

## Military Resistance 8A1



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

**“What In The Hell Am I  
Doing This For?”**

**“What Would I Be Dying For?”**

**“What Did My Unit Members Die  
For?”**

**“War Is War, But We Can’t Go On  
Fighting Forever”**

# **“I Don’t Even Know If Our Generals Or Commanders Even Believe That We Can Win This War - If It Is Even A War To Begin With”**

December 31, 2009 Sara A. Carter, Washington Times [Excerpts]

HUTAL, Afghanistan:

Villagers stared at the Americans as they made their way into a small bazaar where goat meat hung from hooks amid stands of used clothing, pots, pans and various trinkets.

For the Afghans, the big Americans in full battle gear looked like beings from another planet. At each turn of the road, soldiers on the point knelt on the ground, automatic weapons ready. The men and women on the security walk were staggered in zigzag formation to keep casualties low in case Taliban sharpshooters were in the area and taking aim. Capt. Casey Thoreen, 30, the commander of the unit, monitored his radio for intelligence.

Fifteen minutes later, the unit arrived at a local clinic.

It was empty and ominous looking with an open gate. Villagers in the bazaar began to leave. Shopkeepers closed their shops, throwing tarps over their goods. Children who had been cadging the troops for candy and pencils scattered.

“A suicide bomber is in the area,” Capt. Thoreen said after receiving a radioed intelligence report. “We’ve got to move, now!”

It’s an especially difficult security situation for the men and woman assigned to the small Combat Outpost Rath in the heart of Kandahar province’s Taliban territory.

“We haven’t been back here since a suicide bomber took the life of several of our guys,” said Staff Sgt. Daniel Paul Rabidou, 24, of San Bernardino, Calif., who was on protective duty that day.

“You never know out here, who’s around what corner. We’ve lost some good men, and we need more out here to get the job done.”

But several said the dangers aren’t worth it.

“I have a child back home and a wife,” said one soldier, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution from his unit.

“I ran through a mine field once and survived. You know, the only thing that went through my mind was my family back home.

"I thought what in the hell am I doing this for?"

"I don't even know if our generals or commanders even believe that we can win this war - if it is even a war to begin with.

"What would I be dying for? What did my unit members die for?"

Staff Sgts. Rabidou, Yost and Cross also suffer bouts of impatience with the fight.

On Sept. 14, the three survived an improvised explosive device attack on their Stryker convoy that killed platoon leader Lt. David Wright, 25 and Sgt. Andrew McConnell, 24.

"The day after we lost two of our soldiers I had to go back to the village where the insurgents carried out the attacks," said Staff Sgt. Yost.

"I sat with the villagers, knowing full well that some of them helped kill our own men, and I had to negotiate with them. It wasn't easy at all.

"War is war, but we can't go on fighting forever.

"There has to be a way to resolve this."

**MORE:**

# **What Are You Dying For?**

**Military Experts Say U.S. Troops Will Die In Afghanistan To Re-Elect Obama:**

**"We Believe The President Knows Perfectly Well That Afghanistan Is Vietnam All Over Again"**

# **“He’s Seeking The Same Cynical Exit Strategy That Richard Nixon And Henry Kissinger Did” Obama “Has Already Been Seduced By The Old Beltway Calculus That Sometimes A Little Wrong Must Be Done To Get Re-Elected”**

**Even the dimmest bulb listening to the president’s speech could not have missed the obvious link between the withdrawal date for combat troops from Iraq (2010), the date for beginning troop reductions in Afghanistan (2011), and the domestic U.S. election cycle.**

DECEMBER 10, 2009, BY THOMAS H. JOHNSON, M. CHRIS MASON, Foreign Policy [Excerpts]

**Thomas H. Johnson is research professor of the Department in National Security Affairs and director of the Program for Culture and Conflict Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.**

**M. Chris Mason, a retired Foreign Service officer who served in 2005 as political officer for the provincial reconstruction team in Paktika, is senior fellow at the Program for Culture and Conflict Studies and at the Center for Advanced Defense Studies in Washington.**

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As German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer once said, truth is ridiculed, then denied, and then “accepted as having been obvious to everyone from the beginning.”

So let’s start with the obvious: There isn’t the slightest possibility that the course laid out by Barack Obama in his Dec. 1 speech will halt or even slow the downward spiral toward defeat in Afghanistan. None.

The U.S. president and his advisors labored for three months and brought forth old wine in bigger bottles. The speech contained not one single new idea or approach, nor offered any hint of new thinking about a conflict that everyone now agrees the United States is losing.

Instead, the administration deliberated for 94 days to deliver essentially “more men, more money, try harder.”

It sounded ominously similar to Mikhail Gorbachev's "bloody wound" speech that led to a similar-sized, temporary Soviet troop surge in Afghanistan in 1986.

But the Soviet experience in Afghanistan isn't what everyone is comparing Obama's current predicament to; it's Vietnam. The president knows it, and part of his speech was a rebuttal of those comparisons. It was a valiant effort, but to no avail.

Afghanistan is Vietnam all over again.

**First, Obama noted that Afghanistan is being conducted by a "coalition" of 43 countries -- as if war by committee would magically change the outcome (a throwback to former President George W. Bush's "Iraq coalition" mathematics).**

**The truth is, outside of a handful of countries, it's basically a coalition of pacifists.**

In fact, more foreign troops fought alongside the United States in Vietnam than are now actually fighting with Americans today.

Only nine countries in today's 43-country coalition have more than 1,000 personnel there; nine others have 10 (yes, not even a dozen people) -- or fewer. And although Australia and New Zealand have sent a handful of excellent special operations troops to Afghanistan, only Britain, Canada, and France are providing significant forces willing to conduct conventional offensive military operations. That brings the coalition's combat-troop contribution to approximately 17,000.

**Most of the other 38 "partners" have strict rules prohibiting them from ever doing anything actually dangerous. Turkish troops, for example, never leave their firebase in Wardak province, according to U.S. personnel who monitor it.**

The president's final argument, that Afghanistan is different because Vietnam never attacked American soil, is a red herring.

History is overflowing with examples of just causes that have gone down in defeat. To suggest that the two conflicts will have different outcomes because the U.S. cause in Afghanistan is just (whereas, presumably from the speech, the war in Vietnam was not) is simply specious.

**The courses and outcomes of wars are determined by strategy, not the justness of causes or the courage of troops.**

The reality on the ground is that Afghanistan is Vietnam redux.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai's regime is an utterly illegitimate, incompetent kleptocracy.

**The Afghan National Army (ANA) -- slotted to take over the conflict when the coalition pulls out -- will not even be able to feed itself in five years, much less turn back the mounting Taliban tide.**

**The U.S. Center for Army Lessons Learned determined by statistical analysis that the ANA will never grow larger than 100,000 men because nearly 30 percent either desert or fail to re-enlist each year.**

**The ANA is disproportionately Tajik, drug use is a major problem, all recruits are illiterate, and last month the ANA reached only half its modest recruiting goal despite 40 percent unemployment nationwide.**

**The American media, in its own regression to 1963, simply regurgitates Pentagon press releases that vastly inflate the actual size of the Afghan military, which is actually less than 60,000 men, just 32,000 of whom are combat troops.**

The strategy's other component for dealing with the Taliban, "negotiating with moderates," is also ludicrous to anyone who is familiar with the insurgents. There is no one to negotiate with, and from their perspective, nothing to discuss.

And the Taliban know they are winning.

**Meanwhile, commanding Gen. Stanley McChrystal's plan to secure the urban areas (rather than the rural countryside where the insurgency is actually metastasizing) is plagiarized from the famous never-written textbook, How to Lose a War in Afghanistan, authored jointly by Alexander the Great, the British Empire, and the Soviet Union.**

And that is why the United States is now headed for certain defeat in Afghanistan.

**Obama's new "strategy" is no strategy at all.**

**It is a cynical and politically motivated rehash of Iraq policy: Toss in a few more troops, throw together something resembling local security forces, buy off the enemies, and get the hell out before it all blows up.**

**Even the dimmest bulb listening to the president's speech could not have missed the obvious link between the withdrawal date for combat troops from Iraq (2010), the date for beginning troop reductions in Afghanistan (2011), and the domestic U.S. election cycle.**

So we are faced with a conundrum.

**Obama is one of the most intelligent men ever to hold the U.S. presidency.**

**But no intelligent person could really believe that adding 30,000 troops to Afghanistan, a country four times larger than Vietnam, for a year or two, following the same game plan that has resulted in dismal failure there for the past eight years, could possibly have any impact on the outcome of the conflict.**

Arthur Conan Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes used to say that "when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

The only conclusion one can reach from the president's speech, after eliminating the impossible, is that the administration has made a difficult but pragmatic decision: The

war in Afghanistan is unwinnable, and the president's second term and progressive domestic agenda cannot be sacrificed to a lost cause the way that President Lyndon B. Johnson's was for Vietnam.

**The result of that calculation was what we heard on Dec. 1: platitudes about commitment and a just cause; historical amnesia; and a continuation of the exact same failed policies that got the United States into this mess back in 2001, concocted by the same ship of fools, many of whom are still providing remarkably bad advice to this administration.**

We believe the president knows perfectly well that Afghanistan is Vietnam all over again, both domestically and, as we wrote in Military Review this month, in Kabul and out in the Afghan hills, where good men are bleeding and dying.

And he's seeking the same cynical exit strategy that Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger did in 1968: negotiating the best possible second-place position and a "decent interval" between withdrawal and collapse.

In office less than a year, the Obama administration has already been seduced by the old beltway calculus that sometimes a little wrong must be done to get re-elected and achieve a greater good.

**MORE:**

## **How About Dying For The Emperors' Stupid Lies?**

[Thanks to Linda O, who sent this in

30 December 2009 John Pilger, New Statesman [Excerpts]

In Nineteen Eighty-Four, George Orwell described a superstate, Oceania, whose language of war inverted lies that "passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past'."

Barack Obama is the leader of a contemporary Oceania.

In two speeches at the close of the decade, the Nobel Peace Prize-winner affirmed that peace was no longer peace, but rather a permanent war that "extends well beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan" to "disorderly regions, failed states, diffuse enemies". He called this "global security" and invited our gratitude.

To the people of Afghanistan, which the US has invaded and occupied, he said wittily: "We have no interest in occupying your country."

In Oceania, truth and lies are indivisible.

According to Obama, the American attack on Afghanistan in 2001 was authorised by the United Nations Security Council. There was no UN authority.

He said that “the world” supported the invasion in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks. In truth, all but three of 37 countries surveyed by Gallup expressed overwhelming opposition.

He said that America invaded Afghanistan “only after the Taliban refused to turn over Osama Bin Laden”. In 2001, the Taliban tried three times to hand over Bin Laden for trial, Pakistan’s military regime reported, and they were ignored.

MORE:

## **“U.S. Military Deaths In Afghanistan Doubled In 2009” 40% Of U.S. Fatalities In 2009 Caused By IEDs: Annual Death Toll Of Occupation Troops Surpassed 500 For The First Time In The War**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, NY City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance\

Dec 31, 2009 By Jim Heintz - The Associated Press & December 29th 2009 BY  
Stephanie Gaskell, DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

KABUL — U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan doubled in 2009 compared with a year ago as 30,000 additional troops began pouring in for a stepped-up offensive and the Taliban fought back with powerful improvised bombs.

A tally by The Associated Press shows 304 American service members had died as of Dec. 30, up from 151 in 2008. The count does not include eight U.S. civilians killed by a suicide bomber on a base in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday.

Also, the annual death toll of international troops, including U.S. forces, surpassed 500 for the first time in the war. The total this year was 502 compared with 286 in 2008, according to AP’s count.

Among other forces, Britain took the worst blow in 2009 with 107 deaths and Canada lost 32, including four who died Wednesday when their vehicle was blown up by a roadside bomb. Other countries in the international military operation lost a total of 59 service members.



The AP count, based on daily reports from NATO's International Security Assistance Force, found that 129 of the U.S. fatalities in 2009 — or more than 40 percent — were caused by IEDs. The homemade bombs are hidden along the roadside or near buildings and detonated by remote control or triggered when troops cross simple pressure plates.

A majority of the casualties occurred in southern Afghanistan in Helmand province. Officials said 107 U.S. troops have died there since 2001.

Violence in Helmand skyrocketed this year as more U.S. and NATO troops entered the province. Last year, 17 American soldiers and Marines died in Helmand. This year, 65 were killed.

Kunar province in eastern Afghanistan, along the Pakistan border, was the second deadliest province in Afghanistan this year. Records show 103 soldiers were killed there.

**LIAR  
TRAITOR  
TROOP-KILLER  
DOMESTIC ENEMY  
UNFIT FOR COMMAND  
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE**



The traitor Obama Dec. 18, 2009. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

***“Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,  
And cry ‘Content’ to that which grieves my heart  
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,***

***And frame my face to all occasions.”***  
-- Gloucester, “Henry VI”-Shakespeare

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

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

## **ACTION REPORTS**

### **Outreach To New York National Guard Soldiers**

From: Alan S, Military Resistance  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Sent: December 28, 2009  
Subject: Outreach To Soldier NYC Railroad Stations

At one of NY's commuter terminals the first of the new shipment of “Sir! No Sir!” DVDs was handed to an Air Force National Guard sergeant who's made a career of the military having served in the Navy as well.

He gladly took the DVD, four or five business cards and a Military Resistance issue, latest Traveling Soldier, GI Rights Pamphlet.

His partner, a young private, already took a DVD at one of our outreaches in Harlem. She said she hasn't seen it yet and was glad to take a card. Both were extremely friendly.

Two other young soldiers, also a sergeant and private, declined the DVD and handouts politely pointing out, and recently this has been often the case, they weren't allowed to carry anything so, once again, the cards were given out making them obviously vital.

Further on another terminal was not being patrolled underlining the fact that who patrols when and where is totally unpredictable. I've been told by troops that this is what command wants.

A worker in my neighborhood took the same package the friendly sergeant received for his niece, also serving in the Air Force.

Respectfully submitted,

AS  
USN Retired

## THE MILITARY PROJECT

Traveling Soldier  
Newsletter



www.traveling-  
soldier.org

(888) 711-2550  
contact@militaryproject.org  
www.militaryproject.org

## SUPPORTING GI RESISTANCE

[front]

*If you are a veteran who supports an immediate  
end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- the  
Military Project recommends you contact:*

## IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



www.IVAW.org

[back]

[Cards designed by Richie M, Military Resistance]

### MORE:

# ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

**An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces  
organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.**

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports,  
or anywhere else, send a report in to Military Resistance for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was  
done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so. If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

**NOTE WELL:**

**Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.**

**All identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.**

**If accidentally included, that information will not be published.**

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Resistance Action: Green Zone & U.S. Base Attacked**

Jan 1 (Reuters)

U.S. and Iraqi forces, backed up by U.S. aircraft, moved through parts of Baghdad on Thursday night in response to rocket attacks on the heavily fortified Green Zone and the U.S. military base next to Baghdad's airport, a U.S. military spokesman said.

A roadside bomb wounded one policeman in the Adhamiya district of northern Baghdad, police said.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Fort Bragg Medic Killed In Afghanistan**

Dec 31, 2009 The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — A 45-year-old Fort Bragg soldier has been killed while unloading medical supplies in a village in northwestern Afghanistan.

Military officials say Staff Sgt. Ronald Jay Spino, from Waterbury, Conn., died Tuesday in Bala Morghab, a village in Badghis Province. Spino was assigned to the 44th Medical Command at Fort Bragg. He returned from Iraq in February and deployed to Afghanistan in November.

Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell says Spino was expected to return from Afghanistan in about 30 days and ordered flags in the state lowered to half-staff.

Spino was remembered by friends in his unit as a quiet, hardworking soldier with a good sense of humor.

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## **Soldier From 33 Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers killed Near Sangin**

1 Jan 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm a soldier from 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), Royal Engineers, was killed in Afghanistan yesterday, Thursday 31 December 2009.

The soldier was part of the Counter-IED Task Force and died from wounds received as a result of an explosion in the vicinity of Patrol Base Blenheim, near Sangin, in Helmand Province.

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## **This Is What They Call “Success”**

December 31, 2009 By Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Nawa, Afghanistan - It's not yet 10 a.m., and Lt. Col. William McCollough must confront a pair of problems that threaten to undercut Marine success in this onetime Taliban stronghold.

Two members of the community council, the group organized by Marines to instill confidence among villagers in their government, have been killed, probably by Taliban fighters. The Afghan police response has been sluggish.

Meanwhile, rumors are sweeping the farming community that there is favoritism and corruption in the U.S.-sponsored program to distribute wheat seed and fertilizer. The program is aimed at persuading farmers to forgo planting opium poppies, which are turned into heroin, the proceeds frequently funding the Taliban.

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## **Afghans Burn Obama For Killing School Kids**



Afghans rally in Kabul, Afghanistan, Dec. 30, 2009, to protest against the recent killings of 10 civilians, including school children, by U.S. forces in Kunar province. The head of a presidential delegation investigating the deaths in eastern Afghanistan concluded Wednesday that civilians, including schoolchildren, were killed in the attack involving foreign troops, disputing NATO reports that the dead were insurgents. (AP Photo/Musadeq Sadeq)



Afghans rally against U.S. military and burn an effigy of U.S. President Barack Obama in Jalalabad, south Afghanistan, Dec. 30, 2009, during a protest against the recent killings of school children by U.S. forces in Kunar province. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

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**“You Can’t Defend The Highway By  
Just Sitting On It”**

# “Roadside Bomb Attacks Have Risen By More Than 50 Percent — From 308 In 2008 To 469 Last Year”

Dec 31, 2009 By Denis D. Gray - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

MAIDAN SHAR, Afghanistan — Trucks gaily painted with hearts and doves jam up at crowded wayside bazaars. Billboards advertise cell phones and advise drivers to keep their donkeys off the road.

It's not readily evident that this is probably the world's most dangerous highway, a prime target for Taliban insurgents attempting to sever a vital 620-mile (1,000-kilometer) artery with ambushes, executions and roadside bombs.

Overall, roadside bomb attacks have risen by more than 50 percent — from 308 in 2008 to 469 last year. But 394 were discovered before they detonated, up from 254 the previous year, according to a command spokesman, Lt. Col. Todd Vician.

About 35 percent of Afghanistan's population lives within 30 miles (50 kilometers) of the Kandahar-to-Kabul stretch, giving weight to the notion that “as the highway goes, so goes the country.”

Battered by war and weather, the road got a \$250 million makeover five years ago, halving the 12-hour, 301-mile (483-kilometer) drive between Kabul to Kandahar, which have the two largest NATO bases. The U.S., Japan and Saudi Arabia then followed with an overhaul of the stretch from Kandahar to the western city of Herat.

But [Lt. Col. Kimo] Gallahue, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 87th Regiment, says he wishes he had troops in the mountains overlooking his 55 miles (90 kilometers) of highway, where over the summer his troops battled well-trained insurgents prepared to face off against helicopter gunships with just their AK-47 rifles.

“Up there, we can only disrupt, not control,” says Gallahue, of Frankfort, Ky., as his howitzers blast suspected enemy positions in the contested region. “You can't defend the highway by just sitting on it.”

U.S. commanders say the 30,000 extra troops U.S. President Barack Obama has ordered into the country will also help eliminate the highway's other scourge — Afghanistan's own underpaid and ill-trained police.

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**BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG:  
COME ON HOME, NOW**



A United States Marine during an operation in the Garmsir district of Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Dec. 17, 2009. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)



United States Marines in the Garmsir district of Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Dec. 20, 2009. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)





U.S. Marines in Garmsir district of Helmand Province on December 20, 2009.  
REUTERS/Adrees Latif



U.S. army soldiers from 1-40 CAV at FOB Clark in Khowst province, Afghanistan,  
December 24, 2009. REUTERS/Zohra Bensemra

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

## TROOP NEWS

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



U.S. Army Specialist Stephan Mace is carried in a casket at Arlington National Cemetery October 19, 2009. Mace was killed in Afghanistan. REUTERS/Larry Downing

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**“Coffee Strong Needs Your Help To  
Continue Our Outreach To Soldiers  
At Fort Lewis, The Largest Army  
Base On The West Coast”  
“Historically Anti-War Organizations  
Have Neglected To Address The**

# Isolation And Conflicting Pressures That Soldiers Face”

From: G.I. Voice  
To: Military Resistance  
Sent: December 31, 2009 1:00 PM

You have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of soldiers and their families by making a financial contribution to G.I. Voice [at <http://www.givoice.org/donate>

Coffee Strong needs your help to continue our outreach to soldiers at Fort Lewis, the largest Army base on the West Coast. Coffee Strong is a G.I. coffeehouse run by the veteran-led organization G.I. Voice.

Since opening its doors on Election Day 2008, Coffee Strong has served as a much-needed safe place for soldiers weary of repeated deployments and exploitation by the Army.

Coffee Strong, inspired by the Vietnam-era GI coffeehouse movement, is just outside the gates of Fort Lewis in Lakewood, Washington.

## **Coffee Strong offers:**

- GI rights counseling
- Free coffee to enlisted soldiers
- Free concerts and movies to enlisted soldiers
- A public meeting space for groups such as Iraq Veterans Against the War and Veterans for Peace

Your support will allow us to continue offering these essential services. To expand our operations in anticipation of the return of over 10,000 soldiers stationed at Fort Lewis who are currently deployed overseas and continue to provide a safe haven for soldiers Coffee Strong needs to your support today.

## **Why Support Coffee Strong?**

G.I. Voice is a unique organization dedicated to the unmet needs of soldiers and their families.

**Historically anti-war organizations have neglected to address the isolation and conflicting pressures that soldiers face (especially those contemplating war resistance).**

**Anti-war veterans have been underrepresented both by mainstream veterans' groups that support wars, and some peace groups that do not understand soldiers' experiences and grievance -- Coffee Strong seeks to bridge this gap.**

Coffee Strong is a place where soldiers can find resources and information unfiltered by the military command, on issues such as:

Stop-Loss and other involuntary extensions of service

Post-deployment trauma  
Navigating Veterans' Administration bureaucracy  
Military sexual assault and mistreatment of women soldiers  
Options for G.I. dissent and resistance to war

### **Do We Take Our Soldiers For Granted?**

In this world of sound-bite journalism and 24/7 news channels the physical, emotional and psychological toll that war takes on soldiers and their families gets far too little attention. Politicians use soldiers as props, and too often we limit our support of them to token gestures such as yellow ribbons and flag pins.

The wars and accompanying repeated deployments that the U.S. is currently involved in are taxing on servicemembers and their families. Our soldiers surrender their time, energy, and tragically their lives to be chess pieces in a geopolitical game, over which they have little to no control. Soldiers deploying and returning from conflict are under-supported by the Army and the community. They need your help.

Please donate and encourage your friends and family to make a tax-deductible contribution today at <http://www.givoice.org/donate>

You have the option to give a one-time contribution, or give a sustainable monthly contribution. For us to continue our work we need the ongoing support of community members like you.

**This project won't continue without your support! To have a member of G.I. Voice come speak to your group about this project or to volunteer your time, please contact us!**

Thank you for your support of G.I. Voice and Coffee Strong. We hope you'll stop by Coffee Strong next time you're in the neighborhood!

Sincerely,

G.I. Voice  
email: [info@givoice.org](mailto:info@givoice.org)  
phone: 253-581-1565  
web: <http://www.givoice.org>  
P.O. Box 99404  
Lakewood, WA 98496

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## **Half Of UK's New Armoured Vehicles In Afghanistan Out Of Service**

December 31, 2009 Times Newspapers Ltd.

More than half of the new armoured vehicles sent to Afghanistan are out of service, the Ministry of Defence has admitted.

Only 134 of the 271 Mastiffs, the heaviest and most protective of the Army's armoured vehicles in Afghanistan, are "fit for purpose", figures obtained by the Liberal Democrats have revealed.

The same poor service history is also affecting the new Ridgeback vehicles which are being used for the first time by 11 Light Brigade in Afghanistan. In written Commons answers, the Liberal Democrats were told that nearly 40 per cent of Ridgebacks were not operational at present.

The Mastiff and Ridgeback are examples of the new type of heavily armoured, mine-resistant, wheeled patrol vehicles used by the Army on operations in Afghanistan.

Willie Rennie, Liberal Democrat defence spokesman, said: "These worrying figures undermine Labour's claim that our troops have the armoured vehicles they need.

"The Government says more Mastiffs and Ridgebacks are protecting our troops from roadside bombs but now we find only half of them are fit for purpose.

Announcing in November that there was now enough equipment in Afghanistan to deploy extra troops, Bob Ainsworth, the Defence Secretary, said: "(There are) a lot more Mastiffs, almost double the number of Mastiffs than we had before."

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## **Scientists Devising Groin Protector For British Soldiers: Doctors At Field Hospital In Helmand Province Seeing 60% More Cases Of Serious Injuries To The Groin — Including Complete Loss Of Genitalia — Among UK Troops Than Among US Forces**

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

November 29, 2009 The Sunday Times

BRITISH scientists are urgently trying to find a way of protecting the most sensitive part of soldiers' anatomy from Taliban bombs.

The body armour used by US soldiers has a groin protection plate, but the Osprey armour issued to UK troops in Afghanistan does not protect the area, a shortcoming that is causing great concern.

Doctors at the field hospital in Camp Bastion in Helmand province are seeing 60% more cases of serious injuries to the groin — including complete loss of genitalia — among UK troops than among US forces.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) refuses to disclose how many soldiers have suffered serious groin injuries, but Camp Bastion doctors say it is an increasingly urgent issue.

“Anybody who has leg and upper body injuries from a roadside bomb is likely to have very serious injuries to their groin,” said an officer who was recently in Afghanistan.

**Soldiers in vehicles are at greater risk of groin injury because the blast from improvised explosive devices (IEDs) is often directed straight up through the body.**

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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.**

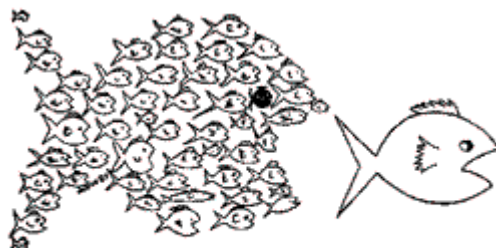
**“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”**

**“Before Any Soldier Risks  
Going To Prison He Should  
Realize That His Ability To  
Communicate With Other  
Troops Will Be Limited”**

**“He Or She Is Immediately Gotten  
Rid Of, And Is Lost To Organizing”**

**“We Choose Our Battles And  
Continue To Speak Out In Our  
Underground Action”**

**If The Objective Is To Stop The Imperial  
Wars, You Do Not Want Anybody To  
Stand Up And Loudly Tell Management,  
“I Refuse To Participate Any Further In  
Your Immoral Enterprise”**



**ORGANIZE**

[Resistance within the armed forces is not most effectively organized by soldiers first confined in military prison and subsequently thrown back into civilian life.]

**When civilian activists sitting safely at home call on soldiers as individuals to refuse to deploy and go to prison instead, that is an exercise in shameless hypocrisy, unprincipled opportunism and political stupidity. Individualistic moralism is antithetical and destructive of organized resistance from below. T]**

Traveling Soldier March-April, 2005 - Issue 10

Once upon a time there was a chicken factory, where, let us suppose, 1000 men and women work.

Live chickens come in one end of the factory complex, and cut up chicken parts and whole chickens come out the other end.

The people who cut up the chickens make about \$3 an hour, work in cold, wet rooms, get sick a lot, and frequently lose body parts during the chicken cutting process. The managers are cold assholes interested in profits, and don't give a shit how dangerous the equipment is. The supervisors are petty tyrants and frequently sexual predators.

If you get too sick or hurt to work, too fucking bad, you get put out the door.

This is not a desirable state of affairs.

You think maybe there should be some kind of organization of the work force to resist this shit. Maybe you can get more money, or insist that you have decent protection from being maimed or killed.

At that point you are alone, and powerless. So you have to very carefully find somebody else that agrees, and then somebody else, and all unnoticed by the assholes in command of the chicken factory, you slowly but surely build an organization.

You need meetings to talk over plans. Off company territory. You need security. You need some kind of way of communicating, maybe a newsletter, but you're careful about that too.

You can take it from there.

**But it is obvious that you do not want anybody to stand up in the middle of the third shift and loudly tell management, "I refuse to participate any further in your immoral enterprise and will defy all your orders."**

**He or she is immediately gotten rid of, and is lost to organizing inside your chicken factory because he or she is gone.**

**And the management is delighted, because they've just ID'd and fired somebody who could give them trouble in the future.**

So, if you're alone, organize. People who act together can have an effect.

And if somebody snaps and does an individual refusal, and gets arrested, in trouble, or whatever, your organization does not leave them behind; they've been hurt, and let no one judge them, because anybody can snap, anytime.



A soldier from the 1st ID summed up his job situation like this:

“Before any soldier risks going to prison he should realize that his ability to communicate with other troops will be limited.

“We choose our battles and continue to speak out in our underground action.

“There has to be a point when we reach a high enough number of troops in our peace effort that a unified boycott of all military action will have a desired effect.”

Use Traveling Soldier to serve your organizing purposes and say what you have to say. You say how.

That's what it's for.

MORE:

**[Those Who Would Tell This  
Soldier To Refuse Orders To  
Deploy, And Go To Military Prison  
Instead, Serve The Empire With  
Their Moralistic Stupidity]**

**“I Am Thoroughly Opposed To The  
Army As A Whole, And The War In  
The Middle East”**

**“I Spent 15 Months Over There For No  
Good Reason”**

[Resistance within the armed forces is not most effectively organized by soldiers first confined in military prison and subsequently thrown back into civilian life. When civilian activists sitting safely at home call on soldiers as individuals to refuse to deploy and go to prison instead, that is an exercise in shameless hypocrisy, unprincipled opportunism and political stupidity. Individualistic moralism is antithesis to and destructive of organized resistance from below. T]

Traveling Soldier, December, 2009 - Issue 26

*From the editors: To protect the writer, ID has been removed from this email as published here. The Military Resistance organization, which produces Traveling Soldier, will follow up with the writer privately. We welcome other letters from members of the armed services.*

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Dear Traveling Soldier,

I was promoted to Sergeant less than a year ago.

Although I am thoroughly opposed to the Army as a whole, and the war in the Middle East (I spent 15 months over there for no good reason), I decided that I could take advantage of the system and become one of the few Non-commissioned Officers that refuses to buy into the Army BS.

Goodness knows we could use more of those.

I was leaning heavily on the example set before me by some of the best Sergeants I had worked with, all of whom hated the Army with a fervent passion, but got their jobs done no less effectively.

I respected them because I could relate to them, and I would have taken a bullet for them without a second thought (whereas I would have had to take a moment to think about it for all of my “hooah” super-goArmy-high-speed NCOs).

With this conviction in hand, I PCS'd to my current unit, ready to show soldiers that leaders can be normal people, that being an asshole doesn't come with the stripes.

Within a few short months of coming here, I was forced to realize that if I don't lead their way (ordering the privates around like dogs and treating them as if they had no ability to think for themselves), then they would find a way to bust me down a peg.

I had already developed common ground with my soldiers, a level of trust that most leaders who demand respect and obedience rarely ever experience. But since this was contrary to how the Army (and those so-called “leaders” who value regulations over sincere trust and respect) does things, they set out to take me down.

I was mentioned by name in a unit anonymous survey for a charge that could have legal consequences if it were even remotely true. Although this accusation is minor, being anonymous and lacking evidence as it was, the message was all too clear to me: “Continue treating your subordinates like real people, and you will soon be one of them.”

I refuse to conform to this.

I firmly believe that, as a leader, if you want to develop the trust necessary to survive in a combat zone, it requires you being a member of the team in garrison.

You can't bark orders and turn your back one day, and then expect a soldier to take a bullet for you the next.

That's not how it works.

For all of you Privates out there reading this, know that there are Sergeants who hate the Army just as much as you do.

Sergeants who would rather be at your side when the shit hits the fan than standing over you expecting you to handle it alone.

There are Sergeants who would rather lose their rank than conform to the Army's expectations of dictatorship in leaders.

Your leader and friend,  
SGT A

## **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**

## **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/](http://www.ivaw.org/))**

### **Military Resistance Available In PDF Format**

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

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



## CLASS WAR REPORTS



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## **Military Resistance** [www.militaryproject.org](http://www.militaryproject.org)

*This is how Obama brings the troops home,  
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



*Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members  
[www.militaryproject.org](http://www.militaryproject.org)*

### **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**

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