

Military Resistance 8L3



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization who sent this in.]

**“What Are We Really
Fighting For?”**

**“We Risk Our Lives To Catch
Them And Bring Them In And
Then They Just Release Them”**

**Afghan Government “For Payment Or Political Motives” Quickly Free Taliban POWs So They Can Kill More U.S. Troops:
“President Karzai And His Powerful Brother Among Those Authorizing And Requesting Releases”
“The Practice Is So Systemic That The Taliban Have A Committee Focused On Getting Their Fighters Out Of Jail”**

“What are we really fighting for? We risk our lives to catch them and bring them in and then they just release them,” said a Kabul-based source who followed the Ghulam Haidar case.

“They have a sufficiently high success rate to boost Taliban fighters' confidence. The threat of arrest has lost its deterrent value as they are confident of being sprung,” Semple said.

Nov 30 By Emma Graham-Harrison, Reuters & By Douglas A. Wissing. December 3, 2010 Huffington Post [Excerpts]. [Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

Afghan security forces are freeing captured senior Taliban for payment or political motives, with President Hamid Karzai and his powerful brother among those authorizing and requesting releases.

The practice is so systemic that the Taliban have a committee focused on getting their fighters out of jail.

U.S. forces will begin drawing down numbers from next July and NATO hopes to meet Karzai's 2014 target for all security to be provided by Afghan police and military.

But cases uncovered by Reuters including that of Ghulam Haidar, a top insurgent in the southern Taliban heartland of Kandahar, suggest that a web of complex loyalties and widespread corruption are undermining the fight against the insurgency.

Days later he was walking free again, according to three sources who have investigated prisoner releases or have seen documents about Haidar's capture.

"They took this guy into custody in mid-March, but he was out again in a few days. This is a classic example of what has been happening," one former Western official told Reuters.

A Kabul-based source with links to Western intelligence services confirmed Haidar was a Taliban leader known to have a major role in the insurgency around the city.

Yet his freedom was requested by Karzai's younger brother Ahmad Wali Karzai, head of the Kandahar provincial council.

Dubbed "AWK" by Westerners working in Kandahar, he has an iron grip on the city but his loyalties are considered less solid. A U.S. government cable dated 2009, released by WikiLeaks, described him as a corrupt drug trafficker.

"When Ghulam Haidar was in (Afghan) custody AWK asked for his release," said a second source, who rejected the idea that Haidar could have been set free because he was a double agent.

Haidar was one of the most high-profile insurgents in recent years to slip through prisoner release mechanisms that are designed to prevent innocent men from languishing in prison but are regularly exploited by the Taliban to free key commanders.

"The Taliban operate a commission for prisoners affairs and effecting releases is among its responsibilities," said Michael Semple, a Harvard University fellow with over 20 years experience in Afghanistan and extensive contacts with the Taliban.

"It's systemic. It is well beyond the level of having the occasional success," he added.

Another source also confirmed the committee's existence, although in practical terms most release operations were conceived and directed at the local level.

In cases like Ghulam Haidar, political connections are key.

One source told Reuters Ahmad Wali Karzai had paid tens of thousands of dollars to secure the release of another Taliban commander, Anwar Shah Agha, who operates in the area to the west of Kandahar city and was captured in May 2009.

He was released by Afghan security forces in Kabul in March 2010, and has since returned to the battlefield.

"They have a sufficiently high success rate to boost Taliban fighters' confidence. The threat of arrest has lost its deterrent value as they are confident of being sprung," Semple said.

“What are we really fighting for? We risk our lives to catch them and bring them in and then they just release them,” said a Kabul-based source who followed the Ghulam Haidar case.

The releases attracted the notice, and anger, of Karzai's Western backers, according to a cable released by WikiLeaks.

“Both (Karzai and the attorney general) authorise the release of detainees pre-trial and allow dangerous individuals to go free or re-enter the battlefield without ever facing an Afghan court,” the August 2009 cable from the embassy in Kabul said.

Many of the insurgents released from Afghan custody were high-value detainees held by the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghanistan's intelligence service.

A University of Ottawa law professor and detainee rights activist, Amir Attaran, told me that selling high-level detainee releases is a good business for the NDS.

“The big bad Taliban buy their way out. The NDS guys are stunningly corrupt. They simply let the high-value Taliban walk--then torture the low-level Taliban to extort money from the families.”

ACTION REPORTS

Military Resistance Outreach To Active Duty And Veterans, College Fair For Veterans, Manhattan Community College

From: Alan S.

To: Military Resistance

Sent: December 01, 2010

Subject: 11/30 Outreach To Active Duty And Veterans At Manhattan Community College
“Veterans Fair”

It was opportune to have noticed an ad for this event in one of New York's giveaway morning newspapers last week – on the subway no less.

And as per our format we discussed the potential outreach at our last meeting (11/23) and voted to pursue.

Today bore the fruit of luck and planning.

Joining myself were Military Resistance members EB and LU from 2:30 – 4pm at the entrance to Manhattan Community College, where we greeted an assortment of veterans and active duty personnel with all, save one, accepting handouts consisting of

the 9/10 issue of Traveling Soldier [see below], GI Rights Pamphlet, the Military Resistance/IVAW contact card [see below] and the Military Resistance Mission Statement [see below].

38 of these packets were distributed plus 4 "Sir! No Sir!" DVDs. A success by any standard.

The Fair itself took place inside the college but reasoning was we'd be asked to leave if observed distributing our material inside, so stationing ourselves at the sidewalk entrance proved worthwhile.

Everything went smoothly with takers politely surprised and one or two asking for more than one handout for others. The only turndown was as respectful as the acceptances so this was a day well spent.

As people arrived we asked out loud if any were headed to the Veterans Fair. Those that replied in the affirmative were given packets of publications. Since there were so many people entering, most of them students, we found the vocal approach to be best .

All, please keep your eyes open for other opportunities so a "crack" MR outreach team can go into action again.

Respectfully submitted,
AS

MORE:

ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to Military Resistance for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so.

If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out. Reporting what went wrong and/or got screwed up is especially important, so that others may learn from you what to expect, and how to avoid similar problems if possible.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

NOTE WELL:

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the wars.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs identifying information be published in reporting on the action.

MORE:

Military Resistance

Traveling Soldier
Newsletter



www.traveling-
soldier.org

(888) 711-2550

contact@militaryproject.org

Box 126, 2576 Broadway New York, NY 10025

SUPPORTING GI RESISTANCE

[front]

If you are a veteran who supports an immediate end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- the Military Project recommends you contact:

IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



www.IVAW.org

[back]

[Cards designed by Richie M, Military Resistance Organization]

MORE:

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"

ARMY LIFE:

"UNFORTUNATE TRUTH"

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

MORE ARMY LIFE:

"SUICIDE"

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

**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**

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

FYI:

Traveling Soldier Is Published By The Military Resistance Organization:

Military Resistance Mission Statement:

1. The mission of Military Resistance is to bring together in one organization members of the armed forces and civilians in order to give aid and comfort to members of the armed forces who are organizing to end the wars of empire in Afghanistan and Iraq. The long term objective is to assist in eliminating all wars of empire by eliminating all empires.

2. Military Resistance does not advocate individual disobedience to orders or desertion from the armed forces. The most effective resistance is organized by members of the armed forces working together.

However, Military Resistance respects and will assist in the defense of troops who see individual desertion or refusal of orders as the only course of action open to them for reasons of conscience.

3. Military Resistance stands for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and other occupation troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Occupied nations have the right to independence and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation by force of arms.

4. Efforts to increase democratic rights in every society, organization, movement, and within the armed forces itself will receive encouragement and support.

Members of the armed forces, whether those of the United States or any other nation, have the right and duty to act against dictatorships commanding their services, and to assist civilian movements against dictatorship.

This applies whether a political dictatorship is imposed by force of arms or a political dictatorship is imposed by those in command of the resources of society using their wealth to purchase the political leadership.

5. Military Resistance uses organizational democracy.

This means control of the organization by the membership, through elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels.

Any member may run for any job in the organization. All persons elected are subject to immediate recall, by majority vote of the membership.

Coordinating bodies report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them, and may be overruled by a majority of the membership.

6. It is not necessary for Military Resistance to be in political agreement with other organizations in order to work together towards specific common objectives.

It is productive for organizations working together on common projects to discuss differences about the best way forward for the movement.

Debate is necessary to arrive at the best course of action.

Membership Requirements:

7. It is a condition of membership that each member prioritize and participate in organized action to reach out to active duty armed forces, Reserve and/or National Guard units.

8. Military Resistance or individual members may choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, but do not support a candidate opposed to immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

9. Members may not be active duty or drilling reserve commissioned officers, or employed in any capacity by any police or intelligence agency, local, state, or national.

10. I understand and am in agreement with the above statement. I pledge to defend my brothers and sisters, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

-----**(Signed**

(Date)

----- **(Application taken by)**

**Military Resistance: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
888-711-2550**

MORE

You Can Take Action That Makes A Difference: Join The Military Resistance Organization: MILITARY RESISTANCE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (please print): _____

Armed Forces? (Branch) _____

Veteran? Years: _____

Union: _____

Occupation: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Phone (Landline): _____

Phone (Cell): _____

\$ dues paid _____

(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

NOTE: Civilian applicants will be interviewed, in person if possible, or by phone.

**Military Resistance: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
888-711-2550**

“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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

Dec 4 (Reuters)

SAMARRA - A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in central Samarra, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed an off-duty police officer in Taji, 20 km (12 miles) north of Baghdad, an interior ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - Guerrillas opened fire on a car carrying Baghdad airport workers, wounding two, in central Baghdad, an interior ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol wounded three soldiers in the Amiriya district of western Baghdad, an interior ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - Guerrillas opened fire at an Iraqi police patrol on Friday and wounded two police officers in the Amil district of southwestern Baghdad, an interior ministry source said.

KIRKUK - Guerrillas in a speeding car threw a hand grenade from a bridge at a police vehicle on Friday, wounding three policemen, in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**Two Foreign Occupation
“Servicemembers” Killed, Six Wounded
While Shopping Near Gardez Base:**

Nationality Not Announced

Dec 5 By Sayed Salahuddin & Kamal Sadat, (Reuters)

Two foreign troops were killed on Sunday by an explosion outside a base used by foreign troops in southeastern Afghanistan.

It happened near an entry to the base in Gardez, the provincial capital of Paktia province. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the blast in Gardez, a province located to the south of Kabul and close to the Pakistan border.

Major S. Justin Platt, spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Paktia confirmed there had been several casualties. "There were two ISAF soldiers killed and six wounded," Platt told Reuters by phone from the region.

The explosion happened as a group of foreign and Afghan soldiers were shopping, a military source in Kabul told Reuters, adding at least four Afghan troops were also wounded.

Foreign Occupation "Servicemember" Killed In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

December 5 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died in an insurgent attack in the south of the country.

Macomb Co. Soldier Killed In Gun Battle



Nov. 18, 2010 Associated Press

A 31-year-old Army specialist from Macomb County was among five soldiers killed when insurgents opened fire on their unit in Afghanistan, the military said Wednesday.

Spec. Shane H. Ahmed of Chesterfield Township died Sunday. He and the other slain soldiers were conducting operations in Konar province when they were attacked with small-arms fire, the Pentagon said in a statement.

The others killed were 26-year-old Spec. Nathan E. Lillard of Knoxville, Tenn.; 27-year-old Spec. Scott T. Nagorski of Greenfield, Wis.; 25-year-old Spec. Jesse A. Snow of Fairborn, Ohio; and 19-year-old Pfc. Christian M. Warriner of Mills River, N.C. They were based at Ft. Campbell, Ky.

Ahmed joined the Army in April 2007, and was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, according to Ft. Campbell's Web site. His awards included the Army Commendation Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal and Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

He is survived by his wife, Eva Vasquez; stepdaughter Evita Vasquez; stepson Evan Vasquez of Lebanon, Tenn., and his parents, Jamal and Subra Ahmed of Chesterfield Township.

Maryland Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

November 15, 2010 By Martin Weil, Washington Post Staff Writer

David C. Lutes, who grew up in Maryland, was a husband and father who joined the Army to provide for his family. And he had another reason, his wife Bobbi said Monday night: to "defend a country that he was proud of."

Spc. David C. Lutes, 28, of Frostburg, a member of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) died last week in Landstuhl, Germany, of wounds suffered when a roadside bomb was used to attack his unit in Afghanistan, the Pentagon said Monday. His wife said he died Nov. 12.

"He was an amazing father and a wonderful husband," Bobbi Lutes said by telephone from Kentucky, where they lived while he was based at Fort Campbell. "We couldn't have asked for a better guy."

He had gone to elementary school in Westernport, in western Maryland's Allegany County, where his mother, Delia Ahern, still lives. A schoolmate and friend, Becky Miller-Mosher, said he had attended middle school in Westernport, and Westmar High School in Lonaconing.

"He was very intelligent," she said. "He would help you with anything."

Youths growing up in Westernport at the time made the best of the relatively limited recreational opportunities there and seemed to share a special bond, Miller-Mosher said. It was "so extraordinary," but was not easy to define, she said.

What was clear, she added, was that it was good to have Lutes as a friend.

Norman J. Rankin, a former neighbor of Lutes's in Westernport, said he had envisioned a promising future for Lutes.

He “could have been a counselor” or a psychiatrist, Rankin said. Lutes was “someone you could talk to,” who would not continually interrupt. He “was a good listener.”

The two played video games together and shot baskets. Lutes was talented, and “full of life,” with a good sense of humor, Rankin said. He liked music and could draw.

In addition to his wife and mother, survivors include two daughters, Kya M. and Kaitlyn E. Lutes. His wife said he also had two brothers and a sister.

According to a statement from Fort Campbell, Lutes joined the Army in January 2008. He was an infantryman in the 61st Cavalry Regiment of his division's 4th Brigade Combat Team.

The Pentagon said Lutes died after being fatally wounded Nov. 8 when the roadside bomb damaged his vehicle during a patrol in Nagarhar Province.

He was a hero, Miller-Mosher said. “Somebody who gives his life just so somebody else can have a better life, to me is a hero,” she said.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: HOME, NOW



U.S. soldiers and an Afghan Army soldier after foot patrol in West Now Ruzi village, Panjwai district, in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, Nov. 24, 2010. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko)

MILITARY NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



The coffin of Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Javier O. Ortiz Rivera, of Rochester, N.Y. at Arlington National Cemetery, Dec. 2, 2010. Ortiz was killed in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

South African Soldiers Union Court Case Blocks Firing Of 1420 Soldiers For Protesting Against The Government”

Earlier Court Ruling Found “Soldiers Had The Same Labour Rights – Including Due Process – As Other South Africans”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

03 December 2010 DefenceWeb [Excerpts]

The Department of Defence (DoD) is to appeal a judgment handed down by the North Gauteng High Court Wednesday as it believes another court will come to a different conclusion.

The Pretoria court ruled the DoD's novel approach to provisionally dismiss 1420 personnel following a violent protest cum mutiny outside the Union Buildings in August last year was unlawful and unconstitutional.

The department served the personnel notices of dismissal that allowed them ten days to give reasons why they should be reinstated.

The notices, that at face value run directly counter to South African labour law, placed the onus on soldiers to prove their innocence rather than on the military to prove their guilt at a disciplinary hearing.

The DoD is a statement says that "upon proper consideration in studying the judgment ... (it) has reached a decision to APPEAL as it is our view that another court will come to a different conclusion. The Department considers this matter in the most serious light as it may affect the management and discipline in the Defence Force which will have a negative impact on National Security.

"Ill-disciplined soldiers have no place in the SANDF [South African National Defense Force] and failure to act firmly may itself be a breach of the constitutional provision requiring that the 'defence force must be structured and managed as a disciplined military force'," the statement added. "Discipline in the military is non-negotiable and is the sole responsibility of the Chief of the SANDF who is the custodian as required by the Constitution to ensure that the "defence force is structured and managed as a disciplined military force".

Justice Cynthia Pretorius interdicted the SANDF from discharging the personnel, many South African National Defence Union (SANDU) members, pending the finalisation of a dispute to be referred to the Military Bargaining Council (MBC).

Should the matter not be resolved there, the dispute must be referred to the Military Arbitration Board (MAB).

"We believe that the judgment reaffirms that the SA Constitution as the highest law in the country and it must be respected by all those that have been elected to manage the state," the South African Security Forces Union (SASFU) said in a statement welcoming the ruling received by the South African Press Association.

However, the DoD said the military wanted the judge to clarify certain aspects of her judgment, because they believed the MBC and MAB dealt with bargaining issues, not discipline.

SANDU [South African National Defense Union] national secretary Advocate Johannes "Pikkie" Greeff last year September said his union took the matter to court as "thousands of members would (otherwise) have been without jobs today

without even having had the benefit of a fair hearing where evidence could have been tested and objectively considered.

“Mere allegations in a letter would have sufficed in securing their unemployment. Surely no democratically minded person could support such an injustice that flies in the face of our hard won Constitution.

“Many of the recipients of the dismissal letters were not even near Pretoria the day in question, some being deployed, some on course and other simply on vacation leave.”

The 1333 SA Army soldiers, 80 SA Military Health Service medics and seven SA Air Force airmen the DoD is seeking to dismiss took part in a service condition protest on August 26, SANDU's 15th birthday.

The union and its rival SASFU have long enjoyed fraught relations with the military.

Efforts by the military and DoD to filibuster the unions led to a series of court cases in the last decade, culminating in a Constitutional Court judgement in May 1999 in which the court, by mouth of Justice Kate O`Regan, confirmed an earlier judgment by Pretoria High Court Judge Willie Hartzenberg that soldiers had the same labour rights – including due process – as other South Africans.

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

“Active-Duty Gay And Lesbian Service Members Are Quietly Building An Underground Support Network At U.S. Military Outposts Around The World”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent in the following two articles.]

Dec. 1, 2010 By DEVIN DWYER, ABC News [Excerpts]

As Congress weighs a Pentagon review of the military's policy banning openly gay service members, the network, known as "OutServe," revealed Monday that it has nearly 1,300 members across 27 chapters in 15 states, the military service academies and 10 foreign countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

While the numbers likely represent a small fraction of closeted gays and lesbians in the armed forces, they shed light for the first time on the extent to which many are organizing, predominantly through social media but also in secret in-person meetings and conference calls.

"Of all the support organizations the military brings to the table, this one can address our needs," a gay Air Force master sergeant who facilitates the OutServe chapter in Afghanistan said. "We are not able to freely communicate our specific issues with any of them in an open manner."

The serviceman, who asked to be identified only as Charles for fear of being thrown out of the military, is stationed at the International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan.

He said most of his chapter's 50 members are scattered throughout the rugged country, from small combat outposts of 100 people to larger military bases in Kandahar and Baghram.

"We communicate mainly through Facebook, I pass on current news from the states and they pass on any concerns, if any they have," he said. "The Facebook page has also become a way for our troops to find out who is where and organize some small social get-togethers."

The online group is strictly limited to active duty personnel to protect their identities.

"Meeting face-to-face and knowing there is someone else like you out there is a huge morale builder," Charles said.

J.D. Smith, pseudonym for an active-duty Air Force officer who founded the network in July, said he envisioned a counterpart to a similar British organization -- known as "Proud 2 Serve" -- that helped facilitate integration of openly gay troops into the U.K. military 10 years ago this month.

"When a repeal does occur and a commander wants to learn more or get in touch with gay and lesbian service members, we can be that resource," said Smith, who is about to deploy to Afghanistan with his unit.

Until the policy changes, however, OutServe does not expose the names, ranks or identities of its members. But Smith said members hail from all five military branches and include a mix of officers and enlisted men.

The largest chapters are Southern California, with 110 members, and Germany, with 85 members. More than 50 gay troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have also formed a chapter.

"We have a huge influx of Marines joining right now," Smith said.

Advocates for gay and lesbian service members are hopeful the Senate will approve a conditional repeal of “don't ask, don't tell” before the end of the year, which is widely viewed as the last, best chance for the foreseeable future.

The House approved a defense spending bill that included a repeal provision in September.

But several high-profile Senate Republicans, including Sen. John McCain, have vowed to block any attempt at lifting the military gay ban.

Meanwhile, the policy faces several ongoing constitutional challenges in federal court. In October, a district court judge in California ruled “don't ask, don't tell” unconstitutional and barred its enforcement. An appeals court later reinstated the military's gay ban while the case is pending.

“You hear President Obama say we want to pass this policy so that people who want to serve can serve,” Smith said.

“But people forget there's a bunch of us serving right now.”

MORE:

This Week In Crazy: John McCain Invents The Weirdest Reason Yet To Oppose The Repeal Of “Don't Ask, Don't Tell”



Dec 4, 2010 By Alex Pareene, Salon.com [Excerpts]

John McCain has finally, inexorably stumbled upon the weirdest and most transparently troll-ish reason yet to oppose the repeal of the military's ban on gay and lesbian service members: The economy sucks.

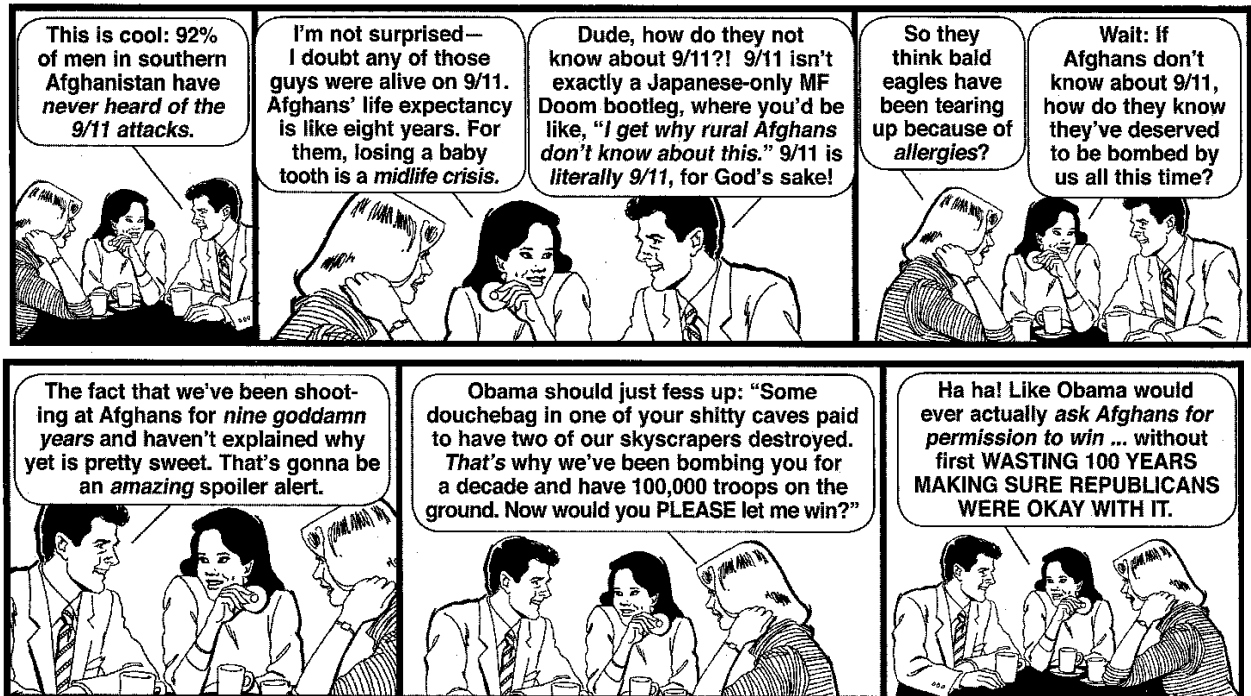
[Miami Herald 12.3.2010:]

"I will not agree to have this bill go forward, and neither will, I believe, 41 of my colleagues, either, because our economy is in the tank," said Sen. John McCain of Arizona, the ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee and the leading opponent of an immediate repeal.

"Our economy is in the tank, and the American people want that issue addressed. ... So to somehow believe that this is some kind of compelling issue at a time we're in two wars ... is obviously not something that we shouldn't be exercising a rush to judgment."

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[By David Rees, New York Magazine, 12.6.2010]

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

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

**Undercover FBI Informant
Named Craig Monteilh “Helped
Build A Terrorism-Related Case
Against A Mosque Member”
Now, Monteilh Has Gone Public,
Charging That “His Handlers
Trained Him To Entrap Muslims As
He Infiltrated Their Mosques”
“The Justice Department Recently
Took The Extraordinary Step Of
Dropping Charges Against The
Worshiper”
“Prosecutors Had Portrayed The Man As
A Dire Threat”**

“She asked if I wanted to infiltrate mosques,” he said. At a follow-up session at a doughnut shop, he said, his new handler told him that “Islam is a threat to our national security.”

December 5, 2010 By Jerry Markon, Washington Post Staff Writer. Staff researcher Julie Tate contributed to this report. [Excerpts]

IRVINE, CALIF. - Before the sun rose, the informant donned a white Islamic robe. A tiny camera was sewn into a button, and a microphone was buried in a device attached to his keys.

"This is Farouk al-Aziz, code name Oracle," he said into the keys as he sat in his parked car in this quiet community south of Los Angeles. "It's November 13th, 4:30 a.m. And we're hot."

The undercover FBI informant - a convicted forger named Craig Monteilh - then drove off for 5 a.m. prayers at the Islamic Center of Irvine, where he says he spied on dozens of worshipers in a quest for potential terrorists.

Agency officials say they are careful not to violate civil liberties and do not target Muslims.

But the FBI's approach has come under fire from some Muslims, criticism that surfaced again late last month after agents arrested an Oregon man they said tried to detonate a bomb at a Christmas tree-lighting ceremony. FBI technicians had supplied the device.

In the Irvine case, Monteilh's mission as an informant backfired.

Muslims were so alarmed by his talk of violent jihad that they obtained a restraining order against him.

He had helped build a terrorism-related case against a mosque member, but that also collapsed.

The Justice Department recently took the extraordinary step of dropping charges against the worshiper, who Monteilh had caught on tape agreeing to blow up buildings, law enforcement officials said. Prosecutors had portrayed the man as a dire threat.

Compounding the damage, Monteilh has gone public, revealing secret FBI methods and charging that his "handlers" trained him to entrap Muslims as he infiltrated their mosques, homes and businesses. He is now suing the FBI.

Officials declined to comment on specific details of Monteilh's tale but confirm that he was a paid FBI informant.

Court records and interviews corroborate not only that Monteilh worked for the FBI - he says he made \$177,000, tax-free, in 15 months - but that he provided vital information on a number of cases.

Citing Monteilh's actions and what they call a pattern of FBI surveillance, many leading national Muslim organizations have virtually suspended contact with the bureau.

"The community feels betrayed," said Shakeel Syed, executive director of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, an umbrella group of more than 75 mosques.

“They got a guy, a bona fide criminal, and obviously trained him and sent him to infiltrate mosques,” Syed said.

“And when things went sour, they ditched him and he got mad. It's like a soap opera, for God's sake.”

Steven Martinez, assistant director in charge of the FBI's Los Angeles field office, declined to comment on Monteilh, citing Monteilh's lawsuit. He said that in certain circumstances, if there is evidence of a crime, FBI agents may “conduct an activity that might somehow involve surveillance in and about a mosque.”

But he said the agency does not target people based on religion or ethnicity.

“I know there's a lot of suspicion that that's the focus, that we're looking at the mosques, monitoring who is coming and going. That's just not the case,” he said.

Monteilh's career as an informant began in 2003. Like many other informants, he was familiar with the inside of a prison cell.

He had just finished a sentence for forging bank notes when local police officers he met at a gym asked him to infiltrate drug gangs and white supremacist groups for a federal-state task force.

“It was very exciting,” Monteilh said in an interview with The Washington Post. “I had the ability to be a chameleon.”

Monteilh, who stands over 6 feet tall and weighs 260 pounds, had worked as a prison chaplain before he was incarcerated. Married with three children, the Los Angeles native said that after he became an informant, an FBI agent on the task force sought him out.

Law enforcement sources, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about informants, said Monteilh was promoted from drug and bank robbery cases because his information was reliable and had led to convictions.

In early 2006, Monteilh said, he met with his FBI handler at a Starbucks.

“She asked if I wanted to infiltrate mosques,” he said. At a follow-up session at a doughnut shop, he said, his new handler told him that “Islam is a threat to our national security.”

Law enforcement sources said that the FBI trained Monteilh and that he aided an existing investigation.

Monteilh, however, said he was ordered to randomly surveil and spy on Muslims to ferret out potential terrorists.

Agents, he said, provided his cover: Farouk al-Aziz, a French Syrian in search of his Islamic roots. His code name was "Oracle."

Monteilh said he was instructed to infiltrate mosques throughout Orange and two neighboring counties in Southern California, where the Muslim population of nearly 500,000 is the nation's largest.

He was told to target the Islamic Center of Irvine, he said, because it was near his home.

FBI tactics were already a sensitive issue at the Irvine mosque, a stucco, two-story building that draws as many as 2,000 people for Friday prayers.

With tensions rising between law enforcement and Muslims over allegations of FBI surveillance, J. Stephen Tidwell, then head of the FBI's Los Angeles office, spoke at the mosque in June 2006.

"If we're going to mosques to come to services, we will tell you," he said, according to a video of his speech. ". . . The FBI will tell you we're coming for the very reason that we don't want you to think you're being monitored. We would come only to learn."

Two months later, in August 2006, Monteilh arrived at the same mosque.

He had called earlier and met with the imam. That Friday, he took shahada, the Muslim declaration of faith, before hundreds of worshipers.

Worshipers said that in Monteilh's 10 months at the mosque, he became almost manic in his devotion, attending prayers five times a day and waiting in the parking lot before the 5 a.m. prayer.

Monteilh said he was told by the FBI to take notes on who opened the mosque each day.

Worshipers said his Western clothes gave way to an Islamic robe, a white skullcap and sandals, an outfit Monteilh said was chosen by his handlers.

As he grew closer to Muslims, he said, the FBI told him to date Muslim women if it gained him intelligence.

Worshipers noticed that Monteilh often left his keys around the mosque, said Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Los Angeles chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, who speaks often at the mosque.

"It seemed strange to people," Ayloush said.

Inside the car remote on the bundle of keys was a microphone that recorded Muslims at the mosque, in their homes and at a local gym. Monteilh, who told people he was a fitness trainer, used the gym to seek out Muslim men.

"We started hearing that he was saying weird things," said Omar Kurdi, a Loyola Law School student who knew Monteilh from the mosque and gym. "He would

walk up to one of my friends and say, 'It's good that you guys are getting ready for the jihad.'

Worshippers said Monteilh gravitated to Ahmadullah Sais Niazi, an Afghan-born Arabic-language instructor who was a regular at Friday prayers.

In May 2007, Monteilh said he recorded a conversation about jihad during a car ride with Niazi and another man.

Monteilh said he suggested an operation to blow up buildings and Niazi agreed.

An FBI agent later cited that and other taped conversations between the two in court as evidence that Niazi was a threat.

A few days later, Ayloush got an anguished phone call from Niazi and the other man in the car.

"They said Farouk had told them he had access to weapons and that they should blow up a mall," Ayloush recalled. "They were convinced this man was a terrorist."

Ayloush reported the FBI's own informant to the FBI.

He said agents interviewed Niazi, who gave them the same account, but the agency took no action against Monteilh.

Still, Monteilh's mission was collapsing. Members of the mosque told its leaders that they were afraid of Monteilh and that he was "trying to entrap them into a mission," according to Asim Khan, the former mosque president.

The mosque went to Orange County Superior Court in June 2007 and obtained a restraining order against Monteilh, court records show.

Soon afterward, Monteilh said FBI agents "told me they wanted to cut me loose." After he vowed to go public, he said, he met with three agents at the Anaheim Hilton, where an FBI supervisor threatened him with arrest.

"She said, 'If you reveal your informant status to the media, it will destroy the Muslim community's relationship with the FBI forever.'" Monteilh said.

The FBI declined to comment on Monteilh's allegation.

At a subsequent meeting, Monteilh said, he signed a non-disclosure agreement in exchange for \$25,000 in cash. An FBI letter to Monteilh's attorney, on file in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana, says Monteilh signed the non-disclosure agreement in October 2007.

But Monteilh was arrested in December 2007 on a grand-theft charge and ended up back in jail for 16 months.

In January, he sued the FBI, alleging that the bureau and Irvine police conspired to have him arrested, then allowed his informant status to become known in prison, where he was stabbed.

The FBI and police have denied the allegations, and the lawsuit was dismissed on jurisdictional grounds.

But the judge allowed Monteilh to file an amended complaint, with similar allegations, in September. The case is pending.

In the meantime, the case against Niazi unfolded.

He was indicted in February 2009 by a federal grand jury on charges of lying about his ties to terrorists on immigration documents. In court, prosecutors said that jihadist materials were found on Niazi's computer and that he had wired money to an alleged al-Qaeda financier. Prosecutors said he is the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden's security coordinator. Much of the evidence was FBI testimony about Niazi's recorded conversations with an FBI informant, who sources say was Monteilh.

"Frankly, there is no amount of bail or equity in a home that can protect the citizens of this community" from Niazi, Assistant U.S. Attorney Deirdre Eliot said in arguing for his detention.

Within days of Niazi's indictment, Monteilh revealed his informant status in a series of interviews with Los Angeles area media.

"I think the FBI treated me with the utmost treachery," he said in the interview with The Post.

In subsequent months, Monteilh sought out Niazi's attorneys and told them he was ordered to entrap their client.

A year and a half later, on Sept. 30, prosecutors summarily moved to dismiss the case against Niazi, and a judge agreed. The U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles cited the lack of an overseas witness and "evidentiary issues."

Sources familiar with the decision said Monteilh's role - and his potential testimony for the defense - was also a factor.

Niazi declined to comment. His attorney Chase Scolnick said he is "very pleased with the outcome. It is a just result."

In recent weeks, Monteilh said, he has been approaching Muslims at a local gym and apologizing for "disrespecting their community and religion." Monteilh, who is now unemployed, says he regrets his role in the Niazi case and was glad when the charges were dropped.

On a recent Friday, more than 200 men sat on the carpet for prayers inside the Irvine mosque, most of them in khakis or jeans. During the sermon, the imam offered some advice.

“If an FBI agent comes in and says, 'You're under arrest,“ he told the crowd, they should pray to Allah - and then call a lawyer.

As worshipers milled around outside, they said they support the FBI's role in fighting terrorism but feel betrayed by the infiltration of their sacred place.

“The FBI wants to treat the Muslim community as a partner while investigating us behind our backs,” said Kurdi, the Loyola student. “They can't have it both ways.”

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