

## Military Resistance 8F16



**Contradictions:  
How The Big Media And The  
Politicians Spun The Rolling Stone  
Story To Protect Obama By  
Focusing On McChrystal And  
Hiding The Most Important Parts  
Of What The Reporter Wrote:**

# **“The Very People That COIN Seeks To Win Over – The Afghan People – Do Not Want Us There”**

## **“So Far, Counterinsurgency Has Succeeded Only In Creating A Never-Ending Demand For The Primary Product Supplied By The Military: Perpetual War”**

**Comment: T  
Contradictions:**

**As may be seen in the excerpts below:**

**1. The General was 100% right. His COIN strategy of minimizing civilian casualties offered the Empire the only hope of winning.**

**The soldiers quoted below were also right: his COIN strategy, for them, was suicidal.**

**2. The General knew how to lead by example. He presented himself as caring deeply about his soldiers and their opinions, especially their criticisms, and was committed to winning their respect and support for his strategy by meeting them face-to-face in a way an armchair general could never comprehend, let alone practice.**

**The soldiers were right: his displays of concern accomplished nothing because he was forcing them into a way of warfighting they had neither the training nor the leadership to survive, let alone fight successfully.**

**3. The General was right: his orders to stop butchering civilians would decrease the number of Afghans killing the soldiers.**

**The soldiers were right: the effort was a failure and they were losing, and they told him so to his face. They were commanded by a hopeless bureaucracy of idiot officers that issued absurd caricatures of the rules of engagement McChrystal was attempting to implement, thereby destroying everything McChrystal was trying to accomplish, and also thereby producing only heaps of maimed and dead U.S. troops on the battlefield. Given the corporate structure of the army: inevitable**

4. The General was right: it was impossible to kill enough Afghans to win a path to success in Afghanistan.

Critics of the war are right: there is no strategy that will win the Afghans to accept a foreign Imperial occupation of their nation.

5. McChrystal was a warrior general without political skills who made a fatal mistake: he thought Afghanistan was a war and his job was to fight it, not kiss ass. His contempt for the greedy unprincipled privileged elite scum who run the government in DC, expressed for him by his staff, was 100% on target. He lived in a world of material reality, and was dismissed for it.

Petraeus is a sleazy politician wearing a general's uniform who understands that Afghanistan is, first and foremost now, a political problem that will require more dead American troops. For General Betrayus, the war in Afghanistan is merely a convenient smokescreen so politicians, himself included, can maneuver for power in what remains of a bankrupt, dying Empire. He lives in a world of ideas and power-point mirrors, disconnected from the material reality of war, and is praised for it by the elite that rules in the United States of America.

Summary: Endlessly proliferating contradictions in an Imperial war that was lost before it was begun.

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## Hastings In Rolling Stone: [Excerpts]

June 22, 2010 by Michael Hastings, Rolling Stone

In June, Afghanistan officially outpaced Vietnam as the longest war in American history – and Obama has quietly begun to back away from the deadline he set for withdrawing U.S. troops in July of next year.

The president finds himself stuck in something even more insane than a quagmire: a quagmire he knowingly walked into, even though it's precisely the kind of gigantic, mind-numbing, multigenerational nation-building project he explicitly said he didn't want.

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Where Gen. Petraeus is kind of a dweeb, a teacher's pet with a Ranger's tab, McChrystal is a snake-eating rebel, a "Jedi" commander, as Newsweek called him.

He didn't care when his teenage son came home with blue hair and a mohawk.

He speaks his mind with a candor rare for a high-ranking official. He asks for opinions, and seems genuinely interested in the response.

He gets briefings on his iPod and listens to books on tape. He carries a custom-made set of nunchucks in his convoy engraved with his name and four stars, and his itinerary often bears a fresh quote from Bruce Lee. ("There are no limits. There are only plateaus, and you must not stay there, you must go beyond them.")

**He went out on dozens of nighttime raids during his time in Iraq, unprecedented for a top commander, and turned up on missions unannounced, with almost no entourage.**

**"The fucking lads love Stan McChrystal," says a British officer who serves in Kabul.**

**"You'd be out in Somewhere, Iraq, and someone would take a knee beside you, and a corporal would be like 'Who the fuck is that?' And it's fucking Stan McChrystal."**

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It doesn't hurt that McChrystal was also extremely successful as head of the Joint Special Operations Command, the elite forces that carry out the government's darkest ops. During the Iraq surge, his team killed and captured thousands of insurgents, including Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq. "JSOC was a killing machine," says Maj. Gen. Mayville, his chief of operations. McChrystal was also open to new ways of killing.

He systematically mapped out terrorist networks, targeting specific insurgents and hunting them down – often with the help of cyberfreaks traditionally shunned by the military.

**"The Boss would find the 24-year-old kid with a nose ring, with some fucking brilliant degree from MIT, sitting in the corner with 16 computer monitors humming," says a Special Forces commando who worked with McChrystal in Iraq and now serves on his staff in Kabul.**

**"He'd say, 'Hey – you fucking muscleheads couldn't find lunch without help. You got to work together with these guys.'**

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**Despite the tragedies and miscues, McChrystal has issued some of the strictest directives to avoid civilian casualties that the U.S. military has ever encountered in a war zone.**

**It's "insurgent math," as he calls it – for every innocent person you kill, you create 10 new enemies.**

**He has ordered convoys to curtail their reckless driving, put restrictions on the use of air power and severely limited night raids. He regularly apologizes to Hamid Karzai when civilians are killed, and berates commanders responsible for civilian deaths.**

“For a while,” says one U.S. official, “the most dangerous place to be in Afghanistan was in front of McChrystal after a ‘civ cas’ incident.”

The ISAF command has even discussed ways to make not killing into something you can win an award for: There’s talk of creating a new medal for “courageous restraint,” a buzzword that’s unlikely to gain much traction in the gung-ho culture of the U.S. military.

**But however strategic they may be, McChrystal’s new marching orders have caused an intense backlash among his own troops.**

Being told to hold their fire, soldiers complain, puts them in greater danger.

“Bottom line?” says a former Special Forces operator who has spent years in Iraq and Afghanistan. “I would love to kick McChrystal in the nuts.

“His rules of engagement put soldiers’ lives in even greater danger. Every real soldier will tell you the same thing.”

In March, McChrystal traveled to Combat Outpost JFM – a small encampment on the outskirts of Kandahar – to confront such accusations from the troops directly. It was a typically bold move by the general.

**Only two days earlier, he had received an e-mail from Israel Arroyo, a 25-year-old staff sergeant who asked McChrystal to go on a mission with his unit. “I am writing because it was said you don’t care about the troops and have made it harder to defend ourselves,” Arroyo wrote.**

**Within hours, McChrystal responded personally: “I’m saddened by the accusation that I don’t care about soldiers, as it is something I suspect any soldier takes both personally and professionally – at least I do. But I know perceptions depend upon your perspective at the time, and I respect that every soldier’s view is his own.”**

**Then he showed up at Arroyo’s outpost and went on a foot patrol with the troops – not some bullshit photo-op stroll through a market, but a real live operation in a dangerous war zone.**

Six weeks later, just before McChrystal returned from Paris, the general received another e-mail from Arroyo.

A 23-year-old corporal named Michael Ingram – one of the soldiers McChrystal had gone on patrol with – had been killed by an IED a day earlier. It was the third man the 25-member platoon had lost in a year, and Arroyo was writing to see if the general would attend Ingram’s memorial service.

“He started to look up to you,” Arroyo wrote.

McChrystal said he would try to make it down to pay his respects as soon as possible.

The night before the general is scheduled to visit Sgt. Arroyo's platoon for the memorial, I arrive at Combat Outpost JFM to speak with the soldiers he had gone on patrol with.

JFM is a small encampment, ringed by high blast walls and guard towers. Almost all of the soldiers here have been on repeated combat tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and have seen some of the worst fighting of both wars.

**But they are especially angered by Ingram's death. His commanders had repeatedly requested permission to tear down the house where Ingram was killed, noting that it was often used as a combat position by the Taliban.**

But due to McChrystal's new restrictions to avoid upsetting civilians, the request had been denied.

"These were abandoned houses," fumes Staff Sgt. Kenneth Hicks. "Nobody was coming back to live in them."

**One soldier shows me the list of new regulations the platoon was given. "Patrol only in areas that you are reasonably certain that you will not have to defend yourselves with lethal force," the laminated card reads.**

**"Does that make any fucking sense?" asks Pfc. Jared Pautsch.**

**"We should just drop a fucking bomb on this place.**

**"You sit and ask yourself: What are we doing here?"**

**The rules handed out here are not what McChrystal intended – they've been distorted as they passed through the chain of command – but knowing that does nothing to lessen the anger of troops on the ground.**

"Fuck, when I came over here and heard that McChrystal was in charge, I thought we would get our fucking gun on," says Hicks, who has served three tours of combat. "I get COIN. I get all that.

**"McChrystal comes here, explains it, it makes sense. But then he goes away on his bird, and by the time his directives get passed down to us through Big Army, they're all fucked up – either because somebody is trying to cover their ass, or because they just don't understand it themselves.**

**"But we're fucking losing this thing."**

McChrystal and his team show up the next day. Underneath a tent, the general has a 45-minute discussion with some two dozen soldiers. The atmosphere is tense. "I ask you what's going on in your world, and I think it's important for you all to understand the big picture as well," McChrystal begins. "How's the company doing? You guys feeling sorry for yourselves? Anybody? Anybody feel like you're losing?" McChrystal says.

**"Sir, some of the guys here, sir, think we're losing, sir," says Hicks.**

McChrystal nods. “Strength is leading when you just don’t want to lead,” he tells the men. “You’re leading by example. That’s what we do. Particularly when it’s really, really hard, and it hurts inside.”

Then he spends 20 minutes talking about counterinsurgency, diagramming his concepts and principles on a whiteboard.

He makes COIN seem like common sense, but he’s careful not to bullshit the men.

“We are knee-deep in the decisive year,” he tells them. The Taliban, he insists, no longer has the initiative – “but I don’t think we do, either.”

**It’s similar to the talk he gave in Paris, but it’s not winning any hearts and minds among the soldiers.**

“This is the philosophical part that works with think tanks,” McChrystal tries to joke. “But it doesn’t get the same reception from infantry companies.”

During the question-and-answer period, the frustration boils over.

The soldiers complain about not being allowed to use lethal force, about watching insurgents they detain be freed for lack of evidence.

They want to be able to fight – like they did in Iraq, like they had in Afghanistan before McChrystal. “We aren’t putting fear into the Taliban,” one soldier says.

**“Winning hearts and minds in COIN is a coldblooded thing,” McChrystal says, citing an oft-repeated maxim that you can’t kill your way out of Afghanistan.**

**“The Russians killed 1 million Afghans, and that didn’t work.”**

“I’m not saying go out and kill everybody, sir,” the soldier persists. “You say we’ve stopped the momentum of the insurgency. I don’t believe that’s true in this area. The more we pull back, the more we restrain ourselves, the stronger it’s getting.”

“I agree with you,” McChrystal says. “In this area, we’ve not made progress, probably. You have to show strength here, you have to use fire. What I’m telling you is, fire costs you.

**“What do you want to do? You want to wipe the population out here and resettle it?”**

A soldier complains that under the rules, any insurgent who doesn’t have a weapon is immediately assumed to be a civilian.

“That’s the way this game is,” McChrystal says. “It’s complex. I can’t just decide: It’s shirts and skins, and we’ll kill all the shirts.”

**As the discussion ends, McChrystal seems to sense that he hasn’t succeeded at easing the men’s anger.**

He makes one last-ditch effort to reach them, acknowledging the death of Cpl. Ingram.

“There’s no way I can make that easier,” he tells them. “No way I can pretend it won’t hurt. No way I can tell you not to feel that. . . . I will tell you, you’re doing a great job. Don’t let the frustration get to you.”

**The session ends with no clapping, and no real resolution.**

**McChrystal may have sold President Obama on counterinsurgency, but many of his own men aren’t buying it.**

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When it comes to Afghanistan, history is not on McChrystal’s side.

The only foreign invader to have any success here was Genghis Khan – and he wasn’t hampered by things like human rights, economic development and press scrutiny.

The COIN doctrine, bizarrely, draws inspiration from some of the biggest Western military embarrassments in recent memory: France’s nasty war in Algeria (lost in 1962) and the American misadventure in Vietnam (lost in 1975).

McChrystal, like other advocates of COIN, readily acknowledges that counterinsurgency campaigns are inherently messy, expensive and easy to lose. “Even Afghans are confused by Afghanistan,” he says.

**But even if he somehow manages to succeed, after years of bloody fighting with Afghan kids who pose no threat to the U.S. homeland, the war will do little to shut down Al Qaeda, which has shifted its operations to Pakistan.**

Dispatching 150,000 troops to build new schools, roads, mosques and water-treatment facilities around Kandahar is like trying to stop the drug war in Mexico by occupying Arkansas and building Baptist churches in Little Rock.

**“It’s all very cynical, politically,” says Marc Sageman, a former CIA case officer who has extensive experience in the region.**

**“Afghanistan is not in our vital interest – there’s nothing for us there.”**

In mid-May, two weeks after visiting the troops in Kandahar, McChrystal travels to the White House for a high-level visit by Hamid Karzai. It is a triumphant moment for the general, one that demonstrates he is very much in command – both in Kabul and in Washington.

In the East Room, which is packed with journalists and dignitaries, President Obama sings the praises of Karzai. The two leaders talk about how great their relationship is, about the pain they feel over civilian casualties. They mention the word “progress” 16 times in under an hour.

But there is no mention of victory.



Still, the session represents the most forceful commitment that Obama has made to McChrystal's strategy in months. "There is no denying the progress that the Afghan people have made in recent years – in education, in health care and economic development," the president says.

**"As I saw in the lights across Kabul when I landed – lights that would not have been visible just a few years earlier."**

**It is a disconcerting observation for Obama to make.**

**During the worst years in Iraq, when the Bush administration had no real progress to point to, officials used to offer up the exact same evidence of success.**

**"It was one of our first impressions," one GOP official said in 2006, after landing in Baghdad at the height of the sectarian violence. "So many lights shining brightly."**

**So it is to the language of the Iraq War that the Obama administration has turned – talk of progress, of city lights, of metrics like health care and education.**

**Rhetoric that just a few years ago they would have mocked.**

**"They are trying to manipulate perceptions because there is no definition of victory – because victory is not even defined or recognizable," says Celeste Ward, a senior defense analyst at the RAND Corporation who served as a political adviser to U.S. commanders in Iraq in 2006.**

**"That's the game we're in right now.**

**"What we need, for strategic purposes, is to create the perception that we didn't get run off. The facts on the ground are not great, and are not going to become great in the near future."**

But facts on the ground, as history has proven, offer little deterrent to a military determined to stay the course.

**Even those closest to McChrystal know that the rising anti-war sentiment at home doesn't begin to reflect how deeply fucked up things are in Afghanistan.**

"If Americans pulled back and started paying attention to this war, it would become even less popular," a senior adviser to McChrystal says.

Such realism, however, doesn't prevent advocates of counterinsurgency from dreaming big: Instead of beginning to withdraw troops next year, as Obama promised, the military hopes to ramp up its counterinsurgency campaign even further.

"There's a possibility we could ask for another surge of U.S. forces next summer if we see success here," a senior military official in Kabul tells me.

**Back in Afghanistan, less than a month after the White House meeting with Karzai and all the talk of “progress,” McChrystal is hit by the biggest blow to his vision of counterinsurgency.**

Since last year, the Pentagon had been planning to launch a major military operation this summer in Kandahar, the country’s second-largest city and the Taliban’s original home base. It was supposed to be a decisive turning point in the war – the primary reason for the troop surge that McChrystal wrested from Obama late last year.

But on June 10<sup>th</sup>, acknowledging that the military still needs to lay more groundwork, the general announced that he is postponing the offensive until the fall. Rather than one big battle, like Fallujah or Ramadi, U.S. troops will implement what McChrystal calls a “rising tide of security.”

**The Afghan police and army will enter Kandahar to attempt to seize control of neighborhoods, while the U.S. pours \$90 million of aid into the city to win over the civilian population.**

**Even proponents of counterinsurgency are hard-pressed to explain the new plan.**

“This isn’t a classic operation,” says a U.S. military official. “It’s not going to be Black Hawk Down. There aren’t going to be doors kicked in.”

Other U.S. officials insist that doors are going to be kicked in, but that it’s going to be a kinder, gentler offensive than the disaster in Marja.

“The Taliban have a jackboot on the city,” says a military official. “We have to remove them, but we have to do it in a way that doesn’t alienate the population.” When Vice President Biden was briefed on the new plan in the Oval Office, insiders say he was shocked to see how much it mirrored the more gradual plan of counterterrorism that he advocated last fall.

“This looks like CT-plus!” he said, according to U.S. officials familiar with the meeting.

**Whatever the nature of the new plan, the delay underscores the fundamental flaws of counterinsurgency.**

**After nine years of war, the Taliban simply remains too strongly entrenched for the U.S. military to openly attack.**

**The very people that COIN seeks to win over – the Afghan people – do not want us there.**

Our supposed ally, President Karzai, used his influence to delay the offensive, and the massive influx of aid championed by McChrystal is likely only to make things worse.

“Throwing money at the problem exacerbates the problem,” says Andrew Wilder, an expert at Tufts University who has studied the effect of aid in southern Afghanistan.

**“A tsunami of cash fuels corruption, delegitimizes the government and creates an environment where we’re picking winners and losers” – a process that fuels resentment and hostility among the civilian population.**

**So far, counterinsurgency has succeeded only in creating a never-ending demand for the primary product supplied by the military: perpetual war.**

**There is a reason that President Obama studiously avoids using the word “victory” when he talks about Afghanistan.**

**Winning, it would seem, is not really possible.**

**More:**

## **A GENERAL’S GIFT TO THE PEACE MOVEMENT: “What A Pair Karzai And McChrystal Made!”**

### **“A Loopy, Unstable Dope-Smuggling Warlord And A Four-Star Fitness Fanatic West Point Loose Cannon, Both Trapped Like Inseparable Twins In The Same No- Exit Maze”**

From: Clancy Sigal  
To: Military Resistance  
Sent: June 28, 2010  
Subject: A GENERAL’S GIFT

By Clancy Sigal

Disgraced General Stanley McChrystal deserves a medal from America’s nonexistent anti-war movement.

In his infamous Rolling Stone interview he was only telling the angry truth by confessing his utter helplessness in managing the lost Afghan war.

The real scoop isn’t in how General Stan and his cadre of politicized aides dissed Obama, after all it gave the president an opening to cheaply win points for what he doesn’t often show, decisiveness.

The bigger story is, as quite deliberately blurted by McChrystal's chief of operations general Bill Mayville, "(The war) is not going to look like a win or taste like a win. This is going to end in an argument."

In other words, the nine-year old war is irretrievably over except for the blood.

I almost feel sorry for "Mullah" McChrystal as he is called behind his back by lower ranks who had to obey his impossible orders.

Poor General Stan, boxed in and now boxed out.

He is what we made him, and asked him to be in the Iraq war: a "dark side" killer skilled at assassinating Al Qaeda suspects, and also by the way abusing prisoners (at Iraq's Camp Nama) and covering up the Pat Tillman friendly-fire scandal.

But, for public consumption, he had all the right media "inputs" - a soldier's soldier, lean, austere, monkish, a reincarnated if less blustery George Patton.

Alas, Afghanistan is not Iraq whose Sunni vs. Shiite vs. Kurdish intrigues look positively placid compared to lethal rivalries among Pashtuns, Hazaras, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Aimaks, Turkmen and Baluch not to mention intramural tribal feuds.

Until now, McChrystal's strong card was his you-con-me-I-con-you relationship with Ngo Din Diem...oops, Hamid Karzai, the slippery Pashtun president who, despairing of American victory, clearly wants to deal with the Taliban even if it reignites an all-out civil war.

What a pair Karzai and McChrystal made! A loopy, unstable dope-smuggling warlord and a four-star fitness fanatic West Point loose cannon, both trapped like inseparable twins in the same no-exit maze.

Talk about a double bind.

We punish our generals if they succeed too well (by killing civilians) but also if they fail (by putting our troops in more danger by not killing enough civilians).

The losers, as always, are the grunts on the ground who, as the fighting season warms up, suffer intense frustration and greater casualties – June has been a horribly bloody month – because counter-insurgency geniuses like McChrystal and his successor Petraeus refuse them air and artillery cover.

The Obama-dictated hearts-and-minds strategy ends up by hurting our own soldiers.

No wonder there's a hallelujah chorus of bitching in the ranks – hey! send us home or let us defend ourselves properly – at all levels from field grade officers to lowly E-1's.

But so far the soldiers have not yet organized themselves into the kind of military resistance that stopped the Vietnam war.

(We peacenik civilians didn't do the job, the fragging, insubordinate GIs did.)

Until McChrystal's gaffe, Afghanistan, like Korea in the 1950s, was the "forgotten war". Some time ago it lost its media sexiness. There are no ratings to be had for covering a losing lousy war.

But now, perhaps, General Stan has unwittingly come to the rescue of America's long-slumbering antiwar movement. His confession of impotence is but a drunken echo of dissenting noises from an increasing number of Establishment figures, from U.S. ambassador to Kabul, Karl Eikenberry (a former combat commander), to the UK's special envoy to Afghanistan, Sir Sherrard Cowper-Coles, who resigned in disgust, to British army chief General Sir David Richards who urges talking to the Taliban "pretty soon".

Their verdict?

Afghanistan is not worth the life of another American or British or any other NATO soldier.

The Teflon general, David Petraeus, now takes over from his arrogant protégé.

Petraeus, one of the Pentagon's "perfumed princes", is a smart guy who semi-pacified Iraq not with his vaunted troop surge but in the old Chicago way, by crudely bribing Sunni gunmen to come over to our side (until the money runs out). What a super idea.

The Taliban – and who knows? Maybe even the mere fifty or so Al Queda still operating in the country (according to CIA boss Leon Panetta's estimate) are eminently bribable.

Scatter the cash where it will do the most good and keep our soldiers safer. Let money do what murderous drones and a somnolent peace movement thus far has failed at.

## **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 Afghanistan, 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**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

## **Resistance Action**

June 26 (Reuters) & June 27 (Reuters) & JUNE 28, 2010 Associated Press & June 29 (Reuters) & By TIMOTHY WILLIAMS, New York Times

**Killed in the Kadhimiya district of northern Baghdad on Tuesday was as Brig. Gen. Wareed Johan, a top supply officer in the Iraqi Army. He was killed when an adhesive bomb on his car detonated, the police said. Another officer in the car, Col. Talib Abdul Rahman, was wounded.**

Two police officers were killed in the city of Baiji, in northern Iraq, when a car rigged with explosives was detonated on the main street as a police convoy drove by. Lt. Col. Dawoon al-Sahin of the local police said he believed that the bomb may have been aimed at one of the slain officers, Lt. Col. Hussein al-Qaisi, who handled police personnel issues.

In the northwestern district of Hurriya, Baghdad, a senior official of the capital's provincial council was killed after an adhesive bomb that had been attached to his vehicle exploded as he passed through a security checkpoint, the authorities said. Two police officers were wounded in the attack. The man, Qahatan Abdul Hussein, "had gotten out of his car and was getting back in when it exploded," said the head of the provincial council's security committee, Abdel Karim Thrib Saheed al-Tarboush.

A policeman was killed and nine were wounded when a bomb exploded in central Baghdad when police tried to defuse a bomb residents found in the garbage near a restaurant.

An Iraqi security officer was killed when a bomb attached to his car exploded in western Baghdad.

A roadside bomb killed a policeman and wounded five others when it exploded near their patrol in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A policeman was killed when a sticky bomb attached to his car exploded in Haifa Street in central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

Militants planted three bombs outside a policeman's house, wounding him, his wife and their three children in Abu Ghraib on the western outskirts of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded a policeman in Mosul on Monday, police said.

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

**AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

# Georgia Soldier Killed At Sayed Abad

June 29, 2010 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 558-10

Spc. David A. Holmes, 34, of Tennille, Ga., died June 26 at Sayed Abad, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 810<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company, Swainsboro, Ga.

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## Public Attack In Kabul Kills Occupation Worker

Jun 29 By DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press Writer

KABUL, Afghanistan – An Afghan man working for the United Nations was shot and killed in his vehicle Tuesday near a busy traffic circle in Afghanistan's capital, the world body said.

The Afghan U.N. employee who died was driving a white pickup truck with the blue U.N. logo painted on the side. Another Afghan member of the U.N. staff, who was in the vehicle, was not wounded, the U.N. said.

The morning shooting occurred amid heavy traffic near Massoud circle, an intersection near the U.S. Embassy and an American military base. Two windows on the truck were shattered and blood was spattered inside the car.

Mirajudin, who was at the scene of the shooting moments after it happened, said he and the passenger helped pull the driver out.

"I saw that the driver was shot in his eye," said Mirajudin, who still had blood smeared on his arms. "He was bleeding from the eye and from the nose. I helped him, and we put him in an ambulance."

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## Resistance Action

Jun 29 By DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press Writer & AFP

Three Afghan soldiers were killed and seven others were wounded since Monday morning in bomb explosions across the country, according to the Ministry of Defense.

The Ministry of Interior reported that a private security guard was killed when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb in Sayd Abad district of Wardak province, west of Kabul.

In the south, two security guards were killed and three were wounded in an explosion in the Maizan district of Zabul province, said Mohammad Jan Rasoolyar, a spokesman for the provincial governor.

On Monday, six policemen were killed by a roadside bomb that ripped through their pickup truck in the Bala Buluk district of the western province of Farah, said local police spokesman Abdul Rauf Ahmadi.

In the southern province of Zabul, insurgents attacked a security company vehicle in the Shahr-e-Safa district on Monday, killing six security guards and wounding five, provincial spokesman Mohammad Jan Rasoulyar said.

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## **“We Don’t Want American Occupiers” Violent Protest Against U.S. Military Forces Breaks Out In Kabul**

Jun 29 Associated Press Writer

In southeastern Kabul, a protest against U.S. military forces in Afghanistan turned violent as demonstrators clashed with police.

At least 15 police officers and five civilians were wounded, according to Mohammad Khalil Dastyar, deputy police chief in the capital.

About 300 protesters blocked streets in the neighborhood of Qalacha. Some threw rocks through windows. A group hoisted a banner that said: “We don’t want American occupiers.”

An AP reporter at the scene heard gunshots, but it was unclear who was shooting. A police official said some of the protesters were shooting Kalashnikov rifles. Two police vehicles were damaged. Police were seen arresting six suspects.

The protest was prompted by a raid that Afghan police and intelligence officials conducted Monday night at a madrassa, or religious school, in which three people were arrested, Dastyar said.

One demonstrator said they were angry because foreign troops with the Afghan forces had torn up copies of the Quran and let a dog — considered unclean in Islam — rummage through a mosque.

A NATO spokesman, Lt. Comm. Iain Baxter, confirmed that foreign forces took part in a search in Kabul last night and arrested a number of suspected insurgents.

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# **U.S. Troops Dying In A Sewer Of Corruption: Afghan Attorney General Tells U.S. Ambassador To Fuck Off: Says “We Do Not Have Sufficient Evidence” To Prosecute Banker Buddy Of Extortionist Caught On Wiretaps “Discussing Bribes”**

June 29, 2010 By ALISSA J. RUBIN, New York Times [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan’s attorney general disputed published allegations Tuesday that he had been pressured by the Afghan political leadership to sideline corruption investigations into some of the country’s elite, and he turned on the American ambassador, Karl W. Eikenberry, alleging that the ambassador had pressed him to bring particular cases against high-profile figures.

The implication was that rather than being inappropriately pressured by Afghan government figures, the attorney general, Mohammad Ishaq Alako, was being inappropriately pressured by the Americans.

**He then charged that Mr. Eikenberry, the ambassador, had come to see him in the last two weeks to discuss two cases and ask why they had not yet been filed.**

**One case involved the former minister of Islamic affairs, who fled the country just before he was charged with extorting millions of dollars from companies that take people on the holy pilgrimage known as the hajj.**

**The second case was that of the No. 2 executive at the Afghan United Bank.**

**The executive, Rafiullah Azimi, appears to have been implicated in the case of the Islamic affairs minister, but also is involved with a company that is an important player in the informal banking system known as “hawala,” according to the Washington Post article.**

“In this particular case, against all diplomatic norms, the U.S. ambassador told me that ‘if you are not arresting him, you should resign,’ “ Mr. Alako said.

“Does diplomatic ethics allow threats such as this one?” Mr. Alako added.

**On the question of why Mr. Azimi had not been arrested and charged, Mr. Alako said: “We do not have sufficient evidence against him.”**

The Washington Post article quoted American officials as saying that in wiretap intercepts shared with the Afghan authorities and played during the trial of a lower-level Islamic affairs official, Mr. Azimi was heard discussing bribes paid to the former Islamic affairs minister, Mohammed Siddiq Chakari.

**MORE:**

## **“Senior US Lawmaker On Monday Angrily Blocked Billions Of Dollars In Aid To Afghanistan”**

### **“Too Many Americans Are Suffering In This Economy For Us To Put Their Hard- Earned Tax Dollars Into The Hands Of Criminals Overseas”**

**“I do not intend to appropriate one more dime for assistance to Afghanistan until I have confidence that US taxpayer money is not being abused to line the pockets of corrupt Afghan government officials, drug lords and terrorists,” she said.**

Jun 28, 2010 AFP

WASHINGTON – A senior US lawmaker on Monday angrily blocked billions of dollars in aid to Afghanistan, vowing not to give “one more dime” until Afghan President Hamid Karzai acts against corruption.

Representative Nita Lowey, who sits on the powerful committee in charge of the budget, said she would hold hearings into allegations that top Afghan officials flew suitcases full of cash from US aid to foreign safe havens.

“I do not intend to appropriate one more dime for assistance to Afghanistan until I have confidence that US taxpayer money is not being abused to line the pockets of corrupt Afghan government officials, drug lords and terrorists,” she said.

An aide to Lowey said that President Barack Obama’s administration requested 3.9 billion dollars in aid for Afghanistan in the 2011 fiscal year.

Lowey, a member of Obama’s Democratic Party from New York, said she would refuse to consider any assistance for Afghanistan other than “life-saving humanitarian aid” when her subcommittee meets on the budget on Wednesday.

“Too many Americans are suffering in this economy for us to put their hard-earned tax dollars into the hands of criminals overseas,” Lowey said in a statement.

“We will not commit billions more in taxpayer money for Afghanistan until there are assurances that such funds will be used for their intended purposes and that the government of Afghanistan is willing and able to root out corruption within its ranks,” she said.

Lowey heads the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations. Her decision would not affect military appropriations, which are handled by a separate subcommittee.

Lowey was responding to a report in The Wall Street Journal that US investigators suspect that Afghan officials stuffed suitcases full of cash siphoned from Western aid projects and flew them out of Kabul airport.

The report said more than three billion dollars has been legally declared to leave Kabul International Airport over the past three years, a figure so large for such a poor country that it triggered concerns.

Transparency International, a watchdog, has ranked Afghanistan as the world's most corrupt nation.

On taking office last year, the Obama administration pressed Karzai on corruption allegations. But it has become more discreet with its concerns after the Afghan leader lashed out at the United States.

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**System United States Using To  
Rate Readiness Of Afghan Army  
And Police “Seriously Flawed And  
There Was No Reliable Way To  
Measure Any Progress”  
New Report “Details Drug Abuse,  
Heavy Attrition, Corruption And  
Illiteracy Among The Afghan Security  
Forces”  
Lt. Gen. Rodriguez Says Lt. Gen Caldwell  
IV Is A Lying Stack Of Shit**

**In addition, the report said some parts of the country were so dangerous that assessment teams could not rate the security forces in those areas at all.**

June 28, 2010 By ELISABETH BUMILLER, The New York Times & June 29, 2010, By Karen DeYoung, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON —

**The U.S. military has systematically overstated or failed to adequately measure the capabilities of Afghan security forces, whose performance is key to the Obama administration's exit strategy for the war, according to a new government audit.**

The system the United States used for the past five years to rate the readiness of Afghanistan's Army and police force was seriously flawed and there was no reliable way to measure any progress, according to a report by a special inspector general that was released on Monday.

Despite spending by the United States of \$27 billion on the training of Afghan security forces since 2002, the report found that even top-rated Afghan units could not operate independently and that the ratings of many security forces overstated their actual capabilities. In addition, the report said some parts of the country were so dangerous that assessment teams could not rate the security forces in those areas at all.

"It basically has not been a dependable system on which to determine the capability of the Afghan national security forces," Arnold Fields, who leads the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, said in a telephone interview on Monday. The office is an independent auditor established by Congress.

The 50-page report, which details drug abuse, heavy attrition, corruption and illiteracy among the Afghan security forces, is the latest setback for the American effort in Afghanistan. Training the Afghan Army and police force to defend their country on their own is at the heart of President Obama's strategy for the withdrawal of American troops, which is set to begin, if only in modest numbers, by July 2011.

**Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, the American commander in charge of training the Afghan security forces, disputed the report's findings, calling them out of date and inaccurate.**

**But in another accompanying letter, Lt. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, the No. 2 American commander in Afghanistan, called the report "accurate" and said that American commanders were already working on its recommended improvements, among them more consistent, systematic and rigorous evaluations.**

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## **Now For The Good News:**

# U.S. Troops Face New Threat: Poisoning By Afghanistan's Neurotoxic Sand

June 28, 2010 By Spencer Ackerman, Wired.com

U.S. troops already face plenty of threats in Afghanistan: AK-47-wielding insurgents, improvised bombs, an intransigent and incompetent government.

Now add a less familiar challenge to that list of woes: Afghanistan's toxic sand.

The pulverized turf, it turns out, contains high levels of manganese, silicon, iron, magnesium, aluminum, chromium and other metals that act as neurotoxic agents when ingested.

Combine the country's frequent sandstorms and the kicked-up dust that results from helicopter travel with troops' nostrils, mouths and pores, and you've got an unexpected example of how inhospitable the terrain is for the soon-to-be 98,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines fighting the war.

That's all according to new research presented this month to a neurotoxicology conference in Oregon by a senior scientist with the Navy Environmental Health Effects Laboratory. That scientist, Palur G. Gunasekar, tells Politics Daily's Sheila Kaplan that "(a)s the sand extract dose increases at the higher concentration you see cell death." As the late Ronnie James Dio told us time and again, metal is evil.

A Navy spokesman tells Kaplan that more research is necessary to determine whether a connection exists between Afghan sand and neurotoxicology, as the service has yet to receive complaints from troops about "cognitive difficulties that are unrelated to traumatic brain injuries."

Those injuries have become the signature trauma of nine years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan as a result of roadside bombs and other improvised explosive devices, with nearly 64,000 cases diagnosed between 2003 and 2009.

According to ProPublica, Congress has dedicated an estimated \$1.7 billion over the last few years to help troops recover from traumatic brain injuries, even standing up six new "Defense Centers of Excellence" in 2007 to provide research support as well as medical care.

But now it looks like there's a new, tragic and expensive unintended health consequence of the war.

And if the Defense Department's late start in combating traumatic brain injuries is instructive, it's going to take a lot more than research and the glacial pace of the defense health bureaucracy to deal with neurotoxic sand.

A September 2009 Defense Department overview of its anti-TBI efforts (.PDF) to date found that grappling with the scope of such a multifaceted health problem required “collaborative efforts” with “state-of-the-art science, technology and knowledge-based outcomes.”

And the Department still isn't there yet, years later.

Until something like that kicks into gear for toxic sand, troops are going to be left on their own to mitigate their exposure, so that may mean enterprising commanders ordering their troops to wear black sunglasses and face masks this summer in the Afghan desert.

If there's any upside to a covered face in baking heat, at least it'll look pretty metal.

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

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE  
WAR**

## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

### **Insurgents Take “Control Of Several Key Positions Including The Main Central Police Station” & “Military Bases In The Abdal Aziz District”**

29 June Mareeg.com & (AKI)

Sheik Ali Mohamed Hussein, the governor of Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen has held press conference for the journalists in Mogadishu, claiming victories over the fighting in north Mogadishu that killed about 10, injuring 15 others on Monday in conflict between government forces and Islamist militants from Al-Shabab.

The governor said that they took over more new military bases of the TFG in Abdal aziz district in north Mogadishu while there is no comment about the fighting from the officials of the transitional government so far.

At least 4 people were killed and more others wounded after bitter shelling and fighting between the that transitional government of Somalia and Harakat Al-shabab Mujahideen broke out in Abdal aziz and Shibis districts in north Mogadishu.

Islamist insurgents attacked a police building and an army barracks in northern Mogadishu, officials and witnesses said.

Sheik Ali Mohamed Hussein, a local leader from Al-Shabab, held a media conference in Mogadishu to claim victory.

“We took control of several key positions including the main central police station,” Sheikh Ali Mohamed Hussein told reporters.

He claimed they took over military bases in the Abdal Aziz district of north Mogadishu but there was no comment from officials of the transitional government.

A government security official admitted to retreating following the fresh Al-Shabab offensive but denied that the militants had made any significant gains.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



The casket containing Sgt. Denis Kisseloff is carried into St. Joseph Catholic Church for his funeral Mass Saturday, May 22, 2010, in Cottleville, Mo. Kisseloff, 45, died May 14 when his unit was attacked with a rocket propelled grenade and fire from small arms in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

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# 58 % Of Americans “Back The Plan To Start Pulling Out U.S. Troops In July 2011”

## “Interest In Afghanistan Is High”

Jun 28, 2010 By Susan Page - USA TODAY [Excerpts]

Most Americans approve of President Obama’s decision to oust Gen. Stanley McChrystal as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, a USA TODAY/Gallup Poll finds, and they support the White House timetable to begin withdrawing from the nation’s longest war next year.

In all, 58 percent back the plan to start pulling out U.S. troops in July 2011 and 38 percent oppose it.

Interest in Afghanistan is high.

By 2-1, those surveyed say they followed the McChrystal drama closely. By 53 percent to 30 percent, they approve of the president’s decision to remove the general.

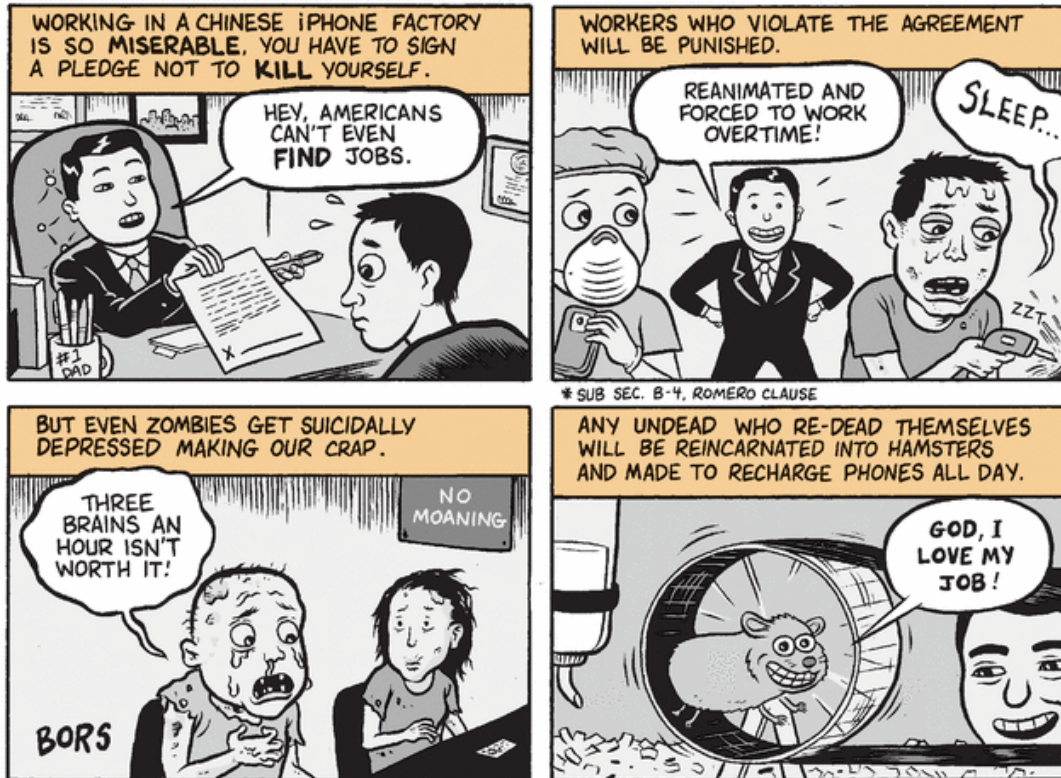
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## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK





## CLASS WAR REPORTS



## U.S. Scores Dead Last Again In Healthcare

**“Americans Spend Twice As Much As Residents Of Other Developed Countries On Healthcare, But Get Lower Quality, Less Efficiency And Have The Least Equitable System”**

Jun 23, 2010 Maggie Fox, Health and Science Editor, (Reuters) [Excerpts]

Americans spend twice as much as residents of other developed countries on healthcare, but get lower quality, less efficiency and have the least equitable system, according to a report released on Wednesday.

The United States ranked last when compared to six other countries -- Britain, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand, the Commonwealth Fund report found.

“As an American it just bothers me that with all of our know-how, all of our wealth, that we are not assuring that people who need healthcare can get it,” Commonwealth Fund president Karen Davis told reporters in a telephone briefing.

The current report uses data from nationally representative patient and physician surveys in seven countries in 2007, 2008, and 2009.

In 2007, health spending was \$7,290 per person in the United States, more than double that of any other country in the survey.

Australians spent \$3,357, Canadians \$3,895, Germans \$3,588, the Netherlands \$3,837 and Britons spent \$2,992 per capita on health in 2007. New Zealand spent the least at \$2,454.

This is a big rise from the Fund’s last similar survey, in 2007, which found Americans spent \$6,697 per capita on healthcare in 2005, or 16 percent of gross domestic product.

**“We rank last on safety and do poorly on several dimensions of quality,” Schoen told reporters.**

**“We do particularly poorly on going without care because of cost. And we also do surprisingly poorly on access to primary care and after-hours care.”**

The report looks at five measures of healthcare -- quality, efficiency, access to care, equity and the ability to lead long, healthy, productive lives.

**Britain, whose nationalized healthcare system was widely derided by opponents of U.S. healthcare reform, ranks first in quality while the Netherlands ranked first overall on all scores, the Commonwealth team found.**

U.S. patients with chronic conditions were the most likely to say they gotten the wrong drug or had to wait to learn of abnormal test results.

Critics of reports that show Europeans or Australians are healthier than Americans point to the U.S. lifestyle as a bigger factor than healthcare.

“On the other hand, the other countries have higher rates of smoking,” Davis countered. And Germany, for instance, has a much older population more prone to chronic disease.

**Every other system covers all its citizens, the report noted and said the U.S. system, which leaves 46 million Americans or 15 percent of the population without health insurance, is the most unfair.**

“The lower the performance score for equity, the lower the performance on other measures.

“This suggests that, when a country fails to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, it also fails to meet the needs of the average citizen,” the report reads.

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## **Greek Workers Launch General Strike Against Government Plan To Cut Pensions, Raise The Retirement Age And Make It Easier For Companies To Fire Employees:**

**“They Want To Put Us In A Straitjacket So We Work For Free All Our Lives So That Some Can Have Their Wealth And Get Very Rich At Our Expense”**

**Tear Gas “Fired At Ship Workers Blocking Port Of Piraeus “When They Swarmed Aboard An Arriving Boat”**



Ship workers blocked tourist ships in the port of Piraeus

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

29 June BBC

Greek riot police have clashed with protesters in Athens and the main port of Piraeus during a 24-hour general strike against cost-cutting reforms.

In the capital, demonstrators threw sticks, bottles and stones at police who responded by firing tear gas.

Tear gas was also fired at ship workers trying to blockade Piraeus's port when they swarmed aboard an arriving boat.

The strike comes as MPs debate tough austerity measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund and EU.

They include cutting pensions, raising the retirement age and making it easier for companies to dismiss employees.

After more than six months of austerity measures and industrial strife, the confrontation between the government and the trade unions is reaching a climax, says the BBC's Malcolm Brabant in Athens.

The debate in parliament over proposed reforms that began on Tuesday is expected to last more than a week.

The challenge for the trade unions is to get as many people on the streets as possible to convince potentially rebellious Socialist MPs to vote against their own party and defeat the bill, our correspondent says.

The government holds a seven-seat majority in the 300-member house.

During a demonstration by about 10,000 people on the streets of the capital on Tuesday, some hooded and masked youths threw stones and other missiles at riot police, who responded with tear gas and stun grenades.

Tuesday's strike shut down many public services and disrupted local transport.

Medical workers and journalists took part, meaning that hospitals were running on emergency staffing and TV news programmes were cancelled.

Some domestic flights were cancelled but international flights were unaffected.

The strike in the nearby port of Piraeus - like a similar protest last week - was declared illegal, and the authorities tried to prevent unionists from blocking the departure of ships to Aegean islands.

Ferries did leave the port early in the morning, though there were angry scenes as some passengers were prevented from boarding and other ships were blocked. Officials said their tickets would be valid on Wednesday.

"They want to put us in a straitjacket so we work for free all our lives so that some can have their wealth and get very rich at our expense," Sotiris Poulidikogiannis, a protester in Piraeus told the Associated Press.

“We don’t accept this. Day by day we’ll grow stronger and more aware of how to overturn this situation.”

There was tension in Piraeus as ferries were blocked.

One tourist told the BBC that he had tried to catch a boat from Piraeus after his flight from Santorini to Athens was cancelled, but that police had ordered passengers away from the port.

The tourist industry was in uproar after the government did not enforce the court order declaring last week’s strike in Piraeus illegal.

### 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



### Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

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<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:  
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## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization.

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! ([www.ivaw.org/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

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