

## **Military Resistance 8C9**

### **Military Resistance Newsletter Raffle Results**

All thirteen prize winners have been drawn, notified, and chosen their prizes effective this past week. Profound thanks to all who participated in helping keep this newsletter going. Total received since December 2009: \$1143.58. This covers all expenses for the newsletter before and up to March 2008. T



**U.S. Command Split At  
The Top:  
“The Marines Have Opted To  
Wage The War In Their Own  
Way”**

# **Marines' Methods "Have Riled Many Up The Chain Of Command In Kabul And Washington" Some "Refer To Their Area Of Operations In The South As 'Marineistan'"**

## **"What The Hell Are We Doing?' The Senior Official Said"**

**The U.S. ambassador in Kabul, Karl W. Eikenberry, recently noted that the international security force in Afghanistan feels as if it comprises 42 nations instead of 41 because the Marines act so independently from other U.S. forces.**

March. 14, 2010 By Rajiv Chandrasekaran, Washington Post [Excerpts]

DELARAM, Afghanistan - Home to a dozen truck stops and a few hundred family farms bounded by miles of foreboding desert, this hamlet in southwestern Afghanistan is far from a strategic priority for senior officers at the international military headquarters in Kabul.

One calls Delaram, a day's drive from the nearest city, "the end of the Earth." Another deems the area "unrelated to our core mission" of defeating the Taliban by protecting Afghans in their cities and towns.

U.S. Marine commanders have a different view of the dusty, desolate landscape that surrounds Delaram. They see controlling this corner of remote Nimruz province as essential to promoting economic development and defending the more populated parts of southern Afghanistan.

The Marines are constructing a vast base on the outskirts of town that will have two airstrips, an advanced combat hospital, a post office, a large convenience store and rows of housing trailers stretching as far as the eye can see. By this summer, more than 3,000 Marines — one-tenth of the additional troops authorized by President Obama in December — will be based here.

With Obama's July 2011 deadline to begin reducing U.S. forces looming over the horizon, the Marines have opted to wage the war in their own way.

But the Marines' methods, and their insistence that they be given a degree of autonomy not afforded to U.S. Army units, also have riled many up the chain of command in Kabul

and Washington, prompting some to refer to their area of operations in the south as “Marineistan.”

**They regard the expansion in Delaram and beyond as contrary to the population-centric approach embraced by Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan, and they are seeking to impose more control over the Marines.**

**The U.S. ambassador in Kabul, Karl W. Eikenberry, recently noted that the international security force in Afghanistan feels as if it comprises 42 nations instead of 41 because the Marines act so independently from other U.S. forces.**

“We have better operational coherence with virtually all of our NATO allies than we have with the U.S. Marine Corps,” said a senior Obama administration official involved in Afghanistan policy.

Some senior officials at the White House, at the Pentagon and in McChrystal’s headquarters would rather have many of the 20,000 Marines who will be in Afghanistan by summer deploy around Kandahar, the country’s second-largest city, to assist in a U.S. campaign to wrest the area from Taliban control instead of concentrating in neighboring Helmand province and points west.

**According to an analysis conducted by the National Security Council, fewer than 1 percent of the country’s population lives in the Marine area of operations.**

They question whether a large operation that began last month to flush the Taliban out of Marja, a poor farming community in central Helmand, is the best use of Marine resources.

**Although it has unfolded with fewer than expected casualties and helped to generate a perception of momentum in the U.S.-led military campaign, the mission probably will tie up two Marine battalions and hundreds of Afghan security forces until the summer.**

**“What the hell are we doing?” the senior official said. “Why aren’t all 20,000 Marines in the population belts around Kandahar city right now?”**

“It’s Mullah Omar’s capital. If you want to stuff it to Mullah Omar, you make progress in Kandahar. If you want to communicate to the Taliban that there’s no way they’re returning, you show progress in Kandahar.”

**Until earlier this month, McChrystal lacked operational control over the Marines, which would have allowed him to move them to other parts of the country.**

**That power rested with a three-star Marine general at the U.S. Central Command**

**He and other senior Marine commanders insisted that Marines in Afghanistan have a contiguous area of operations — effectively precluding them from being split up and sent to Kandahar — because they think it is essential the Marines are supported by Marine helicopters and logistics units, which are based in Helmand, instead of relying on the Army.**

After concern about the arrangement reached the White House, Gen. David H. Petraeus, who heads the Central Command, issued an order in early March giving McChrystal operational control of Marine forces in Afghanistan, according to senior defense officials.

But the new authority vested in McChrystal — the product of extensive negotiations among military lawyers — still requires Marine approval for any plan to disaggregate infantry units from air and logistics support, which will limit his ability to move them, the defense officials said.

“At the end of the day, not a lot has changed,” said a Marine general, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, as did several other senior officers and officials, to address sensitive command issues. “There’s still a caveat that prevents us from being cherry-picked.”

The Marine demand to be supported by their own aviators and logisticians has roots in the World War II battles for Guadalcanal and Tarawa.

Marines landing on the Pacific islands did not receive the support they had expected from Navy ships and aircraft. Since then, Marine commanders have insisted on deploying with their own aviation and supply units. They did so in Vietnam, and in Iraq.

**“The Marines are a double-edged sword for McChrystal,” one senior defense official said. “He got them fast, but he only gets to use them in one place.”**

In December, columns of Marine armored vehicles punched into the city of Now Zad in northern Helmand. Once the second-largest town in the province, it had been almost completely emptied of its residents over the past four years as insurgents mined the roads and buildings with hundreds of homemade bombs.

Successive units of British and U.S. troops had been largely confined to a Fort Apache-like base in the town. Every time they ventured out, they’d be shot at or bombed.

To Nicholson and his commanders, reclaiming the town, which the Marines accomplished within a few weeks, has been a crucial step in demonstrating to Helmand residents that U.S. forces are committed to getting rid of the Taliban.

**To other military officials in Afghanistan, however, the mission seemed contrary to McChrystal’s counterinsurgency strategy.**

**“If our focus is supposed to be protecting the population, why are we focusing on a ghost town?” said a senior officer at the NATO regional headquarters in Kandahar.**

**Nicholson contends that if his forces were kept only in key population centers in Helmand, insurgents would come right up to the gates of towns.**

**Other U.S. and NATO military officials say that what the Marines want to do makes sense only if there were not a greater demand for troops elsewhere.**

Because the Marines cannot easily be moved to Kandahar, U.S. and British military and diplomatic officials have begun discussions to expand the Marine footprint into more populous parts of Helmand with greater insurgent activity where British forces have been outmatched.

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Insurgent Attack On Diyala Base Kills U.S. Soldier; Two Wounded**

March 14 (Reuters) & USF-I PRESS DESK

One United States Division - North Soldier was killed and two were wounded after an indirect fire attack on their Diyala province base, March 13.

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### **More Resistance Action**

3.6.10 New York Times & 13 Mar 2010 Reuters & March 14 (Reuters)

Six mortar shells and rockets landed in the Green Zone, where government ministries and embassies are clustered behind heavy fortifications.

An Iraqi soldier was wounded when insurgents threw a bomb at his checkpoint in the city of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents' killed an off-duty policeman as he was driving his car in a town west of Mosul, police said.

A pair of roadside bombs targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded four policemen, late on Saturday in the Shula district of northwestern Baghdad, police said.

Two policemen were wounded by a so-called 'sticky bomb' stuck onto their vehicle in Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A police officer was seriously wounded on Saturday in an explosion that took place as he tried to defuse a bomb in central Kirkuk.

Insurgents killed an off-duty policeman near his house in Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded two policemen in Ghazaliya District of western Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed an off-duty policeman near his house in Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad, police said.

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# **Huge U.S. Thieving In Iraq Uncovered: Chaos, Weak Oversight Allowed Many Who Stole Cash To Dodge Prosecution: “‘We’ve Seen It In Afghanistan As Well,’ Mr. White Said”**

March 14, 2010 By James Glanz, New York Times [Excerpts]

Investigators looking into corruption involving reconstruction in Iraq say they have opened more than 50 new cases in six months by scrutinizing large cash transactions — involving banks, land deals, loan payments, casinos and even plastic surgery — made by some of the Americans involved in the nearly \$150 billion program.

**Some of the cases involve people who are suspected of having mailed tens of thousands of dollars to themselves from Iraq, or of having stuffed the money into duffel bags and suitcases when leaving the country, the federal investigators said.**

**In other cases, millions of dollars were moved through wire transfers. Suspects then used cash to buy BMWs, Humvees and expensive jewelry, or to pay off enormous casino debts.**

**Some suspects also tried to conceal foreign bank accounts in Ghana, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Britain, the investigators said, while in other cases, cash was simply found stacked in home safes.**

There have already been dozens of indictments and convictions for corruption since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. But the new cases seem to confirm what investigators have long speculated: that the chaos, weak oversight and wide use of cash payments in the reconstruction program in Iraq allowed many more Americans who took bribes or stole money to get off scot-free.

**A related investigation of rebuilding funds for Afghanistan began in February.**

Congress has appropriated about \$53 billion for reconstruction projects, and the rest of the money has come from Iraqi assets and international pledges.

Wayne White, who until 2005 was a senior intelligence official with the State Department focused on Iraq and is now a scholar with the Middle East Institute in Washington, said he was not surprised that new cases were still turning up.

Since Iraq's economy collapsed after the 1991 Persian Gulf war, the country's dealings with foreign companies and contractors have been laced with bribery, kickbacks and other fraud, Mr. White said, adding that weak oversight of the reconstruction efforts almost guaranteed that those problems would not be rooted out.

"That's been very disappointing, and we've seen it in Afghanistan as well," Mr. White said.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Arkansas Sgt. Killed In Afghanistan**



U.S. Army, Sgt. Jonathan J. Richardson, of Bald Knob, Ark., 24, was killed in eastern Afghanistan March 9, 2010, while serving with C Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, based in Ft. Campbell, Ky. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

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### **Family, Friends Remember Slain Orem Marine**



A Marine Corps team lifts a transfer case containing the body of Lance Cpl. Carlos Aragon during a ceremony Wednesday at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Aragon was killed Monday while on patrol in Afghanistan. Ann Heisenfelt, Associated Press

March 3, 2010 By Marc Haddock, Deseret News

OREM — Lance Cpl. Carlos A. Aragon, 19, was a quiet, respectful young man who loved '70s rock music and trucks and who knew the dangers of service in Afghanistan.

“He understood what it was all about,” said Aragon’s stepfather, Brad Halladay of Lehi. “Before he left on his final deployment, he said, ‘Dad, whatever happens, it’s in the Lord’s hands. If he wants me to come home, I’ll come home.’”

At the same time, he had told his family he probably wouldn’t re-enlist.

“He just didn’t like saying goodbye,” Halladay said.

Halladay, his wife and Aragon’s mother, Rosa, and other family members were in Delaware at Dover Air Force Base Wednesday when Aragon’s remains were returned to the United States in a transfer ceremony Halladay described as “extremely respectful.”

Aragon died Monday in Helmand province. Halladay said the family was told that although Aragon was primarily a diesel mechanic and driver, he was on a foot patrol in an Afghan village when he stepped on a pressure-activated homemade explosive. He was killed instantly.

He was assigned to the 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion in the Marine Force’s Reserve base at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Halladay said the family expects his body to be returned to Utah Saturday. Funeral services will be held in Lehi, but details are pending.

Aragon was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, but came to Orem as a young boy and remained there until he graduated from Mountain View High School in 2008. His family moved to Lehi about two years ago.



Teachers at Mountain View High School remember Aragon as a quiet, friendly student who stood out because of unruly brown hair that hung down to his shoulders.

“He was a respectful, quiet kid, but he got A’s in my class and was able to put down on paper some really deep thoughts that were kind of surprising,” said assistant principal J. Peter Glahn, who taught sociology when Aragon was a junior at the school. “He had that long hair, but he was a gentle, nice kid.”

The school is planning a moment of silence this morning to honor Aragon.

Halladay said Aragon liked to challenge himself. “In high school he liked climbing the trails behind Bridal Veil Falls all the way to the top,” he said.

He liked the idea of four-wheeling, although he couldn’t afford a vehicle when he was in high school. As a result he enjoyed driving light armored vehicles.

“They drive them fast over there. He liked the challenge,” Halladay said. “He was the mechanic, but they asked him to drive.”

He told his family he was focused on safety.

“He would call every couple of weeks and he would say, ‘I’m staying with the vehicle and I’m ready to go,’” Halladay said.

Angela Cottrell, who had known Aragon since she was his Cub Scout den leader and whose son, Jason, was one of Aragon’s closest friends, said Aragon was a “wonderful, wonderful young man.

“He was not a rebellious kid at all, just a penny pincher. He said he was saving money to buy a car, and so he didn’t spend his money on haircuts.”

Robert Gardner, who was the bishop in Aragon’s Orem LDS ward, said Aragon was a good example.

“He was just a great friend. He really inspired a lot of his friends to do what is right,” Gardner said.

Honors for Aragon came from the Utah Senate, where at the start of Wednesday’s session, senators observed a moment of silence in his memory at the request of Sen. John Valentine, R-Orem.

Gov. Gary Herbert issued a statement honoring Aragon: “The state of Utah will never forget this young Marine, who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving his country in Afghanistan. His selfless and faithful service is an example to all of us.

“Jeanette and I offer our deepest gratitude for Lance Corporal Aragon’s sacrifice on behalf of the people of Utah, and we extend our prayers to this young man’s family,” Herbert said.

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# Slain Marine Was A 'Fine Young Man'



Marine Lance Cpl. Adam Peak: Provided

February 22, 2010 By Mark Hansel, Cincinnati.Com

FLORENCE – Family and friends say Lance Cpl. Adam Peak, the Marine from Florence that was killed in Afghanistan on Sunday, had a great sense of humor and was always looking to help someone.

“He was a part of the community on so many different levels,” Katie Raverty of Rabbit Hash said of the 25-year-old Peak. “He had a passion for life and was an inspiration to many of us.”

Raverty, 25, met Peak when she was a freshman at Thomas More College and he was helping with new student orientation.

“He was a jokester,” Raverty said. “He always had witty comments and we became friends right away.”

Sara Peak, 28, said her younger brother was very outgoing, but also had a private side.

“He wouldn’t let you know his deep feelings, but he always had a line for you,” she said. “He said he would never settle down, but he was like a second father to a lot of the other Marines’ kids.”

Boone County High School Principal Mark Raleigh said Peak graduated before he came to the school, but those who knew him are grief-stricken. “It’s a tragedy to lose anyone that young and we lost a fine young man who was working for all of us,” Raleigh said. “What we need to do now is focus on showing support for the family.” At Thomas More, Peak was active in the theater and in the Alpha Delta Gamma fraternity.

“We both pledged to the fraternity and we lived together for a while,” said Caleb Finch, 24, a teacher at Bellevue High School. “Adam was a big-hearted, free-spirited, fun-loving guy who would do anything for anybody.”

Peak graduated from Thomas More in 2006 and Richard Shuey, a business administration professor at the school, said the impact of his death is being felt throughout the close-knit college community.

“I was one of his instructors here and we are a small school, so I think I had him in three different classes,” Shuey said. “He was one of those really nice, clean-cut Northern Kentucky kids – always polite and interested in doing well and obviously a true patriot.”

Peak reportedly was killed by an improvised explosive device.

“You see these kids go through high school and college, then go out and do what is right for the country and you hope they don’t pay the ultimate price,” Shuey said. “It’s just so hard when that price comes due.”

There is a memorial service scheduled for 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at Thomas More College.

Peak is also survived by his parents, Bruce and Diana Peak, and sister, Angela Peak, 14, all of Florence. His brother, Sean Peak, 23, is a Marine stationed overseas and will return home for the funeral services.

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## Stevenson Ranch Man Killed In Action In Afghanistan



March 2, 2010 By Signal Staff, The-Signal.com

A soldier from Stevenson Ranch who graduated from Hart High School was killed in Afghanistan on Monday - the first soldier from the Santa Clarita Valley killed in the Middle East in almost two years.

Paratrooper Ian Gelig, 25, of the 82nd Airborne Division was on a routine patrol in southern Afghanistan when a roadside bomb exploded near the vehicle he was riding in, said Major Brian Fickel, an Army spokesman.

Gelig had been serving in Afghanistan since September.

Gelig is survived by his parents, Tim and Delia Gelig, and his sisters, Vanessa and Liana.

Paul Gelig, Ian's uncle, said in an e-mail that he is traveling from the Philippines and will be in Santa Clarita this weekend to be with the family.

Paratrooper David Tryon, who served with Gelig, said in the release, "Gelig was a good friend and great person. He was always there for you when you needed something. He will be deeply missed by everyone in this unit, for a piece of us went with him."

Ian Gelig graduated from Hart High School in 2002, said Principal Collyn Nielsen.

**Gelig is the 11th soldier from the SCV killed in either Iraq or Afghanistan since 2002, according to a list kept by Blue Star Mothers, a support group for families that have children serving in the military.**

Gelig enlisted in the Army in October 2006. After completing basic training in July 2007, he was sent to Kuwait for a 15-month tour of duty, according to the release.

His unit will hold a memorial service in Afghanistan in his honor, Fickel said.

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## Fallen Marine Returns Home To Larue County



Matthias "Matt" Hanson

Feb 26, 2010 By Elizabeth Donatelli, WAVE News

HODGENVILLE, KY (WAVE) – Marine Lance Cpl. Matthias “Matt” Hanson of LaRue County died Feb. 21 in combat while serving in Afghanistan. Less than a week later, Hanson’s body was flown to Fort Knox where he was greeted by family and friends who escorted him all the way to the funeral home in Hodgenville.

Outside of LaRue County High School, the flag stood at half-staff in honor of Hanson, a 2008 graduate, who attended the school for three years. He worked as a technology trainer and played on the football team.

“He was very proud of what he had done when he signed up to go to the Marines,” said Rodney Armes, LaRue County football coach and assistant principal. “He got his hair cut short and he was a Marine from the day he signed up.”

When Hanson graduated, he put the following quote from the movie “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off” by his picture in the yearbook.

“Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t look around and pay attention you could miss it.”

Students lined the streets outside of LaRue County High School and remembered little things about him.

“Funny, energetic, really outgoing,” said friend Emily Johnson. “He could make anyone laugh. He had the brightest blue eyes ever. That’s what we’ll remember him as.”

The hearse carrying Hanson’s body received an escorted by law enforcement, the Patriot Guard Riders and was honored along the way by hundreds of students and community residents.

“He would be so proud and humbled,” said Stacey Cecil, whose son was one of his friends. “He was just a great kid.”

Along the route, people lined the streets of four towns finishing in Hodgenville at the square.

The town is the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, one of the country’s greatest patriots, and now the final resting place for a modern one. “How proud I am of him,” friend Cody Warren said of what he wanted to tell him. “Just how proud for his service, for the freedom we have.”

Hanson’s funeral will be held at LaRue County High School on Feb. 27 at 2 p.m. It is open to the public.

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## **Guerrillas Hit Afghanistan’s Largest Southern City With “One Of The Biggest Coordinated**

**Assaults By The Militants Since  
Their Insurgency Began More  
Than Eight Years Ago”  
“This Was An Answer To General  
McChrystal, Who Announced  
Operation Omaid In Kandahar”  
“We Can Strike Anywhere, Any Time We  
Want”**



The damaged wall of the police headquarters in Kandahar March 14, 2010. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Resistance, who sent this in.

March 13, 2010 The Associated Press & Robin Henry, Times Online & Reuters & AAP & March 14, 2010 AP & By Keith B. Richburg, Washington Post [Excerpts]

#### KANDAHAR

A series of massive explosions rocked Kandahar late on Saturday in what appears to be one of the biggest coordinated assaults by the militants since their insurgency began more than eight years ago.

The governor of Kandahar province demanded more security on Sunday after 12 coordinated explosions in Afghanistan's largest southern city.

The attacks around Kandahar city Saturday night included two car bombs, six suicide attackers on motorbikes and bicycles plus four homemade bombs, Gov. Tooryalai Wesa said.

A Taliban squad detonated bombs at a newly fortified prison, police headquarters and two other locations late Saturday, killing at least 30 people.

A total of 13 police officers were killed Zemarai Bashery told reporters on Sunday, adding the injured included 17 police officers.

The first explosion was near the police chief's headquarters.

Ahmed Wali Karzai, a member of the Kandahar provincial council, said two of the explosions occurred near his home, which was not damaged.

One attack struck at the front gate of the Kandahar police headquarters, causing a lot of casualties, he said.

"We can hear planes overhead and there is still some firing in the distance," Ragina Hamidi said in a telephone interview.

In a phone call from an undisclosed destination, the Taliban spokesman said the attacks were retaliation for comments by the commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan that Kandahar would be targeted in military efforts to eradicate the Taliban.

**"This was an answer to General (Stanley) McChrystal, who announced Operation Omaid in Kandahar," Ahmadi said, referring to the name of the battle plan.**

**"This was to sabotage the operation and to show we can strike anywhere, any time we want," he said.**

**In theory, the Afghan government is in place in Kandahar, but its authority is nominal.**

**Bombings and assassinations have left the government largely isolated behind concrete barricades and blast walls.**

The provincial governor remains mostly behind barricades. The provincial council has trouble convening because many members have fled to Kabul.

The police are viewed as ill-trained, corrupt and possibly in league with criminal gangs.

"I think nobody is in control," said Ahmad Nader Nadery, a member of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, who recently visited Kandahar. "What was worrying to me is how the government is nonfunctional."

In Kandahar city, residents say, real power rests with Ahmed Wali Karzai, head of the council and the younger brother of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Ahmed Karzai has been accused of vote rigging and involvement in the drug trade, allegations he has consistently denied.

The eight judges still working in the city and province live together for security, packed into an impregnable compound, behind gray concrete walls topped with razor wire.

“If we want to walk, we just walk inside our building,” said Judge Dilagha Hemat, director of the Kandahar appeals court, who like others hears cases in the fortress, where judges sleep two to a room and a cook prepares the meals.

[T]he surrounding province appears in even worse shape. In the city, the government has retreated behind concrete barricades; in much of the countryside, there is no government presence.

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## Resistance Action

Mar/12/10 IsraelINN.com & March 13, 2010 Indo-Asian News Service & March 14 (Reuters)

Afghan police reported that three members of an elite strike force have been killed in an overnight attack by militants resisting the occupation of their country by Western forces and the ties between these forces and the Afghan government.

**The police chief of eastern Afghanistan’s Paktia province, Azizudin Wardak, said insurgents launched an attack on a police post on the outskirts the provincial capital.**

**When a rapid-response police force rushed to aid the fight, the militants detonated a roadside bomb, killing three officers including the force’s commander.**

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Militants killed a person on charge of cooperation with government in the southern Ghazni province.

A roadside bomb killed a Pakistani construction worker and wounded six of his compatriots when the device hit their vehicle in Afghanistan’s southern city of Kandahar, a provincial police officer said.

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## “Some Have Questioned The Significance Of Taking Marjah And Involving Thousands Of Troops Just To Secure A Collection Of Farming Hamlets



# That Account For Only A Tiny Fraction Of Helmand Province”

March 12, 2010 ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

MARJAH, Afghanistan (AP) — After a day spent pinned down in gunbattles or caught in a maze of roadside bombs, with little hope of air support and an erratic Afghan army to coax along, Lance Cpl. Travis Anderson reflected on the frustrations of the campaign U.S. forces were fighting.

“I understand the reason behind it, but it’s so hard to fight a war like this,” the 20-year-old from Altoona, Iowa, said as his company of Marines spearheaded the ground assault to reclaim Marjah from the Taliban.

Three weeks later, the Marjah insurgents have been largely defeated. The offensive on the southern Afghan town — NATO’s largest combined operation in Afghanistan — is described as the first step of an 18-month push to push the Taliban out for good.

Some have questioned the significance of taking Marjah and involving thousands of troops just to secure a collection of farming hamlets that account for only a tiny fraction of Helmand province, itself just a small part of Regional Command South.

In Brussels, the Russian ambassador to NATO said he was puzzled by allied claims that the offensive was a success. Dmitry Rogozin noted that a firefight this week between two rebel factions in northern Afghanistan had in fact resulted in more deaths among the insurgents than the entire Marjah operation.

“So the result (of the Marjah offensive) was that the mountain shook, but only a mouse was born,” he said citing a Russian proverb.

The Afghan army units sent into Marjah with the Marines seemed much better trained and more determined to fight than many forces in previous years.

But still, they didn’t follow orders well, they rarely turned up for their assignments on time, some started their day with a joint of marijuana, and orders often got lost in translation.

**Shakier still are the Afghan police, who are supposed to start securing the town in the coming weeks.**

**Fresh out of training, they vow they’ll track the leftover Taliban and win the civilians’ trust.**

**But one of their first moves in Marjah was to take for themselves all the transistor radios they had been given by the Marines to distribute to villagers, an AP reporter saw.**

If they lose their grip, American forces may have to reconquer the town street by street.

Insurgents are well aware of all this.

The lessons learned from Marjah are likely also being learned by the Taliban as NATO generals prepare an even bigger offensive in the coming months, focused on neighboring Kandahar province.

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## **The Great Afghan Police Training Fiasco Rolls On**

March 12, 2010 By Greg Jaffe, The Washington Post Company [Excerpt]

Because police officers do not live on heavily fortified bases as Afghan soldiers do, they have suffered heavier casualties than the army has.

The losses have made some top police officers reluctant to serve in the toughest battle zones. In February, for example, the Afghan National Police Academy graduated its second class -- 568 students who had completed three years of courses and training. U.S. officials assumed that as many as half of those new graduates would be assigned to lead police units in the south and east. Instead, only about 3 percent of the officers were assigned to those regions.

About three-quarters were kept in Kabul.

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## **WELCOME TO THE LONELY SIDE OF HELL: ALL HOME NOW!**



MRAP armored vehicle of the Army National Guard 162 Engineer Company attached with 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion of U.S. Marine Corps driven ahead of a convoy delivering supplies to the remote U.S. Marine base in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, March 6, 2010. Picture taken March 6, 2010. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov



MRAP armored vehicles belonging to the Army National Guard 162 Engineer Company during a route clearance mission for U.S. Marines convoy delivered supply to the remote Forward Operating Base (FOB) Cafferata in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, March 8, 2010. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



The casket of Marine Corp. Jacob H. Turbett at Arlington National Cemetery March 9, 2010. Turbett, from Canton, Mich., died Feb. 13 during fighting in Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

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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**

**I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.**

**-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace**

**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”**

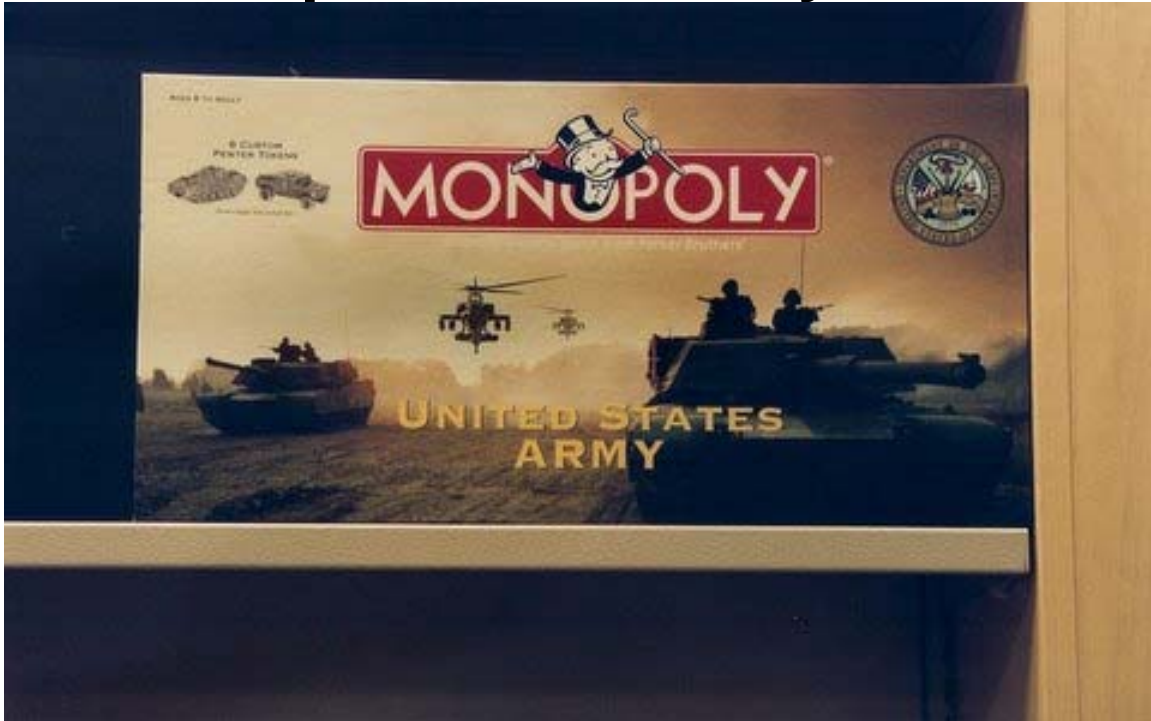
**-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787**

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

**"The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy"**  
-- David Cortright; *Soldiers In Revolt*

**It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.**  
-- Larry Christensen, *Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers*

## A Trip Down Memory Lane



Taken at Barnes and Noble bookstore in Portland, Oregon: Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie  
To: Military Resistance  
Sent: March 12, 2010  
Subject: A Trip Down Memory Lane

### A Trip Down Memory Lane

During the dozen years of U.S. sanctions on Iraq,

bombs were being dropped on Iraq almost daily, while the sanctions continued a long campaign of human rights violations. The U.N.'s humanitarian aid chief, Dennis Halliday, resigned in protest, as did his successor, Hans von Sponeck. Together, they wrote that:

The death of some 5-6000 children a month is due to contaminated water, lack of medicines, and malnutrition. The US and UK governments' delayed clearance of equipment and materials is responsible for this tragedy, not Baghdad.

The above information was taken from the article:  
**Why America Should Apologize**  
By Connor Boyack  
March 12, 2010

“You do not bring the enemy to the peace table by just killing military combatants. You ultimately bring the enemy to the peace table by killing innocent civilians. They are military targets. The primary goal of the aggressor nation is to break the spirit of the people, and their ability to defend their homeland. This strategy is as old as warfare itself.”

**Mike Hastie**  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71

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)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie**  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004

## Trash

*[Reprinted from GI Special 7C14: 3.16.09]*

From *Peace Speaks From The Mirror*

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

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### Trash

Stan waited in line in the creepy drizzly cold rain  
waiting to vote for his favorite rich man, who above all,  
wanted his son to carry a weight on his back  
and carry a rich man's gun in a holocaust called Iraq  
Removed forward in the lines lies, but good people  
trying to decide if they will vote for  
Republican and Democrat trash.  
Stan was finally at the table and they found his name,  
then another table where he had to wait.  
At least the people were warm now,  
then they gave Stan his ballot and he stood alone in the booth  
trying to figure out if he wanted to vote for  
Republican and Democrat trash.  
Stan was switching from one leg to the other for a long time  
trying to decide which rich man would let a few pennies  
trickle down to him or cut off welfare  
and send jobs to China or stop the war  
when they were making billions  
and voting for Democrat and Republican trash  
Make him have to be a Christian to live in the USA  
and round up the gays and gas them  
make elementary classes have a course how to breakdown  
a M-16 and put it together.  
Build walls and make it legal for minute men  
to shoot Mexicans in a second  
and voting for Republican and Democrat trash  
Build walls around the blacks in the inner city ghettos  
like they did to the Jews in Warsaw  
Put huge crosses on the tops of our schools  
on the top of the white house  
on the top of the supreme court  
and on top of the soldier's helmets  
Outlaw evolution and outlaw abortion  
and vote for Republican and Democrat trash.  
So Stan ripped up his ballot and threw it on the floor  
people looked up as he left the room  
some with an I feel that way too.

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# OCCUPATION PALESTINE

## Unconquered Unconquerable



A Palestinian boy uses sling shot against Zionist border police during clashes in the occupied Palestinian West Bank village of Iraq Burin near Nablus March 13, 2010. REUTERS/Abed Omar Qusini

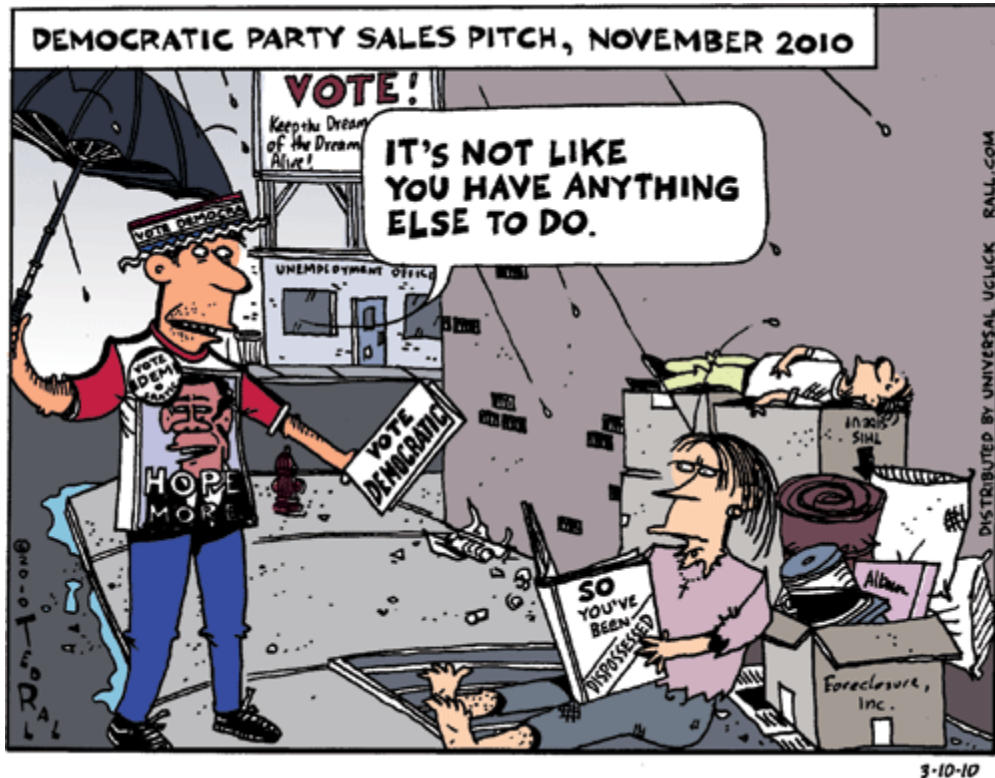


A Palestinian boy uses a slingshot against Zionist soldiers during clashes in the occupied Palestinian West Bank village of Iraq Burin, near Nablus, March 13, 2010. Residents of the village said they tried to prevent Zionist occupiers from bathing in a water cistern they depend on for agriculture. The Zionist soldiers attacked with tear gas and rubber coated steel bullets, injuring Palestinians, medics said. (AP Photo/Nasser Ishtayeh)



[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."]

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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## CLASS WAR REPORTS



## **“Most Of The Richest People On The Planet Have Seen Their Fortunes Soar In The Past Year”**

March 13, 2010 By Chris Bray, linkedin.com [Iraq Veteran] [Excerpt]

“In the America where things are made, the recession has been a depression. According to a new Northeastern University study, one in every six blue-collar industrial jobs have disappeared since 2007, matching the drop in overall employment in the Great Depression. Last year, about 1.3 million factory jobs vanished.”

-- USA Today, March 2

“Indeed, last year’s wealth wasteland has become a billionaire bonanza. Most of the richest people on the planet have seen their fortunes soar in the past year. This year the World’s Billionaires have an average net worth of \$3.5 billion, up \$500 million in 12 months. The world has 1,011 10-figure titans, up from 793 a year ago but still shy of the record 1,125 in 2008. Of those billionaires on last year’s list, only 12% saw their fortunes decline.”

-- Forbes, March 10

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

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

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**Just posted at: <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS28.pdf>**

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/))**

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