

Military Resistance 8F14



Material Reality:

“In Their First Weeks On The Ground, The Commanders From The 1-87 Learned About The Growing Insurgent Activity”

“The Village Of Gor Teppa, Less Than 10 Miles To The Northwest, Had Become The Seat Of A Taliban Shadow Government”

“The Battalion Could Not Travel More Than A Few Miles — In Some Cases Just A Few Yards — Beyond Police Outposts In Contested Areas Without Drawing Fire”

June 26, 2010 By JAMES DAO, The New York Times [Excerpts]

For the next year, the First Battalion, 87th Infantry of the 10th Mountain Division from Fort Drum, N.Y., will be living, working and fighting in the fertile northern plains of Afghanistan, part of the additional 30,000 troops who will make up the backbone of President Obama’s plan for ending the nine-year war.

Over the course of the next year, The New York Times will be visiting the battalion to chronicle its part in the surge and explore the strains of deployment on soldiers, many fresh out of basic training, others on their fifth combat tour in nine years.

The battalion, which began moving to Afghanistan in March, will be joined by late summer by an aviation brigade with transport and assault helicopters that will allow them to conduct missions deep into insurgent strongholds, which fuels talk of a possible offensive by fall.

From late March until mid-April, the battalion moved in waves through Germany, Kyrgyzstan and Kuwait to a small airstrip in Kunduz, about 150 miles north of Kabul across the rugged Hindu Kush mountain range. As their planes arrived, the soldiers received a bracing reminder that they had entered a war zone.

“The weapons status once we go outside that door will be red!” a sergeant major shouted inside the bare blue walls of the Kunduz air terminal. Then he led soldiers wearing heavy rucksacks and body armor on a brisk jog across a partly cleared minefield to their new home, Forward Operating Base Kunduz.

Below the base spreads a verdant plain of rice, wheat and cotton fields, grape arbors and almond groves. This is Afghanistan’s breadbasket, an ethnically diverse region of Tajik, Uzbek and Pashtun villages that seemed relatively stable after 2001, when Taliban fighters were ousted from Kunduz city after a 12-day siege. It was the last major city to fall to the American-led anti-Taliban forces.

In their first weeks on the ground, the commanders from the 1-87 learned about the growing insurgent activity from the local police over tea, skewers of roasted lamb and small talk. Hundreds of fighters were massing in the Archi District about 25 miles northeast of Kunduz city, the police reported.

The village of Gor Teppa, less than 10 miles to the northwest, had become the seat of a Taliban shadow government, protected by hundreds of homemade bombs buried in the area’s lone road.

And at 7 o'clock every evening, the Taliban shut down cellular telephone service across the province, punctuating their control of the night.

In early April, the commander of the battalion's Alpha Company, Capt. Jeffrey Kornbluth, visited police headquarters in Emam Saheb, a district near the Tajikistan border. The police chief, Col. Kajum Ibrahimi, told him that Taliban forces — many of them involved in opium and weapons smuggling — had begun massing a few miles outside town.

Captain Kornbluth explained that it would be weeks before all his soldiers and trucks had arrived. Colonel Ibrahimi's face darkened and he sighed dramatically. "We need an operation as soon as possible," he said.

Two weeks later, a platoon from Alpha Company returned to Emam Saheb. This time, though, the Americans agreed to help Afghan police officers who were trying to clear a Taliban stronghold near town.

The platoon's armored vehicles turned down a narrow dirt road that snaked through farm land, accompanied by Afghan police officers on motorcycles and in Ford pickup trucks.

Suddenly there was a boom and a puff of smoke: the truck carrying the platoon leader, Lt. Nathaniel Bleier, had set off a mine.

The truck's front left tire landed in a rice paddy a football field away.

No soldiers were seriously hurt, beyond a separated shoulder. But a few hours later, a road-clearing team found antipersonnel mines connected to a much larger bomb buried just up the road. The injuries could have been far worse.

And on a single afternoon in early May, three separate patrols were ambushed by insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades.

There were no serious injuries, but it had become clear: the battalion could not travel more than a few miles — in some cases just a few yards — beyond police outposts in contested areas without drawing fire.

"We've gone to where the guns are," an intelligence officer said.

The 1-87 had found the war.

One month had passed. There were 11 to go.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Canadian Soldiers Killed By Panjwa'i IED Saturday

June 26, 2010 CEFCOM

OTTAWA — Two Canadian soldiers were killed when the vehicle they were travelling in as part of a convoy struck an improvised explosive device. The incident occurred approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City, in the Panjwa'i District at approximately 11:00 a.m. Kandahar time on 26 June 2010.

Killed in action was Master Corporal Kristal Giesebrecht from 1 Canadian Field Hospital, based in Petawawa, Ontario. She was serving in Afghanistan with the Task Force Kandahar Health Services Unit.

Killed in action was Private Andrew Miller from 2 Field Ambulance, based in Petawawa, Ontario. He was serving in Afghanistan with the Task Force Kandahar Health Services Unit.

Two Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Sunday: Nationality Not Announced

June 26, 2010 Reuters

Two foreign service members were killed on Sunday in a small arms attack in eastern Afghanistan.

Polish Soldier Killed In Ghazni By Secondary IED Explosion

26 czerwca 2010 (PAP)

Polish engineer - Corporal Paul Stypuła - was killed on Saturday evening local time in the southern province of Ghazni in Afghanistan - have informed the press service PAP Polish contingent.

As emphasized, Polish sapper died a hero's death as a result of the explosion of an explosive charge on Saturday at approx. 19.45 local time during the execution of combat missions by Polish strike unit and a rapid response team is an American demining.

Rapid reaction force and the de-mining team were asked to help against an invasion formerly Polish patrol.

According to the Communication Polish patrol was attacked by a roadside explosive charge. As announced, to the place was immediately called a branch of Rapid Reaction Force (QRF) and an American patrol Mine Clearance (EOD).

“In the course of performing their tasks sappers neutralized the explosive charge, and during the subsequent neutralization of the cargo load there erupted a trap, which fatally wounded Cpl. Stypuła Paul. The other soldiers on patrol suffered no injury”.

Fallen soldier’s family was informed about the event.

Corporal Stypuła served in the 2nd Mazowiecka Sapper Brigade in Kazuniu. He served as a platoon commander in the mine clearance team, it was his first mission. He was a bachelor. He was 26 years old.

Almost every Polish soldiers remove the storage of weapons and explosives.

Corporal Paul is the 19th Stypuła Polish soldier killed ISAF operations.

The future of Polish involvement in the mission is from a few days topic of public debate.

SOLDIER KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN



June 16, 2010 By Chris Smith FOR THE TIMES

Nikki Colwell and Blaine Redding were crazy about one another.

“You could see it when they looked at each other,” described Gina Mitchell Cotton, Nikki’s mom.

When Redding got the news he was to be deployed to Afghanistan, the couple exchanged vows March 13 and planned to have their big wedding on his return.

Those plans were lost when Specialist Blaine Redding was killed by a roadside bomb on patrol in Afghanistan Monday, June 7. Four other Fort Campbell soldiers were also killed.

“It was a five-vehicle convoy,” explained Cotton. “They rotated the order each day and it just happened that his vehicle was in the lead.

“He and the others took it for the rest of his unit.”

Now 20-year-old Nikki is facing burying her husband and handling all the many details that shake someone much older.

Nikki and her mother were flown Wednesday to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware where the five were brought home in flag draped coffins.

Nikki knew when she met her future husband that he was all military and that he believed in defending his country.

“Nikki understood him, knew that he had to go,” her mother explained.

The deployment to Afghanistan was his second tour of duty after being on a previous tour in Iraq.

“He was a true soldier. He was what every commander wanted a soldier to be,” Redding’s commander told the young widow when notified about his death.

Though the marriage was short, the pair made the most of the time they had together.

“They had a love story,” said Cotton. “He could make her smile like no one I’d ever seen. He would make her laugh. He was such a good guy. They had something so strong – they loved a lifetime.

“We were so proud to have him in our family.”

One of his last text messages to his mother-in-law said, “Take care of my most precious prize, I’ll be back in no time.”

Nikki traveled to Plattsville, Neb., on Friday to make the arrangements for her husband to be buried near his grandfather. Her family left Monday to join her.

“As a mom, I hurt so bad for my child,” said Cotton, stopping to wipe her tears. “I am so proud of her. She is being so strong. He would be so proud of her, so very proud.

“She is 20 years old and she is shouldering a load that no one should have to shoulder. I am in awe of her.”

Cotton said the people of Cross Plains have been wonderful in their support.

“The community outpouring of love in this town I call home is amazing,” she said.

“My daughter is so lucky to have such a support system.” Redding loved the American flag. Not long before he was deployed, he was picking on Cotton’s decorative flowery flag she had in her garden. “He told me if you are going to fly a flag, fly a big ole flag.”

As she was leaving her office on the Springfield Square Friday, her co-workers surprised her with a flag. “I will never look at a flag the same way again,” said Cotton. “When people ask what they can do for Nikki, I tell them to fly a proud crisp beautiful flag in their yard. “They silenced such a life force. He died a hero. He didn’t die in vain.”

Nikki Colwell Redding is the daughter of Michael and Gina Mitchell Cotton of Cross Plains and Roger Colwell of Westmoreland.

She is 2008 graduate of East Robertson High School, a December graduate of Vol State and is earning her teaching degree at Austin Peay.

Funeral Services Held For Slain Lawton Soldier

June 17, 2010 FROM STAFF REPORTS. Oklahoman

LAWTON — Spc. Charles Scott Jirtle’s legacy became abundantly clear during his Wednesday funeral, when the wife and parents of the fallen soldier received folded U.S. flags from Brig Gen. Ross E. Ridge, commandant of Fort Sill’s School of Artillery.

Ridge then reached for three more flags, drawing gasps from some in the church.

Ridge knelt by Jirtle’s three children, handed each a flag, then stood and saluted each child.

The soldier, whom friends and loved ones knew simply as “Scott,” had graduated to the realm of “an American hero” for his service to his country, pastor Trey Smart said.

Jirtle, 29, died with four U.S. Army comrades June 7 in the Kunar Province in Afghanistan when their mortar patrol struck a buried roadside bomb.

He left behind his pregnant wife, Savannah, and daughters Cheyenne, 8, Chelsie, 5, and son Jordan, 4.

Moments earlier, onlookers fought back tears as a four-song slide show played on giant overhead screens. Images of Jirtle’s childhood, teenage years and military career appeared in full color, evoking memories of a sly smile and Christmases long ago.

The photos told an American story of a child with a jutting jaw and a playful spirit who became a man and then a soldier. One image — of Jirtle kissing the belly of his pregnant wife before his May deployment — brought sobs from mourners at First Baptist East.

Smart said Jirtle’s unborn son will soon bear a proud name — Charles Scott Jirtle Jr.

“Our son Charles Scott Jirtle joined the Army because he wanted to take care of his children,” Jirtle’s parents, Virginia and Terry Jirtle, said in a statement released this week. “He extended his enlistment for this deployment, knowing that he was going to a very hot spot.”

Jirtle, who served a tour in Iraq in 2007-2008, had been in Afghanistan three weeks. His final posting on Facebook read: “Savannah is having a real problem with this deployment, and I pray to God that He will watch over her and my children.”

Laughter also played a role in Wednesday’s service. Smart told of how Jirtle’s four older brothers would recruit him when they heard the ice cream truck coming down the street.

“They always knew if they sent Scott to ask Terry and Virginia for money, they wouldn’t turn him down because he was the youngest,” Smart said.

Smart told how Terry and Virginia Jirtle often reserved Friday nights for bowling. Their five boys would then turn their house into a makeshift arena for “Friday night wrestling matches.”

“Being the youngest,” Smart added, “I would assume Scott didn’t fare very well.”

All five soldiers were assigned to Company A, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

Jirtle, a Lawton native, was an indirect fire infantryman who joined the Army in July 2007 and arrived at Fort Campbell, Ky., in November 2007.

Elizabeth Forward Remembers Slain Soldier

Jun 14, 2010 KDKA

Another local serviceman has been killed in the line of duty.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Hoover’s dad has a memory to hold on to – a sweet time last summer with Bryan and his brothers, fishing for pike on the Pickled River in Ontario.

“He was probably one of the proudest people I know. He was very determined – put 100 percent in everything he did,” Bryan’s longtime friend Laura Sari said.

Sgt. Hoover died on foot patrol in an attack by a suicide bomber in Afghanistan. He was a much-decorated Marine and then enlisted in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

He was 29. “It meant the world to him,” Sari said. “I mean to do that for us and to be over there fighting so that we could stay safe.”

Bryan Hoover was a warrior even before he joined the military as No. 29 on the Elizabeth Forward football team. "He was a leader. He liked to lead people to greatness," Jeff Esper, Bryan's former middle school coach, remembered. "I'm sure that's what he was doing that day."

Outside Elizabeth Forward High School, the flag flutters at half-staff. Bryan was in the class of 2000 and returned to coach track and cross country after getting his degree in Sports Management at California University of Pennsylvania.

Under a tree, a spontaneous memorial is growing. The kids he coached, like James Krznic, cannot fathom the loss.

"I was just really upset because Coach Hoover – I mean, he was too good of a guy for this to happen," he said.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Hoover served three tours of duty.

"And he came back safe already how many times," Sari said, "and you never think he's gonna not come back."

The Elizabeth Forward Warriors Baseball Team had a moment of silence in Sgt. Hoover's memory before their big game Monday night.

Funeral arrangements are being worked out between the Bekavac Funeral Home in Elizabeth and the Army. They are not complete.

Sgt. Hoover is survived by his dad, Sam; two brothers, Rick and Ben and his sister, Samantha.

Smithville Soldier Remembered As Loving Father, Caring Friend

June 14, 2010 By Naureen Khan, AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Sgt. Mario Rodriguez Jr., who was killed in combat in Afghanistan on Friday, was at least the third service member from Smithville to be killed in Afghanistan in the past year.

The 24-year-old husband and father joined a Marine and another soldier, both of whom died in 2009. Although details are still unclear, Rodriguez's family said military officials told them that he was on a mission when he was hit by gunfire.

"He was a wonderful man, a wonderful husband and father," his wife, Leslie, said Monday, shortly after returning home from Delaware, where the family received his body Sunday night.

"Our little girl — he loved her so much. He was going to teach her how to play soccer. He always told her that he loved her big head."

Rodriguez is survived by his wife, 7-year-old daughter Raven George , two brothers, four sisters and his mother and father.

He grew up in Smithville and was a linebacker for Smithville High School's football team. When he was home on leave, he loved going to football games on Friday nights.

Britni Fleming, 21, went to high school with Rodriguez and said his "goofy smile" lit up the hallway.

"He's always been the leader-type, even before he joined the Army," she said. "He was always there for people. He was extremely close to his friends. He was a shoulder to cry on, there when you needed him."

Rodriguez enlisted with the Texas National Guard in 2003 and did his first tour of duty in Kosovo.

In 2007, he was deployed to Iraq. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant shortly before he was sent to Afghanistan in December as part of the 82nd Airborne , a sister said. The division is based at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"He was dedicated to what he decided to do," said Rosalva Rodriguez, 21 , Mario Rodriguez's younger sister. "He knew what his job was, and it didn't scare him. He was always worried about others being safe."

His two Rodriguez brothers have also served in the military — one will be deployed to Afghanistan next month.

Scott Grzyb, 24 , who also attended high school with Rodriguez, said his friend's death is "just like a punch to the gut."

"You don't really believe it at first," he said. "The war just got real, in other words."

Rodriguez met his wife online three years ago. He drove two hours from Fort Hood, where he was stationed, to Mexia for their first date.

"He would go without stuff just to make sure that me and Raven had the things that we wanted," Leslie Rodriguez said. "He made sure we had a roof over our heads and that we were always taken care of."

Funeral arrangements have not been made yet.

Smithville, about 40 miles east of Austin, has less than 5,000 residents, according to the city. But the small community is mobilizing in tragedy.

The Smithville High School class of 2004 is holding a Fallen Heroes Benefit on July 17 at the American Legion there in his honor. Proceeds will go toward a memorial for Rodriguez and other local casualties of the war, and toward a scholarship fund for underprivileged students.

Their Hero Always: Calaveras Residents Honor Fallen Marine

June 14, 2010 By Dana M. Nichols, Record Staff Writer

EVERY - Grief for a fallen Marine and love for his parents painted Highway 4 red, white and blue for a few hours Sunday.

Hundreds gathered beside the highway in Avery, Arnold, Murphys and smaller communities to give a solemn welcome to Gregg Brummund and Debra Morris, who were returning from Delaware after claiming the remains of Lance Cpl. Gavin R. Brummund, 22. For now, the body remains on the East Coast with Gavin Brummund's wife, Mikaela Brummund.

Brummund died Thursday after being wounded by an improvised explosive device in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

For many, it was a day of tears.

"I watched those kids grow up," Kathy O'Malley, 57, said of Gavin Brummund and his younger brother, Cole, 18.

O'Malley sometimes had to stop to wipe her eyes while she worked the cash register at the Chevron service station in Arnold. Brummund's parents own the business.

Across from the Chevron, an enormous U.S. flag was suspended between pine trees next to Bristol's Ranch House Cafe.

"Our kids all grew up with Gavin," said Patty Ellington, 53, owner of Bristol's Ranch House. "Gavin is my son's best friend."

Beth Hicks, 51, said she helped organize the roadside show of support so that Morris, who lives in Arnold, would know she is not alone.

"We love her. We think of her. And then she can go home and lock the door," Hicks said.

The crowd along the highway was much larger in Avery, a few miles west of Arnold. Gregg Brummund lives there, and organizers invited supporters to that location in the belief Gregg Brummund might turn off to return to his home there.

As it happened, Morris and Brummund traveled together in a silver van and continued east to Arnold, not stopping after they passed through Avery at 3:10 p.m.

Many in both Arnold and Avery were personally connected to Brummund and his parents. The Chevron station is a hub, where many people buy sandwiches, coffee and breakfast burritos on their way to work.

"I go there every morning," said Parris Scott, 44, of Avery, a roofing contractor. Scott was on the shoulder of Highway 4 in Avery with his daughter Ava, 3, on his hip, waiting to show his support as Morris and Gregg Brummund passed by.

"We try to support each other," Scott said. "He was a young kid and barely had started."

Others, including individual veterans and members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2600 in San Andreas and Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 391 of Sonora came to honor the family of the first Calaveras County resident to give his life during combat since the Vietnam War.

"It just hits home when it's somebody from your community," said Tim Saunders, 49, of Angels Camp. "I think this community really wants to let the family know how much we appreciate the sacrifice that he gave."

“We Don’t Care Whether It’s McChrystal Or Petraeus” “We’ll Be Fighting The Invading Forces Until They Leave”

24 Jun 2010 Press TV

The Taliban say they will continue fighting foreign troops in Afghanistan, regardless of a switch in top US command in the war-ravaged country.

"We don't care whether it's McChrystal or Petraeus. Our position is clear.

"We'll be fighting the invading forces until they leave," AFP quoted Taliban spokesman, Yousuf Ahmadi, as saying on Thursday.

NATO has lost at least 80 soldiers so far this month, making June the deadliest single month for foreign troops in the nearly nine-year-long conflict.

The number of foreign fatalities in Afghanistan has soared to nearly 300 this year.

The rising number of casualties has increased opposition to the Afghan war in the member states of the Western military alliance.

The 130,000-strong foreign presence in Afghanistan has so far failed to establish security in the country.

TROOP NEWS

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The remains of U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Michael C. Bailey at Lambert-St. Louis International Airport June 22, 2010, in St. Louis. Bailey, 29, of Park Hills, Mo., died June 16 after he was shot while on patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)



The remains of Lance Cpl. Timothy G. Serwinowski, 21, of North Tonawanda, N.Y. outside the Amigone Funeral Home in Tonawanda, N.Y. June 26, 2010. The Marine was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C., and was killed on June 21, 2010 when he was hit by a sniper in Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Robert Kirkham)



The remains of U.S. Army Spc. Benjamin D. Osborn at Saratoga National Cemetery in Schuylerville, N.Y. June 24, 2010. Osborn, 27, of Queensbury, N.Y., was killed in combat on June 15 while serving with the 101st Airborne Division in Konar Province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Mike Groll)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

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

**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787**

**The Social-Democrats ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression no matter where it appears no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.”
-- V. I. Lenin; What Is To Be Done**

**“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**

Hummer Bummer



Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance
Sent: June 27, 2010
Subject: Hummer Bummer

**100 million gallons of oil
spilled in the Gulf so far**

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
June 27, 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) 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

Film: Restrepo: Why You Miss Afghanistan: “It’s Brotherhood, And A Sense Of Identity, A Sense Of Being Necessary, And A Sense Of Loyalty And Commitment By Other People To You And Vice Versa”

June 28, 2010 By Jada Yuan, New York Magazine

When Sebastian Junger first came home from Afghanistan, it was the garbage trucks that got him. “I kept leaping out of bed when they’d go by at 3 a.m.,” he says. “They all hit the same pothole on our street, and it sounded just like artillery.”

But softer noises freak him out more.

“The thing that really makes me jump is a quiet tapping sound,” he says, “because that’s what a machine gun sounds like from 400 yards, and all the gunfire in the Korengal Valley”—in Kunar Province, where Junger’s unit was stationed—“was distant, from 300 or 400 yards away. A really loud bap-bap-bap: That’s someone next to you shooting someone else. That’s a reassuring sound.”

Junger embedded with Second Platoon, Battle Company, for five monthlong stints during its fourteen-month deployment. He simultaneously wrote dispatches for Vanity Fair, gathered material for his book WAR, and made, together with his Vanity Fair photographer, Tim Hetherington, an arresting documentary, Restrepo, which is due out June 25.

At first he was worried when Battle Company got assigned to Korengal Valley in the northeast instead of the seemingly more action-packed southern part of the country.

But as it turned out, that six-mile stretch of mountains was home to 20 percent of all combat in the country at the time.

Seven men died during the deployment, including PFC Juan “Doc” Restrepo, now namesake for both the documentary and the platoon’s remote outpost.

Junger and Hetherington actually had, as journalists, more previous war experience than the soldiers with whom they were embedded, but neither was expecting to be shot at nearly every day.

While filming an offensive in which one soldier died, Hetherington broke his leg but had to keep hiking downhill till dawn. Junger ruptured his Achilles tendon hauling gear, but limped his way through another three weeks in the valley, which is so steep it can be patrolled only by foot.

Later, he was in a Humvee that got hit by an IED. "It went off under the engine block instead of under us," he says.

"It just disturbed me that something that important, that personally catastrophic, could be determined by something as tiny and random as ten feet, as a tenth of a second.

"That life works that way was sort of intolerable. I had a lot of bad dreams after that and got very depressed. War was not exciting any longer."

It took a while to adjust back in New York.

"I'm a mellow guy, and all of a sudden, I had a temper," he says. The post-deployment interviews in Restrepo reveal once-gung-ho young men who seem to have no way of emotionally processing what they've been through. And yet today, all but one are still in the Army. About a third were redeployed back to Kunar (an area the U.S. has since abandoned).

The key to helping these guys when they come home, Junger says, is to understand why they all miss it.

"It's not adrenaline," he says, "like The Hurt Locker would have you believe. It's brotherhood, and a sense of identity, a sense of being necessary, and a sense of loyalty and commitment by other people to you and vice versa.

"It's intoxicating. The idea of 'You must be so fucked up that you want to go back there, you must be an adrenaline junkie' is such a useless analysis of what they're experiencing."

It's also pretty much why war reporters keep going back.

And yes, despite promises to his wife, Junger thinks he'll return to war, but not on the front lines again. "My risk tolerance isn't particularly high now," he says.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionists Grab Oxygen Machines Donated To Palestinian Hospitals: “The Generators Attached ‘Came Under The Category Of Possible Use For Non- Medical Purposes’”

Jun 25, 2010 Ma'an

Bethlehem –

Seven oxygen machines donated to the Palestinian Authority by a Norwegian development agency were seized by Israeli officials en route to hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza, the Ramallah-based health ministry said.

The machines, the ministry said in a Thursday statement, were confiscated by Israeli officials who claimed that the generators attached “came under the category of possible use for non-medical purposes” if they were delivered to the southern Gaza governorates.

While only one generator was bound for southern Gaza, all seven were taken, the statement said, and “all were badly needed for medical treatment.”

The six others were bound for government hospitals in the northern Gaza, including the European Hospital in Gaza City, the Rafdieyah hospital in Nablus, and other facilities in Ramallah and Hebron.

The Ministry of Health made an official appeal to the Norwegian Development Agency, which had supplied the machines, asking that they intervene and demand the release of the equipment at the soonest possible date.

“Any delay in obtaining the medical equipment will negatively affect the health of patients,” the statement concluded, holding all partners responsible for the well being of Palestinians as the goods are withheld.

Where Kindness Is A Crime: Two Years In Prison The Penalty For Taking Some Palestinian Kids To The Beach In Their Own Occupied Nation



Ilana Hammerman

June 23rd, 2010 By the Coalition of Women for Peace, TheOnlyDemocracy

"The trip to the Betar crossing point passed in almost complete silence.

When we approached the checkpoint, the red sign, the metal tower, the speed bumps, the concrete barriers, the soldiers' position, I felt my legs shaking – and not because of the bumpy road.

I took a deep breath, slowed down but didn't stop, rolled down the window, gave the soldier a causal wave and he indifferently motioned for me to keep going. 'We made it!'"

(Ilana Hammerman, "If There Is a Heaven," Ha'aretz, 7 May 2010)

One spring morning, not so long ago, four women crossed the Betar Checkpoint: Ilana Hammerman, an Israeli translator and editor, and three Palestinian girls from a village in the West Bank.

The girls, Aya, Lin and Yasmin – who because of their young age have not lived one day free of occupation – went with Ilana for a fun day in Tel Aviv.

They visited the museum, the mall and the market, dipped in the sea, ate ice cream on a bench in the boulevard and when the evening came they crossed the checkpoint again to return to their homes.

Hammerman tells this optimistic tale in her article, "If There Is a Heaven."

But these simple and optimistic activities have turned the four women into criminals according to Israeli law.

An organization called "The Legal Forum for the Land of Israel" asked the Attorney General to open a criminal investigation against Hammerman for violating the "Law of Entry to Israel" – which states that anyone who drives,

hosts or in any other way assists a Palestinian's entry to Israel shall be sentenced to two years in prison or fined.

In a public act of civil disobedience, Ilana Hammerman has pointed to one of the basic components of the Israeli occupation regime: the law.

Dozens of laws and regulations, civil and military, define and dictate every detail in the lives of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories: Where they go and how they will get there, how they will work, where they will live and with whom they can share their lives.

Most of these rules and regulations violate international law, Israeli basic laws, as well as human empathy and logic, and Ilana was right in choosing to violate them.

Ilana's actions undermine the legitimacy of the ongoing control of millions of people by a "democratic" rule they have no part in, and rejects the separation between Jews and Palestinians, which is one of the foundations of the occupation regime.

It is an act of necessary defiance in the face of an unbearable reality.

"What is the red line beyond which we can no longer continue to respect its laws and regulations without betraying our conscience, which requires us, just as the Basic Law of our country says, 'to defend human dignity and liberty' – that is, the human dignity and liberty of every person, and not just the Jewish or Israeli person?"

(Ilana Hammerman, "In Defense of Dignity and Freedom," Ha'aretz, June 10 2010)

If and when she is put on trial, Ilana will refuse her right to an attorney.

She wants to raise awareness and to generate a public discourse in Israel and abroad – on questions of the occupation, blind obedience and situations where obeying the law constitutes betraying one's conscience and the human spirit.

"I did not do this in rash defiance," she writes, "but rather after much thought. Out of a need, that has become ever more pressing in the last years, to raise certain essential issues for in-depth public discussion in Israeli society."

"The end was wonderful.

The last photos show them about two hours after the trip to the flea market, running in the darkness on Tel Aviv's Banana Beach.



They didn't want to stop for even a minute at the restaurant there to have a bite to eat or something to drink, or even to just relax a bit.

Instead they immediately removed their sandals again, rolled up their pants and ran into the water. And ran and ran, back and forth, in zig-zags, along the huge beach, ponytails flying in the wind.

From time to time, they knelt down in the sand or crowded together in the shallow water to have their picture taken. The final photo shows two of them standing in the water, arms around each others' waists, their backs to the camera.

Only the bright color of their shirts contrasting with the dark water and the sky reveals that the two are Yasmin and Aya, because Lin was wearing a black shirt."

(Ilana Hammerman, "If There Is a Heaven").

The Zionist Terror Devises Another Clever Way To Kill More Palestinians: This Light Is Always Red: "It Doesn't Turn Green, Even For Ambulances Or Fire Engines"

Ziad, a resident of Sheikh Sa'ad, recalls another case when a villager had suffered a heart attack. "We called the ambulance. It took quite a while to reach the checkpoint. Even then the guards weren't prepared to let it through.

"A paramedic asked to cross by foot. The guards refused even that. Eventually, he was told he could go through on his own without any of the equipment in the ambulance. By the time he finally reached the man, he'd already passed away."

Jun 25 By Jerrold Kessel and Pierre Klochendler (IPS)

SHEIKH SA'AD, Occupied Eastern Jerusalem

A traffic light, yet no traffic at all.

In fact, a traffic light...for pedestrians only. And even they move little. There are restrictions on walking out of this village (pop. 3,000).

The 1,200 villagers who carry Palestinian identity papers have no way of crossing the barrier to leave the village.

That's a privilege reserved for the 1,800 who hold Israeli identity cards. They can cross the fence by foot, in principle. But even that can be daunting.

This is Jerusalem's backyard, the backyard of Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem.

Alongside the traffic light, the improvised sign reads: 'Driving permitted on green alone'. But the light is always red.

Attached to the improvised light pole, other colours flutter; the blue-and- white of the Israeli flag. The checkpoint is manned by Israeli border policemen and policewomen, all in full battle gear.

This is Sheikh Sa'ad, literally caught between a rock and a hard place.

The village lies between Wadi Nar, the steep Biblical Kidron Valley which flanks it on three sides, and Israel's security wall on its eastern side. A special extra segment of that fence cuts through Sheikh Sa'ad and prevents access into the Israeli-occupied part of Jerusalem, which since 1967 has been under Israeli control.

A few years ago Israel built the security wall to keep out would-be Palestinian bombers.

That's left the Palestinians of Sheikh Sa'ad in a double bind. They are isolated both from the rest of the West Bank that's under the control of the Palestinian Authority, and from Jerusalem.

Even though the Palestinian Intifadah uprising has subsided, the barriers remain intact.

That leaves people here still arbitrarily cut off by the fence from the adjacent neighbourhood, Jabel Mukaber. Unlike Sheikh Sa'ad, Jabel Mukaber falls entirely under the municipal jurisdiction of East Jerusalem.

The people of Jabel Mukaber enjoy the services which the Israeli authorities of Jerusalem accord the Palestinians of the eastern occupied part of the city. Even if they carry Israeli IDs, their neighbours in Sheikh Sa'ad do not.

A ruling in their favour by the Israeli High Court has not been able to alleviate the acute conditions of the residents of this isolated village.

In March this year, the Court denied a petition to relocate the extra section of the fence that separates Sheikh Sa'ad from Jabel Mukaber to the other side of the village.

But it did rule that the Israeli authorities must allow residents round-the-clock access to and from Jerusalem.

Still, the red light remains on. It doesn't turn green, even for ambulances or fire engines.

Absurdly, emergency traffic must be coordinated in advance with the Israeli occupation authorities.

Any commercial vehicle from Jerusalem is barred from driving through the barrier. That means all supplies must be carried in by hand by those who have permission to make the journey on foot.

Volunteers from the NGO, MachsomWatch (Checkpoint Watch), an Israeli women's group that monitors checkpoints, report several incidents in which pregnant women and sick infants were held up for long periods by the Israeli border guards.

"They did so for absolutely no reason," Shulamit, one of the 'watchers', told IPS.

"I saw instances where women were not even allowed to pass on foot. They had to do a major roundabout detour to the hospital through the Palestinian- controlled area of the West Bank on the far side of the security wall. That takes hours."

Ziad, a resident of Sheikh Sa'ad, recalls another case when a villager had suffered a heart attack. "We called the ambulance. It took quite a while to reach the checkpoint. Even then the guards weren't prepared to let it through.

"A paramedic asked to cross by foot. The guards refused even that. Eventually, he was told he could go through on his own without any of the equipment in the ambulance. By the time he finally reached the man, he'd already passed away."

Regular health and education facilities are available to the residents of Sheikh Sa'ad, but only in Jabel Mukaber. That means they can't reach them.

Some of the homes in Sheikh Sa'ad are technically defined by Israel as part of Jerusalem, part of the area it annexed 43 years ago. That makes residents liable to municipal taxes. Yet they cannot drive into town - their own town by the Israeli tax book - to pay such taxes.

A month ago, under pressure, the army finally announced that vehicles with the appropriate permit would be allowed to cross.

Residents, however, say they have still to see the change.

They plan to re-petition the court to relieve their isolation. According to their attorney, Nasser Iyyat, the military authorities have continued to mislead the court. "Since March, and despite the ruling, no vehicles are allowed through."

If approached, the High Court may well rule again in favour of the Palestinians but, as so often in the past, military authorities might well find a way to enlist a 'security' argument to ensure any such court ruling is not implemented in practice.

"Someone in the defence establishment has clearly decided to make a mockery of the court," wrote Avi Issacharoff, in the liberal Haaretz newspaper.

"Where is the security threat? Everyone is hiding behind the court ruling. Somehow, though, they ignore what's happening on the ground."

Swedish Dockworkers Union Declares One Week Blockade Of Israeli Ships And Cargo

23 Jun 2010 Press TV

Swedish dockworkers have staged a blockade of Israeli ships and cargo to protest Tel Aviv's deadly attack on an international Gaza-bound aid convoy.

The Swedish Dock Workers Union (Hamnarbetarförbundet), which had supported the flotilla, said Wednesday that the weeklong protest also calls for an end to the deadly blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The blockade was launched "because of the assault on the ship to Gaza, that we supported before they took off ... And the blockade of the Gaza strip, which affects the civilian population," union spokesman Rolf Axelsson said.

Eleven Swedish activists were on the Turkish-flagged Gaza Freedom Flotilla when Israeli commandos stormed the ship on May 31, killing at least 20 civilian activists and injuring dozens of others in international waters. The fatal attack sent shockwaves across the world and raised global calls for an international investigation into the incident.

Union chairman Bjoern A. Borg said stevedores in all unionized Swedish ports are set to refuse to handle containers containing cargo from Israel or goods destined for it until June 29.

Although Israel announced Sunday that it would ease its land blockade on the coastal region, which has been under siege for three years, it is widely believed that the recent measure does not mean the end of the siege and only aims to reduce global pressure on Tel Aviv following its deadly attack on the aid convoy.

Swedish dockworkers have also called Israel's recent easing of its Gaza blockade as insufficient and urged for an international probe into the attack.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Chief Justice John Roberts' Never-ending Quest to Free the Wrongly Convicted



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

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**Filthy, Despicable, Degenerate,
Lying, Cowardly Piece Of Shit Cop
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Veteran In Handcuffs Was Proper:
“Officer London Is Seen Briefly Walking
Away From Mr. Harvin, Who Was
Handcuffed And Lying Down, But Then
Quickly Returning To Deliver More
Lashes With The Baton”**

[In addition to all the other excellent reasons for the immediate withdrawal of all our troops from Afghanistan and Iraq, they can help us sweep filth like this off our streets once and for all. T]

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

6.24.2010 By JOHN ELIGON, New York Times

A New York City police officer testified on Thursday that he struck a man with his baton dozens of times while the man lay on the ground because the man was swearing at him, threatening to kill him and thrashing around.

The man, Walter Harvin, also tried to punch and kick him, the officer, David London, said, testifying in his own defense at his assault trial in State Supreme Court in Manhattan.

“He was aggressive and violent, sir,” Officer London said under questioning from his lawyer, Stephen C. Worth. “I was trying to get him to comply, sir. I wanted him to stop fighting, sir.”

Prosecutors have said that Officer London used excessive force that evening in July 2008.

They also charged him with lying about the episode.

Officer London, 45, was scornful of the prosecution’s theory, though politely — speaking so softly he could hardly be heard, and beginning and ending most sentences with “sir.”

He often defaulted to the word “compliance” to describe why he struck Mr. Harvin.

“Were you hitting him hard?” David Drucker, an assistant district attorney, asked at one point.

“I was trying to get compliance, sir,” Officer London said.

The confrontation between Officer London and Mr. Harvin began when the officer was closing the door to a building in a housing project on West 93rd Street, and Mr. Harvin, who lived there with his mother, tried to slip in.

Officer London testified that when he asked for identification, Mr. Harvin was hostile.

Officer London stood by testimony that surveillance footage of the episode seemed to contradict.

He said that Mr. Harvin, an Iraq war veteran, pushed him when they were in front of the building.

But footage of them at the entrance seemed to show Mr. Harvin pulling away as Officer London reached for him.

After Mr. Drucker showed the video and asked Officer London to explain where the push was, the officer responded, “He put his hands on me, sir.” Justice Thomas Farber intervened and asked Officer London if he thought that “touching you is pushing you.” “Yes, your honor,” the officer answered.

Several times in his testimony, Officer London, in a meek voice, repeated profanities that he said Mr. Harvin had directed at him. They included a curse word emblazoned on the

T-shirt of an alternate juror. Justice Farber scolded the juror for wearing the shirt and dismissed her.

Officer London, a 17-year police veteran, said that after the encounter at the door, he told Mr. Harvin he was under arrest for disorderly conduct. The charges were later dropped.

Mr. Harvin would not obey his commands to stop, Officer London said. When Mr. Harvin lunged toward him near the elevators in the lobby, Officer London said, he unleashed Mace and the first blow with his baton. That initial strike did not deter Mr. Harvin, Officer London said, so he continued to strike. Even with Mr. Harvin down, Officer London, who was in the Air Force Reserves, said he had to be careful.

“In my military training, if a person is down on the ground, they’re trained to kick your legs from underneath you, and they’re still a threat,” the officer said.

At one point on the video, Officer London is seen briefly walking away from Mr. Harvin, who was handcuffed and lying down, but then quickly returning to deliver more lashes with the baton.

Officer London said that as he had walked away, Mr. Harvin began screaming threats again, and he was worried that Mr. Harvin was trying to draw a crowd, which would have made the situation more dangerous.

Nonetheless, Officer London said, the arrest was routine.

Mr. Drucker, the assistant district attorney, seemed to snicker at the assertion.

“You don’t think hitting a person more than 20 times with a baton makes this more than routine?” he asked.

“Sir,” the officer responded, “I was trying to get compliance.”

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

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POLITICIANS CAN’T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

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