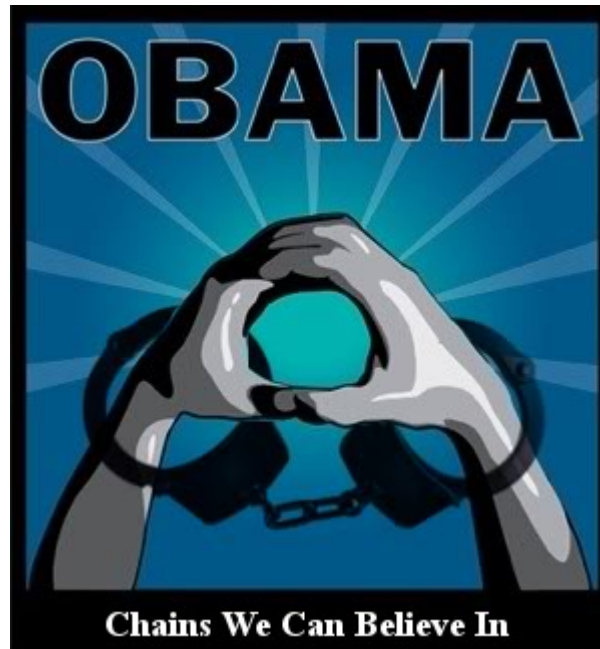


Military Resistance 8D6



WikiLeaks – “Collateral Murder”

“Promoting Truth With Gross Errors Is Just As Shameful As An Unnecessary Engagement”

“We Don’t Like Killing Innocent People”

“We Don’t Like Being The Arm Of The Imperialistic Bastards In Government”

“Were My Duties Strictly Related To Defending The Constitution, I Would Have Been Deployed To The Halls Of Congress – A Place Wherein One Can Find Numerous Domestic Enemies To Said Document (Within Either Political Party)”

By Anthony, [<http://blog.ajmartinez.com/>] On April 5, 2010, In Operation Iraqi Freedom V, Opinions

Critical note: I am not, nor have I ever claimed to be, a helicopter pilot.

Thousands of you viewers have come here via click-through on a widely disseminated, and poorly researched, article found here.

Warning: The video content contained within this post is likely to greatly disturb those who have not seen these things many times before.

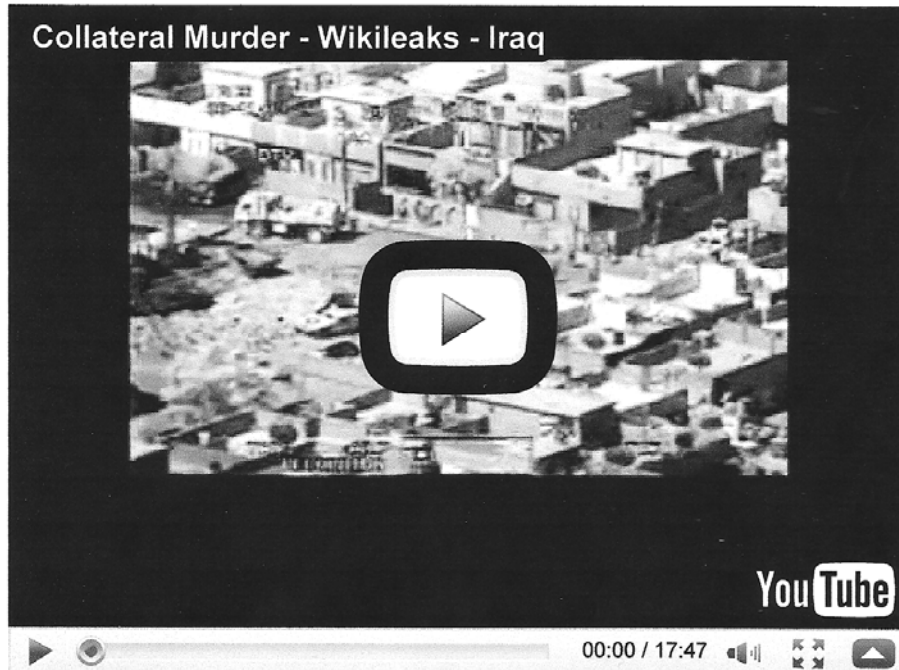
People die. It is real. War, as they say, is hell. Updates below.

To start things off, I will come right out and say I support WikiLeaks in their endeavors to bring about transparency in government.

The government promises to do such things and fails time and time again.

That said, I have several problems with their presentation of “Collateral Murder,” the video immediately below this paragraph.

These errors do nothing to lend to the credibility of this organization, and if there is any desire to promote anything but transparency and truth I will cease any inkling of support immediately.



[\[http://maxkeiser.com/2010/04/05/collateral-murder-wikileaks/\]](http://maxkeiser.com/2010/04/05/collateral-murder-wikileaks/)

For those unaware of my background, I have spent quite a lot of time (a conservative estimate would be around 4500 hours) viewing aerial footage of Iraq (*note: this time was **not** in viewing TADS video, but footage from Raven, Shadow, and Predator feeds*).

I am certain my voice can be heard on several transmissions with several different Crazyhorse aircraft, as I have called them to assist troops on the ground more times in my 24-months in Iraq than I could even attempt to guess.

I need no reassurances to determine the presence of an RPG7 or an AK-variant rifle, especially not from a craft flying as low as Apache (even after the video has been reduced in dimensions to a point at which it is nearly useless).

Several commenters on Twitter and YouTube have expressed a great deal of anger towards the United States and members of its military.

Many of them, unsurprisingly, have wished death on us all.

Part of the problem, which is far more complex than I have the time or desire to fully discuss, lies in the presentation of above video.

What *could* have been the case is identified for the viewer quite readily.

What certainly is true, in several key moments, is not.

When presenting source media as the core of your argument, it is grossly irresponsible to fail to make known variables not shown within that media.

If you are going to take the time to highlight certain things in said media, you should make certain all key elements are brought to the attention of your viewer.

WikiLeaks failed to do these things in this video, happily highlighting the positions and movements of the slain reporter and photographer while ignoring those of their company.

It is also, until their arrival on scene, never clear where exactly the ground forces are in reference to Crazyhorse 18 and flight. I can make a pretty good guess, given my background. I would guess the same cannot be said by the vast majority of WikiLeaks' target audience.

Between 3:13 and 3:30 it is quite clear to me, as both a former infantry sergeant and a photographer, that the two men central to the gun-camera's frame are carrying photographic equipment.

This much is noted by WikiLeaks, and misidentified by the crew of Crazyhorse 18. At 3:39, the men central to the frame are armed, the one on the far left with some AK variant, and the one in the center with an RPG.

The RPG is crystal clear even in the downsized, very low-resolution, video between 3:40 and 3:45 when the man carrying it turns counter-clockwise and then back to the direction of the Apache.

This all goes by without any mention whatsoever from WikiLeaks, and that is unacceptable.

At 4:08 to 4:18 another misidentification is made by Crazyhorse 18, where what appears to clearly be a man with a telephoto lens (*edit to add: one of the Canon EF 70-200mm offerings*) on an SLR is identified as wielding an RPG. The actual case is not threatening at all, though the misidentified case presents a major perceived threat to the aircraft and any coalition forces in the direction of its orientation.

This moment is when the decision to engage is made, in error.

(note: It has to be taken into consideration that there is no way that the Crazyhorse crew had the knowledge, as everyone who has viewed this had, that the man on the corner of that wall was a photographer. The actions of shouldering an RPG (bringing a long cylindrical object in line with one's face) and framing a photo with a long telephoto lens quite probably look identical to an aircrew in those conditions.)

I have made the call to engage targets from the sky several times, and know (especially during the surge) that such calls are not taken lightly.

Had I been personally involved with this mission, and had access to real-time footage, I would have recommended against granting permission.

Any of the officers with whom I served are well aware that I would continue voicing that recommendation until ordered to do otherwise.

A few of them threatened me with action under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for doing so. Better officers than they, fortunately, were always ready to go to bat for me and keep that from happening.

That said, if either of the clearly visible weapons been oriented towards aircraft, vehicles, troops, or civilians I would have cleared Crazyhorse 18 hot in a heartbeat and defended my actions to the battle staff if needed.

(note: The above is based on the number of times footage from a UAV under my unit's control produced visual evidence that showed a lesser threat level than that reported as possible by either attack aviation or troops on the ground. Such footage may not have been available during this incident, and as such if the camera was thought to be an RPG the engagement of the personnel was well within any ROE I have ever seen. By making the call, I mean that I have quite literally been the voice heard over the radio clearing an engagement. It is important to note that while I was a position to influence the decision, the actual decision was not mine to make – that falls to the officer-in-charge, not the non-commissioned officer-in-charge.)

The point at which I cannot support the actions of Crazyhorse 18, at all, comes when the van arrives somewhere around 9:45 and is engaged.

Unless someone had jumped out with an RPG ready to fire on the aircraft, there was no threat warranting a hail of 30mm from above.

Might it have been prudent to follow the vehicle (perhaps with a UAV), or at least put out a BOLO (Be On the Look Out) for the vehicle?

Absolutely without question.

Was this portion of the engagement even remotely understandable, to me?

No, it was not.

All in all, the engagement clearly went bad.

I would have objected when I was a private first-class pulling triple duty as an RTO, driver, and vehicle gunner. I would have objected when I was a sergeant working well above my pay-grade as the Brigade Battle NCO.

My assessment is based on my experiences in that very theater of operations. I did not see a threat that warranted an engagement at any point. I did, however, see the elements indicating such a threat could develop at any moment. *(note: As I did, in fact, already know several things about the situation when I viewed this footage I cannot say with any certainty that had I viewed the exact same footage at the time of the incident that I would not have concluded the camera was an RPG as well.)*

People can make their judgments however they wish, but what is clearly visible is not the entire picture.

I'll also say that I've seen Crazyhorse elements do some pretty drastic maneuvers to protect troops and civilians alike. Those pilots have saved the lives of my friends many times, and a bad shoot is not going to ruin them as far as I'm concerned.

Update: I have seen several mentions of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle running over a body off in the rubble. This is highlighted at some point in the video. Crazyhorse 18 misidentifies a Canon zoom lens as an RPG7, but WikiLeaks has managed to identify a HMMWV as a BFV. I'm not even sure how that's possible. The transcript also has the ground commander calling on the BFV crew to "drop rap" – there should be an 'm' between the 'a' and the 'p' – ramp is what it should read.

WikiLeaks claims to seek to shed the light on the truth, yet continues to allow such gross errors in reporting stand unchanged.

There are many veterans with thousands of hours experience in both analyzing aerial video and understanding the often-garbled radio transmissions between units. It is not unreasonable to think any number of us would be willing to make sure everything is identified correctly, and all jargon is translated appropriately, before things go to the presses.

Promoting truth with gross errors is just as shameful as an unnecessary engagement.

Some Comments From The Website On The Above Article: [From <http://blog.ajmartinez.com/>]

“We Don’t Like Killing Innocent People” “We Don’t Like Being The Arm Of The Imperialistic Bastards In Government”

Soldier says:

April 7, 2010 at 4:12 am

I was a soldier in Iraq in 04-05 and then 07-08. During my second tour I killed a man.

He was just driving home, possibly to a wife(s) and kids. But instead of waiting for the route clearance group to move on, decided to try and push through the center, right next to our EoD truck.

I killed him after repeatedly flashing him with lights. I killed an innocent man. Foolish, but innocent.

Please try not to judge to harshly these men. I cannot explain it well, if at all.

But anyone who attempts to criticize either my actions or the actions of these pilots must understand something.

We don't like killing innocent people. We don't like being in Iraq or Afghanistan.

We don't like being the arm of the Imperialistic bastards in government. I got out, others feel like staying in. But we all feel it.

Please don't judge harshly. It will not make things better.

Reply:

Anthony says:

April 7, 2010 at 8:01 am

That much is certainly understood, at least by those of us who have been there and done that.

This incident in no way changes the fact that Crazyhorse elements have saved my bacon, and that of my friends, numerous times – at great personal risk.

“With All Due Respect, You Have Absolutely No Concept Of The Quantity Of Good Judgement Exercised By Our Military”

randall bramstedt says:

April 6, 2010 at 7:38 pm

I am glad to hear some members of the military like you show good judgement. It is of much consolation to me, since I have seen and heard more cases of poor judgement by our military than good judgement. It does appear though that this kind of incident is representative of U.S. military conduct in Iraq. We probably need more soldiers like you.

However, I do think your minor criticism of Wikileaks is insignificant relative to the good that this Wikileaks does. I am ecstatic that the truth about our military conduct is being revealed to the American public. America has a lot to be ashamed of in this war. Your worry about Wikileaks not providing background and context info. in this video is nothing in comparison to the good they are doing in getting this stuff out. In this case, the video speaks for itself, no excuses, a clear case of misjudgement by our military again. I believe there is a systemic problem and this is not an exception.

Reply

Anthony says:

April 7, 2010 at 1:41 am

With all due respect, you have absolutely no concept of the quantity of good judgement exercised by our military.

This is true, sadly, because the exercise of such judgement is not newsworthy.

To put it simply people do not care when others do the right thing, at least not in a capacity conducive to earning a profit. Allow nobody to fool you, media are businesses.

“If This Was A Terrible Mistake, It Was Nothing Compared To The Responsibility That Should Be Laid At The Doorstep Of Those Who Started This Mess In The First Place”

Dogcatcher says:

April 6, 2010 at 6:16 pm

Thank you for this clarifying information. I have a son who is a Marine and another in the Navy.

I am pretty much a peacenik type but know that what they and you and all the military folks are living in Iraq and Afghanistan is really easy to criticize and condemn – until you see the reality.

We seem to have huge blind spots in this country. We don't like to see the 'ugly parts' of life.

The radio chatter is not even a matter of 'what the guys say when they think no one else will hear.' It's a matter of life and death and sometimes the only way to face it is to say something – anything – so you don't go insane.

No, I don't have military experience. I do have experience serving as an animal control officer and that means, gentle reader, that I kill animals. Dogs and cats, puppies and kittens – the ones everyone says "It's tragic!!!" but no one adopts or cares for. It's easier to make me a bad guy than to face one's own potential responsibility for creating the problem or for at least being part of the solution.

Try to remember when you were 19 or 20 years old. Try to imagine spending all your time thousands of miles from your home doing a dirty and dangerous job. How "appropriate" were your comments when you were that age? How thoughtful and mindful were you? Did you have the responsibility for your life and the lives of everyone around you?

Were you in danger of being shot out of the air at any given moment?

Probably not. Your biggest worry may have been if you were going to get drunk that night or get laid or get to class the next morning in spite of your hangover or if you were going to Cancun for spring break week.

Think about that for a while before you start slinging grandiose statements about fitness for service.

If this was a terrible mistake, it was nothing compared to the responsibility that should be laid at the doorstep of those who started this mess in the first place.

Thank you, Anthony and all service members. Thank you, WikiLeaks for showing but shame on you for not telling accurately.

“Would You Prefer Those Guys Talk In A Dull Monotone”

PFC Hausman says:

April 7, 2010 at 7:32 am

Would you prefer those guys talk in a dull monotone, and feel utterly emotionless about the deaths of enemy combatants? Or would you rather they start flipping out on the radio, taking up more precious combat airwaves?

Honestly, in a situation like that you have three choices.

Either laugh and joke and minimize a horrible situation with humor, freak out and become combat ineffective because “that was so wrong”, or have experienced so much death and destruction that you become a cold, mindless killer.

Such is the reality of war.

“My Combat Tours (And Thus My Service) Had Little, Or Nothing, To Do With Defending The Constitution”

Don says:

April 7, 2010 at 3:21 am

This is my first time here and I’m already well aware that this is a military justification site. It’s true that Anthony has clear qualifications to make his judgement calls. The real question is whether he’s making correct judgement calls. One can be qualified and still have one’s opinions be tainted by experience with the subject matter, sympathies with the actors in question, or even a personal agenda. I see no reason to assume that Anthony’s judgements are any more valid than any other person’s who has watched this video.

As an aside I have serious concerns that in an area where fighting took place, the first instinct of the military was to kill rather than to try to detain the “assumed” combatants for questioning and possible information regarding where OTHER combatants might be

found and who their accomplices in government,etc... might be(if any). Killing is the least productive result of a possible combative situation. Information wins wars...not more dead bodies.

Reply

Anthony says:

April 7, 2010 at 7:48 am

Did you ever imagine that my reasoning for leaving the service might have had something to do with the overwhelming feeling that my combat tours (and thus my service) had little, or nothing, to do with defending the Constitution?

You're welcome though, anyway.

“Were My Duties Strictly Related To Defending The Constitution, I Would Have Been Deployed To The Halls Of Congress – A Place Wherein One Can Find Numerous Domestic Enemies To Said Document (Within Either Political Party)”

Rod says:

April 10, 2010 at 7:13 am

Anthony, you let the cat out of the bag by hinting that you left the military because you knew that in Iraq, you weren't defending the Constitution as your oath demanded. It therefore follows that you know your claim to be defending my rights is completely bogus, as are similar claims made by other 'veterans of foreign wars'.

It further follows that you know that all RoE in force in Iraq are illegitimate, however 'sensitively' applied. Consequently you should know as an American that anybody who works to expose what is happening is doing patriotic and righteous work. And that means that you owe Wikileaks your thanks.

All the other military types who haven't yet come to the realization that Anthony has come to don't qualify as Americans, and any claims that Americans are unconcerned about the basis for their security are shameful and bogus.

Reply

Anthony says:

April 10, 2010 at 2:18 pm

For the sake of argument, I'll entertain another response.

I said I swore to defend your rights (twice), I did not say I'd actually done so (through my military service).

I did, in fact, say I left the service because I did not feel I was actually doing what I'd sworn to do.

Were my duties strictly related to defending the Constitution, I would have been deployed to the halls of Congress – a place wherein one can find numerous domestic enemies to said document (within either political party).

While I did certainly leave the service, I have not turned my back on my oath to defend the Constitution.

The whole thing. Not just the parts politically popular during election seasons.

How one does that, effectively, given the track record of our government (where actually operating within the bounds of the articles or amendments are concerned) has not revealed itself to me.

Writing members of Congress, frequently, does nothing. Attempting to inform the public does the same. If you've got an idea as to how one might make the document I swore to defend relevant again (though that phrase implies it was ever relevant in the first place), I'd love to read it.

MORE:

The Video:
**“If You Call This A Heartless
Murder, I Think That You’re Being
Overly Self-Righteous”**
**“If You Question The Very Nature Of
The Machines, Then We Can Learn
Something From This Video”**
**“I Had Multiple Conversations With
Soldiers In Iraq Telling Me That They
Would Become Insurgents If They Were
In The Iraqi’s Shoes”**



[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

Just as I hope we can all avoid blindly judging the soldiers in this video, I would hope that we can take the same understanding to “the other side.”

I had multiple conversations with soldiers in Iraq telling me that they would become insurgents if they were in the Iraqi’s shoes.

Apr 7 2010 By Josh Stieber, Iraq Veterans Against The War (www.ivaw.org/)

Branch of service: United States Army (USA)

Unit: 1st ID

Rank: Spc.

Home: Laytonsville, Maryland

Served in: Baghdad (Rustamiyah) 07-08 Fort Riley, KS 06-07, 08-09

Bravo Company 2-16, the company I was deployed with to New Baghdad felt isolated from the fanfare that other soldiers experienced in Iraq.

While major celebrities visited the safer bases, FOB Rustimiyah was lucky to get the third-string of the Buffalo Bills’ cheerleading squad.

Several years later, and 2-16 has more fanfare than we ever wanted.

An online whistleblower site released a video yesterday of a mission that 2-16 was a part of, titled COLLATERAL MURDER.

Yes, I am a conscientious objector and yes, I had pissed some of my leaders off a few days earlier and was not trusted on missions for a few weeks so was left back at the base while this event took place, but I do have a few words to say about it.
<http://wikileaks.org/>

This video is aimed at sensationalizing a scene that, militarily speaking, is somewhat understandable; and with the gain of righteous indignation that many have seemed to embrace after watching this video, we lose a much more complex, honest conversation.

To attempt to put this fragile conversation into an analogy, my best description is that this video implies that what happened here was like The Texas Chainsaw Massacre-sick, unwarranted killing.

This video is a horror, but I would argue that it is closer to the Saw movies...

The high number of soldiers that I deployed with, including my friends whose voices and images are in this chilling video wanted to improve the lives of their friends, families, and their own futures.

The rep. from Wikileaks in the interview above says that it's just about killing as many people as possible.

Sadly, there are too many soldiers I knew who took pride in the number of lives they had taken or disrespected the bodies of the enemy died in battle, but I don't believe any of us started this way...

In the SAW movies, characters suddenly find themselves in horrible situations, feeling they have no option but to perpetrate awful acts.



The photo from one of the movies above is a character who wakes up to find this machine he's trapped in, and, if I remember correctly, the key to unlock the machine is

stuck in the stomach of a person lying next to him and he most rip open that person's stomach to retrieve the keys and make it out alive.

I urge you to be slow to judge those who are trapped in these machines and ask yourself if you did or didn't do anything to create this trap.

We faced threats every single day and naturally, a defensiveness that at times can cross into paranoia will emerge.

In the video, I can certainly understand why the helicopter gunner thought he was seeing weapons and, in the full 40-min video, it even has on record soldiers finding a live rpg round.

If you call this a heartless murder, I think that you're being overly self-righteous.

If you question the very nature of the machines that we trap ourselves in and our goals for doing so, then we can learn something from this video.

Honestly, I was surprised when I saw this video and how sensationalized it was; of all the memories that have led to me change my mind about war, having my friends tell me what they saw on this July day isn't even on the list.

I will grant that the shooting of the van is far less militarily justifiable than the initial killings. But again going back to the Saw example, in the frantic scramble for survival (though this scramble definitely can be overplayed), fear and vengeance cloud our vision.

As the military officer points to in the interview, in the heat of such moments, we don't think of the effects these actions will have on those children or the local community; we just want to make it out alive.

Just as I hope we can all avoid blindly judging the soldiers in this video, I would hope that we can take the same understanding to "the other side."

Both sides surely have more than enough reasons to compel them to do what they do. I had multiple conversations with soldiers in Iraq telling me that they would become insurgents if they were in the Iraqi's shoes.

Like the machine in Saw, we strap deadly machines on idealistic men and women who fight in war.

Judging their actions is easy, but to truly find solutions, we need to understand what happens when we're strapped in these machines.

That is where Collateral Murder fails; we need to see the humanity in all, no matter how tight the machines might be holding a person.

And speaking of machines, I think this video also proves that with such dominating technology that is shown here, if war were only a question of superior firepower, then the seven plus years that this has been going on, much of that theory remains unanswered.

And that is why I embarked on another path to solve problems than through war; not because I thought I was surrounded by cold-hearted murderers, but because the system that we were a part of forced away our humanity; and though it is natural to want to exchange a slap for a slap, it seems to only justify each side's hatred of each other.

The Good Soldiers is a book written about the 2-16th Infantry and it describes the event in Collateral Murder and it's aftermath...

"...an EFP had killed his friend... (his) memorial service had been on July 7, and now, 5 days later, as M saw all of the bodies scattered around, blown open, insides exposed, so gruesome, so grotesque, he felt – as he would later explain – "happy. It was weird. I was just really very happy. I remember feeling so happy. When I heard there's thirteen Killed In Action, I was just so happy, because C had just died, and it felt like, you know, we got 'em"

"...But the one on top was still alive, and as M locked eyes with him, the man raised his hands and rubbed his two forefingers together, which M had learned was what Iraqis did when they wanted to signal the word for friends.

"So M looked at the man and rubbed his two forefingers together too.

"And then dropped his left hand and extended the middle finger of his right hand.

And then said to the other soldier, "C's probably just sitting up there drinking a beer thinking 'Hah! That's all I needed'" - The Good Soldiers by David Finkel, Ch 5

And as one side hardens their hearts more and more in the name of their lost friends, I have no reason to doubt that the other does exactly the same.

If people mourn fallen soldiers here, imagine how much more grief there would be if the person fallen was a child, or somebody who had nothing to do with perpetrating the violence.

Because I have felt grief and sadness in my own heart, both in war and with the rush of emotions following 9/11, I can put myself in the shoes of the community of New Baghdad who had protested our presence to begin with, seeing how creating Freedom, Peace, and Democracy through actions like the one shown in this video seem an extremely odd recipe... to say the least.

And even if somehow this contradictory recipe cooks up the desired product, I can't help but recoil at rewatching the van being shot, the celebration of death in the gunner's conversation, or reading the words of a fellow soldier as quoted in The Good Soldiers without thinking of the religion that I went to Iraq in the name of and being haunted by the words of the man it's named after: "And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" -Matt 16:26

And at the end of the day, when the internet videos are watched, when our guns rest beside our beds, when we judge those who we don't try to understand (American or Iraqi), I hope we also remember to ask, "is anything worth more than my soul?"



MORE:

**“Nobody Likes Killing Innocents,
Especially Children And That Is Evident
When The Soldiers On The Ground
Immediately Start Calling For A
MEDEVAC To Come Get The Wounded
Children”**

April 7, 2010 By Bouhammer, Bouhammer.com [Excerpts]

If you watch the video there is without a doubt there are weapons being carried by some of the insurgents.

There is also no doubt that the pilots did not willy-nilly shoot at these people, they confirmed PID (Positive Identity), and they did this several time. The pilots identified weapons multiple times, they cleared with higher command to engage, what angle to engage, etc.

Some have mentioned that the soldiers treated this like a video game. That is the stupidest thing I have ever heard. Let me clear something up here. Video games are created to mimic war, not the other way around. We don't conduct warfare to look like video games. They try to make their games as realistic as possible.

I guarantee you that the ground soldiers who eventually made it on scene were not thinking of video games as they worked to clear the ground and then had to deal with two wounded children. The pilots look through their optics and that is how they engage with their weapons. What do people expect them to do, open the canopy and shoot their hand-held weapons and throw down hand-grenades.

Soldiers cannot get wrapped around every single life they are forced to take by virtue of being in combat.

Soldiers (and I use soldiers generally describing all service-members), use dark humor and take it all in stride when they have to take lives. They can't be effective by getting wrapped around the axle over taking human lives. So what you hear in this video is soldiers being soldiers.

Nobody likes killing innocents, especially children and that is evident when the soldiers on the ground immediately start calling for a MEDEVAC to come get the wounded children.

**Quit Whining And Pissing On
Everybody In Sight With Your
Despicable Disgusting
Condescending Lying Elitist Bullshit
About How U.S. Troops Are Nothing
But A Pack Of Homicidal Maniacs**

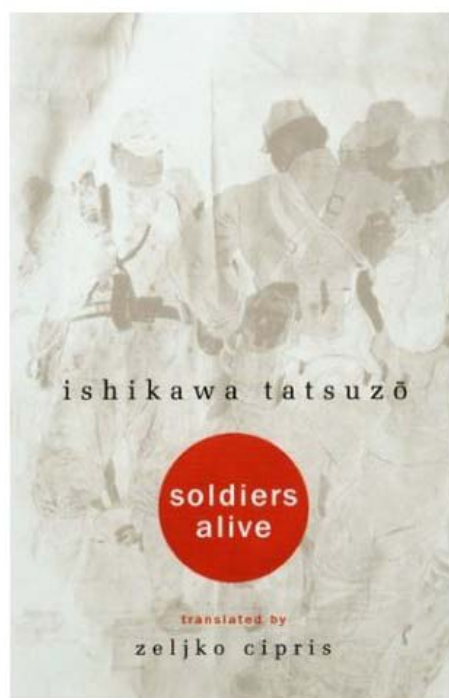
**Every Rotten Word Out Of Your Mouth
Makes It Harder To Organize Troops
Turning Against Imperial Wars**

**And Because That Is The Effect Of What You
Do, You Serve The Empire, And Are Covered
In The Blood Of Iraqis And Afghans Up To
Your Neck**

**“The single largest failure of the anti-war
movement at this point is the lack of outreach to
the troops.”**

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z



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

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 888.711.2550

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Family Mourns Soldier's Death: A Roadside Bomb Blast On Wednesday In Northern Iraq Cut His Life Short

April 10, 2010 Ben Piper, Hattiesburg American

PETAL — Pfc. Anthony Blount had scheduled a short leave in about three weeks for the birth of his daughter, to be named Avery.

But now, Blount never will have the chance to meet her.

A roadside bomb blast on Wednesday in northern Iraq cut his life short.

Blount, 21, of Petal, had enlisted in the Army roughly one year ago and was serving with the 164th Infantry Bravo Company.

His father, Billy Blount, said his son loved baseball and the University of Southern Mississippi. "He loved the Atlanta Braves, loved USM," he said. "He really loved baseball. ... Me and him went to a lot of USM games, bowl games for football."

Anthony Blount's widow, Amanda, who is eight months' pregnant, traveled with his mother, Lori Kay Blount, to Delaware on Friday to meet a plane carrying the soldier's body, Billy Blount said.

He said the local community had reached out immediately following news of his son's death.

"It's been pretty rough. A lot of our cell phones have been going off," Billy Blount said. "It's great, I mean, the morning after we found out ... a guy from his unit who was on leave came and talked with us and cried with us."

A tank commander who saw Anthony Blount in the hospital after the explosion also called the Blount family to give his condolences, Billy Blount said.

"The military has really been great. Different people have come by and talked with us," he said. "They've been really good to us."

Jessie Williamson, a history teacher at Petal High School, taught Anthony Blount in 11th grade and also in kindergarten. "One thing that really stands out is his faith and his love for family," she said. "He was not afraid to say it or to stand up for his faith."

Anthony Blount, a 2007 graduate of Petal High, was a hard-working and conscientious student, Williamson said. Teachers found out about the soldier's death throughout the day by word of mouth, she said.

"It was just shock, and everyone is just devastated. Anyone who knew him knew his character and the potential he had," she said. "The sky was the limit as far as what he could do."

Billy Blount said everyone who met his son gained his friendship because he was a likeable person. He said he also was strong-willed and was not the type to give up easily.

"He loved playing the guitar, taught himself how to play it," he said. "He was a good Christian boy, and he had a lot of awesome friends and loved his family, wife and his newborn."

His brother-in-law, Nate McRae, said, "Anthony was one of most the hilarious people I've ever met."

McRae said he tried to discourage Anthony Blount from the joining the Army, but he was intent on serving in the military.

"He's extremely honorable," McRae said. "All of his commanding officers said he was just an amazing soldier. It's a tremendous loss."

Funeral arrangements are incomplete. But family members said it is likely a wake will be held Tuesday, followed by a funeral on Thursday. Moore Funeral Service is handling arrangements.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation "Service Member" Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan; Nationality Not Announced

April 11 AFP & ISAF

A foreign soldier was killed in a home-made bomb attack in southern Afghanistan on Sunday.

Afghan In Army Uniform Opens Fire On Occupation Troops; One Polish Soldier Wounded

April 11, 2010 Reuters & Associated Press

An Afghan soldier opened fire on NATO troops, lightly wounding one alliance soldier, the international force in Afghanistan said, the latest in a string of attacks by rogue Afghan forces.

Major Marcin Walczak, a spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, said the Afghan soldier fled after opening fire on a group of NATO and other Afghan troops in Ghazni province, southwest of Kabul, late on Saturday.

The unidentified Pole shot Saturday night at a joint command center in the eastern province of Ghazni was transferred to a medical facility for treatment, according to a NATO spokesman in Kabul, speaking on routine condition of anonymity.

The Ghazni base is headquarters of the 2,600 Polish troops stationed in Afghanistan.

While rare, Afghan troop attacks on international forces damage the trust between Afghan police and soldiers who work side-by-side with their foreign mentors on training and combat missions.

Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Mohammad Zahir Azimi said the shooting resulted from an argument between the two men, but details weren't immediately known. He said both had pulled weapons and fired, but only the Polish soldier was wounded. The whereabouts of the Afghan soldier weren't known, and it was possible he was hiding somewhere on the base, Azimi said.

Zabiullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban, said the Afghan soldier had escaped, killing four Afghan soldiers in the process, and was now with the insurgents.

Mujahid said the Afghan attacker had joined the insurgent movement after witnessing brutalities against Afghans, and the man he had wounded was Polish.

Witness In Nowkhaiz Village Reports Osprey Shot Down By Afghan Resistance Fighters

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

April 9, 2010 By ALISSA J. RUBIN, New York Times [Excerpts]

A NATO Osprey aircraft crashed in southern Afghanistan on Thursday night, killing three American service members and one civilian employee, according to NATO officials.

“NATO forces raided a village where the Taliban had already taken up positions,” said a witness in Nowkhaiz village, who asked not to be named because he feared for his safety.

“When the helicopter swooped down, the Taliban shot the helicopter. We heard the exchange fire and then the crash of the helicopter, and it was on fire.”

“The shooting on both sides went on for a while,” the man added.

The Number Of IEDs In Afghanistan Climbed From 429 In March 2009 To 989 In March 2010

Apr 10, 2010 By Anne Flaherty, The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of crude roadside bombs in Afghanistan has doubled in the past year, prompting U.S. officials to rush billions of dollars of new protective gear to troops and double the number of road-clearing teams.

Twice as many troops died in the first three months of 2010 compared to the same period last year. The majority of all American deaths and injuries in Afghanistan are believed to have been a result of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs.

The number of IEDs in Afghanistan climbed from 429 in March 2009 to 989 in March 2010.

Resistance Fires On Kunduz: Karzai Runs Away

Apr 11, 2010 DPA

Kunduz, Afghanistan - At least two rockets landed in northern city of Kunduz on Sunday, hours before President Hamid Karzai and NATO Commander, US general Stanley McChrystal visited the region, officials said.

The rockets fell on agricultural land near the German-led Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kunduz city, the capital for province of the same name, but caused no damage or casualties, Mohammad Omar, the provincial governor said.

A German military spokesman also confirmed that three rockets hit an area close to their base, but caused no injuries.

The rockets were fired hours before Karzai and McChrystal reached the most volatile province in the region, where they met hundreds of local elders on Sunday.

An official, who did not want to be named, said Karzai cancelled his planned visit to the German team because of security concerns and cut short his trip in the province.

Omar confirmed that the president cancelled two of his planned meetings and left for Kabul for 'urgent matters'.

**Rebellion In Kyrgyzstan Cuts U.S.
Government Troop Route To
Afghan Occupation:
"All Troop Flights Were Being
Diverted From Manas To Kuwait For
At Least The Next Two Days Because
Of Security Concerns At The Base"
"If Not For The Events Of April 7 And The
Popular Uprising, We Believe That The
U.S. Would Have Swallowed A Complete
Destruction Of Democracy And The
Opposition Leaders"**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

April 9, 2010 By MICHAEL SCHWIRTZ and CLIFFORD J. LEVY, New York Times & APRIL 10, 2010 By ALAN CULLISON, KADYR TOKTOGULOV AND YOCHI J. DREAZEN, Wall St. Journal & By Maria Golovnina, Reuters [Excerpts]

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan

The United States stopped all troops flying to Afghanistan via its Kyrgyz air base as security concerns persisted on Saturday following an uprising in the Central Asian state.

All passenger flights from the Manas air base, a vital cog in supplying operations in Afghanistan, were suspended from Friday evening, a spokesman for the base said.

The new self-installed government here plans to investigate the U.S. military's fuel purchases at its Manas air base, focusing on the ousted president's son and "why the U.S. allowed so much money to go to his personal gain," a top official said Friday.

The accusation about the son of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev could provide fresh complications for the U.S. attempts to maintain the air base outside the Kyrgyz capital, which it has used as a pivotal hub for ferrying troops and supplies into Afghanistan.

Word of the new Kyrgyz leadership's anger over U.S. dealings with the Bakiyev regime on the air base came as a senior U.S. military official said that all troop flights were being diverted from Manas to Kuwait for at least the next two days because of security concerns at the base.

The new Kyrgyz government plans to untangle the business interests of the younger Bakiyev, which evolved from a humble interest in cash-and-carry alcoholic beverages to a financial empire stretching into oil trading, banking and telecommunications, according to Edil Baisalov, chief of staff for the leader of the new government in Bishkek.

The Pentagon currently employs a little-known, Gibraltar-registered company called Mina Corp. to provide fuel at Manas. It until recently shared hotel space in Bishkek with another Gibraltar-based company, Red Star Enterprises Ltd.

Kyrgyz opposition figures believe both are linked to members of the Bakiyev family, though they provided no documentation on Friday. Ms. Fantasia said Mina's three-year contract is valued at up to \$762 million.

Mr. Baisalov said he believes Maksim Bakiyev has benefitted by "absolutely the same" mechanism as the Akayev family did. Ms. Otunbayeva also said Thursday she would like an investigation into the import and sale of fuels to the air base, but she didn't give details.

Mr. Baisalov called the fuel sales part of a wider U.S. policy of coddling Mr. Bakiyev in return for his support of the U.S. military presence in this mountainous former Soviet republic.

He complained that the U.S. ignored Mr. Bakiyev's rising authoritarianism as he cracked down on opposition and appointed family and friends to top government posts.

Over the past year a number of opposition figures have disappeared, been arrested or fled the country to avoid prosecution.

"If not for the events of April 7 and the popular uprising, we believe that the U.S. would have swallowed a complete destruction of democracy and the opposition leaders," he said.

Thursday's events were dominated by two compelling and contrary figures in Kyrgyz politics: the interim leader, Roza Otunbayeva, a bespectacled former diplomat who once taught Marxist-Leninist theory before embracing Western mores; and President Bakiyev, the streetwise president, who has long been steeped in the country's clan rivalries and boasted in an interview last year that he feared "absolutely nothing."

Ms. Otunbayeva, 59, took the stage first, calling a news conference with her opposition colleagues to issue a series of directives that she said would calm the country.

"You can call this a revolution. You can call this a people's revolt," she said. "Either way, it is our way of saying that we want justice and democracy."

FUTILE EXERCISE: ALL HOME NOW!



U.S. Marines from Kilo company, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines patrol in Marjah district, Helmand province March 28, 2010. REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih



Soldiers from the U.S. Army's 20th Battalion, 584 Mobile Augmentation Company (MAC), Route Clearance Patrol (RCP) inspect a security grill fitted over the end of a culvert in Kandahar April 2, 2010. The security grills are supposed to assist in preventing the placement of IEDs in drainage culverts. Reuters/Tim Wimborne



U.S. Marines from Lima company 3rd Battalion 6th Marine Regiment burn poppy and corn stalks, using a thermite grenade, used to conceal IEDs, at a disused school in Karez-e-Sayyidi, in Helmand province, April 5, 2010. REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih

TROOP NEWS

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



Lance Cpl. Rick Centanni's dog tag hangs from the side of his casket during his burial service, April 6, 2010, at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, Calif. Centanni was killed in Afghanistan last month by an IED that also killed Robert Cottle, sergeant major, Marine reserves. (AP Photo/The Orange County Register, Jebb Harris)

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**“As Can Be Seen In These Latest
Developments In Kyrgyzstan, It Is The**

People Who Bring About A Change Once The Limit Of Their Patience Has Been Reached”

April 09, 2010 Daily Times [Pakistan]

Power to the people took a drastic step forward on Wednesday when the opposition in Kyrgyzstan stormed the state’s institutions, airwaves and broadcasting networks to successfully oust President Kurmanbek Bakiyev.

Starting on a small scale to protest rising utility costs and rampant government brutality, specifically in the northwestern town of Talas, the fervour of the protesters escalated after riot police fired indiscriminately into the crowds.

Eventually, the escalating violence between police and protestors sent Bakiyev fleeing to the south of the country. Roza Otunbayeva, the opposition leader and former foreign minister, has vowed unobstructed “justice and democracy”.

Demonised as autocratic, repressive and extensively corrupt, Bakiyev himself became president in the aftermath of 2005’s Tulip Revolution, where the then president, Askar Akayev, was overthrown due to corruption charges and amending the constitution to increase presidential powers — sound familiar? Knowing that his people were capable of a revolt-like response, Bakiyev should have trod much more carefully than his predecessor if he wished to continue his rule.

The opposition’s displeasure with Bakiyev started soon after his being placed on the presidential chair.

His visible support for the US to establish their airbase in Manas — the only airbase leased to the US in Central Asia — after hefty bidding between the US and Russia, lent a perception of his kowtowing to US pressure and money.

The opposition argued that when the US confessed to viewing Bakiyev as an autocrat, their dealing with him despite that undermined the very struggle these former Soviet states have been waging for democracy. It is no surprise then that the Russians curried enough favour with the antagonists due to their disillusionment with the US.

Based on the legacy of the crumbled USSR to these newly independent states in Central Asia, successive rulers have brought with them their own version of authoritarianism.

What we are witnessing now is the people’s movement against such dictatorial regimes as they have sampled the sweet taste of freedom — freedom from subjugation and the autocracy of post-Soviet apparatchiks drawn from earlier times.

Many such places, Chechnya being one, have even witnessed the rise of Islamic militancy to fill the void of a political alternative to the Soviet era party and government leaders.

The kleptocratic post-Soviet governments face the wrath of their people who aspire for democracy and all the rights it entails: a free media, human, civil and political rights, etc.

The Bakiyev government's recent clamping down on the media was the first sign of a feeble authoritarian reassertion, a move condemned by the UN's Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. However, once set in motion, an uprising rarely loses its momentum.

Rebellions in former Soviet states such as Belarus, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Georgia all betray a similar trajectory: a transition from Soviet power to corrupt protégés of Russian influence to an all out bid for freedom.

The storming of the centres of power in Kyrgyzstan is just another reinforcement of the people's demand for social democracy.

Pakistan could learn a thing or two from these lessons in modern day history. The masses, fed up with the denial of their rights, across the board corruption and profiteering, tailored alterations of the constitution to suit whosoever usurps power, a lack of basic amenities and skyrocketing inflation, hold the power to exhibit an extreme degree of pent up animosity.

The Pakistani public, too, has been alerted, not just to its rights but also of the blatant denial of them.

As can be seen in these latest developments in Kyrgyzstan, it is the people who bring about a change once the limit of their patience has been reached. *

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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.

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