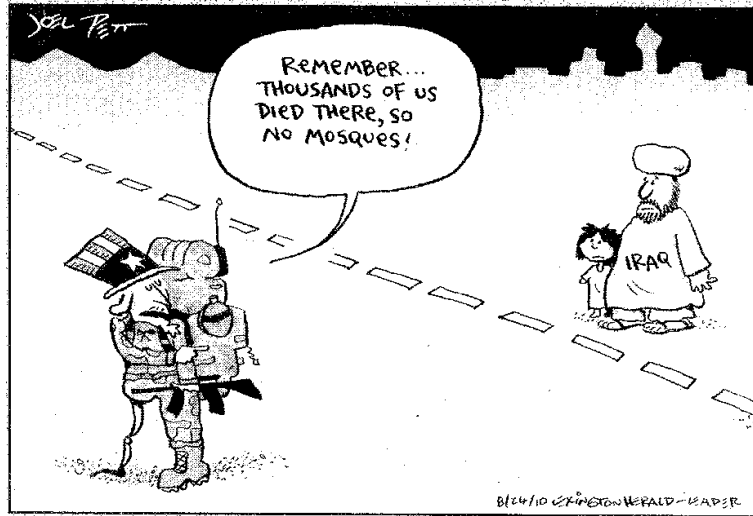


Military Resistance 8J8



While U.S. Troops Die:

Karzai Family Plunders:

“American Officials Say The Karzais Have Benefited From The Billions Of Dollars That The United States Has Poured Into The Country”

The Money “Helped Pay The Salaries Of Some Karzais Who Are Government Employees, Kick-Started Real Estate Development And Construction Projects Involving Family Members And Created Demand For Businesses Tied To The Karzais”



Members of the Karzai family feed on the dying body of Afghanistan seasoned with the blood of U.S. troops.

In recent years, dozens of Karzai family members and close allies have taken government jobs, pursued business interests or worked as contractors to the United States government, allowing them to shape policy or financially benefit from it.

October 5, 2010 By JAMES RISEN, New York Times [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — Until recently, Taj Ayubi's specialty was retail. Mr. Ayubi, an Afghan immigrant, ran a furniture store in Leesburg, Va., and before that, a thrift shop in Washington.

But today, Mr. Ayubi's specialty is foreign policy. He is the senior foreign affairs adviser to the Afghan president, Hamid Karzai.

Among Mr. Ayubi's qualifications for his post in Kabul are ties to President Karzai's extended family.

His sister is married to a Karzai, and her sons are now important junior members of the growing Karzai family network in Afghanistan.

In recent years, dozens of Karzai family members and close allies have taken government jobs, pursued business interests or worked as contractors to the United States government, allowing them to shape policy or financially benefit from it.

While the roles played by two of President Karzai's brothers — Ahmed Wali Karzai, the power broker of Kandahar, and Mahmoud Karzai, a prominent businessman and investor in the troubled Kabul Bank — have been well documented, the extensive web of other family members has not previously been reported.

Most of them lived in the United States before going to Afghanistan, leveraging the president's position to put them at the center of a new oligarchy of powerful Afghan families.

One of President Karzai's nephews is a top official in the intelligence service, giving him authority over some of Afghanistan's most sensitive security operations.

A brother of the president is an official in the agency that issues licenses required for all Afghan corporations; an uncle is now ambassador to Russia.

At least six Karzai relatives, including one who just ran for Parliament, operate or are linked to contracting businesses that collect millions of dollars annually from the American government.

Other brothers, cousins, nephews and in-laws wield influence in Kabul and the family's native Kandahar, through government posts or businesses like trucking and real estate development.

Corruption allegations taint his government, and Afghans routinely accuse him of turning a blind eye to the activities of some of his relatives. They include Ahmed Wali Karzai, who denies repeated accusations of ties to the drug trade, and Mahmoud Karzai, whose business dealings are under investigation by American prosecutors.

American officials say the Karzais and a handful of other well-connected families have benefited from the billions of dollars that the United States has poured into the country since 2001.

That money has helped pay the salaries of some Karzais who are government employees, kick-started real estate development and construction projects involving family members and created demand for businesses tied to the Karzais.

"Family politics is part of the culture of this part of the world," said Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani author who has written extensively about Afghanistan.

"Right now, Afghanistan is going through a phase of very primitive capital accumulation by the country's leading families."

Still, many relatives are hedging their bets against the decline and fall of the Karzai government, keeping their own families and homes outside of Afghanistan, either in the United States, in Dubai or elsewhere, several relatives said in interviews.

And some are increasingly critical of their kin, complaining that their rush back to Afghanistan to stake a claim has been unseemly.

As more Karzais have gained prominence in Afghanistan over the last few years, some relatives have privately begun to point fingers at one another for trading too heavily on their connections to President Karzai, and accuse others of excessive political ambition and insider dealing.

“The Karzais are over there in Afghanistan cashing in on their last name,” said Mohammad Karzai, a cousin of President Karzai who lives in Maryland. “My relatives have told me they can’t understand why I don’t come over with them and get rich.”

It is hard to quantify how the Karzais may have prospered from their proximity to power. But some appear to have significantly improved their circumstances.

Before 2001, Yama Karzai, a nephew of the president, was living with his brothers in Quetta, Pakistan, and receiving financial support from relatives in the United States, Mohammad Karzai said.

Today, Yama Karzai is a top Afghan intelligence official and owns a house in Virginia, according to land records. He did not respond to inquiries from The New York Times.

Hashim Karzai, a cousin of President Karzai, now works as a consultant to Pamir Airways, an airline based in Kabul that has been controlled by one of Mahmoud Karzai’s business partners, and lives in Dubai on one of the luxurious Palm Islands.

In August, he rented the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, one block from the White House, for his son’s wedding to a niece of President Karzai, according to Qayum Karzai, the bride’s father and the president’s brother.

And Mahmoud Karzai, widely considered to be the most well-connected business leader in Afghanistan, said a residential real estate project he has been developing in Kandahar was now worth \$900 million, including the value of homes sold.

The original five partners, including Mr. Karzai, started with an investment of \$4 million, he said. The Kandahar project set off a bitter dispute with the Afghan Army, which claims ownership of the land used for the project.

One Afghan Parliament member said family members exploited their connections to get in on favorable business ventures. “They have carte blanche to be partners with anyone they want to; it’s the unwritten law,” said the official, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution. “Anyone who wants to start a business and has problems becomes partners with them.”

Before the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, many members of the extended Karzai family were quietly building new lives as American immigrants, and the family’s center of gravity had shifted from war-ravaged Kandahar to the Maryland suburbs of Washington, where many of them settled in the 1970s and ‘80s.

Of the seven sons of Abdul Ahad Karzai, a prominent Kandahar politician who lived in exile in Quetta, Pakistan, until his 1999 assassination by the Taliban, only one — Hamid Karzai — had never lived in the United States.

By 2001, a generation of Karzais who had grown up in the United States and knew little of Afghanistan was emerging.

But after the American-led invasion of Afghanistan ousted the Taliban in 2001 and lifted Hamid Karzai from obscurity to the presidency, the family's migration pattern reversed.

Only one of his brothers, Abdul Wali Karzai, a biochemistry professor at Stony Brook University in New York, declined to go back home. Many others seized the opportunity.

While federal prosecutors in New York are investigating Mahmoud Karzai's business dealings, no inquiry has been opened into Ahmed Wali Karzai even though many United States officials have said they suspect that he benefits from drug trafficking.

Some family members have had lower profiles than the three better-known brothers.

Qayum Karzai, for example, served as a member of Parliament from Kandahar and then as President Karzai's intermediary with the Taliban, while continuing to own three restaurants in Baltimore. Today, he talks of opening a university in Afghanistan. An Afghan business leader said Qayum Karzai had been a behind-the-scenes force in Kabul's politics.

"Qayum is the interlocutor for the president with other political players in Afghanistan, and with foreign powers," said the businessman, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he feared the consequences of talking publicly about the president's family. "He is a sounding board."

Shahwali Karzai, another brother, lives in Ahmed Wali Karzai's compound in Kandahar, where he runs his own engineering consulting firm and Mahmoud's real estate project.

Abdul Ahmad Karzai, who worked at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport before his brother became president, now works for the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, which issues corporate licenses.

Ahsan Karzi and Zabeah Karzi, younger cousins of the president who grew up in Los Angeles, now own a trucking company in Kandahar that has contracts with the United States military, according to Mahmoud Karzai.

Two other cousins, Rateb Popal and his brother Rashid Popal, own a security company that has contracts with the American military.

Ajmal Popal, the son of Abdullah Popal, a former mayor of Kandahar and a Karzai relative, works for a company that has contracts with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

With so many Karzais flooding back into the country, tensions and rivalries have emerged among them, according to several family members.

Rateb Popal, for example, has been feuding with Mahmoud Karzai, and in interviews, Mr. Popal, who served a prison sentence in New York on drug-related charges in the 1990s, accused Mahmoud Karzai and the president of undermining his business deals.

"I haven't had a good relationship with Hamid from the beginning," Rateb Popal said.

And Hekmat Karzai, a cousin who now runs a research organization in Kabul, recently irritated President Karzai. After the president denied reports earlier this year that he had secretly met with an insurgent leader, Hekmat Karzai gave a television interview in which he indirectly confirmed the supposed meeting, according to Qayum Karzai.

Qayum Karzai said the criticism of the family was unfair, adding that it had taken an emotional toll.

“We have been on the political scene in Afghanistan for more than 100 years, and never has our name been mentioned with narcotics or wheeling or dealing,” he said. “We have always been identified with the moderate traditions of Afghanistan. So this is very heartbreaking to every family member.”

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

**The United States Army Officially
Confirms Obama A Lying Stack Of
Shit:**

**In Iraq, “Combat Conditions Are Still
Prevalent”**

**“Due To The Nature Of Combat
Conditions, Wartime Awards Will
Continue To Be Issued In Theater Until A
Date To Be Determined”**

[Thanks to Felicity Arbuthnot, who sent this in.]

October 7, 2010 Posted By Thomas E. Ricks, Foreign Policy

The note below, from a friend in the Army, is interesting.

The Army is formally stating that of course combat is continuing in Iraq, and indeed it is “prevalent.”

It is unusual for the Army to come right out and say the emperor has no clothes, but I think it had to in this case, because soldiers take medals seriously.

A little over a month ago, we watched the last combat unit (Brigade Combat Team or BCT) leave Iraq. It even occurred a few days earlier than the deadline. Of course, we all know that there are still close to 50,000 U.S. service members in Iraq, predominantly in what are now known as AABs (or Advise and Assist Brigades).

However, if one reads the ALARACT (All Army Activities) and MILPER (Military Personnel) messages concerning Operation New Dawn, one has to wonder if combat operations are really over or not.

For example, here is part of the message concerning wartime awards and badges:

“ALARACT 314/2010 CLARIFICATION ON WARTIME AWARDS AND BADGES FOR OPERATION NEW DAWN, DTG 051621Z OCT 10.

“This message provides clarification on the awarding of wartime awards and badges for Operation New Dawn (OND).

“Effective 1 Sep 10, OND began signifying an end to combat operations in Iraq. However, combat conditions are still prevalent. Due to the nature of combat conditions, wartime awards will continue to be issued in theater until a date to be determined.

“Commanders will continue to process retroactive award recommendation through their peacetime chain of command to...”

So, we aren’t executing combat operations, BUT we still have combat conditions. In conjunction with this, Hostile Fire Pay (rightly, in my mind) continues to be paid to those serving in Iraq and environs.

Another example... this one concerns expeditionary and service medals:

“MILPER MESSAGE NUMBER 10-261 OPERATION NEW DAWN - REVISED CAMPAIGN, EXPEDITIONARY AND SERVICE MEDAL POLICY, ISSUED: [05 OCT 10].

“This message provides revised campaign, expeditionary and service medal policy for Operation New Dawn (OND). On Feb 17, 10, the Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum to change the name of OIF to OND. This memorandum incorporates OND into DOD policy for award of the ICM, GWOTEM, and GWOTSM. OND will not mark the beginning of a new campaign phase for the ICM. See the message for more information.”

I find the second one interesting in that the change from OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) to OND isn't even considered a new campaign phase for the Iraqi Campaign Medal. Interesting indeed.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE:**



The traitor Obama. (AFP/Mandel Ngan)

***Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,
And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
And frame my face to all occasions.
-- Gloucester, "Henry VI"-Shakespeare***

Resistance Action

Oct 7 AP & Oct 8 (Reuters) & 10.9.10 AFP & Oct 10 (Reuters)

Insurgents wearing black uniforms on Saturday shot dead three people, two of them brothers, near Fallujah. "It happened early in the morning when the gunmen entered the victims' homes," said Lieutenant Colonel Yasin Mohammed, adding that a fourth person was shot and wounded. Mohammed said the victims were hauled out and shot in front of their homes in the village of Garma, east of Fallujah in predominantly Sunni Arab Anbar province. All four worked for the ministry of higher education, the brothers as administrators and the others as a guard and driver, the police officer said.

BASRA - Armed men in two boats wounded seven security guards when they attacked a prison situated alongside a river in Basra, 420 km (260 miles) southeast of Baghdad, a police source said. A riot broke out amongst prisoners after the attack and security forces responded by using tear gas.

BAGHDAD - One policeman was killed by a sniper in Baghdad's northern district of Adhamiya, an Interior Ministry source said.

An attack in Iskandariyah, 30 miles (50 kilometers) south of Baghdad, Iraq, Oct. 7, 2010. killed a policeman who was searching for explosives.

BAGHDAD - A sticky bomb attached to the car of a security guard exploded and wounded him in Baghdad's northwestern Hurriya district.

BAGHDAD - A sticky bomb attached the car of an Iraqi army officer went off and wounded his son who was driving the car on Saturday in Baghdad's west-central Mansour district, an interior ministry source said.

TUZ KHURMATO - Clashes erupted between police and insurgents trying to plant bombs around a mosque on Saturday in the town of Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. One of the insurgents and a mosque guard were wounded in the clashes, police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Four Italian Soldiers Killed By IED Near Farah, Another Wounded

October 10, 2010 By Tommaso Ebhardt, Rome; AFP

FOUR Italian soldiers were killed and one was seriously injured in Afghanistan yesterday when a bomb blew up their vehicle, Italian Minister of Defence Ignazio La Russa said.

The Italian soldiers were attacked near Farah in western Afghanistan while escorting a convoy of civilian military supply trucks.

Two Foreign Occupation “Servicemembers” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Friday: Nationality Not Announced

October 8 AP

Two foreign servicemembers died following separate improvised explosive device attacks in southern Afghanistan today.

Two Foreign Occupation “Servicemembers” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Sunday: Nationality Not Announced

October 10 AP

Two foreign servicemembers were killed Sunday in a blast on a highway in southern Afghanistan.

Another Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan Friday: Nationality Not Announced

October 8 AP

A foreign servicemember died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

UK Soldier Killed In Nahr-E Saraj

8 October 2010 BBC

A British soldier has been killed in an explosion in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has confirmed.

The soldier, from 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment attached to 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, was killed in the morning.

Spokesman for Task Force Helmand, Lt Col David Eastman, said: "The soldier was carrying out a patrol in the Nahr-e Saraj area of the province, when he was hit by an explosion.

30 More U.S. Fuel Supply Tankers For Afghanistan Attacked And Burned In Pakistan



[Thanks to Felicity Arbuthnot, who sent this in.]

Oct 08, 2010 By Zahidhameed & By BeautifulLife, Allvoices, Inc & Oct 9, 2010 Press TV

At least 29 fuel-carrying tankers for US-led foreign troops in Afghanistan were blown up when unidentified assailants opened fire on parked containers in Mithri area of Balochistan, Pakistani province providing link to Afghanistan. The tankers were on their way to the border town of Chaman.

According to levies officials the oil containers for U.S. supplies were enroute to Afghanistan from Karachi when militants opened indiscriminate fire on those in Mithri locality of Bolan district in Balochistan".

"The motorbike riding attackers fired shots at the tankers.

The firing resulted in eruption of blaze which engulfed the oil tankers in no time. Some personnel of Levies force also received critical injuries in the incident.

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants have stepped up attacks on convoys carrying supplies for US-led forces since an unauthorized US drone attack on September 30 in northwestern Pakistan left three Pakistani soldiers dead.

Hundreds of foreign military supply vehicles, including tankers and container trucks, are currently parked in various parts of northwestern Pakistan near the Afghan border.

Guards Guarding US Afghan Bases Turn Out To Be Taliban, Warlords And Criminals: “You Just Can’t Believe Anything This Insane Could Possibly Go On”

October 8, 2010 by JJ Sutherland, NPR

They are everywhere in Afghanistan. Subcontracted Afghan guards hired by the US to guard American military bases.

A new report from the Senate Armed Services Committee finds that there is little oversight by the Pentagon of these forces. As a result Americans have been exposed to surprise attacks, plotted by the very people they are paying to guard their bases. Some of the guards are also linked to murder, kidnapping, and bribery.

Besides active problems, there are also passive ones. The report also found instances of untrained private guards, unserviceable weapons and unmanned posts.

Just one example from the report.

In August, 2008, American forces went on a raid to capture a high value Taliban target who was attending a meeting. The fighting was fierce. A lot of people died. When the dust settled, it turns out the meeting was being held at them home of one of the leaders of a guard force paid by the Americans.

A man the Americans simply called “Mr. White” as they didn’t even know his real name. They’d started to call the leaders of the various forces after characters in Reservoir Dogs. And yes, there was a Mr. Pink too, he turned out to be “mid-level Taliban manager.”

Oh, and the forces that Mr. White led?

They were fired by one security contractor, only to be hired by another, so they once again got a western paycheck. The company, AGMA, a subsidiary of Armor Group, decided Mr. White's brother was "a man we could do business with."

Anyway, there are a ton more stories of such unbelievable situations in the report that you think you're reading the script to a terrible caper movie.

Terrible because you just can't believe anything this insane could possibly go on.

MORE:

U.S. Government Funded "Security": Junk Weapons, No Weapons, Drugs And Crime, No Training & Aligned With The Taliban

Oct. 8 By Sharon Weinberger, AOL Inc.

A wide-ranging review of contracts given to private security operations in Afghanistan found an egregious lack of oversight, including one case where a company paid warlords linked to the Taliban.

But that's not all.

The inquiry, conducted by the Senate Armed Services Committee, covers over 125 security contracts in Afghanistan, and the resulting 89-page report provides a wealth of information about a business rife with mishaps and misdeeds.

Among the most outrageous cases were:

1. **Junk Weapons.** The Senate report found repeated instances where Afghan guards were poorly equipped for security duties, or not equipped at all. The companies involved often appeared to be well-aware of these problems, describing the issues in graphic details.

One company's site security manager acknowledged that his company was working with substandard weapons, writing: "I mean, I could shoot out to 1,000 yards myself, and I could barely hit the broad side of the barn with some of these weapons that we had."

2. **No Weapons.** In some cases, Afghan guards simply didn't have weapons, or engaged in a version of musical chairs with a limited supply of guns.

In one audit of a contract to provide security at an unnamed forward operating base in Zabul, auditors found the company had provided only 10 weapons "that they rotate around."

On another contract, for security at the Adraskan National Training Center, the contractor “failed to provide working weapons to the members of its guard force,” the Senate report found. The company resorted to borrowing weapons from a “local strongman.”

3. **Drugs and Crime.** The report details cases of Afghan guards using and selling drugs, as well as other crimes, like stealing and selling fuel from the bases they are supposed to protect.

“Pretty much everyone knows the security contractors routinely use drugs and work their posts while high on drugs,” one Marine said of guards working under one contract.

4. **No Training.** In Ghazni province, investigators looked at a contract to provide convoy security and found that only \$40 per guard had been allocated for training for the entire year. Not surprisingly, an audit found there wasn’t enough ammunition to allow the guards to train adequately.

In June 2009, the same company allowed 40 untrained guards to go on patrol with a convoy, which was then ambushed by over 100 insurgents. Such problems were found in other contracts as well.

In one contract for security in the Farah province, a report by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service found untrained guards, including one who “the last time he fired a rifle was in the late 1980s when the Russians occupied Afghanistan.”

5. Aligned With the Taliban. The report cites numerous instances where contracts may have indirectly funneled money to the Taliban, or employed guards sympathetic or aligned with the Taliban.

In one contract for security in Nangarhar Province, an Afghan security guard was discovered to be “spreading Taliban propaganda” at the base.

The same guard was also selling “opium and drugs,” the audit found. The guard was subsequently fired.

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED
ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED
THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO
STOP THE WARS**

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



A US army soldier with the 101st Airborne Division Alpha Battery 1-320th battles Taliban from the rooftop of Lugo patrol base on the outskirts of the village of Jelawar in the Arghandab Valley early on September 10. (AFP/File/Patrick Baz)



U.S. from Task Force 1-66 patrol near the village of Mohammad D'Jakub , Arghandab River valley, Kandahar province, September 13, 2010. REUTERS/Oleg Popov



A U.S. soldier on a stretcher after a roadside bomb attack in Kandahar province, Afghanistan September 28, 2010. REUTERS/Erik de Castro

MILITARY NEWS

**Wounded Combat Veterans
Kicked Out Of Armed Forces
With No Benefits To Save
Money For DoD Traitors:
“If They’re Going To Send Us,
They’ve Got To Take Care Of Us.
We’re Not Bad Soldiers”**

**“Under Congressional Pressure, DoD
In 2008 Decreased The Number Of
Personality Disorder Discharges”
Now “Military Officials Are Using
Misconduct And Adjustment Disorder
Discharges To Remove Service Members
Who Might Be Suffering From PTSD Or
Traumatic Brain Injury”**



Before his less than honorable discharge from the Marines, Austinite James Karp was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. Photo: Kelly West/AMERICAN-STATESMAN

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,550th time, there is no enemy in Iraq or Afghanistan. Their citizens and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started these wars of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't tell the truth: U.S. Imperial wars are about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback is overdue. T]

“The main underlying cause of the improper discharge remains the enormous pressure from top Pentagon officials, including Secretary Robert Gates himself, to curb military spending”

Sullivan testified that the Department of Defense stands to save between \$5 billion and \$20 billion in lifetime health care and benefits to the estimated 10,000 to 20,000 veterans with what he calls dubious discharges

Oct. 3, 2010 By Jeremy Schwartz, AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF [Excerpts]

The drinking began in earnest after his first deployment, when he served as a mortarman in the 2004 Battle of Fallujah, a bloody, savage fight that left him with dead friends and mental scars.

After his second tour, this time in Afghanistan, James Karp and his fellow Marines regularly drank to excess to blot out the pain, he said.

“It’s numbing,” said Karp, a 2003 graduate of Cedar Park High School. “You sleep so much better. There’s no dreams. ... It was like, you come back from war, you get drunk. You’re having issues? Have a beer.”

But Karp’s alcohol use took a bad turn one night in early November 2006. He said he was drunk at a party and snorted cocaine for the first time.

The drug turned up on a random test, and Karp was promptly court-martialed, sentenced to a month in the brig and kicked out of the Marines with an “other than honorable” discharge for misconduct.

But before he was discharged, he checked himself into a clinic at his Hawaii base, where he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and told doctors of suicidal thoughts and nightmares.

“It appears he has been using alcohol to self-medicate his underlying anxiety and more recently PTSD symptoms,” his doctor wrote in his hospital discharge notes.

Today, the Austin resident says his discharge, commonly referred to as “bad paper,” has prevented him from getting the Department of Veterans Affairs health care to which he might be entitled.

Karp represents what veterans advocates say is a troubling trend within the United States’ fighting force: increasing numbers of service members discharged from duty for misconduct and other disorders who are suffering from the mental wounds of war.

Once dismissed, many find themselves unable to get the help they need for mental health issues that might have sparked the misconduct.

“You can take away my benefits, but you can’t take away what’s up here,” Karp, 25 , said on a recent afternoon, tapping his head.

“If they’re going to send us, they’ve got to take care of us. We’re not bad soldiers. We made mistakes.”

Veterans advocates see cynical forces at play in the use of administrative discharges for reasons including misconduct, personality disorder and adjustment disorder — defined as an excessive reaction to a stressful event, with symptoms similar to PTSD.

Paul Sullivan, head of the Austin-based Veterans for Common Sense, testified at a Congressional Veterans Affairs hearing on military discharges last month that the increase stems from an attempt to cut costs.

“The main underlying cause of the improper discharge remains the enormous pressure from top Pentagon officials, including Secretary (of Defense) Robert Gates himself, to curb military spending,” Sullivan testified. “The military’s improper discharges will continue so long as there is pressure to reduce medical costs.”

In the Army and the Marines, the two services that have borne the brunt of ground combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, discharges because of misconduct, similar to the one Karp received, have increased since 2005.

In the Army, misconduct separations rose from 5,926 in 2005 to 7,496 in 2009. Included in those numbers are drug abuse discharges, which jumped from 1,971 to 2,706. In the Marines, over the same period, discharges for patterns of misconduct rose from 637 to 824, and drug-related discharges went from 1,143 to 1,581.

Under congressional pressure, the Department of Defense in 2008 dramatically decreased the number of personality disorder discharges, in which service members exhibiting PTSD-like symptoms were instead diagnosed with personality disorder, which is considered a pre-existing condition and not linked to combat or service in a war zone.

Now, veterans groups and some inside Congress say, military officials are using misconduct and adjustment disorder discharges to remove service members who might be suffering from PTSD or traumatic brain injury.

Sullivan testified that the Department of Defense stands to save between \$5 billion and \$20 billion in lifetime health care and benefits to the estimated 10,000 to 20,000 veterans with what he calls dubious discharges.

Teresa Panepinto, the legal director for the San Francisco-based Swords to Plowshares veterans advocacy organization, helps service members with bad paper discharges get benefits and pursue discharge upgrades.

She said she often sees service members with no history of major disciplinary problems return from deployment with PTSD symptoms and self-medicate with drugs.

Panepinto said she sees other than honorable discharges for drug use most often from the Marines, who have a zero tolerance policy for drug use. Offenses are dealt with

“swiftly and effectively to the fullest extent provided for by law and regulations,” that policy says.

“All of a sudden, all the prior honorable service is negated,” she said. “It’s really quite tragic. Not only does it put an end to someone’s military career; it gives them a scarlet letter.”

Many veterans and VA employees are unclear about exactly what kind of medical help is available for those carrying other than honorable discharges, veterans advocates say.

An other than honorable discharge, which can result from anything from desertion to drunken driving, often means a loss of potential disability benefits and compensation.

But veterans with other than honorable discharges “still retain eligibility” for health care benefits for injuries suffered during service, which can include PTSD, according to a VA fact sheet. Access to medical care requires administrative approval by VA officials, although veterans can get treatment while their review is pending.

“What happens is that not all VA employees are aware of that rule, so people can be turned away unjustly,” Panepinto said.

Service members with dishonorable or bad conduct discharges, which are the result of general court-martial convictions for serious offenses, are not eligible.

The VA can also decide, on a case-by-case basis, to upgrade a veteran’s service to receive full VA benefits.

“Basically does the good service outweigh the bad?” Panepinto said. “We use that process a lot with fairly good success rates. All the difficulties with VA processes aside, they’ve been fairly reasonable.”

After his discharge in May 2007, Karp said he was told he had lost his VA benefits, but he wasn’t particularly troubled by it. “I didn’t realize I would need help,” he said. “I thought once I got out, I would be OK.”

Instead, things got much worse. In the months after his discharge, he said, he drank himself into a stupor most days in his rented room, working as a bartender and then a waiter at an Austin steakhouse.

Although he is a firearms lover, he said, he made sure no guns were in his apartment. “I still won’t buy a gun because sometimes you just get low,” he said.

One night in May 2008 he found himself wandering through an unfamiliar neighborhood in his camouflage pants.

“I just snapped,” he said.

He was arrested for public intoxication and spent a night in the Williamson County Jail. It wasn’t the first time he had gotten into trouble for drinking. He said he received military punishment for underage drinking before deploying to Iraq, something veteran

advocates say is fairly common in the military. And after his first deployment, his drinking earned him an unauthorized absence punishment when he slept through an assignment.

After he got out of jail, his mother drove him to the VA hospital in San Antonio, where he walked into the emergency room some time around midnight.

“He was overwhelmed; he had anxiety, sadness,” said his mother, Darcel Grounds. “He was just looking to go and talk with somebody.”

Karp said the man at the front desk turned him away when he gave him his DD-214, his discharge paper, which showed he had a less than honorable discharge because of misconduct. Karp said the man slid the paper back toward him and told him the VA couldn't help him.

At the time, Karp didn't know combat veterans with other than honorable discharges could be eligible for VA health care for their war injuries, such as PTSD. He ended up getting help from a nonprofit civilian counselor for about six months.

Voices within the Marines have also called for better treatment of combat veterans.

A 2007 Marine Corps study found that in the first four years of the Iraq war, 1,019 Marines were dismissed with less than honorable discharges for misconduct after deployments, according to a 2007 USA Today article.

And while officials with the Marines' combat stress program called for mental health screening of those who committed “uncharacteristic misconduct,” the plan was stymied by a shortage of mental health professionals, according to the article.

Veterans advocates have called for increased screening of service members before and after deployments to catch changes as quickly as possible.

Karp says he still battles PTSD on a regular basis: He suffers nightmares, is easily startled and deals with panic attacks that include numb hands, heavy breathing and the shakes.

But when his unit left Iraq, he said, he quickly learned that seeking out mental health help was inviting the wrath of his comrades. “One guy said he had problems after Iraq, and everyone turned on him,” Karp said. “We were close to whipping his ass. The whole unit looks away.”

He has since found a steady girlfriend and a good job with a pest control company, and though he said he feels more grounded, he is still not getting counseling for his PTSD.

Meanwhile, the thoughts of Fallujah are never far from his mind. He remembers the rocket attacks, the dead bodies and dead dogs in the streets. He remembers the when his convoy was ambushed and the Humvee in front of his crashed into a ditch. He remembers helping pull a buddy from the wreckage and thinking he was alive, only to realize no breath was coming from his lungs.

He knows he needs help but doesn't know how to get it.

"Iraq's never going to leave me," he said. "I'm starting to realize that. I think about it every day. If you don't get help, it just builds."

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The remains of Army Spc. Deangelo B. Snow at Dover Air Force Base, Del. on Sept. 19, 2010. Spc. Deangelo B. Snow, 22, of Saginaw, Michigan was killed Sept. 17 in Kandahar province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

Traveling Soldier

Posted at:

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS32.pdf>

THIS ISSUE FEATURING:

**INDIANA SOLDIERS ORGANIZING OPEN
RESISTANCE TO AFGHAN DEPLOYMENT,
“CHARGING THEIR COMPANY IS NOT
PROPERLY TRAINED OR MENTALLY FIT FOR
BATTLE”**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/9.10.Indiana.php>

**ARMY LIFE:
“UNFORTUNATE TRUTH”**

**By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent
Reporting from Germany**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/9.10.untruth.php>

**MORE ARMY LIFE:
“SUICIDE”**

**By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent
Reporting from Germany**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/9.10.suicide.php>

**WHY ARE US TROOPS KILLING THEMSELVES?
ARMY PRESCRIPTION OF SUICIDE-LINKED
ANTIDEPRESSANTS, ANTIPSYCHOTICS AND
ANTISEIZURE DRUGS EXACTLY PARALLELS
THE INCREASE
IN US TROOP SUICIDES SINCE 2005**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/9.10.suicide2.php>

AND MORE!

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

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together.

We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

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

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies.

-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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

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

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

“The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy”
-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers

[Comment Received & Reply]
“While I Understand What Your Group Is Doing, And Why (I Was An Army Casualty Officer For A Year After Returning From Iraq Myself So Have Seen Both Sides Of The War), I

Think Maybe The Thought Process Is Wrong”

From: BEN GRIMES
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: September 29, 2010

Sir,

Recently while looking around online, I saw that you added a letter I had wrote to the Army Times concerning the wonderful beret we wear. **[Copy below. T]**

I also took a further look around your online “military resistance 8g17”

While I understand what your group is doing, and why (I was an Army Casualty Officer for a year after returning from Iraq myself so have seen both sides of the war), I think maybe the thought process is wrong.

History shows us the way to “win” a war. Until Vietnam, the nation went to war and was committed to see it end quickly. We rationed rubber, gas, meat and other vital materials. If an older person saw a young man on the street, they would often ask “don’t you know there is a war? why aren’t you in uniform?”.

The bulk of America could not buy a new car since the factories had been converted to building tanks, jeeps, halftracks and the such. We deployed millions of Soldiers into the combat areas and they pretty much were there until the end of the war. Men who were in the military on December 7th 1941 often did not return home until after 1945.

Even those who were not 100% behind the war were “part” of it, so they wanted to end quickly.

These days, there is no dedication to the wars as a nation. We allow the units to be rotated in and out of the combat area.

This means new units have learning curve and a bigger chance for troops to be lost. The same thing could be seen in WWII as the replacement troops were more likely to become casualties than the old-timers were.

As me and my unit left Iraq at the end of our time, I even had to wonder why? We had adjusted to the environment and could function VERY well....so why did someone else have to go take our place? Don’t get me wrong, I was very happy to go home, but it just did not make sense to me.

The simple way to end wars is to go at them 100% just as we did prior to Vietnam. We have the people, the equipment and the money to be able to do this. It would actually speed up the war, thus saving lives on both “sides” and allowing life to return to normal much faster.

Going into an area with too few troops obviously just does not work....so lets do it right the first time. It's the right thing to do for the country, our troops and even for the nation that we are invading.

Thank you,
Benerval Grimes

[This Is The Letter By SFC Grimes Referenced Above, Carried In Military Resistance 8G17]

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
April 12, 2010

I am surprised that a general would be so well-insulated from the troops that he does not see the true hatred of the "black wool sock." Army Knowledge Online is full of forums with negative comments. Letters are constantly being published on this subject ("Casey: Beret here to stay," June 21).

I even submitted a suggestion about this topic through the Army Suggestion Program, but was told basically that clothing was "not our department."

I suggested that we switch the beret to class A or B wear only, and put the Army Combat Uniform-wearing force back into soft caps. We can even cut down on the issue of the beret by only giving new recruits one instead of two. This whole idea would not cost the Army anything, and in fact would save more than \$7 for each new soldier in uniform.

We cannot make it any clearer to the chain of command that this hat is horrible for daily wear. Let's change it now.

Sgt. 1st Class Benerval Grimes
Fort Sill, Okla.

REPLY TO SFC GRIMES: T

Without debating the merits of the war on Afghanistan, the arguments presented in your thoughtful letter of 9.29 assume that the politicians in command in DC care about the lives of our troops fighting in Afghanistan, or about Afghanistan.

The article below indicates that the Obama regime has other priorities.

Therefore, what you propose as effective action is of no interest to those charged with the conduct of the war.

Both of the co-authors of the article below have experience that merits attention.

Military Experts Say U.S. Troops Will Die In Afghanistan To Re- Elect Obama:

**“We Believe The President Knows
Perfectly Well That Afghanistan Is
Vietnam All Over Again”**

**“He’s Seeking The Same Cynical Exit
Strategy That Richard Nixon And
Henry Kissinger Did”**

**Obama “Has Already Been Seduced By
The Old Beltway Calculus That
Sometimes A Little Wrong Must Be Done
To Get Re-Elected”**

Even the dimmest bulb listening to the president’s speech could not have missed the obvious link between the withdrawal date for combat troops from Iraq (2010), the date for beginning troop reductions in Afghanistan (2011), and the domestic U.S. election cycle.

DECEMBER 10, 2009, BY THOMAS H. JOHNSON, M. CHRIS MASON, Foreign Policy [Excerpts]

Thomas H. Johnson is research professor of the Department in National Security Affairs and director of the Program for Culture and Conflict Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

M. Chris Mason, a retired Foreign Service officer who served in 2005 as political officer for the provincial reconstruction team in Paktika, is senior fellow at the Program for Culture and Conflict Studies and at the Center for Advanced Defense Studies in Washington.

As German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer once said, truth is ridiculed, then denied, and then “accepted as having been obvious to everyone from the beginning.”

So let’s start with the obvious: There isn’t the slightest possibility that the course laid out by Barack Obama in his Dec. 1 speech will halt or even slow the downward spiral toward defeat in Afghanistan. None.

The U.S. president and his advisors labored for three months and brought forth old wine in bigger bottles. The speech contained not one single new idea or approach, nor offered any hint of new thinking about a conflict that everyone now agrees the United States is losing.

Instead, the administration deliberated for 94 days to deliver essentially “more men, more money, try harder.”

It sounded ominously similar to Mikhail Gorbachev’s “bloody wound” speech that led to a similar-sized, temporary Soviet troop surge in Afghanistan in 1986.

But the Soviet experience in Afghanistan isn’t what everyone is comparing Obama’s current predicament to; it’s Vietnam. The president knows it, and part of his speech was a rebuttal of those comparisons. It was a valiant effort, but to no avail.

Afghanistan is Vietnam all over again.

First, Obama noted that Afghanistan is being conducted by a “coalition” of 43 countries -- as if war by committee would magically change the outcome (a throwback to former President George W. Bush’s “Iraq coalition” mathematics).

The truth is, outside of a handful of countries, it’s basically a coalition of pacifists.

In fact, more foreign troops fought alongside the United States in Vietnam than are now actually fighting with Americans today.

Only nine countries in today’s 43-country coalition have more than 1,000 personnel there; nine others have 10 (yes, not even a dozen people) -- or fewer. And although Australia and New Zealand have sent a handful of excellent special operations troops to Afghanistan, only Britain, Canada, and France are providing significant forces willing to conduct conventional offensive military operations. That brings the coalition’s combat-troop contribution to approximately 17,000.

Most of the other 38 “partners” have strict rules prohibiting them from ever doing anything actually dangerous. Turkish troops, for example, never leave their firebase in Wardak province, according to U.S. personnel who monitor it.

The president’s final argument, that Afghanistan is different because Vietnam never attacked American soil, is a red herring.

History is overflowing with examples of just causes that have gone down in defeat. To suggest that the two conflicts will have different outcomes because the U.S. cause in Afghanistan is just (whereas, presumably from the speech, the war in Vietnam was not) is simply specious.

The courses and outcomes of wars are determined by strategy, not the justness of causes or the courage of troops.

The reality on the ground is that Afghanistan is Vietnam redux.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai's regime is an utterly illegitimate, incompetent kleptocracy.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) -- slotted to take over the conflict when the coalition pulls out -- will not even be able to feed itself in five years, much less turn back the mounting Taliban tide.

The U.S. Center for Army Lessons Learned determined by statistical analysis that the ANA will never grow larger than 100,000 men because nearly 30 percent either desert or fail to re-enlist each year.

The ANA is disproportionately Tajik, drug use is a major problem, all recruits are illiterate, and last month the ANA reached only half its modest recruiting goal despite 40 percent unemployment nationwide.

The American media, in its own regression to 1963, simply regurgitates Pentagon press releases that vastly inflate the actual size of the Afghan military, which is actually less than 60,000 men, just 32,000 of whom are combat troops.

The strategy's other component for dealing with the Taliban, "negotiating with moderates," is also ludicrous to anyone who is familiar with the insurgents. There is no one to negotiate with, and from their perspective, nothing to discuss.

And the Taliban know they are winning.

Meanwhile, commanding Gen. Stanley McChrystal's plan to secure the urban areas (rather than the rural countryside where the insurgency is actually metastasizing) is plagiarized from the famous never-written textbook, How to Lose a War in Afghanistan, authored jointly by Alexander the Great, the British Empire, and the Soviet Union.

And that is why the United States is now headed for certain defeat in Afghanistan.

Obama's new "strategy" is no strategy at all.

It is a cynical and politically motivated rehash of Iraq policy: Toss in a few more troops, throw together something resembling local security forces, buy off the enemies, and get the hell out before it all blows up.

Even the dimmest bulb listening to the president's speech could not have missed the obvious link between the withdrawal date for combat troops from Iraq (2010), the date for beginning troop reductions in Afghanistan (2011), and the domestic U.S. election cycle.

So we are faced with a conundrum.

Obama is one of the most intelligent men ever to hold the U.S. presidency.

But no intelligent person could really believe that adding 30,000 troops to Afghanistan, a country four times larger than Vietnam, for a year or two, following the same game plan that has resulted in dismal failure there for the past eight years, could possibly have any impact on the outcome of the conflict.

Arthur Conan Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes used to say that "when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

The only conclusion one can reach from the president's speech, after eliminating the impossible, is that the administration has made a difficult but pragmatic decision: The war in Afghanistan is unwinnable, and the president's second term and progressive domestic agenda cannot be sacrificed to a lost cause the way that President Lyndon B. Johnson's was for Vietnam.

The result of that calculation was what we heard on Dec. 1: platitudes about commitment and a just cause; historical amnesia; and a continuation of the exact same failed policies that got the United States into this mess back in 2001, concocted by the same ship of fools, many of whom are still providing remarkably bad advice to this administration.

We believe the president knows perfectly well that Afghanistan is Vietnam all over again, both domestically and, as we wrote in Military Review this month, in Kabul and out in the Afghan hills, where good men are bleeding and dying.

And he's seeking the same cynical exit strategy that Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger did in 1968: negotiating the best possible second-place position and a "decent interval" between withdrawal and collapse.

In office less than a year, the Obama administration has already been seduced by the old beltway calculus that sometimes a little wrong must be done to get re-elected and achieve a greater good.

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

"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops." Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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October 10, 2002: Infamous Anniversary



Carl Bunin Peace History October 8-14

The House voted 296-133 to pass the “Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq,” giving President George W. Bush broad authority to use military force against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, with or without U.N. support.

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