

Military Resistance 8H8



8.1.10 THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. UNIVERSAL-CLICK.

**“People Are Still Dying
Off”**

**“The Brigade We’re Attached To
Lost Four People In The Last
Few Months”**

**“About Once A Week, Their Trucks
Will Get Tagged By IEDs”**

**“We Got Attacked Today And These Mothers Mortared The Gym! My Precious Gym! Six Guys Are Injured”
[This Article, About Soldiers In Iraq Who Made A Music Video, Has Hidden Bits And Pieces That Make It Very Clear The War In Iraq Is So Not Over]**



Specialist Codey Wilson at a Guard base in Lynchburg, Virginia, in June.
(Photo: Matt Eich/Luceo)

They are no longer the subject of war articles and war books and war movies, and their slain and armless and legless are no longer on the front page of the New York Times.

“Yeah, Afghanistan is worse,” he says. “But people think that’s where the real fighters are, and the guys over here we’re just hangin’ out.

“It’s not like that. There are still people dying.”

Aug 1, 2010 By Lisa Taddeo, New York Magazine [Excerpts]

Inside an armored truck are two soldiers. Soldier One is reading a missive against the steering wheel and yells, "What?!"

"What's wrong?" asks Soldier Two, smiling because he can't help it.

"Gays, man! Gays in the military. It's all right to be gay in the military?"

And then a club song kicks in. A soldier unzips his uniform. A shirtless boy dances in the distance atop a military vehicle. The music-video subtitle: "If the Army Goes Gay. A Codey Wilson Production."

The Video At:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya9iFYmdYp4>

A few months ago, when the U.S. military was in the midst of discussions about repealing its "don't ask, don't tell" policy, 22-year-old specialist Wilson took his JVC camera and filmed some of the guys in his company -- a troop of National Guardsmen from Virginia on a city-size base in Iraq -- dancing to Ke\$ha's "Blah Blah Blah" in modified uniform.

The director himself appears in his full Army vest, a camouflage loincloth hanging between his naked thighs.

The video is a spoof of what would happen if soldiers were allowed to identify as openly homosexual. There is a shower scene and a night scene with glow sticks and a scene with a kid in a gas mask dry-humping another soldier. There are serious-looking Army guys in T-shirts that are knotted up at the waist to expose their bellybuttons.

Wilson posted the video around 5 p.m. on May 10, and at 2 a.m. the other guys were banging on his door and they came in shouting about how many people had seen it. Holy crap, there were 54,000 views.

"We felt like heroes," he says. "It was the coolest feeling." Wilson heard a rumor that the Pentagon had to brief President Obama on the video, and while the president was watching it, he is said to have "laughed his ass off."

But Wilson's more immediate higher-ups weren't laughing.

They told him to take it down, son.

He had to draft a letter explaining himself.

He was investigated and put on garbage duty.

By the time Wilson removed the video on the evening of the second day, it had received almost 200,000 views. The Huffington Post and Perez Hilton and NBC and others had posted the link on their sites.

The commentary was wide-ranging: Some people thought it was funny, some thought it was sexy.

Then there were the people who thought it was nearly blasphemous. What the hell are these boys doing, wasting our tax dollars making silly videos? They are supposed to be fighting a war. And what was it supposed to mean? Was it for or against a change in policy?

This was a different sort of reality television.

The boy in Wilson's video at 37 seconds in, the boy at 48 seconds in. They are deployed in Iraq; at this very moment, they are driving tanks up and down the hell roads that lead to Baghdad, where, more often than is advertised, a kid is killed by a roadside bomb.

The boy at 37 seconds in could be dead tomorrow, and the video would take on that cobweb lens, the dreamy freeze-frame of what once was.

Wilson's video did not appear in isolation. A few weeks before he uploaded "Blah Blah Blah," a troop of soldiers in Afghanistan spoofed Lady Gaga's "Telephone" and it became a viral sensation.

These videos are revealing a new breed of soldier: rebellious, witty, rabid consumers of pop culture, thousands of miles from home but able to Skype daily with family and friends.

When they are not on patrol, they live on the web. They are there and here at once.

In Iraq, there are long, stretching days and lonely nights when the guys don't come out of their rooms unless the Internet is down or an alarm sounds and the base is in trouble.

They get gray inside waiting for time to pass, downloading songs and doing pull-ups and growing larger, their arms, chests, jaws. But the making of the video was a reason to come outside, to wield glow sticks, to show off their gym bodies, to have fun. "They don't pay us," Wilson says, "to be miserable out here."

Today is one of Wilson's last days of leave before he ships out, back to Iraq via Atlanta via Kuwait, where the boys switch from commercial planes to military planes and it's a whole crew of camo kids loading themselves in like gear.

He's driving through Lynchburg in his welcome-home present to himself, a black 2010 Mazda6, and he has the air-conditioning cold and high. In Iraq, it was dry-death hot, and here in Lynchburg a few days after Memorial Day, it is wet-dirt hot. Wilson drives by his college, Liberty University, which is attached to his private high school, Liberty Christian Academy.

He points to the high school, which is dwarfed by a planetary football field, and says, "You get fined if you have a picture holding a drink on Facebook. It's that kind of place."

He graduated in 2006 and couldn't wait to get to college. But in his junior year at the academy, he let himself get recruited.

"My recruiter was a *genius*," he says. A lot of the soldiers paint their recruiters as highly intelligent men who read their brains and knew exactly what to say. Wilson was 17 years old and the kind of kid who was trying to wrap anomalous muscles around a small-boy body. "He saw my ego glowing. He said, 'Boy, did you know you could go to boot camp while you are still in high school?' I was like, 'What?! You *can*? How many other people do it?' He goes, 'Almost nobody!'"

So Wilson signed up for the National Guard, partly for the money (a \$6,000 bonus plus tuition for school) but mostly because he was flattered to be asked.

He has been deployed twice: a year the first time, and it will be eight months when he comes home for the last time, in August. In Iraq, he is in the communications department. He is also often the gunner when they do convoy missions across the country.

The last night before he ships out again, all of Wilson's friends and some ex-girlfriends and maybe a prospect or two have gathered at Buffalo Wild Wings off Route 460 near the Lynchburg airport. It's a big hall of a restaurant, and there's a southern band playing and two big tables full of his friends eating 45-cent wings and drinking Blue Motorcycles, which contain all the clear alcohols plus tequila and blue Curaçao.

Here is Mike, who is in Wilson's company in Iraq. They hang out in one another's chu's a lot. (That's Containerized Housing Units.) There are two to three boys in each. They have their beds and their laptops and their mini-fridges and their huge tubs of strawberry protein powder and their DVDs and their iPods.

Music, they all say, saves them. They talk about stuff going on at home, but mostly they don't. Girls, family. "It's easier," says Mike, "when you don't think about what you're missing."

Wilson's friend Amy Richardson is a combat medic, 22 years old. When she's home in Lynchburg working retail for American Eagle, that's when she's lonely, she says. She thrills to being in the field. "You don't need to know the person you're walking beside," she says, "but you know they'll give their life up for you, and you would die for them."

That makes her feel the opposite of lonely.

A few weeks later, back in Iraq, it is just after the Fourth of July.

In Wilson's neck of the base, he hangs out with Mike, who says he misses green grass today, more so even than drinking; Fontane, who misses freedom; Moses, who misses his shower; Rampage, who misses the daughter he hasn't met; and Wilson's roommate Ramen, who is so called because his family sends him stockades of ramen noodles, in beef and chicken flavors, and it is all he eats every day.

Shirtless and kneeling before his microwave, he assembles ramen burritos -- he drains the noodles and rolls them up in a tortilla -- when everyone else leaves for the dining facility.

Fontane says he joined the Army for self-improvement. He is 31 and almost has his bachelor's degree, and this is because of the Army. It gives you focus and a schedule, and it pays for school. Rampage joined up to honor his late brother, who was also in the National Guard. Also the money. A lot of the soldiers join for college money. Ramen signed up because "a recruiter came along with a \$20,000 check."

None of these guys joined to kill the enemy.

"That's all the Marines," says Moses. "Or the Rangers. That's active duty. Nobody who joins the Reserves says, 'I'm gonna go join the Guard one weekend a month and whup some ass.'"

And yet here they are in Iraq, if not trying to whup some ass then trying, at least, to keep from getting their asses whupped.

Folks back home have the perception that the soldiers in Iraq are twiddling their useless thumbs, says Wilson.

They are no longer the subject of war articles and war books and war movies, and their slain and armless and legless are no longer on the front page of the New York Times.

"Yeah, Afghanistan is worse," he says. "But people think that's where the real fighters are, and the guys over here we're just hangin' out.

"It's not like that. There are still people dying."

Another guy says, "The brigade we're attached to lost four people in the last few months," and Wilson tells him to hush up, they're not supposed to give statistics.

Wilson says, "People are still dying off. Afghanistan is definitely scarier in most ways, but Iraq is a different war.

"It's worse because nothing changes, we're doing the same thing we've been doing for the past two years, it's just different soldiers doing the same things other soldiers were doing a few months ago."

On this day in July, Wilson and Rampage and Fontane and Moses and Mike are in Wilson and Ramen's chu on the base that is built around some old Iraqi bunkers that the U.S. Army overtook.

They're talking about Lindsay Lohan going to jail, because she has just been handed her sentence. They get their news from Yahoo and the like. The print magazines they are sent, says Wilson, consist of "every tool-bag muscle magazine and every kind of weapons magazine that exists."

The Army, it seems, does not know who these boys are, not the way that Facebook does, with their macros up in everybody's engines so they can deliver heat-seeking ads.

About Lohan, Fontane says, "When I saw her on the news, crying in the courtroom -- shit. If it was me back home, if I'd gotten consecutive DUIs, I would've been locked up long ago. I mean, the fact that she's crying about 90 days ... Fontane has been in Iraq for hundreds of days.

Iraq is scorched, says Wilson. That is the best word.

It's dusty. Your ankles get tough from kicking and slipping on rocks all day long. It's so hot that your sweat evaporates in direct sunlight. So hot you don't sweat.

This week, it's so hot that they can't stand to eat carbs. Ramen has laid off the ramen in favor of fruits and vegetables.

It is too hot, in fact, for underwear. The boys just powder up. Wilson dreams of having a mesh window on the rear of his pants between his legs and his butt so that the skin down there can breathe.

Having a better job shows on the body. Some of the combat guys are shriveled and small, but the supply guys -- who get the most time at the gym -- are huge and beautiful. "Combat in Iraq," says Wilson, "has come to mean riding around in a truck for four days or more at a time." The soldiers pound energy drinks and Honey Buns to stay awake and alert.

Up north, there is a big base that they convoy to. They call it Mount Olympus. It has an enormous swimming pool, and roasting around it is a meat locker of Air Force and Navy troops. In their farmers' tans, Wilson and the rest of the combat guys look like small pale potatoes from the Midwest.

When he was recruited, his mother made him choose the communications department. She knew he was wild, and she wanted him in an office, out of harm's way as much as possible. Little could she know that modern warfare doesn't always spare the desk jockeys.

In Iraq, the gossip is "Did you hear so-and-so lost his arm in the truck accident?"

About once a week, their trucks will get tagged, which is another way of saying hit, by IEDs -- improvised explosive devices, such as roadside bombs. Thankfully, Wilson says, their armor is so damn good.

An e-mail from Wilson a few days ago: "We got attacked today and these mothers mortared the gym! My precious gym!" Six guys are injured, but nobody died. A mortar attack sounds like a light whistle that gets ever louder as it gets deathly closer.

Here on a top bunk, there is a boy in glasses and a dog collar. He is half-naked, maybe fully naked, and his torso is large and white beside the blue sheets.

"How you got pimples on your chest, man?" says a black guy from the floor.

The collared kid says they're scars.

"Scars?"

"Yeah, scars of pimples."

The other guys in the room -- reading, standing, getting ready for bed -- laugh. The collared kid is laughing most of all. He knows he deserves to be teased. Aside from a stuffed Pikachu with whom it is alleged that he has a special relationship, he is a 24-year-old virgin.

Someone else says, "Shit, are you naked or something?"

"I'm not naked!" says the dog-collared kid and he begins to lift off the blue sheets to prove it and the room goes wild. Heads bury into pillows, they laugh and tell him to stop, pull the sheets back up, man!

Nobody in Wilson's "If the Army Goes Gay" video is actually gay, even though that's the part that a lot of people got stuck on. He says he'd be shocked (shocked, not upset, he is careful to say) if he found out there were any gay guys in his unit. "They're all from Virginia, where we have a lot of straight arrows."

Wilson says there are homophobes on the base, "backcountry rednecks" whom Wilson makes fun of, but mostly makes fun with, because that is how you get across the sand.

There were guys in the company who thought Wilson was disrespecting the unit or speaking out in favor of the repeal. "I was also getting gay jokes for a while, but I have kind of a reputation at home -- I've had like 50 girlfriends -- so let people make jokes."

The thing they seem most concerned about is that the repeal will usher in a slew of new rules about fraternization. "If everyone knows you're gay and you touch someone, even as a joke, you'll be going down for it, the same way that if a guy held a girl's hand on the -- *Stop it, man!* My roommate's touching me right now."

These kids don't have politics -- or not the kind you'd recognize back home. They made the video, says Wilson, because they want to be part of the conversation. They watch Lady Gaga videos from their warm blue laptops thousands of miles away, they download current music and post items on Facebook about caches of puppies they find inside of old bunkers.

More than anything it says about gays in the military, the message is, Hey, we're still here.

"The most special thing about the video I made," says Wilson, "is that for a few days, we kind of became members of society. It was like we actually mattered."

Everyone gets depressed at some point in Iraq, he says.

The word depressed comes out of his mouth pretty often, actually.

These boys are different from soldiers that came before, savvier in a sense, mostly because they are more in tune with what they're missing.

Iraq is like Narnia, minutes are hours and you have plenty of time to watch the world move past you. Time happens faster back home. People become celebrities overnight. Girlfriends move on in an afternoon. You can see it all happening in real time on the computer screen.

"Relationships don't survive this stuff," says Wilson. A friend of his opened a letter from his fiancée, and the engagement ring fell out.

A few days later, Wilson had to console Ramen after he found out his fiancée was cheating on him. "We've got young kids in our area preparing for a divorce. People have gotten used to soldiers being away. They just see us as a temporary person now."

A few weeks ago, the girl Wilson was seeing broke it off with him, saying she needed to be free. A friend and fellow soldier posted on Facebook in solidarity: "Gone are the days of WW2 when girls waited weeks for letters and held onto every word and sentiment."

Wilson has started making episodic snapshots of life on the base, documenting how things look from out on the sand.

In one video he's made, you can see the fuzzy darkness of Hip-Hop Night.

A dark concrete room with a bunch of boys dancing without any beer and with very few girls.

The video cuts to the 24-year-old virgin, being interrogated by Wilson about the erotic food visuals he employs during masturbation. Wilson says, "So, at some point you thought about pizza and ... They're laughing and screwing around, and they just look like regular kids.

But then there is a red fire burning across the dark war sky and they ask each other if they've been attacked and you remember, this is not a college dorm.

His follow-up to "If the Army Goes Gay" will be a "really sexual and violent and risqué video calendar," which he says will give "all the muscular guys in my unit a chance to take their shirts off again."

He also plans to produce an actual calendar you can download to your desktop. "I'm going to drop this next one a week before we ship out. By the time everyone gets enraged, I'll hopefully be on a plane back home."

Wilson is supposed to come home on August 12, part of the plan to drawdown to 50,000 troops in Iraq by the end of August and end the combat mission there.

He is looking through the blue window of his computer at the faster, greener world on the other side. "We're ready," he says, "to merge back into society."

On the other end of the line, there is a faint clicking.

Wilson apologizes, explaining that he is packing up. It is the sound of unloading ammunition.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

POW Kills Two U.S. Marines And British Mercenary

August 9, 2010 The Associated Press & Guardian News and Media Limited

Two U.S. Marines were killed Saturday when they tried to subdue a prisoner who was trying to escape from an undisclosed prison in southern Afghanistan, NATO said Monday.

The prisoner escaped a room where he was observing prayers, acquired a rifle and started fighting Afghan and coalition forces. The inmate was shot and killed.

A former Northern Ireland policeman was also shot dead his father said today.

Ken McGonigle, 51, from Co Derry, was working for a security services company when he was gunned down by the inmate, who seized his captors' weapons.

McGonigle was his first target as he ran out of the building.

"Kenneth was the first man he saw – he opened up and Kenneth hit the ground," Joe McGonigle said.

The gunman ran into some buildings and two hand grenades were thrown after him.

Then two marines entered as he was standing behind the door.

"He blew them to smithereens," McGonigle Sr added.

Two Danish Soldier Killed In Helmand

August 09, 2010 Agence France-Presse

Two Danish soldiers were killed on Saturday when their tank hit a roadside bomb in Helmand, the Danish military said.

U.S. “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan

August 9, 2010 The Associated Press

An American service member was killed Monday in a bomb attack in southern Afghanistan,

Four U.S. Soldiers Wounded By Coordinated Four Hour Attack On Three Combat Posts In Paktika

8.9.10 AFP

In the southeast, seven suspected insurgents were killed and five people were wounded Monday, including four US soldiers, when insurgents attacked three foreign military combat posts.

The troops came under attack in the rural province of Paktika, which shares a long, porous border with Pakistani areas troubled by Taliban militancy.

"The attack started at around 6:00 am local time and continued for four hours," said US Air Force Master Sergeant Lori Mills.

Another German Military Spy Plane Down In Kunduz

August 09, 2010 Xinhua

An unmanned German plane crashed in Kunduz province north of Afghanistan on Monday.

The vehicle, a German Army Kleinflugger Zielortung, or KZO, was remotely piloted from a ground station and contains no weapons or intelligence that could be exploited by enemy forces.

Meantime, authorities in Kunduz province told Xinhua that the pilotless plane went down in Ludin area, a suburban of provincial capital Kunduz city at 01:30 a.m. local time but caused no loss of life or damage.

This is the second unmanned plane of foreign troops that has crashed in the northern Kunduz province over the past month.

Soldier Is Remembered As Family Man, Local Athlete

July 26, 2010 By Wendy Fry, Associate Staff Writer, The San Diego Union-Tribune

Army Staff Sgt. Conrad Mora's job in Afghanistan was to clear roads of explosives.

That duty killed him Saturday.

Mora, a 24-year-old from San Diego, was on his second deployment to Afghanistan. He was leading a group of soldiers when their military vehicle ran across a roadside bomb in the town of Qalat. Three other soldiers also died in the attack.

Military life "was his passion," said his brother-in-law, Christian Lleva. "His passion was serving."

Mora's body was returned to Dover Air Force Base, Del., on Monday. His mother, Carmelita, of National City, traveled to Philadelphia to identify his remains, Lleva said.

Mora's wife, Ann, had moved to Washington state with her husband before his deployment. He also is survived by his 1-year-old son, Christopher; his father, Alejandrino Mora; and his sister, Carmela.

Mora's family moved to San Diego from the Philippines when Mora was a child, around age 9 or 10, Lleva said.

Mora attended Morse High School and played football there, Lleva said. He also practiced mixed-martial arts such as jujitsu.

His family, particularly his young son, was especially important to him, Lleva said. His mother sent an e-mail to Conrad wishing him a happy Father's Day last month. And though he was far away from his family and his home, he wrote back one simple sentence.

"You really know how to make me smile," the return e-mail said.

The last time Mora's family saw him was in May, when they shared a meal at Goldilocks, a bakery and Filipino cuisine restaurant in National City.

"After dinner we came back here, and we all talked for hours and hours," Lleva said.

He said the family was disappointed he had to deploy to Afghanistan for the second time after having served a year in combat.

"We don't really have anything to say about it," said Lleva, a Marine. "If they want us to go somewhere, we don't have a choice."

During his six-year career, Mora received six Army Achievement Medals and an Army Commendation Medal, said a public affairs officer with Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.

"Clearly, he was recognized by his leaders for something," the officer said.

Besides serving his country, he was also passionate about music. "He would rap about anything," Lleva said. "He could make anything rhyme."

Mora died with three other soldiers: Sgt. Daniel Lim of Cypress, Spc. Joseph A. Bauer of Cincinnati and Pfc. Andrew L. Hand of Enterprise, Ala. They were assigned to the 5th Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

The battalion deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in October.

Memorial service arrangements have not been announced.

Sylmar Marine Had Plans For Home, Family

07/22/2010 By C.J. Lin, Staff Writer, Daily News

Just 23, Marine Cpl. Julio Vargas had a lot to look forward to.

He had gotten married in December, and he and wife Rosita had purchased a home near Camp Pendleton.

His first combat deployment to Afghanistan was coming to an end in September. And Rosita was waiting for him to come home so they could start a family.

Before he went overseas, Vargas had asked his dad: "Are you ready to be a grandpa?"

But Vargas was killed Tuesday by a roadside bomb in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan.

It was just his second day on patrol, according to Adalberto Cruz, a neighbor of 11 years, who joined with other mourners on Thursday outside the Vargas family's townhome in Sylmar.

"He enjoyed doing what he wanted to do," Cruz said. "He was a good kid. He was always smiling and you'd never see him mad or anything. He was always real polite, really outgoing."

Upon receiving news of Vargas' death, his parents and brothers - including his identical twin who serves in the Army Reserves - flew to Portland, Ore., to receive his remains, Cruz said.

"It's a tragedy for us all," Cruz said. "This was a shock to us."

After graduating from Sylmar High School, Vargas went to Texas on a mission with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was through his church that he met his future wife.

"He was so young," said neighbor Jessica Salgado, who recalled playing with Vargas when they were children. "He had so much ahead of him."

In February 2008, he enlisted in the Marines. He was a vehicle gunner assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force.

Vargas' personal service awards include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

"The Marines and sailors of the 1st Marine Division mourn the loss of Corporal Vargas," said 1st Lt. Ken Kunze in a statement. "Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family."

Vargas stationed at Camp Pendleton and was the second Marine from the base to be killed in Afghanistan this week.

Flags at the state Capitol were flown at half-staff in Vargas' honor.

Family, Friends Grieve For Fallen Marine

July 30, 2010 BY ALEX PIAZZA, Traverse City Record-Eagle

LAKE ANN — Cpl. Paul James Miller was more than just a Marine.

He was an athlete, who once led his Lake Ann Little League team to victory over its rival with a triple in the final inning.

Miller, 22, of Lake Ann, was a beloved son, who often surprised his mother with Slurpees at work.

He also was a bit of a thrill-seeker, which sometimes prompted him to ignore the speed limit while behind the wheel.

All those traits led the 2006 Benzie Central High School graduate to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps months after he received his diploma.

Family members, friends and area veterans on Thursday paid their final respects to Miller, who died last week after a roadside bomb exploded nearby while he was on foot patrol with the Third Combat Engineer Battalion in Afghanistan.

"Our family is devastated by his death, but feel very proud of how brave he was," said his sister, Ashley Gavaldon.

Hundreds crammed inside the Lake Ann United Methodist Church, where a group of Marines presented Miller's family with a Purple Heart, a prestigious military award given to military members injured or killed in combat. A lengthy funeral procession, comprised of several motorcycles and American flags, traveled from the church to the Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens Cemetery, where Miller was buried.

Matthew Schoech waved his American flag along Veterans Drive as the procession entered the cemetery. "I understood that feeling," said Schoech, a Traverse City Marine who served in the Vietnam War. "I feel like it was one of my own. They grieve for his loss, and we grieve as well."

Craig Metz often drives by the cemetery on work-related trips, so he decided to stop by and wave his American flag in honor of Miller.

"I get tears in my eyes even just thinking about it, and I didn't even know him," said Metz, a Kingsley Marine who served during the post-Vietnam era. "It's like part of your body's dying. I wanted to make sure I was part of this. Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Miller's passion for the Marines came shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks — he was 13. A former teacher said Miller would have enlisted in the Marines when he was 16 if he had the opportunity. Family members also knew after Miller's high school graduation that it was only a matter of time before he enlisted.

"Upon Paul graduating high school, there was no hesitation to join the Marines," Gavaldon said. "He didn't seem to even toss around the idea of doing anything else. He was adventurous and anxious of his deployment to Iraq, as well as Afghanistan."

His death stunned many communities across northwest Michigan, especially in Miller's hometown of Lake Ann where several residents knew him on a first-name basis. But the impact of his death prompted an outpouring of community support this week.

Several veterans and local authorities on Tuesday escorted a vehicle that transported Miller's remains from Cherry Capital Airport to Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home in preparation for his memorial service. Scores of area residents lined the streets to honor him.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm also ordered that U.S. flags be lowered on Thursday throughout Michigan in honor of Miller's funeral services, as requested by his family.

Janet Toth never met Miller, but her husband's involvement in the military led her to drive several hours from her West Branch home to take part in the memorial service.

"I hope it's a comfort for them to know that we care for their son, and I hope it helps in their healing process," said Toth, who waved her American flag as a tribute to Miller. "Whatever we can do to help."

Miller is survived by his wife, Sarah, sister, Ashley, and parents, Jim and Teresa Miller.

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR
HEALTH;
ALL HOME, NOW**



U.S. soldiers watch as an M-ATV armored vehicle burns after it struck an improvised explosive device near Combat Outpost Nolen in the Arghandab Valley north of Kandahar July 23, 2010. REUTERS/Bob Strong



Soldiers from the US Army's 1-320 Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division assist a comrade with an injured ankle after his M-ATV armored vehicle struck an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on a road near Combat Outpost Nolen in the Arghandab Valley. Picture taken July 23, 2010. REUTERS/Bob Strong



A U.S. soldier of the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division runs with a grenade to resupply a soldier during a firefight at COP Nolen, Arghandab Valley, Kandahar, Afghanistan, July 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)



U.S. soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, during a firefight with insurgents at COP Nolen, Arghandab Valley, Kandahar, Afghanistan, July 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)



US soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division return fire after coming under attack by Taliban at COP Nolen, Arghandab Valley, Kandahar, Afghanistan, July 27, 2010. (AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The body of Marine Cpl. Michael C. Bailey is carried to Bailey's burial site, June 25, 2010, in Leadwood, Mo. Bailey, 29, died June 16 after he was shot while on patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

**“IVAW Is Partnering With The
Institute For Public Accuracy To
Expose The Details Of Incidents
Depicted In The Leaked Field Reports
By Wikileaks”
“Help Us With This Effort By Making A
Donation Today”**



From: IVAW
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: August 04, 2010
Subject: IVAW members fill in details on Wikileaks documents

Wikileaks documents reveal "the everyday squalor and carnage of war"

Debate continues about the massive number of Wikileaks documents released last week providing detailed field reports from the front lines in Afghanistan. While much of the public discussion is focused on the source of the leak and whether it was a justifiable act, we here at IVAW feel that the media should be focusing on something else.

What stands out to us at IVAW is the regular, seemingly commonplace occurrence of civilian death depicted in the body of WikiLeaks documents.

These documents reveal the truth about the bloody battle for Afghanistan, characterized by lengthy and repeated deployments by our troops and exposure to human trauma by both soldiers and Afghan people on a mass scale. With all the talk of timetables for withdrawal, we know that the human trauma of these wars has no end in sight. Yet, this trauma is too often sanitized by the time it reaches the public view.

That is why IVAW is partnering with the Institute for Public Accuracy to expose the details of incidents depicted in the leaked field reports by Wikileaks.

[Help us with this effort by making a donation today.](#)

In a recent interview on Democracy Now, Wikileaks' founder, Julian Assange put out a call: ***"We really need the public, other journalists and especially former soldiers to go through this material and say, 'Look, this connects to that,' or 'I was there. Let me tell you what really happened. Let me tell you the rest of the detail.' And over the next few days, we'll be putting up easier- and easier-to-use search interfaces, the same ones that our journalistic teams use to extract this data."***

These search tools will allow any soldier or veteran to look through the trove of documents on Wikileaks and find reports of incidents they were involved in to check for their accuracy and provide more details.

IVAW members are answering the call to humanize these 'war incidents.'

Right now, we are mobilizing our membership to look through the relevant Wikileaks materials, and provide additional information for the public.

Four members have already come forward with their stories and are speaking to members of the media.

On Monday, the Netherlands became the first NATO ally to remove all of its troops from Afghanistan. At a time when the global public is increasingly turning against the war, [your donation today](#) will help us continue this important work.

The White House and the Pentagon are decrying this latest leak as potentially endangering the lives of those presently on the ground in Afghanistan.

Admiral Mike Mullen, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff stated recently that Wikileaks and its leak source "might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family."

Yet, he does not question the blood on the hands of our government from the thousands of civilians killed in Afghanistan.

When Wikileaks released its "Collateral Murder" video in April that depicted the killing of Reuters journalists and other civilians, IVAW members Josh Stieber and Ethan McCord who served in that unit spoke out.

And before that, IVAW members told their stories through our Winter Soldier testimonies.

As veterans who have to live with what we were part of in Afghanistan and Iraq on a daily basis, speaking out about it is our solemn duty.

By doing so, we hope that other soldiers will come forward and do the same.

[Your help today](#) will allow more soldiers and veterans to continue changing the Afghanistan war from an abstraction to a reality for the American and global public.

Thank you for your support.

In Solidarity,
Iraq Veterans Against the War



Army Spouses Cheated By New DoD Policy: “We Will Be Forced To Go Into Debt To Finish My Degree Program Because MyCAA Is Changing The Rules”

Army Times
Letters To The Editor
8.9.2010

I think the new stipulations of (My Career Advancement Accounts) for spouses who are already enrolled in the program are unfair.

I have \$2,000 left and was planning to combine that with other financial aid and would be able to use the combined efforts to finance my next four terms (and consequently the rest of my degree) without having to take out loans.

However, requiring that spouses currently enrolled request their aid by Oct. 21, and for classes starting by Jan. 15 (my spring term starts Jan. 23), limits me to only two more terms of financial aid from MyCAA.

My husband and I budgeted for the remainder of my education; however, the change in policy causes a financial burden that we had not anticipated.

We will be forced to go into debt to finish my degree program because MyCAA is changing the rules.

While I understand the MyCAA program had to undergo changes to support the high number of spouses requesting enrollment, adjusting that should not negatively affect

currently enrolled spouses. MyCAA should change their policy for currently enrolled spouses.

Lauren Robertson
Seoul, South Korea

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

The War On Iraq:

Five US Presidents, Five British Prime Ministers, Thirty Years of Duplicity, And Counting....

Further, in Afghanistan's invasion and ongoing massacres by the occupiers, a gate crashing daily more resembling the towering illegality of that of Iraq, here are more of the 1990 Hiroshima Day's now laughable lauding of the values and integrity of the US and UK: "The West is dealing with a person who, without warning, has gone into the territory of another state with tanks, aircraft and guns, has fought and taken that state against international law, against the will of that state, and has set up a puppet regime. That is the act of an aggressor which must be stopped. While a person who will take such action on one state will take it against another state if he is not stopped."

August 6, 2010 By Felicity Arbuthnot, Global Research

"Out of the mirror they stare, Imperialism's face And the international wrong."
(W.H. Auden, 1907-1973, writing in 1939.)

Twenty years ago this August, with a green light from America, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

He had walked into possibly the biggest trap in modern history, unleashing Iraq's two decade decimation, untold suffering, illegal bombings, return of diseases previously eradicated and what can also only be described as UN-sponsored infanticide.

The reason for the Kuwait invasion, has been air brushed out of the fact books by Britain and America, and been presented as the irrational and dangerous act of a belligerent tyrant who was a threat to his neighbours. He had, they pointed out piously, attacked, then fought an eight year war with Iran, and exactly two years to the month, after the 20th August 1988 ceasefire, invaded Kuwait, on 2nd August 1990.

It was, of course, not quite that simple. After the US engineered the fall of the democratic government of Mossadegh, in Iran, resultant from his nationalizing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (now BP) in 1953. After two years of economically ravaging sanctions, The US installed Shah Reza Pahlavi (whose savage state police, SAVAK, were trained by General Norman Schwarzkopf, Snr., father of General "Storming" Norman Schwarzkopf of the 1991 Gulf war, who famously declared at the time of the ceasefire: "... no one left to kill ..")

Under the Shah, oil arrangements satisfactory to the United States were, of course, restored.

Five years later, across the border in Iraq, the British installed monarchy was overthrown and the popular leader of the anti-British uprising, Abdel Karim Kassem, began nationalizing the country's Western assets.

It took the CIA just five more years to bring about his overthrow.

They picked the wrong collaborators, the nascent Ba'ath Party, with Saddam Hussein as Vice President, embarked on nationalizing the oil industry. President Nixon and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger schemed with Iran to arm the Kurds and weaken the Iraqi government. Iraq was placed on list of supporters of terrorism.

Interestingly, Saddam, and the Shah quietly came to US-excluded, mutually beneficial agreement - and aid to the Kurds was cut.

In 1980, the year after the Shah was overthrown, to grass roots Iranian jubilation, President Jimmy Carter announced the "Carter Doctrine", with breath taking political arrogance, granting the US the unilateral right to intervene in the Persian Gulf region to protect US oil demands. With (broadly) a US political nod and wink, Iraq invaded Iran - the US aiding both sides in a war where the million lives estimated lost equal that of Rwanda and Armenia, each which have been cited as a genocide.

Iraq was also perceived as a more secular buffer against fundamentalist tendencies in Iran, under Ayatollah Khomeini.

(Ironically, now, Iraq is largely politically dominated by fundamentalist Iranian-backed factions, which came in with the invasion, due, seemingly, to blind ignorance of the region by the British and Americans, their useless "diplomats" and unemployable "Middle East experts.")

Carter won the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize. His Carter Center blurb informs: "President Carter has been committed to peace in the Middle East since his White House days (and) advancing human rights, accountability and the rule of law", in the region. Devotion is to : "Peace with Justice"; "Waging Peace."

In 1984, President Reagan ordered the sharing of top secret intelligence with Iraq - and also with Iran. The following year, Colonel Oliver North of Iran-Contra infamy, informed Iranian authorities that the US would help Iran overthrow Saddam Hussein.

Subsequently, when Iraq looked vulnerable in America's (arguably) proxy bloodbath, US military hardware and other assistance was ratcheted up.

Breathtaking duplicity being the order of the decade, General Norman Schwarzkopf, then head of CENTCOM quietly intervened by re-flagging Kuwaiti tankers (with US flags) thus if attacked, it would be deemed an attack on the United States. The US began bombing Iranian oil platforms.

The scales tipped for Iraq, and in August 1988 the ceasefire was signed - and the (US) Center for Strategic and International Studies immediately began a two years study on the outcome of a war between the United States and Iraq.

The following year, with much of Iraq's youth "stone dead ..", terribly wounded or imprisoned in Iran, it's Air Force near wiped out, and the country financially on its knees, the US renamed War Plan 1002 - dreamt up to counter a Soviet confrontation - War Plan 1002-90, designating Iraq the new threat.

Iraq, needing to recoup the \$billions the war had cost, now addressed the problem of Kuwait's alleged systematic "slant drilling" under the Iraq/Kuwait border, in to Iraq's Rumeila oil field, syphoning off, claimed Iraq, millions of \$'s worth of oil.

Iraq wanted - and desperately needed - reparation.

Not in dispute is that over the eight years of war, Kuwait had moved its borders northwards in to Iraq by some considerable distance, by establishing encroaching settlements.

Iraq wanted its territory back. Kuwait and the Gulf states were also manipulating oil prices, to hard pressed Iraq's disadvantage, with Washington's backing, claimed Iraq, with some justification.

Iraq, additionally, wanted to negotiate to lease two islands, Warbah and Bubiyan, from Kuwait, for additional access to the Gulf, which would also have reduced residual tensions with Tehran.*

Tiny Kuwait, population at the time, under two million - "an oil company masquerading as a country", as one commentator remarked unkindly - confident of mighty Washington's backing, refused negotiation - as it had in 1975 and 1980.

After two years of attempts to resolve the problems with Kuwait, in late July, 1990, Saddam Hussein met with US Ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie.

With the border tensions mounting, she told him that: "I have direct instruction from the President (Bush Snr.,) to seek better relations with Iraq."

She even expressed the United States apology for a critical article on Iraq by the American Information Agency, designating resultant broadcasted comments: "...cheap and unjust." Adding that : "President Bush ... is not going to declare an economic war against Iraq."

She continued: "I admire your extraordinary efforts to rebuild your country. I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country." (How arrogantly, patronisingly kind.)

Then: "But we have no opinion on Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border dispute with Kuwait."

Her conversation followed on from a meeting the previous April, between Glaspie and President Saddam, with five US Senators, Robert Dole, Alan Simpson, Howard Metzenbaum, James McClure and Frank Murkowski, who had travelled to Iraq, with President Bush's blessings, ostensibly to form better relations and trade relations with Iraq and to assure that President Bush would oppose any suggestion of sanctions on Iraq.

President Saddam commented later to Glaspie that anyway: "There is nothing left for us to buy from America except wheat. Every time we want to buy something they say it is

forbidden. I am afraid, one day, you will say 'You are going to make gunpowder out of wheat.'" (1)

The response to the invasion of Kuwait, was, of course, an embargo of unique severity, imposed on Hiroshima Day (6th August) 1990 (UNSCR 661.) All overseas assets were frozen, as were oil sales, thus, effectively all imports in a country which imported two thirds of absolutely everything (on advice given by the United Nations via their UN Food and Agriculture Organization.) Iraq faced famine. Infant mortality doubled in just four months, by December 1990.

Advice to any country when outside consultants counsel relinquishing self-sufficiency : Don't do it. The day before the embargo was imposed, President H.W. Bush stated:

"What's emerging is nobody seems to be showing up as willing to accept anything less than total withdrawal from Kuwait of the Iraqi forces, and no puppet regime. We've been down that road, and there will be no puppet regime that will be accepted by any countries that I'm familiar with. And there seems to be a united front out there that says Iraq, having committed brutal, naked aggression, ought to get out, and that this concept of their installing some puppet -- leaving behind -- will not be acceptable. ... There is no intention on the part of any of these countries to accept a puppet government, and that signal is going out loud and clear to Iraq. I will not discuss with you what my options are or might be, but they're wide open, I can assure you of that."

Britain's then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher - whose son, Mark, was allegedly doing arms deals across the Middle East, using his mother's status - pitched in on Hiroshima Day : "... I think it is quite different when you have a nation which has violated all rules of United Nations Charter, which has gone in with guns and tanks to take and invade another country, which would have far-reaching consequences if it were left like that for every other country in the world ..."

(Given America's British-backed, bombings, invasions, imposed, useless, corrupt, foreign passport holding puppet governments, imposed since the Balkans in 1999 alone, irony is redundant.)

Without Congressional approval, Bush ordered forty thousand US troops to "defend Saudi Arabia", despite no sign of any intention by Iraq to attack the Kingdom. Washington lied that Iraq's troops were massing on Saudi's border.

They were not.

Entirely forgotten, is that just ten days after the invasion, Saddam Hussein, a staunch supporter of Palestinian rights, announced that Iraq would withdraw from Kuwait, if Israel withdrew from Israeli occupied Palestinian territories. The United States rejected the offer, out of hand.

Subsequently Iraq proposed withdrawal without the stipulation relating to Palestine. Washington rejected it as "a complete nonstarter." For Washington, seemingly, war, war, is ever preferable to jaw, jaw. Heaven forbid peace should ever reign, the military industrial complex's billion \$s munitions bonanza would dry up and the remnants of the US economy with it.

The US having refused all negotiation, then dispatched an extra three hundred and sixty thousand US troops to the Gulf at the end of November, the UN Security Council passed UNSCR 678, threatening force of Iraq did not withdraw by January 15th - Iraq having offered to withdraw, albeit with conditions on August 12th., and without conditions a short time later.

In Geneva, on 9th January 1991, then Secretary of State James Baker (a "diplomat" who stated: "We will reduce Iraq to a pre-industrial age") met Iraq's Foreign Minister, Tareq Aziz, with a letter from Bush Snr., promising the destruction of Iraq, if Kuwait was not withdrawn from by 15th January. Tareq Aziz stated he would not deliver the letter.

On 17th January the forty two day assault on Iraq began, as now well documented, deliberately destroying all infrastructure necessary to sustain society, including the deliberate targeting of all water purification facilities, with an exact time line of how long it would take Iraq's complex water system "to fully degrade" issued to all NATO Command Headquarters.(2)

Somewhere in Iraq's ashes lay all the painstakingly crafted legal Treaties, Conventions and Principles, on war crimes and treatment of civilians in conflict, never to surface again, as far as the US and UK were concerned, arguably now officially signed up to "rogue state" status.

On 21st February, the USSR stated that Iraq had agreed to a complete withdrawal, without conditions. The United States rejected unless they had left by mid-day on 23rd.

Interestingly, on the rare occasions the US and UK moot a withdrawal, the public is told, ad nauseum, that this is a complicated process which takes time and can not be achieved overnight.

The US ground assault, however, almost could be. It started on 23rd February. Three days later, when the Iraqi troops did withdraw, they with civilians, were strafed mercilessly from both ends of the road to Basra, resulting in a massacre, or for General Norman Schwarzkopf, a seemingly psychologically disturbed individual: "A turkey shoot."

The ceasefire was finally agreed by America on February 28th., five months and sixteen days of decimation, after Saddam Hussein had first offered to withdraw.

Two days later, the US killed thousands more, heading from the south, towards Baghdad. Another war crime of enormity, for which no one has ever faced trial.

In the light of the near-unprecedented illegality of all which has happened to Iraq, before 1991 and subsequently, the thirteen years of bombings, the famine-style deprivation, and then the illegal invasion built on lie, upon lie, it is worth returning to Margaret Thatcher, who quoted the fine words of St Francis ("Where there is discord, may we bring harmony, where there is error, may we bring truth ... and where there is despair, may we bring hope") from the steps of Downing Street, on 4th May 1979, the day she took office.

Further, in Afghanistan's invasion and ongoing massacres by the occupiers, a gate crashing daily more resembling the towering illegality of that of Iraq, here are

more of the 1990 Hiroshima Day's now laughable lauding of the values and integrity of the US and UK: "The West is dealing with a person who, without warning, has gone into the territory of another state with tanks, aircraft and guns, has fought and taken that state against international law, against the will of that state, and has set up a puppet regime. That is the act of an aggressor which must be stopped. While a person who will take such action on one state will take it against another state if he is not stopped."

"President Saddam Hussein and Iraq are aggressors. They have invaded another country, they have taken it by force—that is not the way we do things in this world. Other countries have rights, they have their right to their nationhood, they have the right to their territorial integrity. He has been rightly branded as an aggressor, contrary to international law, and it is not a question of taunting, it is a question of earning the condemnation of the world and the appropriate action which follows." The "Iron lady" Thatcher, was as subservient to Bush Snr., as her slippery successor, Blair was to Clinton and baby Bush.

On the 21st August, Thatcher opined: "I think it is as well to remind ourselves how this whole position started. It started because Saddam Hussein substituted the rule of force for the rule of law and invaded an independent country and that cannot be allowed to stand."

This August, an estimated three million dead later, in Iraq, as the bell now tolls ever louder for Iran, with the near identical sleights of hand and word being played out, as were against Iraq. Farcical, were it not so sinisterly demented, Iran is (says the US and UK) hell bent on making "weapons of mass destruction", remember them? The one's the crazies are still searching for in Iraq? The ones Iraq accounted for not having in 11,800 pages, delivered to the UN in December 2002 and stolen by the US mission to the UN?

The substitution of "the rule of force for the rule of law", seemingly imminent, are there governments, statesmen and women, world bodies and institutions, unions; is there enough people power to halt the juggernaut on the Armageddon highway?

With the United Nations, as ever, either complicit, or asleep at the wheel, can "We the people" finally ".. save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", and the equivalent unimaginable horrors of the equivalent of multiple Hiroshimas and Nagasakis.

References

Geoff Simons details these complexities with clarity : "From Sumer to Saddam." : <http://www.amazon.com/Iraq-Sumer-Saddam-Geoff-Simons/dp/1403917701>

As does : "The Fire this Time", Ramsey Clark, with eagle-eyed witness account, background : <http://www.amazon.com/Fire-This-Time-U-S-Crimes/dp/1560250712>

Both with invaluable time-lines.

1. Simons p 314-316.
2. <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines/091700-01.htm>

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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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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/)

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