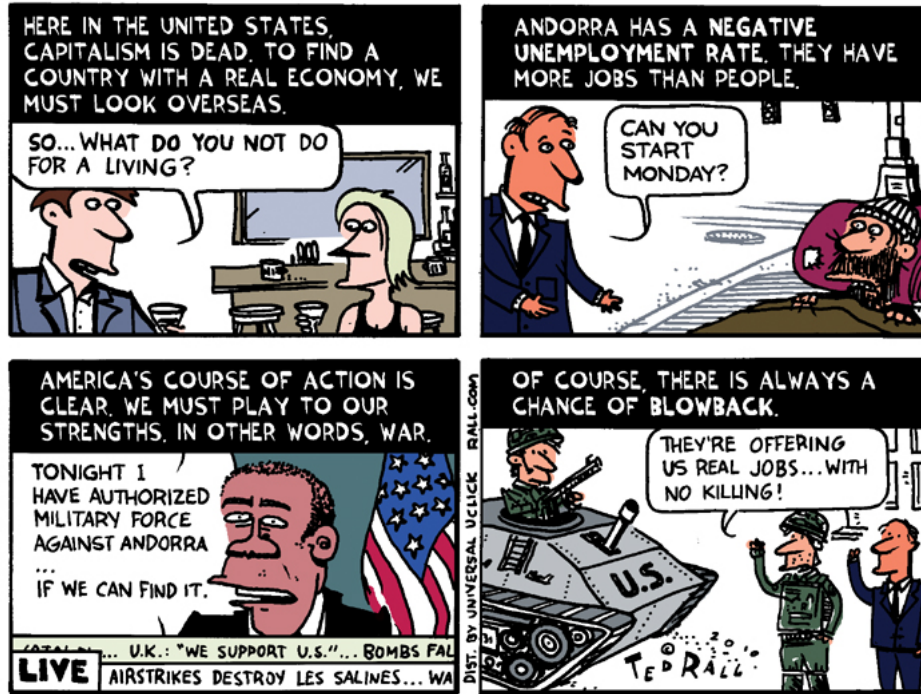


Military Resistance 8L18



**Command Protects
Incompetent Highers Whose
Dereliction Of Duty Killed Nine
U.S. Soldiers At Wanant:
Dishonorable Filth Rewrite The
Official History To Throw The
Blame On Platoon Level
Leadership:**

“Col. David Brostrom Says ‘It Blames My Dead Son’”

“The Initial Investigation, Conducted By A Three-Star Marine Corps General And Completed In The Spring, Found That The Company And Battalion Commanders Were ‘Derelict In Their Duty’”



Brass Meet At DoD To Protect The Officers Whose Dereliction Of Duty Killed Nine U.S. Soldiers

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

That investigation also found that mid-level Army officers failed to plan the operation beyond the first four days and as a result failed to provide sufficient manpower, water and other resources to defend the base from a Taliban attack.

The official history makes little mention of such conclusions.

December 29, 2010 By Greg Jaffe, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

The Army's official history of the battle of Wanat - one of the most intensely scrutinized engagements of the Afghan war - largely absolves top commanders of the deaths of nine U.S. soldiers and instead blames the confusing and unpredictable nature of war.

The history of the July 2008 battle was almost two years in the making and triggered a roiling debate at all levels of the Army about whether mid-level and senior battlefield commanders should be held accountable for mistakes made under the extreme duress of combat.

An initial draft of the Wanat history, which was obtained by The Washington Post and other media outlets in the summer of 2009, placed the preponderance of blame for the losses on the higher-level battalion and brigade commanders who oversaw the mission, saying they failed to provide the proper resources to the unit in Wanat.

The final history, released in recent weeks, drops many of the earlier conclusions and instead focuses on failures of lower-level commanders.

The battle of Wanat, which took place in a remote mountain village near the Pakistan border, produced four investigations and sidetracked the careers of several Army officers, whose promotions were either put on hold or canceled.

Family members of the deceased at Wanat reacted with anger and disappointment to the final version of the Army history.

"They blame the platoon-level leadership for all the mistakes at Wanat," said retired Col. David Brostrom, whose son was killed in the fighting. "It blames my dead son. They really missed the point."

The initial investigation, conducted by a three-star Marine Corps general and completed in the spring, found that the company and battalion commanders were "derelict in their duty" to provide proper oversight and resources to the soldiers fighting at Wanat.

Petraeus reviewed the findings and concluded that based on Army doctrine, the brigade commander, who was the senior U.S. officer in the area, also failed in his job. He recommended that all three officers be issued letters of reprimand, which would essentially end their careers.

After the officers appealed their reprimands, a senior Army general in the United States reversed the decision to punish the officers, formerly members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The initial decision to discipline the three officers was controversial within the Army even before Campbell's decision to tear up the letters of reprimand. On the day the letters were supposed to be finalized, senior Army officials had planned to have top commanders discuss the decision with their officers. When the letters were revoked, those plans were canceled.

The Army's final history of the Wanat battle largely echoes Campbell's conclusions, citing the role of "uncertainty (as) a factor inseparable from any military operation."

In its conclusions, the study maintains that U.S. commanders had a weak grasp of the area's complicated politics, causing them to underestimate the hostility to a U.S. presence in Wanat.

But the history focuses mostly on the failures of lower-level commanders to patrol aggressively in the area around Wanat as they were building their defenses.

It also criticizes 1st Lt. Jonathan Brostrom, a 24-year-old platoon leader, for placing a key observation point in an area that did not provide the half-dozen U.S. soldiers placed there a broad enough view to spot the enemy.

"The placement of the OP (Observation Post) is perhaps the most important factor contributing to the course of the engagement at Wanat," the report states.

The initial investigation, by contrast, found that the placement of the post was not a major factor in the outcome of the battle.

That investigation also found that mid-level Army officers failed to plan the operation beyond the first four days and as a result failed to provide sufficient manpower, water and other resources to defend the base from a Taliban attack.

The official history makes little mention of such conclusions.

One of the senior officials involved in the initial investigation said that none of the officers who were recommended for disciplinary action were incompetent. "They were all truly professional officers," the senior official said.

But even good officers must be held accountable for inattention and mistakes, the official said.

"We are talking about people's lives here," he said. "Officers have to be held accountable for their actions. They can't be given a free ride when lives are involved. If you screw up, you have to pay a price."

David Brostrom, the father of the dead platoon leader at Wanat, said he will meet next month with senior Army officials and Army historians at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., in an effort to get them to further revise the Wanat history. He doesn't expect the Army to change the record, which is considered final.

"For me, this has never been about trying to get officers fired," Brostrom said. "It is about trying to get the Army to admit and learn from its mistakes."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Marina Soldier Dies In Afghanistan

12/22/2010 By LARRY PARSONS, Herald Staff Writer

A 19-year-old soldier from Marina died during the weekend in Afghanistan after his vehicle was attacked with an improvised explosive device used by the enemy, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

Pfc. Conrado D. Javier Jr., a 2009 graduate of Seaside High School, suffered fatal injuries in the Sunday attack in Kandahar province. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment in Vilseck, Germany.

"I still can't believe it," said Javier's 29-year-old sister, Araceli, in the doorway of the family's home on Crescent Avenue, where a car in the driveway carried a black and gold Army bumper sticker.

Javier, who was one of eight children, yearned to be in the military since he was 5 years old, his sister said.

At Seaside High, Javier was active in the ROTC program, was a member of the drill team and frequently volunteered to attend funerals and other occasions with the team, she said.

"He was real loyal and real compassionate," his sister said.

Javier's parents, Julia and Conrado, traveled to Maryland to accompany their son's body home from Dover Air Force Base, she said.

The family received word of his death Sunday and was still reeling, she said.

"We've had a rosary for him every night with close family members. We pray for him," his sister said.

Javier grew up in Seaside and longed to become an Army officer and an attorney, she said.

She said their mother told them that military service was part of the family's Mexican heritage, but she worried about Javier joining the service.

Her brother joined the Army months after graduating from high school. He came home on leave at Thanksgiving before deploying to Afghanistan, she said.

His parents worked as farmworkers when the family was younger, then shifted to hospitality industry jobs.

His father has been working at the Navy Lodge in Monterey for the past year after losing a job in the 2009 closure of Quail Lodge in Carmel Valley.

Ron Rickow, general manager at the Navy Lodge, recalled seeing the young soldier at Thanksgiving.

"He was all excited about joining the Army and seeing the world," Rickow said.

His father is a popular member of the lodge staff, and news of his son's death was greeted somberly.

"I didn't sleep too well last night," Rickow said. "We are like a family here."

Rickow said within an hour after he received the go-ahead, employees pooled their leave time to assure Javier's father that he won't lose any pay "until he's ready to return."

Javier is the fifth Monterey County service member to die in the nine-year war in Afghanistan known as Operation Enduring Freedom.

Last week, a funeral was held at Fort Ord for Staff Sgt. Vincent Ashlock of Seaside, who died Dec. 4 in a non-combat incident in Afghanistan's Khost province.

Javier "just wanted to serve his country," his sister said, recalling how he loved the Fourth of July and fireworks.

After his Thanksgiving leave, she said, her brother "left

Remembering Lance Cpl. Jose L. Maldonado

December 22, 2010 By Rhiannon Meyers, Corpus Christi Caller Times

MATHIS — Jose L. Maldonado's life could have taken a drastically different turn.

He struggled through a difficult childhood, bouncing between his mother's house in Baytown and his relatives in Mathis, before his aunt and uncle got full custody of him as a teenager.

By that time, his life had been so rough that when he signed up to play football at Mathis High School, the coaches at first debated playing him, thinking he would be too fragile, too easy to break, said Chris Casarez, who was Maldonado's football coach.

"One of the first things I noticed about him is that he's looking forward, not looking at things happening to him," Casarez said. "He did not play the victim's role.

"When you see bad things happen to people, they sometimes use that as an excuse or a crutch. He looked for ways to make things better, to make things right. He was a tremendous young man early on."

On Wednesday scores of mourners gathered in front of Sacred Heart Church to remember the man who, against all odds, grew to become the hero of this small town. Maldonado, a lance corporal in the Marine Corps, was killed while conducting combat operations in the volatile Helmand province in Afghanistan.

He was 21.

"It's a great loss to the Maldonado and Williams families, to the Mathis community, to the Mathis Pirates and to the United States Marines," Casarez said. "We're going to miss you, Jose."

Maldonado's family, sitting side by side in hard plastic chairs, sobbed throughout the vigil, as his friends, teammates and Mathis residents lined up to offer their condolences.

His older cousin, Jessica Williams, told the crowd their family has been overwhelmed by the support that has poured in after Maldonado's death.

"I'm honored to say we didn't lose him to a gang fight. We didn't lose him to a drug overdose. We lost him in an honorable way defending our country," she said. "I want to thank everyone ... and make sure everyone knows how grateful we are for everything, but, in the end, we would rather be at home, waiting for his phone call."

Williams said that, while most people in Mathis know Maldonado as a football star, a baseball hero or a loyal friend, she always will remember him as a 4-year-old boy, clad in a firefighter's hat, clutching a red fire engine in his hand.

"He was so full of life," she said, sobbing. "He would never settle for ordinary in his life, so it should be no surprise that his death was extraordinary, because he died doing what he loved, which was just protecting his country."

More than anything, Maldonado wanted to fight for his country, said Cpl. Juan Sanchez Jr., Maldonado's friend and a fellow Marine. "He's one of the greatest men I've ever known and an even better Marine," he said.

The town has rallied around Maldonado's family, particularly his aunt and uncle, Alicia and George Williams, since news of the Marine's death on Friday. U.S. flags are flying at half-staff at City Hall and the town library and an oversized flag, bathed in floodlights, is hanging from the boom of a giant crane parked in a vacant lot. The local pharmacy posted on its sign: "We honor Lance Cpl. Jose Maldonado."

Local veterans will honor him at 5:30 p.m. today with a march from Prosperity Bank to a veterans' park near Dobie Funeral Home.

On Wednesday, clutching thin, white candles, the mourners gathered in a semicircle, held hands and bowed their heads as family friend Rosalinda Peña asked God for comfort and understanding.

"We ask God to give to us the healing we need, the healing the Williamses need, that his brothers and sisters, and all his friends and these community members need," Peña said. "We are the ones who need it now. We are the ones hurting. He is in a better place."

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

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



A U.S. soldier looks towards Taliban positions as other soldiers of Bravo Company 2-327 Infantry take cover during battle in Chowkay district, near the Pakistani border in Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Dec 20, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



A U.S. soldier responding to an attack by Taliban with small arms on Badel Combat Out Post near Pakistani border in Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Dec 23, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



A U.S. soldier returns fire as another moves to take cover upon a sudden attack by Taliban on Combat Out Post Badel in eastern Afghanistan near Pakistani border on Saturday, Dec 25, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



U.S. soldiers at car bomb blast site in Kandahar city December 27, 2010, where a car bomber killed Afghan police officers as they lined up outside a bank to collect their salaries in the southern city of Kandahar. REUTERS/Ahmad Nadeem



A U.S. soldier of Bravo Company 2-327 Infantry returns fire to Taliban positions after Taliban attacked them during a patrol in Chowkay district near Pakistani border in Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Dec 28, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)



U.S. soldiers of Bravo Company 2-327 Infantry return fire after a sudden attack by Taliban on Badel Combat Out Post in eastern Afghanistan near Pakistan border on Wednesday, Dec 29, 2010. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

MILITARY NEWS

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THEM HOME: ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The casket of Lance Cpl. Jose Maldonado Dec 28, 2010 at the Corpus Christi International Airport in Corpus Christi, Texas. Maldonado of Mathis died Friday during combat in the Helmand province of southern Afghanistan. Maldonado was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif. (AP Photo/Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Todd Yates)

Traveling Soldier:

Posted At:

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

THIS ISSUE FEATURING:

“A WAR WITH NO CLEAR OBJECTIVE”

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.war.php>

“WE SHOULD JUST END IT. BRING THE TROOPS HOME”

“I never wanted my son to be a little old obituary in the paper”

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.troops.php>

THE POLITICIANS WON'T TALK ABOUT THE WAR:

“But for the Olechnys, avoidance is not an option”

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/12.10.avoidance.php>

[And More.....]

TRAVELING SOLDIER

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



“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

“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

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

Each Year The Column “Dispatches From The Edge” Awards News Stories And Newsmakers That Fall Under The Category Of “Are You Serious?” Here Are 2010’s Winners:

[Thanks to Frank Millsbaugh, who sent this in.]

December 28, 2010 By Conn Hallinan, Dispatches From the Edge

Each year the column Dispatches From The Edge awards news stories and newsmakers that fall under the category of “Are you serious?”

Here are 2010’s winners.

The Harry Potter Award to the British technology company ATSC Ltd for its invention of a “wand” that, according to the company, detects explosives, drugs, and human remains for up to six miles by air and three fifths of a mile by land. The ADE 651 sells for \$16,000 a unit.

The only problem is that it doesn’t work, which users might have figured out by reading the manual: the device has no batteries or internal parts.

It is powered by “static electricity” generated by the holder walking in place. A wand-like antenna then points to the drugs, bodies, or explosives.

This past January ATSC Ltd was charged with fraud and banned by the British government. One ATSC source told the New York Times, “Everyone at ATSC knew that there was nothing inside the ADE 651,” and that the units cost only \$250 to make.

But the wand was widely used in Iraq.

Ammar Tuma, a member of the Iraqi parliament’s Security and Defense Committee, bitterly attacked the company for causing “grave and massive losses of the lives of innocent Iraqi civilians, by the hundreds and the thousands, from attacks we thought we were immune to because we have this device.”

The Iraqi Ministry of the Interior purchased 800 ADE 651s at a cost of \$85 million.

The managing director of ATSC, Jim McCormack, staunchly defended the wand, which he claims the company has sold to 20 countries. He did admit, “one of the problems is that the machine looks primitive,” and said the company was turning out an upgraded model “that has flashing lights.”

Runner-up for this award was the British firm, Global Technology Ltd, which sold \$10 million worth of very similar wand—the GT 200—to Mexico.

The unit retails for \$20,000 apiece. In one demonstration the GT 200 detected drugs in a Volkswagen sedan. After thoroughly searching the car, authorities turned up a bottle of Tylenol (suggesting that one should switch to Advil).

Human Rights Watch says it is “troubled” by the use of the wand, which is widely used in Thailand and Mexico. “If people are actually being arrested and charged solely on the basis of its readings, that would be outrageous,” the group said in a press release.

A Mexican interior official defended the GT-200, however, claiming that it “works with molecules.”

Hard to argue with science.

The Golden Lemon Award goes to the Conservative government of Canada for shelling out \$8.5 billion to buy 65 Lockheed Martin F-35 stealth fighters. According to Defense Minister Peter MacKay, “This multi-role stealth fighter will help the Canadian forces defend the sovereignty of Canadian airspace.”

Exactly whom that airspace is being defended from is not clear.

The contract also includes a \$6.6 billion maintenance agreement, which is a good thing because the F-35 has a number of “problems.”

For instance, its engine shoots out sparks, and no one can figure out why. It is generally thought a bad idea for an engine to do that.

There are several different types of F-35, and the vertical lift version of the aircraft doesn’t work very well.

It seems the fan that cools the engine, doesn't, and the panels that open for the vertical thrust, don't.

Also switches, valves and power systems are considered "unreliable."

The F-35 is looking more and more like the old F-105 Thunderchief, a fighter-bomber used extensively at the beginning of the Vietnam War.

Pilots nicknamed it the "Thud" (the sound the plane made when it hit the ground after failing to clear a runway, a rather common occurrence).

One pilot said it had all the agility of a "flying brick," thus its other nickname: the "lead sled."

The U.S. is spending \$382 billion to buy 2,457 F-35s, although the price tag keeps going up as more and more "problems" develop. Maintenance and spare parts for the aircraft will run several hundred billion extra.

One normally thinks of Canadians as sensible, but the country's Conservative government is apparently as thickheaded as our own. Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently had a summit meeting on the Arctic and didn't invite the Inuit (whom most Americans call Eskimos).

Well, the F-35 may not fly very well, but it works just fine for Lockheed Martin: second quarter profits saw a jump from \$727 million to \$731 million over last year, and revenues rose to \$11.44 billion, 3 percent over last year.

The Panjandrum Award to the U.S. military in Afghanistan. For those unfamiliar with the "Great Panjandrum," it was an enormous rocket-propelled explosive wheel developed by Great Britain for breaching the Atlantic Wall that Nazi Germany had built on the French coast to defend against amphibious invasions. Tested on a Devon beach, it roared ashore, turned smartly to port, and thundered into a bevy of admirals and generals, scattering them hither and yon. Thus "Panjandrum" became a metaphor for really silly military ideas.

And there is not a whole lot sillier idea than the one to deploy M1-Abrams tanks in southern Afghanistan.

The M1 is a 68-ton behemoth, powered by a jet engine (miles per gallon is not its strong point). Since Afghanistan has virtually no roads and a good deal of the terrain is vertical—at least the part where the insurgents are ensconced—how the M1 is going to get around is not obvious.

However, one U.S. Marine officer told the Washington Post, "The tanks bring awe, shock and firepower. It's pretty significant."

Right. Show the Wogs a tank and they will be begging for mercy.

Except the Taliban are quite familiar with tanks.

The initial Soviet invasion included 1,800 of them, many of them T-72s. The T-72 is admittedly smaller than the Abrams—41 1/2 tons vs. 68 tons—but the former actually packed a bigger gun.

The M1 sports a 120mm gun, the T-72 a 125 mm gun. T-72 carcasses are scattered all over Afghanistan, and the Taliban even managed to capture some of them.

Tanks are effective against stationary targets and other tanks.

The Taliban don't have tanks, and they don't stick around when one shows up. But shocked and awed by their appearance? Don't these people read history? Try "The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan," by Lester Grau.

The George Orwell Award to the U.S. Defense Department for dropping the name of "Psychological Operations"—"Psyops" for short—because the "term can sound ominous."

Instead Psyops will now be known as Military Information Support Operation, or MISO, which sounds like a Japanese soup.

Some military contractors, however, apparently didn't get the memo about using names and acronyms that sound "ominous."

Northrop Grumman just successfully tested a radar system that will be attached to Predator and Reaper armed drones to allow the killer robots to "detect individuals walking over a wide area" and track vehicles, watercraft, people, and animals, as well as "stationary targets of interest."

Given that the drones pack Hellfire missiles and 500 lb. bombs, you really don't want to be "interesting" when they are around.

The news system is called the "Vehicle and Dismount Exploitation Radar" or "Vader" for short.

Sound of heavy breathing are not included in the basic package.

The Rudyard Kipling Award to the Pentagon and its program to train officers for extended service in Afghanistan. For those unclear on this award, a few lines from Kipling's poem, "Arithmetic on the Frontier" about Britain's unsuccessful effort to subdue Afghanistan, and how one adds up the cost of occupation:

A scrimmage in a Border Station--
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drop to a ten-rupee jezail*—

*A jezail is a cheap, muzzle-loading rifle that took a heavy toll on British troops during their 19th century invasions of Afghanistan.

It appears some officers read Kipling.

In spite of a high profile push by the Defense Department to recruit officers to serve in Afghanistan, the program is less than half filled, according to Pentagon officials.

The Barn Door Award to the Department of Defense (yes, yes they do win a lot, but then they excel at winning awards) for telling employees and contractors not to read Wiki Leak documents online, because they are “classified.” Just close your eyes?

The Air Force went one step further and barred personnel from using computers where the documents were online, thus underlining conventional wisdom in Washington: the Army is slow, the Marines are dumb, the Navy lies, and the Air Force is evil.

The Mary Wollingstonecraft Shelly Award (the author of Frankenstein) goes to the University of California at Berkeley, MIT, and Cornell University for using Defense Department money to turn the beetle, *Mecynorrhina torquata*, into a cyborg.

The beetle is fitted with an electronic backpack attached to the animal’s wing muscles, allowing scientists to control the beetle’s flight path.

The idea is to use the little beastie (actually, as beetles go, kind of a big beastie) to crawl or fly into areas where the “enemy” is. Once the “enemy” is identified, the military can target the area with bombs, rockets or artillery. This is a tad rough on the beetles.

According to researchers Michael Maharbiz and Hirotake Sato, the long-term goal is to “introduce synthetic interfaces and control loops” into other animals. “Working out the details in insects first will help us avoid mistakes and false starts in higher organisms, such as rats, mice, and ultimately people. And it allows us to postpone many of the deeper ethical questions about free will, among other things, that would become more pressing if this work took place on vertebrates.”

The Michele Bachmann Award to Australian legislator Bob Katter for sounding the alarm about a serious threat facing his constituents: “We have terrible problems with deadly flying foxes. They are going to kill more people than the Taipan snake in Australia.”

The flying fox is the world’s largest bat, also called the “fruit bat.” It has broad, flat molars and feeds on soft fruit, from which it extracts juice. By all accounts they are gentle and intelligent and don’t attack humans. The Taipan snake, which can grow up to 12 feet, is considered the most venomous land snake in the world. However, the animal is shy and rarely bites people.

It is comforting to know that there are other legislators in the world just as wacko as U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn), who recently suggested that legislators “slit their wrists in a blood pact” to block health reform and said that people had to be “armed and dangerous” to block efforts to mitigate global warming.

Happy Anniversary December 31, 1948; Honor To The 60,000

Peace History December 25-31 By Carl Bunin

Sixty thousand Puerto Rican men refused to register for the draft. Eight were prosecuted.

Happy Anniversary December 31, 1970 The Day The Liars Were Repudiated

Peace History Dec 31 - Jan 6 By Carl Bunin

The U.S. Congress repealed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which in 1964 authorized a dramatic increase in U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in response to an attack on U.S. forces that was later revealed to be fictitious.

How The Tonkin Gulf Lie Launched Vietnam War

July 27, 1994 By Jeff Cohen and Norman Solomon, Media Beat

Thirty years ago, it all seemed very clear. "American Planes Hit North Vietnam After Second Attack on Our Destroyers; Move Taken to Halt New Aggression", announced a Washington Post headline on Aug. 5, 1964.

That same day, the front page of the New York Times reported: "President Johnson has ordered retaliatory action against gunboats and 'certain supporting facilities in North Vietnam' after renewed attacks against American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin." But there was no "second attack" by North Vietnam -- no "renewed attacks against American destroyers."

By reporting official claims as absolute truths, American journalism opened the floodgates for the bloody Vietnam War. A pattern took hold: continuous government lies passed on by pliant mass media...leading to over 50,000 American deaths and millions of Vietnamese casualties.

The official story was that North Vietnamese torpedo boats launched an "unprovoked attack" against a U.S. destroyer on "routine patrol" in the Tonkin Gulf on Aug. 2 -- and

that North Vietnamese PT boats followed up with a “deliberate attack” on a pair of U.S. ships two days later.

The truth was very different.

Rather than being on a routine patrol Aug. 2, the U.S. destroyer Maddox was actually engaged in aggressive intelligence-gathering maneuvers -- in sync with coordinated attacks on North Vietnam by the South Vietnamese navy and the Laotian air force. “The day before, two attacks on North Vietnam...had taken place,” writes scholar Daniel C. Hallin. Those assaults were “part of a campaign of increasing military pressure on the North that the United States had been pursuing since early 1964.”

On the night of Aug. 4, the Pentagon proclaimed that a second attack by North Vietnamese PT boats had occurred earlier that day in the Tonkin Gulf -- a report cited by President Johnson as he went on national TV that evening to announce a momentous escalation in the war: air strikes against North Vietnam.

But Johnson ordered U.S. bombers to “retaliate” for a North Vietnamese torpedo attack that never happened.

Prior to the U.S. air strikes, top officials in Washington had reason to doubt that any Aug. 4 attack by North Vietnam had occurred. Cables from the U.S. task force commander in the Tonkin Gulf, Captain John J. Herrick, referred to “freak weather effects,” “almost total darkness” and an “overeager sonarman” who “was hearing ship’s own propeller beat.”

One of the Navy pilots flying overhead that night was squadron commander James Stockdale, who gained fame later as a POW and then Ross Perot’s vice presidential candidate. “I had the best seat in the house to watch that event,” recalled Stockdale a few years ago, “and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets -- there were no PT boats there.... There was nothing there but black water and American fire power.”

In 1965, Lyndon Johnson commented: “For all I know, our Navy was shooting at whales out there.” But Johnson’s deceitful speech of Aug. 4, 1964, won accolades from editorial writers. The president, proclaimed the New York Times, “went to the American people last night with the somber facts.” The Los Angeles Times urged Americans to “face the fact that the Communists, by their attack on American vessels in international waters, have themselves escalated the hostilities.”

An exhaustive new book, *The War Within: America’s Battle Over Vietnam*, begins with a dramatic account of the Tonkin Gulf incidents. In an interview, author Tom Wells told us that American media “described the air strikes that Johnson launched in response as merely ‘tit for tat’ -- when in reality they reflected plans the administration had already drawn up for gradually increasing its overt military pressure against the North.”

Daniel Hallin’s classic book *The ‘Uncensored War’* observes that journalists had “a great deal of information available which contradicted the official account; it simply wasn’t used. The day before the first incident, Hanoi had protested the attacks on its territory by Laotian aircraft and South Vietnamese gunboats.”

What's more, "It was generally known...that `covert' operations against North Vietnam, carried out by South Vietnamese forces with U.S. support and direction, had been going on for some time."

In the absence of independent journalism, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution -- the closest thing there ever was to a declaration of war against North Vietnam -- sailed through Congress on Aug. 7. (Two courageous senators, Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska, provided the only "no" votes.) The resolution authorized the president "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."

The rest is tragic history.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“President Evo Morales, Enemy Of The Poor”

Bolivians Rise Up Against Morales Regime After 83% Hike In Fuel Prices



“President Evo Morales, Enemy Of The Poor”



The Mineworkers Union de Huanuni goes to strike contra the "gasolinazo"
Photo: boliviademocratica.net

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

December 30, 2010 By REUTERS & By PAOLA FLORES, Associated Press &
December 27, 2010 Dan Moriarty, Blogspot [Excerpts]

LA PAZ, Bolivia – Protests against a sharp increase in fuel prices intensified and turned violent in Bolivia on Thursday, as thousands of demonstrators demanded President Evo Morales' government repeal the hike.

Big winners from Morales's decree to increase energy prices include three foreign firms: Petrobras, Total, and Repsol. The state energy company will YPFB will increase the amount it pays those three firms per barrel of oil.

Demonstrators filled the streets in La Paz and other cities to protest the higher prices, which were announced suddenly on Sunday.

Gasoline prices immediately soared by 73 percent and diesel prices went up by 83 percent, leading to a rapid increases in transport and food prices in the Andean country.

Taxi drivers held a strike that largely paralyzed La Paz on Thursday, and protests were also held in the cities of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Potosi and Oruro.

The march in the capital began peacefully but clashes with police erupted when demonstrators tried to enter the main plaza where the government palace is located. Police used tear gas to disperse the protesters, who hurled stones at officers, the vice presidential office, a union headquarters and two ministry buildings.

In El Alto, a city neighboring the capital, demonstrators set afire a car and toll booths. People lined a bridge while protesters raised fists demanding the measure be repealed.

Interior Minister Sacha Llorenti said disturbances in La Paz, El Alto and Cochabamba left 15 police officers injured, two seriously.

Bus and truck drivers and powerful citizens groups took to the streets.

Bolivia's central workers union has declared its strong opposition to the government's price hike, as have many other social movements, including in La Paz and El Alto, Morales strongholds.

The government's decision has sparked outrage in a country rich in natural gas, landing Morales with one of the biggest crises of his five years in power.

Demonstrators set fire to toll booths on the main highway linking El Alto to neighboring La Paz, Bolivia's administrative capital.

The protesters hurled sticks and stones at police, who used tear gas to clear the area.

Bus and truck drivers protested by blocking roads and public transportation was crippled in La Paz.

Thousands of people from the sprawling slum city of El Alto marched to nearby La Paz on Thursday, one of many protests planned for the city.

"Evo, we're the people ... Correct this mistake," said Fanny Nina, head of FEJUVE, an influential group of neighborhood associations in El Alto, which has nearly 1 million residents and is traditionally a Morales stronghold.

Between 2003 and 2005, two Bolivian presidents were toppled by protests in which El Alto residents played a leading role.

Elsewhere in highland La Paz, striking bus and truck drivers blocked bridges and road junctions and there was nearly no public transportation in the city.

Many critics - including a former MAS/Morales-appointed Bolivian ambassador - have pointed out that this move on Morales' part mirrors many similar decisions by the previous, "neoliberal" governments of which Morales is so critical.

In fact, Morales had claimed earlier in his presidency that he didn't need and would not implement a "gasolinazo" (the word refers to just this kind of sudden price hike), as his government would find other ways of increasing revenue than by taking it out on the population.

One critic pointed out that this - insisting that international markets dictate the "correct" price of essential goods - is exactly the kind of thing the IMF would mandate



Demonstrators take part in a protest rally against President Evo Morales' government in La Paz December 30, 2010. REUTERS/Gaston Brito



Demonstrators protest against President Evo Morales' government in La Paz, December 30, 2010. Thousands protested on Thursday after the government cut state fuel subsidies on Sunday, pushing up prices by as much as 83 percent. REUTERS/Gaston Brito



Bolivians protest against President Evo Morales' government in La Paz, December 30, 2010. REUTERS/David Mercado

MORE:

Evo Morales: The Privileged Pig Who Loves The Rich And Rapes

The People:

**“Did The People Send You To
Impose Such A Brutal, Irrational,
Arrogant And Neoliberal
“Gasolinazo” (An 82% Hike In
Gasoline Prices)”**

**“Was It The People Who Sent You To
Buy A Private Airplane For \$40
Million When Millions Of ‘Your**

People' Do Not Have Housing Nor Basic Services?"

“The Multinational Oil And Mining Companies And Large Bankers Today Have Made More Money Than During Any Previous Government To Yours, Those Which You Affectionately Call ‘Partners’”?

December 30, 2010 **By Oscar Olivera Foronda**, Marcelo Rojas, Abraham Grandydier, Aniceto Hinojosa Vásquez and Carlos Oropeza Via Narco News

Open Letter To Evo Morales And Álvaro García Against The Gasolinazo And For The Self Governance Of Our People:

December 30, 2010

Cochabamba, (La Llajta) December 30, 2010

Sirs;
Evo Morales Ayma and
Alvaro García Linera
La Paz.-

We speak to you through this open letter although it probably won't be read because you don't hear of it or because it doesn't interest you.

However, although you may ignore it, although it may not exist, we want to tell you how we, like many of our people, feel today.

We tell you, Sirs, because years ago you ceased being our brothers and compañeros, you distanced yourselves from the people, and thus you don't know what happens down here, below.

Your defects – and not your virtues – that we know have multiplied ten times in a worrisome, indignant and sad manner.

We still remember when we marched, together with you, Evo, for our people, when we campaigned to get Alvaro out of prison; when the ancient textile workers'

building in Cochabamba became our headquarters to conspire against the bad governments that today look a lot like yours: BAD GOVERNMENT.

You quickly forgot that we sent you into the government not to administrate, but, rather, to transform and change the lives of the people.

Today we see all of you transformed and the lives of the people have changed, but badly so, from bad to worse.

Since that December 22 of 2005, when you cried, Evo and Alvaro, you have only busied yourselves making traditional and privileged politics, subordinating and coopting social and union leaders, military and police officials, with money, with positions, disqualifying and stigmatizing everything that has criticized you, everything we said we wanted to do away with.

Some of us had the luxury to reject your offers and you converted us into your enemies or simply behaved as if we did not exist.

We asked you: Change the economy, worry about the people more than your political enemies, create jobs, industry, work, build solidarity, brotherhood and generosity.

Where is your “obedience leads” slogan that was invented by the Zapatistas?

Did the people send you there to pact with the right in the Constituent Assembly?

Did the people send you there to fill your cabinet with neoliberals, opportunists, incompetents and advisors for international organizations that we never saw in the struggles of the people, in the streets, the highways, the communities, the hunger strikes and factories?

Where were most of the members of your cabinet in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005?

Did the people send you there to invite your mayors, governors, “beauty pageant contestants,” and neoliberal technicians into the government?

Who decides in this government? The people?

Or the llunk’us (a Quecha indigenous word for lackeys and adulators) that surround you in order to not lose the privileges that gives them power?

Who continues controlling the economy of our country?

The indigenous and “social movements”?

Or the multinational oil and mining companies and large bankers who today have made more money than during any previous government to yours, those which you affectionately call “partners”?

They are partners in the conditions of anguish and poor living to which we have been subjected during these last five years.

Where are the billions of dollars in fiscal reserves that you constantly tell us are there?

What about the nationalizations that have been a trick against the population, indemnifying the multinational looters with the people's money?

These businesses are being administrated by the old neoliberal and corrupt bureaucracy.

Where is the industrialization of gas in the country? Where is the new economy based on respect for Mother Earth and the balance and harmonious relation with Pachamama that you always proclaim?

Haven't you delivered thousands of acres to the multinational oil and mining companies so they can keep exploiting Mother Earth?

Have you given the New Political Constitution of the State to the plantation owners of the Eastern region?

The economic model continues being extractionary, neoliberal, capitalist, all of it contrary to your speeches.

Was it the people who sent you to buy a private airplane for \$40 million when millions of "your people" do not have housing nor basic services?

Did the people send you to tolerate narcotrafficking like never before and that, sooner or later, will turn our city into a Ciudad Juárez or a Medellín? Maybe the same coca leaf that you promoted so that you could be president will be the same leaf that takes that privilege away from you.

Do you know what it's like to have to wait on line overnight to sign your sons and daughters into school or to receive inadequate medical attention in the public hospitals?

The people don't have private and privileged insurance for the clinics of the rich.

Are you familiar with what it is to get on a public bus or taxi and listen to the sentiments of our people?

Have you gone to the markets to bargain the prices of basic foods that each day are harder to obtain to calm the hunger of our families?

Did the people send you there to have so many privileges, bodyguards, assistants, cabinet chiefs who make it impossible to speak directly to both of you?

Who pays you?

Who pays your food, your transportation, your health insurance, your security, your planes, your costs?

We do: the people which you were once part of.

Did the people send you to impose such a brutal, irrational, arrogant and neoliberal “gasolinazo” (an 82 percent hike in gasoline prices) that will make the people, who barely survive if they have the luck to have a stall in the market or a job, even poorer?

You always said that neoliberalism has failed. Is the gasolinazo a revolutionary and popular measure? Or is it that your economic model has failed?

Why must you – like all the governments previous to yours have done – carry out your failures behind the backs of the population, notably over those making minimum wage whose median income is fifty times less than yours and whose needs are one hundred times greater than yours?

What a pain that you always say that power is in the hands of the people, that this is an indigenous-popular government, what a pain that all of this is a lie: LLULLAS! (A very strong indigenous Quechua word for “liars.”)

Luckily, thanks to the struggles in which we have been together, we learned something very important.

We learned to think and act for ourselves so that never again would anyone tell us what we must do, so that nobody ever again would be able to trick us so that the popular vote, trust and hope that has come in recent times from the most impoverished and humble sectors would be converted into a party for the rich, the well-off, the neoliberals in sheep’s clothing, the “beauty pageant contestants.”

The process is not propaganda, it is not a speech, it is not about marketing: the process is to change the lives of the people.

And read this well, because we won’t allow ourselves to be tricked again by anybody. That’s the way that people – who come, like you, from the breast of The People – are.

We would like to finish by saying something that an Aymara elder said: The indigenous are not defined by physical traits, nor language, nor last name, nor culture. The indigenous come from an attitude of generosity, of respect, of reciprocity, transparency, of listening to others.

We ask you: Do you have that?

From below and to the left, as the Zapatistas say, we see arrogants who decide everything, who don’t listen to anyone, who discriminate, who insult, who disqualify, who defame. Is that how you want to remain in power for many years?

The problem is that you don’t understand the enormous responsibility that you assumed as part of this process with our people and other peoples of the world: of demonstrating that it is possible to govern ourselves, that it is possible to lead by obeying, that it is possible to construct another model of development, of “good living,” that another world is possible. This was a process that delivered itself to you with hope and joy.

The legitimate owner of this process is the Bolivian people, the girls and boys, men and women, youths, elders, from the country and from the city, whose effort cannot be worn down, diverted, usurped, expropriated, betrayed or subordinated by anyone, even less by you and those who equivocally decide for us.

We don't care about governments. We care about the people and this process is losing the social base that it cost us so much to construct while returning it to the right against which we fought and will fight.

To make you understand that we exist we must mobilize and this we will do, do not forget it.

But we will not mobilize to fight among brothers and sisters in the way that you've been encouraging in these years in your incapacity, and the result is in Huanuni, Cochabamba, Pando, Yungas, Sucre... where so many brothers and sisters, all children of Mother Earth, have hated and died.

Alvaro, we already told you: The people come first, and later the numbers and statistics.

Do not confront us. Do not provoke us. Do not divide us or ignore us. We exist. We are dignified. We will struggle against everything that harms our daily lives.

We seek:

- The repeal of your anti-popular and nefarious Decree 748
- The decolonization of the Plurinational State
- That no political party, not of the left, the center or the right, can benefit from or involve itself in our actions and decisions
- Like in 2000, like in 2003, Cochabamba and El Alto defeated the anti-popular policies.

Oscar Olivera Foronda
Marcelo Rojas
Abraham Grandydier
Aniceto Hinojosa Vasquez
Carlos Oropeza

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

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

This is how Obama brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.



Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org

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

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

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.