

## **Military Resistance 8E11**

### **HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?**



The hearse carrying U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Tyler Griffin of Voluntown, Ct., who was killed in Afghanistan earlier in the month, proceeds through the village, April 12, 2010. Hundreds of people honored the fallen Marine in his small town in southeastern Connecticut. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa)

**1,000 Gone:**  
**On Tuesday, The Toll Of American  
Dead In Afghanistan Passed 1,000:**  
**“Having Taken Nearly Seven Years  
To Reach The First 500 Dead, The  
War Killed The Second 500 In Fewer  
Than Two”**

# **First Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment: “By This Week, The Battalion Had Lost 21 Soldiers In Afghanistan In Less Than A Year”**

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

May 18, 2010 By JAMES DAO and ANDREW W. LEHREN, New York Times [Excerpts]

He was an irreverent teenager with a pregnant girlfriend when the idea first crossed his mind: Join the Army, raise a family.

She had an abortion, but the idea remained. Patrick S. Fitzgibbon, Saint Paddy to his friends, became Private Fitzgibbon.

Three months out of basic training, he went to war.

From his outpost in the Kandahar Province of Afghanistan, he complained to his father about shortages of cigarettes, Skittles and Mountain Dew. But he took pride in his work and volunteered for patrols.

On Aug. 1, 2009, while on one of those missions, Private Fitzgibbon stepped on a metal plate wired to a bomb buried in the sunbaked earth. The blue sky turned brown with dust.

The explosion instantly killed Private Fitzgibbon, 19, of Knoxville, Tenn., and Cpl. Jonathan M. Walls, a 27-year-old father from Colorado Springs.

An hour later, a third soldier who was helping secure the area, Pfc. Richard K. Jones, 21, of Roxboro, N.C., died from another hidden bomb. The two blasts wounded at least 10 other soldiers.

On Tuesday, the toll of American dead in Afghanistan passed 1,000, after a bomb in Kabul killed at least five United States service members.

Having taken nearly seven years to reach the first 500 dead, the war killed the second 500 in fewer than two. A resurgent Taliban active in almost every province, a weak central government incapable of protecting its people and a larger number of American troops in harm's way all contributed to the accelerating pace of death.

In many ways, Private Fitzgibbon typified the new wave of combat deaths. American troops are dying younger, often fresh out of boot camp, military records show.

From 2002 to 2008, the average age of service members killed in action in Afghanistan was about 28; last year, it dropped to 26. This year, the more than 125 troops killed in combat were on average 25 years old.

The warm months have long been the prime fighting season in Afghanistan, when insurgents have emerged from mountain havens to plot ambushes and recruit new fighters. But in the weeks before the August presidential elections last year, the Taliban's reach was wider and more potent than at any time since they were driven from power.

A bomb estimated at 2,000 pounds killed seven American soldiers and their interpreter riding in a troop carrier last fall.

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They did not know each other well. But the three soldiers from Charlie Company, First Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colo., shared a few things in common.

All had weathered the breakup of their parents' marriages. None liked school much.

And all viewed the Army as a path to a better life.

Pfc. Richard K. Jones had been a star high school wrestler in Person, N.C., near the Virginia border. All arms and legs at 6-foot-2 and 152 pounds, he made it to the state championships one year. The sport gave his life discipline, his mother said, and he thought the Army would be the perfect place to channel it.

His mother, Franceen Ridgeway, prevailed on him to try college instead. But after earning an associate's degree and working as a diesel mechanic for a short time, he asked his mother to support his military ambitions. She consented, saying, "Maybe it's what God wants you to do."

He graduated from basic training in late January 2009 and was in Afghanistan by May. In one firefight, Private Jones fell and dislocated his shoulder. But the medics popped it back in, gave him a few days off and then returned him to duty.

"He wasn't into death or dying," Ms. Ridgeway said. "To him, it was an honor to be a soldier. And it was a chance to see the world, to get away from a small town. Maybe he was thinking he might never have that opportunity again."

Cpl. Jonathan Walls was the son of a Navy man, but he played soldier from the time he could hold a toy gun, his mother, Lisa Rowe, said.

In the woods outside Reading, Pa., he spent innumerable hours hunting, target shooting and playing paintball. After high school, he tried community college and worked at a Lowe's. But only the military captured his imagination, and he enlisted in 2005. By 2007, he was in Iraq.

**Roadside bombs there gave him a mild traumatic brain injury, Ms. Rowe said, and he returned home suffering migraine headaches that made it difficult to sleep.**

**Nevertheless, he received orders to deploy to Afghanistan, arriving there last May, three months after the birth of his third child.**

“I thought they might not send him so that his brain could simmer down,” Ms. Rowe said. “But we’re in a time of war. He said, ‘Ma, it’s my duty.’ ”

On the day before Charlie Company deployed last summer, Private Fitzgibbon took a bunch of soldiers to a strip club near Fort Carson, running up a \$3,400 tab that his father paid off. It was typical Patrick. Charmingly roguish, he wore his hair in a brightly tinted Mohawk, drilled holes the size of nickels into his ear lobes and posted comedic homemade videos on YouTube. The military did not seem a natural fit.

But after his girlfriend got pregnant two years ago, he vowed to support her and the child by joining the Army. He was devastated when she had an abortion, his father said, and decided to enlist anyway. Boot camp changed him.

“He went from not caring about nothing to knowing he had responsibilities,” his father, Donald Fitzgibbon, 39, said. “All in a matter of months.”

The day the three men died began with a reconnaissance patrol along dirt paths lined by grape arbors in a place called Mushan Village. By 8:30 a.m., the temperature was already over 100 degrees.

After resting in the shade of a mud-brick compound, the soldiers gave brief chase to a pair of suspicious-looking men. But their sergeant ordered them to fall back, worrying about an I.E.D. trap. A few minutes later, Private Fitzgibbon stepped on the pressure plate.

One of the first medics on the scene was Private Fitzgibbon’s best friend in the unit. For weeks afterward, the medic felt ripped by guilt because he could not save Private Fitzgibbon or Corporal Walls. Mr. Fitzgibbon tried to ease his grief, telling him, “God knows when it’s your turn.”

Now and again the private’s father consoles himself with the same thought.

“I feel he would have died whether he was here or in Afghanistan, and that gives me peace with it,” Mr. Fitzgibbon said. “But I still have my good days and bad days.”

Just as Private Fitzgibbon’s platoon was making its first forays into Kandahar Province last year, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the top American commander in Afghanistan, was dispatching a team of experts to review American strategy.

As the group traveled the country last June, they were troubled by how little American intelligence officers seemed to know about local conditions, some of the members said in interviews later.

The Taliban had established shadow governors in many provinces and were waging intimidation campaigns against village leaders who defied them.

Under General McChrystal’s signature, the final report landed on Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates’s desk on Aug. 30.

The next day, three more American soldiers died in southern Afghanistan.

Pfc. Jordan M. Brochu was one of them.

An adopted child, he had lived in many places but carried himself with a confidence, some said swagger, that belied the disruptions in his life. Perhaps it was his build: 6-foot-1 and muscular, he was a natural athlete who threw the discus for the first time as a senior in high school yet still qualified for the state championships.

But he had another side as well, writing poetry, playing the violin — lovingly, if not proficiently — and cooking.

He considered becoming a chef, but jobs were scarce in western Maine, where he attended high school. So upon graduating in 2008, he chose the Army, “to help make a difference and to grow me up,” he declared on his MySpace page.

Before deploying to Afghanistan last year, his culinary arts teacher asked him for a photograph to hang in the classroom as a reminder of the war. With a smile and a touch of bravado, Private Brochu declined.

“Don’t stress it, Mr. B,” he told the teacher, Eric Botka. “I’ll see you when I get home.”

On Aug. 31, while Private Brochu was on foot patrol in the Arghandab River Valley of Kandahar Province, a mine detonated and killed him at the age of 20, along with another soldier, Specialist Jonathan D. Welch.

Before the day was over, a third soldier from their unit, the First Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment out of Fort Lewis, Wash., would be killed.

**By this week, the battalion had lost 21 soldiers in Afghanistan in less than a year.**

Raised in Orange County, Calif., Specialist Welch, 19, was from a close-knit, deeply Christian family. But he rebelled in his freshman year of high school, drinking heavily, using methamphetamine and living on the streets for weeks before his parents sent him to a rehabilitation clinic in Mexico.

When he was 17, Specialist Welch and a good friend decided to visit a military recruiting station. His friend joined the Navy but Specialist Welch chose the Army, declaring, “I just want to shoot a gun.” His parents grudgingly consented.

“You see your child so lost with the drugs, and then you see him saying: ‘I’m passionate about this,’ ” recalled his father, Ben Storll, 47. “The only thing he was passionate about before was punk rock music.”

In Afghanistan, he became close to his fire team leader, Sgt. Drew McComber, who was badly wounded in the explosion that killed Specialist Welch. In a letter to the specialist’s parents, Sergeant McComber described the soldier as his “go-to guy for everything.”

“Thank you so much for supporting him through his wilder days when he was younger,” Sergeant McComber wrote from his hospital bed.

“I’ve seen the pictures. He certainly has come a long ways in a very short time.”

## U.S. Fatalities In And Around Afghanistan

Country of Death	Fatalities
Afghanistan	954
Germany (from wounds in theatre)	13
Pakistan	15
USA (from wounds in theatre)	19
Uzbekistan	1
Total	1002

[www.icasualties.org/oef/](http://www.icasualties.org/oef/)

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“The U.S.-Led Effort To Pacify  
Kandahar Already Appears To  
Be Faltering”**

**“U.S. Commanders Now Say The  
Turning Point May Not Be  
Reached Until November, And  
Perhaps Later”**

**“None Of This Makes Any Sense,  
Said A U.S. Defense Official”**

**“Marjah ‘Is Already Coming Unraveled,’  
The U.S. Defense Official Said”**

[Thanks to Elaine Brower, Military Resistance, & Phil G, who sent this in.

**NATO officials once spoke of demonstrating major progress by mid-August, but U.S. commanders now say the turning point may not be reached until November, and perhaps later.**

**He noted that on the eve of the Marjah offensive in February, McChrystal described how he planned to bring in a "government in a box."**

**"But when they opened the box, there was nothing in it," the U.S. defense official continued.**

16 May 2010 By Patrick Cockburn, Independent.co.uk & May 17th, 2010 By Dion Nissenbaum and Jonathan S. Landay, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

Kandahar, Afghanistan — Although it's just beginning, the U.S.-led effort to pacify Kandahar – the Taliban's spiritual capital in southern Afghanistan – already appears to be faltering.

NATO officials once spoke of demonstrating major progress by mid-August, but U.S. commanders now say the turning point may not be reached until November, and perhaps later.

American and Afghan officials, however, so far have made little headway in building a foundation for a respected local government capable of winning the confidence of the nearly 1 million Afghans who live in and around Kandahar.

The largest impediment remains President Hamid Karzai's half-brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai.

A controversial kingpin and reputed drug smuggler who reportedly has been paid by the CIA, he wields virtually unchecked power over the region as the chairman of the provincial council as well as through local militias, security firms awarded lucrative contracts by the U.S.-led international force and an alliance with a small band of powerful tribal leaders.

Ahmed Wali Karzai exuded confidence in a McClatchy interview and dismissed any suggestion that the evolving plans were faltering.

Asked when he would be able to declare victory, he said the battle was already over.

"We already won," he said this past Monday. "We are picking up the pieces now."

**According to an updated timeline seen by McClatchy, the U.S. troop buildup won't reach its peak until September, around the time that Afghanistan is to hold parliamentary elections and U.S. congressional election campaigns will be in full swing.**

One major question is whether there will be enough forces for Kandahar, where McChrystal's plan calls for the deployment of 20,000 U.S. and Afghan troops.

**U.S. defense officials and defense analysts said that McChrystal used 10,000 troops in Helmand to gain control of a rural river valley with about 50,000 residents.**

**But in Kandahar, however, Afghanistan's second largest city, with an estimated population of 800,000, he's calling for just 20,000 troops.**

"None of this makes any sense," said a U.S. defense official.

"If it took you 10,000 (U.S. troops) to do Marjah, there aren't enough troops (for Kandahar)." The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly.

The challenges in Kandahar come amid a growing recognition in Kabul and Washington that efforts in neighboring Helmand province to install a new administration in the former Taliban stronghold of Marjah quickly have stumbled.

Marjah was meant to be the proving ground for McChrystal's counter-insurgency strategy, which emphasizes building governments trusted by local populations over combat operations.

Military leaders now describe Helmand as a "tale of two districts," however. One is Nadi Ali, where British forces are reported to have had some success; the other is Marjah, where Afghan security forces and the nascent Afghan administration still need U.S. Marines to keep the Taliban at bay.

Marjah "is already coming unraveled," the U.S. defense official said.

He noted that on the eve of the Marjah offensive in February, McChrystal described how he planned to bring in a "government in a box."

"But when they opened the box, there was nothing in it," the U.S. defense official continued.

**Three months after the operation in Marjah, however, local people say that the Taliban still control the area at night.**

Shops are still closed and no schools have reopened. Education officials who returned at the height of the US-led offensive have fled again. The local governor says he has just one temporary teacher teaching 60 children in the ruins of a school.

Aid is not arriving.

**The Taliban are replacing mines, the notorious IEDs, removed by US troops and often use the same holes to hide them in.**

**Pentagon officials increasingly agree with the Afghan villagers that the Marjah operation failed to end Taliban control and put the Afghan government in charge.**

This puts in doubt General McChrystal's whole strategy which also governs the way in which 10,000 British troops are deployed.

He is being held to account for earlier optimism such as his claim at the height of Marjah offensive that "we've got a government in a box ready to roll in".

Three months later, people in Marjah say they have yet to see much sign of the Afghan government.

**When General McChrystal's plan was adopted by President Obama it promised a quick turnaround on the ground in Afghanistan and this is demonstrably not happening.**

**Local people say the Taliban are stronger and more active in Kandahar than they were three months ago.**

**One Pashtun, a former colonel in the Pakistani army, said: "It will be difficult for the Americans and British to win the hearts and minds of the people in southern Afghanistan since at the centre of Pashtun culture is a hatred of all foreigners."**

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**“The Military Had Seen Marja As A  
‘Clear And Hold’ Operation In  
Which The First Part, Clearing The  
District Of Militants, Would Be  
Wrapped Up Fairly Quickly”**

**“In Fact, Clearing Has Proved To Be  
A More Elusive Goal”**

**“Taliban Fighters Have Found A Way To  
Resume Their Insurgency”**

May 16, 2010 By Carlotta Gall, The New York Times [Excerpts]

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan

The departure of the farmers is one of the most telling indications that Taliban fighters have found a way to resume their insurgency, three months after thousands of troops invaded this Taliban stronghold in the opening foray of a campaign to take control of southern Afghanistan.

As the coalition prepares for the next major offensive in the southern city of Kandahar, the uneasy standoff in Marja, where neither the American Marines nor the Taliban have gained the upper hand and clashes occur daily, provides a stark lesson in the challenges of eliminating a patient and deeply rooted insurgency.

Combat operations in Marja ended at the end of February and the military declared the battle won. But much of the local Taliban, including at least four mid-level commanders, never left, stashing their rifles and adopting the quiet farm life.

A Taliban resurgence was not entirely unexpected, especially now as the poppy harvest ends, freeing men to fight, and as the weather warms up. But the military had seen Marja as a “clear and hold” operation in which the first part, clearing the district of militants, would be wrapped up fairly quickly.

In fact, clearing has proved to be a more elusive goal.

The population remains divided in its support for the Taliban, with a portion providing shelter and assistance to the militants and few daring to oppose them.

**Villagers complained of indignities imposed by the foreign forces, the arrest and killing of civilians, house searches that violate the ethnic Pashtuns’ sense of honor and the sanctity of the home, and checkpoints where they are forced to lift up their shirts, which is deeply shaming for Afghans, to show that they are not carrying explosives.**

More Taliban fighters have arrived in recent weeks, slipping in with the itinerant laborers who came to work the poppy harvest and staying on to fight, villagers and officials said. Haji Gul Muhammad Khan, tribal adviser to the governor of Helmand Province, said he had reports of Taliban arriving in the area in the last three or four days.

Everyone in Marja knows the Taliban, since they are village men who never left the area although they quit fighting soon after the military operation. Gradually they found a stealthier way of operating, moving around in small groups, often by motorbike or on foot.

At least three midlevel Taliban commanders were seen operating in the area in recent weeks, moving among the farms, staying in different houses every night, and asking for food and shelter from the villagers as they go.

**MORE:**

## **Failing “Reconstruction Effort” In Marjah “Raising Questions About The U.S. Strategy That Will Be Used Next Month In The Key Southern City Of Kandahar”**

MAY 16, 2010 By YOCHI J. DREAZEN, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON—Persistent Taliban violence has slowed the American reconstruction effort in the former insurgent stronghold of Marjah, raising questions about the U.S. strategy that will be used next month in the key southern city of Kandahar.

In the run-up to the February offensive into Marjah, U.S. military and civilian officials said they would launch tens of millions of dollars of economic development projects once major military operations there came to an end, and said they would hire thousands of local residents to clear debris from Marjah's irrigation channels and roads.

But data from U.S. officials last week show Washington has to date spent only \$1.5 million in Marjah, far less than the \$19 million initially planned for civilian projects, because of a wave of Taliban attacks and intimidation in and around the town. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has spent an additional \$3.5 million in Marjah, but violence has affected the military-funded reconstruction and employment efforts as well.

In recent weeks, Taliban fighters have attacked the compound of one of the Afghan companies hired by the U.S. to assist in Marjah; kidnapped and killed Afghan contractors working on a \$16 million, U.S.-funded road project linking the town with the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah; and beheaded several of Marjah's pro-government tribal elders.

The Marjah offensive has been the first substantive test of Gen. Stanley McChrystal's strategy for reversing the course of the Afghan war by pouring troops into militant-held areas, then staying to help rebuild the local government and run extensive economic-development and job-creation efforts.

U.S. and Afghan forces retook control of Marjah roughly two weeks after the operation began. They raised the Afghan flag over Marjah's government offices and installed a new town administrator, Haji Zahir. Mr. Zahir, a subdistrict governor, is the first Afghan official to serve in the town in more than two years.

Col. Wayne Shanks, an American military spokesman in Kabul, said the overall situation in Marjah was "mixed."

Still, U.S. officials with direct responsibility for Marjah acknowledge that American-funded reconstruction and jobs programs are proceeding more slowly than had been hoped because of the Taliban violence.

USAID's Mr. Bever said the U.S. has to date spent just \$1.5 million of the \$19 million in civilian funds budgeted for Marjah. Only about 20 Marjah residents have been hired on USAID-funded projects, a tiny fraction of the more than 1,000 Afghans that American civilian officials hope to eventually employ there, according to USAID.

"You have to assume that's largely a question of security constraints," Mr. Bever said.

In testimony to Congress earlier this month, Mr. Ruggiero said the Taliban have been targeting local contractors hired to help implement a \$360 million U.S. initiative called the Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture, or AVIPA Plus, which gives local farmers money for seeds and fertilizer if they work with the government.

A senior U.S. official in southern Afghanistan said the Afghan company hired to implement the program lost several employees when the Taliban detonated a car bomb

at its compound last month. A handful of Afghan contractors working on the new \$16 million road, the centerpiece of American reconstruction efforts in Helmand, also had been killed in recent weeks, the official said.

Other contractors, and numerous local residents, have received "night letters" warning they'd be killed if they continued working or associating with the U.S.-led coalition, the official said. "There's a sustained assassination campaign in Marjah, and the level of intimidation is pretty high," the official said. "The Taliban understand the importance of Marjah to the coalition," the official said, "and they're throwing a lot of effort at it."

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## **Civilians Slaughtered At Occupation Military Checkpoints Skyrockets: “Since Last Summer, None Of The Afghans Killed Or Wounded In Convoy And Checkpoint Shootings Had Weapons That Would Have Posed A Danger For Troops Who Killed Them”**

May 8, 2010 By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr., New York Times [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — Shootings of Afghan civilians by American and NATO convoys and at military checkpoints have spiked sharply this year, becoming the leading cause of combined civilian deaths and injuries at the hands of Western forces, American officials say.

At least 28 Afghans have been killed and 43 wounded in convoy and checkpoint shootings this year — 42 percent of total civilian deaths and injuries and the largest overall source of casualties at the hands of American and NATO troops, according to statistics kept by the military.

Since last summer, none of the Afghans killed or wounded in convoy and checkpoint shootings had weapons that would have posed a danger for troops who killed them, commanders said.

A recent military-commissioned survey of almost 2,000 residents of Kandahar Province found that American and NATO convoys were perceived as equally as dangerous as roadside bombs and more dangerous than Taliban checkpoints.

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# Afghan Prosecutor Issues Arrest Warrant For U.S. Special Forces Commander Over Police Killing

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

16 May 2010 Stephen Grey in Kandahar, Guardian [UK] [Excerpts]

An Afghan prosecutor has issued an arrest warrant for an American special forces commander over allegations that a police chief was murdered by a US-trained militia.

Brigadier General Ghulam Ranjbar, the chief military prosecutor in Kabul, has accused the US of creating an outlaw militia which allegedly shot dead Matiullah Qateh, the chief of police in the city of Kandahar.

The militia, which Ranjbar claimed is armed and trained by US special forces, also allegedly killed Kandahar's head of criminal investigations and two other officers, when they attempted to free one of their members from a courthouse.

"We lost one this country's best law enforcement officers for the (attempted) release of a mercenary," said Ranjbar, interviewed for a film to be shown on Channel 4 News tomorrow.

He accused American officials of refusing to hand over evidence or to permit his investigators to interview the special forces commander, known to Afghans only as "John or Johnny", who he alleges sanctioned the raid.

The arrest warrant, which has been circulated to border posts and airports, is an embarrassment for the US military, which is facing growing criticism for links to militias controlled by warlords. In Kandahar, the militias have been accused of murder, rape and extortion.

Ranjbar said an investigation found that the force that killed Qateh operated from Camp Gecko, in the hills outside Kandahar, a base for both US special forces and the CIA.

Officials in Kandahar said the militia supplies guards and is trained to work alongside special forces and intelligence officials in raids against Taliban targets.

"If you go to Kandahar, people say these guys pretend to be interpreters but they carry out night raids and assassinations," said Ranjbar. "We hear lots of strange and shocking stories."

**He said that suspects arrested for the courthouse raid had confessed to being part of a 300-strong militia unit run by "Johnny".**

**They said they "could not move a muscle and could not leave their base without Johnny's orders" Ranjbar said. "He was the head of the group and they (the Americans) were the ones paying them."**

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

***Good News For The Afghan  
Resistance!!***  
**U.S. Occupation Commands'  
Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More  
Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**



A foreign servicemember from the USA takes an Afghani citizen to the main Marine base for “questioning” in Karez-e-Sayyidi, in the outskirts of Marjah district, Helmand province, May 15, 2010. REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih

Foreign occupation soldiers from the USA make a daily practice of this public humiliation of Afghan citizens.

This encourages self-respecting honorable Afghans to kill them.

**[Fair is fair. Let's bring 80,000 Afghan troops over here to the USA.**

**[They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, bomb and butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it “sovereign,” and “detain” anybody who**

doesn't like it in a military prison endlessly without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.

[Those Afghans are sure a bunch of backward primitives.

[They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship killing them wholesale, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country.

[What a bunch of silly people.

[How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by Barrack Obama. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

## **CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS29.pdf>

### **THIS ISSUE FEATURING:**

#### **THE UNFAIR TREATMENT OF SINGLE SOLDIERS:**

**"The Army Treats All Single Soldiers As If They Were Children"**

**By: SGT. I.T.A.**

#### **ARMY LIFE: STUPID IN COMMAND**

**By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent**

**Reporting from Germany**

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/>

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

# **NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME**



A U.S. soldier walks through a sand storm at his base in Arghandab valley, near Kandahar, in southern Afghanistan, May 5, 2010. REUTERS/Yannis Behrakis



A U.S. soldier, part of the 82nd Airborne Division, in a field by the Arghandab river, Kandahar province, southern Afghanistan, May 11, 2010. REUTERS/Yannis Behrakis



A U.S. Marine, 6th Marines returns fire during battle with Taliban fighters in Karez-e-Sayyidi, in the outskirts of Marjah district, Helmand province, May 15, 2010.  
REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih

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

## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

# **Ugandan Occupation Soldier Killed In Mogadishu; Two More Wounded: Their Command Cheating Families Of KIA Out Of Death Benefits**

May 21 2010 By Risdell Kasasira, Monitor.co.ug

Kampala

A roadside bomb killed a Ugandan soldier yesterday morning and injured two others while on foot-patrol in the Somali Capital, Mogadishu.

The spokesperson of African Union Mission in Somalia, Maj. Barigye Ba-Hoku, told Daily Monitor on phone from Mogadishu that the peacekeepers were patrolling the city.

“It was an improvised explosive device that exploded and killed one of our soldiers who were patrolling in Afixione,” he said.

Maj. Ba-Hoku, however, dismissed reports that Islamist fundamentalists had killed the peacekeeper in the mortar-attack on ships allegedly carrying AMISOM weaponry at Mogadishu Seaport.

Each family of the soldiers killed on duty in Somalia is supposed to receive \$50,000 (about Shs100m) as compensation but some families have not received their payments due to delays in the release of money by the African Union.

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## **Insurgents Raid & Disable Mogadishu Radio Station**

May 21, 2010 Mareeg

Al Shabaab militants have confiscated the equipment of [pro-government] Radio Somaliweyn in Mogadishu on Friday, an official and witnesses said.

Abukar Hassan Kadaf, the director of Radio Somaliweyn in Mogadishu said al Shabaab fighters broke into the headquarters of the radio and took equipments including the FM and the computers.

The move comes as government soldiers and al Shabaab fought near the headquarters of the radio in north Mogadishu early on Friday.

Mr. Kadaf said the Shabaab harassed the staff of the radio before they took away the gadgets which the radio was working with.

Al Shabaab banned BBC and VOA and took over the equipment of the BBC in Mogadishu on 9 April 2010.

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## **Civilians Resist And Kill Ethiopian Occupation Troops**

May 21, 2010 Sh. M. Network

BUHODLE

At least 6 people have been killed and 20 others wounded after heavy fighting between Ethiopian troops and residents of Buhodle town in the breakaway republic of Somaliland, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Friday.

Reports say that the fighting broke out as the Somali people in the town infuriated Ethiopian troops who halted more vehicles traveling to some of the Somali regions and both sides exchanged heavy gunfire as the fighting between two sides continued.

One of the residents of Buhodle confirmed to Shabelle radio that more than 6 people including Ethiopian and residents were killed in the fighting while 20 others wounded

The latest reports from there say there was tense situation.

On the other hand the Islamist fighters of Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen have greatly welcomed the fighting that the residents of the Buhodle started to the Ethiopians.

The spokesman of Harakat Al-shaabab Mujahideen Sheik Ali Mohamud Raghe said that they would greatly welcome the fighting that people of Buhodle decided to defend from the Ethiopians saying that more Ethiopian troops were killed as the clash between the two sides continued.

“We are very glad to fight with Ethiopia and we are supporting the people who decided to fight with the Ethiopians who often commit brutal actions to the Somalia people.

“They died in the fighting after the residents refused their intervening. And that is what we are very glad and support our brothers,” said the Spokesman of Harkat Al-shabab Mujahideen.

Sources also said that more wounded people were rushed to the hospital of Buhodle where they are being cured adding that there were some of the injuries who had hard wounded.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

**Army Recalling 44,000 Defective  
Combat Helmets:  
“It’s Likely That Some Of Them Are In  
The War Zone”  
War Profiteer Found To Be “Using  
Unauthorized Manufacturing Practices,**

# Defective Materials And Improper Quality Procedures”

May 17, 2010 By Matthew Cox - Staff writer, Army Times & May 19, 2010 AP [Excerpts]

The Army is recalling 44,000 Advanced Combat Helmets amid concerns that they offer substandard ballistic protection.

All the helmets are made by ArmorSource LLC, formerly Rabintex USA LLC.

“There is evidence that ArmorSource and Rabintex ACHs were produced using unauthorized manufacturing practices, defective materials and improper quality procedures which could potentially reduce ballistic and fragmentation protection,” according to an All Army Activities message released May 14.

The Army-wide message orders an immediate inspection of all ACHs and the “immediate direct exchange of those ACHs manufactured by ArmorSource and Rabintex” through unit central issue facilities.

The exact risk to soldiers wearing the recalled helmets is still being determined, the Army said.

However, sample testing from a quarantined inventory revealed that the helmets did not meet Army specifications. The matter is under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice, according to the Army.

Army officials could not say where all the faulty helmets are, but it’s likely that some of them are in the war zone, Army spokesman Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings said.

Army officials would not comment on how the service found out about the defective helmets and are still unsure how long the faulty helmets have been in the inventory.

ArmorSource is based in Hebron, Ohio.

The manufacturer’s label is located on the inside of the helmet.

Soldiers may have to remove one or more of the ACH pads to expose the label.

“If the manufacturer’s label is unreadable, the retention system hardware will be used to identify the manufacture,” the message states. “If the hardware matches figure 13, WP 0002-14 of the ACH operator’s manual, the helmet is an ArmorSource or Rabintex and must be turned in.”

**Brigadier General Peter Fuller, who oversees soldier equipment contracts for the Army, said he did not know whether any injuries had resulted from the defective helmets.**

## HOW TO CHECK YOUR HELMET

Here's how to see if your helmet is included in the recall. If the manufacturer's label is unreadable, retention system hardware will be used to identify the manufacturer, according to the Army's recall message.

If the hardware matches figure 13, WP 0002-14 of the Advanced Combat Helmet operator's manual, the helmet is an ArmorSource or Rabintex and must be turned in, the message states.

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## **Some National Guardsmen Eligible For A Lot Of Missed Back Pay: “Congress Temporarily Authorized The Services To Pay Those Troops Up To \$200 A Day For Every Day Earned”**

5.17.10 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

If you returned from a deployment between January and August 2007, the Army National Guard may have some money for you.

The Guard is seeking current and former guardsmen who came off federal active duty during that period because they may be entitled to retroactive pay of up to \$200 a day for each day earned under the Army Post-Deployment/Mobilization Respite Absence program.

The program was created in January 2007 as a way to compensate troops who were deployed more often than the Defense Department's targeted dwell-time rates of one year deployed and two years at home for active-duty troops and one year deployed and five years at home for those in the reserve component. These troops were given additional time off to make up for the extra days they were deployed.

But delays in implementing the program at the individual service level led to some troops missing out. The Army's program wasn't put in place until August 2007, leading to an eight-month shadow period where soldiers may have missed out on the extra time off they're owed, said Col. Dennis Chapman, chief of personnel policy for the Army Guard.

“There were a lot of soldiers who completed their tours but were not getting the respite days they were supposed to be getting” because that time off initially was use-or-lose, Chapman said.

To help bridge that gap, Defense Department officials decided to let the troops carry over the extra time off for use when they were deployed or mobilized again.

But that fix wouldn't work for troops who had left the service or the families of deceased soldiers, Chapman said.

So, in October, Congress temporarily authorized the services to pay those troops up to \$200 a day for every day earned, but qualified soldiers must submit their applications for the payments by Oct. 28.

“We’re trying hard to reach out-of-service soldiers,” Chapman said. The Guard estimates almost 14,000 soldiers fall into the shadow period. About 9,000 are still in uniform, and about 5,000 have left the military.

Those 5,000 former soldiers together could be owed as much as \$28 million.

“We’ve got (Defense Finance and Accounting Service) processing packets for about 87 percent of soldiers still in service, but just over 20 percent for soldiers out of service,” Chapman said.

Some former soldiers have not responded to the Guard, while some cannot be found because their last known address is outdated.

The typical claim by soldiers in the shadow period is for 28 days, for a payment of \$5,600. As of May 6, DFAS had paid more than \$26.7 million to shadow-period soldiers who are still in uniform.

**To figure out if you’re qualified, Chapman advises Guard members to speak to their former unit or to the military personnel officer at their home state’s National Guard headquarters.**

Soldiers can also qualify if they meet two basic criteria: if they got off active duty between Jan. 19 and Aug. 18, 2007, and if they were deployed for more than a year in the 72 months before they were released from federal active duty.

“PDMRA is designed to compensate soldiers who deploy more often than what the secretary of defense has decided is a fair and reasonable rotation rate,” Chapman said.

“Everybody out there, if you think you might be eligible, please contact your state Guard headquarters and ask, or if you have a friend or relative you think might be eligible, ask them to do the same.”

#### **DEADLINE TO APPLY**

Soldiers who qualify must apply by Oct. 28 for payments of up to \$200 a day for every day they earned under the Post-Deployment/Mobilization Respite Absence program.

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

# **“The Head Of The Virginia National Guard Has Been Paid As Much As \$100,000 Per Year For Serving On An Advisory Board For A Company Owned By One Of His Subordinate Officers”**

## **Newman Also “Improperly Spent \$3,600 In State Funds On Household Items For The Adjutant General’s State-Owned, Part-Time Residence”**

May 15, 2010 The Associated Press [Excerpts]

NORFOLK, Va. — For years the head of the Virginia National Guard has been paid as much as \$100,000 per year for serving on an advisory board for a company owned by one of his subordinate officers, according to a report in Saturday’s *Virginian-Pilot*.

Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert Newman, adjutant general of the Virginia Guard, has been paid between \$50,000 and \$100,000 yearly since 2003 for his role on the board of Total Immersion Software Inc., which markets virtual-reality training software to the military and other customers.

**The company is owned by Air Force Brig. Gen. Peter Bonanni, who Newman promoted to assistant adjutant general for the Virginia Air National Guard in 2008.**

On its website, Total Immersion lists the Air National Guard among its clients, but Bonanni said the company does not do business with the Virginia Guard.

Newman and his boss, Secretary of Public Safety Marla Decker, declined to comment.

Gov. Timothy M. Kaine appointed Newman as adjutant general, which has a salary of more than \$131,000, in 2006. Newman previously served as deputy assistant homeland security adviser to Kaine’s predecessor, Mark Warner.

Maj. Cotton Puryear, a Virginia Guard spokesman, said Newman informed senior officials in the Kaine administration about his association with Bonanni’s company.

In 2008, a state investigation found that Newman and his wife improperly spent \$3,600 in state funds on household items for the adjutant general’s state-owned, part-time residence at Camp Pendleton.

Newman is awaiting word on whether he will be reappointed to the position by Gov. Bob McDonnell.

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## **Car-Loan Scams Waiting In The Weeds For Servicemembers: Learn To Spot Bad Deals, Unscrupulous Lenders**

May 24, 2010 By Karen Jowers, Army Times [Excerpts]

Service members, especially young ones, are sometimes targets of unscrupulous businesses — including some used car lots.

Here's a new twist on car financing spotted by Michael Archer, regional legal assistance officer for Marine Corps Installations East:

A Marine goes into a car dealership and doesn't qualify for a loan, so the salesman asks him to make a down payment. The Marine doesn't have it, so right there at the salesman's desk, they go to an online lender and apply for a loan for a couple of thousand dollars — at an interest rate as high as 34 percent. With the down payment, and a large monthly payment, the Marine now qualifies for the loan.

Another common problem is the “yo-yo sale”: A service member thinks he has a loan from the dealer and drives off the lot with the car. “He gets yanked back and is told the loan fell through,” said Archer, a retired Marine judge advocate. But then the salesman offers him a different deal.

If the service member balks, the salesman may not give him back the car he traded in, or he may not refund the down payment.

At Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., Vicki Wilson, director of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society office, says her office advises service members to do research before ever visiting a car salesman — on cars as well as dealers. Check with your fellow service members for their recommendations.

And go online, she said. Always check the Better Business Bureau online listings for reports ([www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)). Search the Internet for the dealer's name to see what complaints might turn up.

**Before you sign any contract, take it to your legal assistance office or financial readiness office for review. If the dealer protests or says the deal is for that day only, walk away. That's a red flag.**

Wilson also encourages service members to come into the relief society's office, or a personal financial management office, for a budgeting session to see how much car they can afford.

If you can't pay cash for the car, shop around for financing before you darken a dealer's door. Start with your financial institution, such as a military bank or a credit union. If you're approved for a loan beforehand, you have better negotiating power, said Ana Hernandez, personal financial readiness specialist at Fort Bliss, Texas, Army Community Services. "If it's your first vehicle, you may have to pay a higher interest rate," she said.

The reality for young service members is that the loan may cost more because they have no credit history. If their credit history is tarnished, the interest rate could be even higher.

As you pay off that car on time, it helps your credit score. Service members "can get the loan refinanced after a year of good payment history" at a better interest rate, Hernandez said.

Your car costs — payments plus insurance — should be no more than 15 percent of your pay, Hernandez said. For some, the cost of insurance might be higher than the car payment, she warned.

Research car prices and value at [www.edmunds.com](http://www.edmunds.com) and [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com) . If you're buying a used car, get a vehicle history report (online at [www.carfax.com](http://www.carfax.com) , or ask the dealer for the report) before you buy.

Take the car to a trusted mechanic to check out. Buying a car is a big financial commitment. We may never be completely protected from scam artists. But we can arm ourselves with knowledge and help from military experts to fend them off.

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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.”**

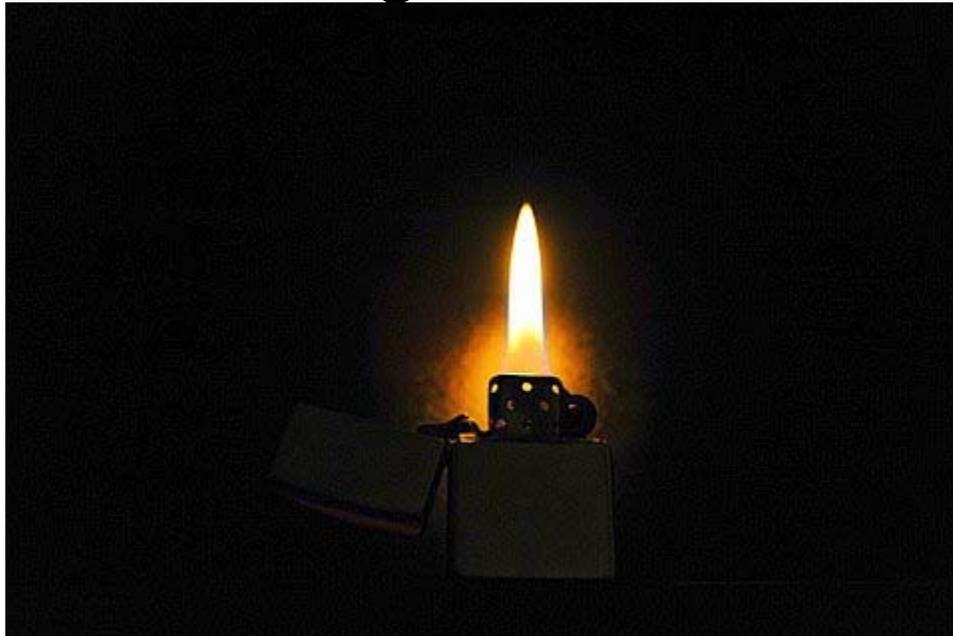
**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

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

**“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**

## **Burning of The Soul**



Photograph by Mike Hastie: Zippo lighter from Vietnam.

From: Mike Hastie

To: Military Resistance  
Sent: May 11, 2010  
Subject: Burning of The Soul

### **Burning of The Soul**

**I watched my buddies burn another hut...They weren't gooks, for God's sake!...They were a helpless mother and her terrified little children! After six months in the bush I saw them for the first time...They weren't evil. They weren't the enemies. They weren't the bad guys. We were!**

**Everything was turned around. I wanted to raise my M-16 and blast away at these crazy marauding Americans who were wasting this helpless village. Now I had a soul, and I wanted to save it and these people by doing the right thing and defending them, even if it cost me my life.**

**I just walked off in a stupor while they...touched the hut. My hut with my family in it. Where I found my soul. Where I figured out the truth. I was in a daze for a long time. Then I went numb for the rest of my tour.**

**A U.S. Marine's testimony from Vietnam.  
From the book: War And The Soul  
Healing Our Nation's Veterans from  
Post-traumatic Stress Disorder  
Edward Tick, Ph.D.**

**The worst thing I experienced in Vietnam was the lie!  
It is the same Lie that is now in the Middle East.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
May 11, 2010**

**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

## **“Once The Mind Is Defeated, The War Is Won”**

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

17 May, 2010 By Javed Hussain, DAWN Media Group.

**The writer is a retired brigadier of the Pakistan Army**

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In a war against insurgency unless the mission is accomplished within a year, the war tends to drag on for years on end.

In the event, the soldiers who are basically groomed for conventional war lose their combat effectiveness, having to fight an invisible enemy who is here, there and everywhere, yet nowhere.

The guerillas have no such compulsion as time is always on their side.

Therefore, they do everything to prolong the war in order to not only cultivate more recruits, build their inventory of weapons, ammunition and explosives, put in place an effective intelligence network, but also to play with the minds of the soldiers, for once the mind is defeated, the war is won.

### **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**

**“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**

# DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



# CLASS WAR REPORTS



## **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**

## **Thailand: Beginnings**



(Photo by Lee Yu Kyung at penseur21)  
[Thanks to Max Watts, Australia, who sent this in.]

**A soldier hold up the red scarf, which seemed to be given by red shirts protesters, after small skirmish with red shirts protesters near Thai Com in Pathumthani province on April 9.**

As the government has cut off transmission of the red shirts' mouth piece TV, 'People Channel' (or 'D station') along with the independent website Prachatai and hundreds others, thousands of red shirts protesters staged a demonstration at Thai Com, which is a satellite provider of P channel. The blockade of critical media has fuelled extreme anger among red shirts protesters who had eventually turned to be violent next day.



5.10.10: Bangkok: Red shirts stand upon the abandoned army tanks in Din So road, where deadly clashes between security forces and red shirts protesters took place. (Photo: Lee Yu Kyung at penseur21) (Thanks to Max Watts, Australia, who sent this in.)

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