.

The mood on the street is darker and more wary.

Mr. Wasay and several friends visiting his pharmacy were discussing the Taliban's killing of a police chief in a rural part of the province. The rumor was that Taliban fighters had severed his head and delivered it to his son, according to one of Mr. Wasay's friends.

True or not, the anecdote was part of a growing mythology of Taliban power and a general perception that neither the Afghan government nor American troops were protecting Afghans.

Daily life continues to be so precarious for many people interviewed, especially those outside Kabul, that they have come to believe that the United States must want the fighting to go on.

"In the first days of the war, the Americans defeated the Taliban in just a few days," said Mohammed Shefi, a graduate student in the pharmacy school at Kabul University. "Now they have more than 60,000 forces and they cannot defeat them."

Alex Thier, an analyst at the United States Institute of Peace, who has spent years working in Afghanistan, said the country's mood was shifting.

“What’s changed fairly recently was the confidence of the population as to whether we can actually achieve the job, even with more resources,” he said.

**A tribal elder in Balkh Province, in the remote north, said the insurgency had disrupted life for farmers and herders, and he repeated one of a growing number of conspiracy theories about the Americans’ intentions.**

**In his version, the Americans were transporting Taliban fighters to the north and dropping them from helicopters at night, on the theory that the Americans wanted more fighting so they could stay in the country. Other versions have the British transporting the insurgents.**

Graduate students at Kabul University were no less suspicious.

“Those countries that are working with the U.S. and are friends of theirs are Saudi and Pakistan and those are the same countries the insurgents are coming from,” said Abdullah, a graduate student in the Faculty of Islamic Law who, like many Afghans, has only one name.

**While the notions may seem absurd to Americans, they have added to an increasingly volatile public mood here.**

**A story that American forces burned a Koran in Wardak Province brought hundreds of young people into the streets last month to protest the American presence, even though the story was roundly disputed by Afghan and American officials.**

With less certainty about America’s continued commitment, there is a growing sense that the only sure way to peace is through negotiations with the Taliban. “They are the sons of this country, it is right to negotiate with the Taliban,” said Mohammed Younnis, a shopkeeper in Charikar who sells tea, sugar and grains.

“This government is Afghan, and the Taliban are Afghan; they should build the country together,” he said.

#### **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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 888.711.2550**

## **TROOP NEWS**

## **THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THEM HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**



The casket of Army Staff Sgt. Joshua M. Mills at Arlington National Cemetery Nov. 3, 2009. Mills, 24, of El Paso, Texas, died Sept. 16 in Helmand province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his vehicle Sept. 15 with an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



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

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

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

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

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

**Dying For Democrats  
“In Afghanistan, As In Vietnam,  
It Simply Does Not Matter  
Whether The United States Wins  
Or Loses”**

**“The Driving Force In Both Cases  
Is Domestic Politics”**

**“Democrats Know Full Well That If  
The United States Walks Away From  
Afghanistan Now, The Republicans  
Will Accuse Them Of Capitulating To  
Terrorism”**

**“As Was The Case In Vietnam, More  
American Soldiers And Many More**

# **Civilians Are Going To Die In Afghanistan. And For No Good Reason”**

NOVEMBER 2, 2009 BY JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER, Foreign Policy [Excerpts]

**The real tragedy of Vietnam is not that the United States lost, but that it became involved in the first place.**

**It pains me to say this as someone who served in the American military from 1965 to 1975, but the anti-war movement was right: It did not matter to U.S. security whether North Vietnam conquered the south and unified that country under communist rule.**

More than 58,000 American soldiers and more than 2 million Vietnamese died in an unnecessary and foolish war.

**A similar logic applies today with regard to Afghanistan.**

**In Afghanistan, as in Vietnam, it simply does not matter whether the United States wins or loses.**

It makes no sense for the Obama administration to expend more blood and treasure to vanquish the Taliban.

The United States should accept defeat and immediately begin to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan.

Of course, President Obama will never do such a thing. Instead, he will increase the American commitment to Afghanistan, just as Lyndon Johnson did in Vietnam in 1965.

**The driving force in both cases is domestic politics.**

Johnson felt that he had to escalate the fight in Vietnam because otherwise the Republicans would lambaste him for “losing Vietnam,” the same way they accused President Harry Truman of “losing China” in the late 1940s.

Obama and his fellow Democrats know full well that if the United States walks away from Afghanistan now, the Republicans will accuse them of capitulating to terrorism and undermining our security. And this charge will be leveled at them for decades to come, harming Democrats at the polls come election time. The Democrats have no intention of letting that happen.

The United States is in Afghanistan for the long haul. As was the case in Vietnam, more American soldiers and many more civilians are going to die in Afghanistan. And for no good reason.

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

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

## **Fort Hood, Texas Massacre**



From: Richard Hastie  
To: Military Resistance  
Sent: November 06, 2009  
Subject: Ft. Hood, Texas Massacre

### **Fort Hood, Texas Massacre**

**November 5, 2009.  
13 killed.  
30 wounded.  
Endless war.  
Events moving so fast,  
it has become a blur.  
Violence  
begets  
violence**

begets  
violence  
begets  
violence.  
High Noon in America.  
Homecoming.

Mike Hastie  
Vietnam Veteran  
November 6, 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](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net)) T)

**Eyewitness From Fort Hood:  
“I Was Walking Into The Medical  
SRP Building When He Started  
Firing”**

**“If The Shooter Had A Grievance He  
Should Have Taken It Out On Those  
Responsible”**

**“PTSD Doesn’t Turn People Into Killers,  
Most Muslims Aren’t Evil, And Whether  
We Should Stay Or Go In Afghanistan  
Has Nothing To Do With This”**

[What is yet to be reported, which will be based on a toxicology screen taken after his capture, is whether Major Hasan was helping himself to any of the assorted drugs that Army psychiatrists give out to soldiers like so many bags of popcorn. The dirty little secret largely unknown to the public is that most of those prescription drugs have side effects that may include “homicidal and/or suicidal ideation.” Army psychiatrists know the ugly fact of those side-effects very well. It’s not a secret to them. Neither is the fact that prescription drug abuse is common among psychiatrists. T]

November 6, 2009 Kevin Drum, Mother Jones

A former reader emails today to pass along a firsthand account of the shooting at Fort Hood on Thursday.

It's unedited except for paragraph breaks:

\*\*\*\*\*

I was walking into the medical SRP building when he started firing (he never made it to the main SRP building....the media accounts are understandably pretty off right now). He was calmly and methodically shooting everyone. Like every non-deployed military post, no one was armed. For the first time in my life I really wish I had a weapon.

I don't know how to explain what it feels like to have someone shoot at you while you're unarmed. He missed me but didn't miss a lot of others. Just pure random luck. It's a very compressed area, thus the numbers.

I saw a lot of heroism. So many more would have died if this wasn't an Army post. We're almost all CLS trained and it made a huge difference. Cause the EMTs didn't get there for almost an hour (they thought there was a second shooter). I just can't believe one of our own shot us. When I saw his ID card I couldn't believe it. After he shot the female police officer he was fumbling his reload and I saw the other police officer around the corner and yelled at him to come shoot the shooter. He did. Then I used my belt as a tourniquet on the female officer.

I hate to tell you this but in the course of the day it became clear that it was another Akbar incident.[1] (Once they convinced them the blood drenching my clothes wasn't mine I spent the day being interviewed by the alphabet.) Akbar again. God help us. He was very planned. I counted three full mags around him (I secured his weapon for a while). Found out later that his car was filled with more ammo.

This was premeditated. This wasn't VBC again. That guy snapped, not this one. He was so damn calm when he was shooting. Methodical. And he was moving tactically. The Army really is diverse and we really do love all our own. We signed up to be shot at but not at home. Not unarmed. No one should ever see what the inside of that medical SRP building looked like. I suppose that's what VA Tech looked like. Except they didn't have soldiers coming from everywhere to tourniquet and compress and talk to the wounded while rounds are still coming out.

No one touched him...the shooter that is...other than to treat him. Though I told the medic (and I'm not proud of this) that was giving him plasma that there better not be anyone else who needed it because he should be the last one to be treated. But I had just finished holding a soldier who was critical (I counted three entry wounds) and talking to him about his children.... If the shooter had a grievance he should have taken it out on those responsible; he wasn't shooting people he knew (media reports to the contrary). He was just shooting anybody who happened to be present for SRP medical processing, mainly lower enlisted.

But please, no one use this politically! The Army is not “broken”, PTSD doesn’t turn people into killers, most Muslims aren’t evil, and whether we should stay or go in Afghanistan has nothing to do with this. I’m babbling...sorry.

\*\*\*\*\*

[1] Hasan Akbar was an Army sergeant who killed two soldiers and wounded 14 others in a grenade attack in Kuwait in 2003. He’s currently under a sentence of death.

There have been several media reports that the Fort Hood shooter yelled “Allahu Akbar!” during his rampage, but my correspondent says, “He was silent in my presence.”

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

**“This Is The First Time  
Demonstrators Succeed In Toppling  
A Part Of Israel’s Barrier Which Is A  
Concrete Wall”**

**“The Wall On Palestinian Land And  
Through Palestinian Communities Is  
Simply A Land Grab By Israel”**



Demonstrators topple concrete wall. (Shahaf Polkov / Activestills.org)

6 November 2009, International Solidarity Movement & Haaretz Newspaper in Israel

In Ni'lin, 300 demonstrators managed to topple a part of the concrete wall that cuts through the village's land.

The weekly demonstrations against the West Bank separation barrier in the towns of Bil'in and Na'alin, which take place every Friday, reached new heights this week when activists, seeking to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the falling of the Berlin Wall, knocked a part of the barrier over.

Masked Palestinian youths breached the 8-meter high section of Israel's security wall that runs through Na'alin, while Israeli border guards fired tear gas and a foul-smelling spray from behind the high concrete barrier.

Protesters levered open a space under one the pre-cast panels and used a hydraulic car-jack to topple it out of position.

"No matter how tall, all walls fall," read one banner pasted onto the structure by Palestinian youths assisted by Israeli activists, who say the wall on Palestinian land and through Palestinian communities is simply a land grab by Israel.

Three protest marches were held today in the West Bank to mark the 20th anniversary to the fall of the Berlin wall, which has been declared an international day of action against Israel's barrier.

Following the direct action, the army fired scores of live rounds at the demonstrators.

Since Israel began its construction in the year 2002, This is the first time demonstrators succeed in toppling a part of Israel's barrier which is a concrete wall.

One of the demonstrators, Moheeb Khawaja, said during the protest: "Twenty years ago no one had thought the monster that divided Berlin into two could be brought down, but in only two days in November, it did. Today we have proven that this can also be done here and now.

"It is our land beyond this wall, and we will not give up on it. We will win for a simple reason – justice is on our side."

As a result of the Wall construction, Ni'lin has lost 3,920 dunams, roughly 30% of its remaining lands.

Originally, Ni'lin consisted of 15,898 dunams (3928 acres). Post 1948, Ni'lin was left with 14,794 dunams (3656 acres). After the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, the illegal settlements and infrastructure of Modi'in Ilit, Mattityahu and Hashmonaim were built on village lands, and Ni'lin lost another 1,973 dunams.

With the completion of the Wall, Ni'lin has a remaining 8911 dunams (2201 acres), 56% of it's original size.

**Israeli armed forces have shot 40 demonstrators with live ammunition in Ni'lin. Of them, 11 were shot with 5.56mm caliber live ammunition and 24 were shot with 0.22 caliber live ammunition.**

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

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## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

**U.S. Citizens Are Joining  
Immigrants Looking For Day Labor  
In Store Parking Lots:**

**“The Enemy Isn’t In Iraq-  
Afghanistan, Nor Is It Brown  
People”**

**“It’s Right Here At Home, Tied To The  
Profiteers”**

**“Please, Troops, Come Home And  
Defend All Americans”**



Ken Buchanan, left, waits for work at a Home Depot Thursday morning. Most weeks he’s there six days. The most he’s made in a week: \$140.

Thanks to SSG N (ret’d) who sent this in.

She writes:

**“Except he’s too old. This line at the bottom of the article is the key: “For a long time, people have looked at day laborers and said, ‘The problem is the immigrants.’ Now the economy is changing. Now people may see it’s a problem of the labor market, of the rights of workers”**

**“The enemy isn’t in Iraq-Afghanistan, nor is it brown people.**

**“It’s right here at home, tied to the profiteers.**

**“Please, troops, come home and defend all Americans.”**

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Nov. 2, 2009 By Timothy Pratt, Las Vegas Sun [Excerpts]

**It sounds like a George Lopez joke.**

**“Times are so bad that I saw an Anglo day laborer standing outside Home Depot the other day.”**

**Except it’s true.**

In the latest sign of the Las Vegas Valley’s economic free fall, U.S. citizens are starting to show up in the early mornings outside home improvement stores and plant nurseries across the Las Vegas Valley, jostling with illegal immigrants for a shot at a few hours of work.

Experts say the slow-starting but seemingly inexorable trend is occurring nationwide.

“It’s the equivalent of selling apples in the Great Depression,” said Harley Shaiken, chairman of the Center for Latin American studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

In the Las Vegas Valley, where the most recent unemployment rate was 13.9 percent, one face of this phenomenon is Ken Buchanan. The 50-year-old describes himself as a “food and beverage” guy, most recently working for four years at Renata’s Sunset Lanes casino and, before that, 30 years in a string of restaurants, hotels and casinos here and in his birthplace, Chicago.

But in 2006 Renata’s closed for remodeling. When the casino reopened as Wildfire, the management did not rehire Buchanan, he said.

In the months that followed, Buchanan discovered the difficulty of seeking work in his fifth decade, eventually winding up at Green Valley Car Wash, where he stayed for about two years, he said.

The banks foreclosed on the house he was renting. In the attempt to grab his things two steps ahead of the constable, he wound up missing work. He lost his job. He became homeless.

A Hispanic man Buchanan met in Renata’s sports book told him he had picked up work standing outside the Home Depot on Pecos Road at Patrick Lane. One July day, Buchanan gave it a try.

At first, he got nothing but sunburn. But then he started to get work. Now he’s at the Home Depot six days most weeks.

Pablo Alvarado, executive director of the Los Angeles-based National Day Laborer Organizing Network, said he has been seeing the same thing elsewhere. "It's happening, though still not in massive numbers," Alvarado said.

**In the past six months or so, he has heard of "americanos" on the street corners and parking lots of Silver Spring, Md., Long Island, N.Y., and Southern California locations.**

**"It's just beginning," he said. "But I think it's only going to increase."**

A recent morning's swing through the valley produced reports of the same phenomenon. At Star Nursery on Cheyenne Road west of Tenaya Way, Nicolas stood shivering under a hooded sweatshirt, hoping a car or pickup would stop.

The Mexican immigrant said he had seen a couple of "white guys" showing up recently, though not on the blustery cold days last week.

At Home Depot on Decatur Boulevard north of Tropicana Avenue, Jose said the same thing, adding that "it's never more than three or four, but they're coming out."

**As a salesman at Moon Valley, Mike Fugitt's job includes making sure the laborers don't come into the nursery's parking lot, because their presence draws complaints from some customers.**

**In the past three months or so, he said, more of those laborers have been telling him, "But I'm an American."**

That includes some Hispanics, he added. "But I treat them all the same; they can't be trespassing," he said.

Workers at all the sites said the presence of the americanos hasn't made work scarcer or produced any conflict. Some suggested that people hiring day laborers prefer Hispanics anyway, because of their reputation as hard workers.

Although Alvarado allowed that the change in day labor sites was an undeniable sign of the withering economy, he also sees a "beautiful irony" in U.S. citizens seeking work as day laborers.

That's because his organization has defended the free-speech rights of day laborers in at least 10 court cases over more than a decade. Up to now, courts have ruled in favor of the laborers.

"We always knew (these cases) would be useful not only for immigrants, but also for U.S. citizens," Alvarado said. "We knew there would be a time when the economy would reach this point, and they also would be looking for work this way."

Buchanan likes to wear a Cubs or White Sox cap as a sign of his Chicago heritage when he stands with one or two Hispanic laborers about 20 yards south of a larger crowd.

**He said he has gone through an education of sorts in the past four months. He has always worked around Hispanics in restaurants, hotels and casinos, but now he understands the issue of immigration from up close.**

His sojourn got off to a rocky start.

On one of his first days on the street outside Home Depot, another laborer told him he should move along because too many people were at the spot.

“I told him, ‘I’m an American citizen and you’re trying to push me off American soil?’ ” The man walked away, and Buchanan says he hasn’t had another problem with his competitors since.

**Instead, Buchanan has found himself defending the rights of his fellow laborers on more than one occasion.**

One day, a man tried to hire a bunch of them for \$5 an hour. Again, Buchanan pulled out the “citizen card.” But this time, he was telling the other person that he, a U.S. citizen, knew about minimum wage laws, and was going to make sure those laws were followed. “I said, ‘You want me to write down your license plate number?’ ” Buchanan recalled. The guy drove away.

**Now, he said, “I get along with everybody here.”**

He stands in a smaller group because he thinks that helps to get work. He reads the daily tea leaves of the trade, like the end of the month being a good time for moving jobs, because many people are moving in or out. His best week so far: \$140. His longest stint without work: the first two weeks, “until I learned to be more aggressive.”

Antonio Bernabe, day labor organizer for the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, said the appearance of more and more U.S. citizens seeking day labor work on corners and in parking lots poses new challenges for organizations such as his.

In recent months, he said, he has found himself explaining to a whole new group the legal rights of workers, as well as approaching local authorities to discuss the entry of new people into what he called “the world of day labor.” That group includes blacks and Asians, he said.

Another difference is that now he’s giving those explanations to laborers in English.

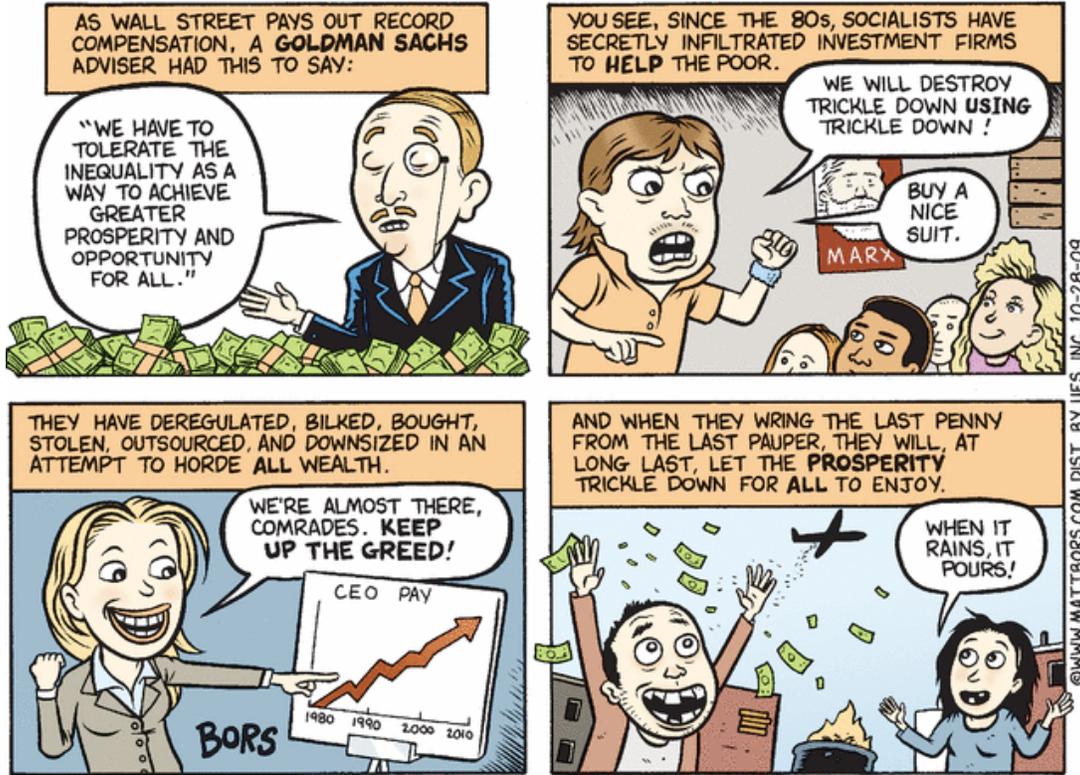
Bernabe said organizers came across one case where a local sheriff had been sending officers to answer complaints about day laborers and then found one day that the sheriff’s neighbor, a citizen, was among them.

Police in that area have been less likely to harass laborers since then, he said. These events will occur more, changing people’s attitudes in the process, he said.

**“For a long time, people have looked at day laborers and said, ‘The problem is the immigrants.’ Now the economy is changing. Now people may see it’s a problem of the labor market, of the rights of workers,” Bernabe said.**

Buchanan, meanwhile, looks forward to a future that includes a steady job and an apartment. "I'm trying to dig my way out of this," he said. When he does, however, he sees himself as a changed man.

"Before, I was part of the majority. Now I'm part of the minority ... I'm not going to forget this. I'm not going to forget any of this."



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