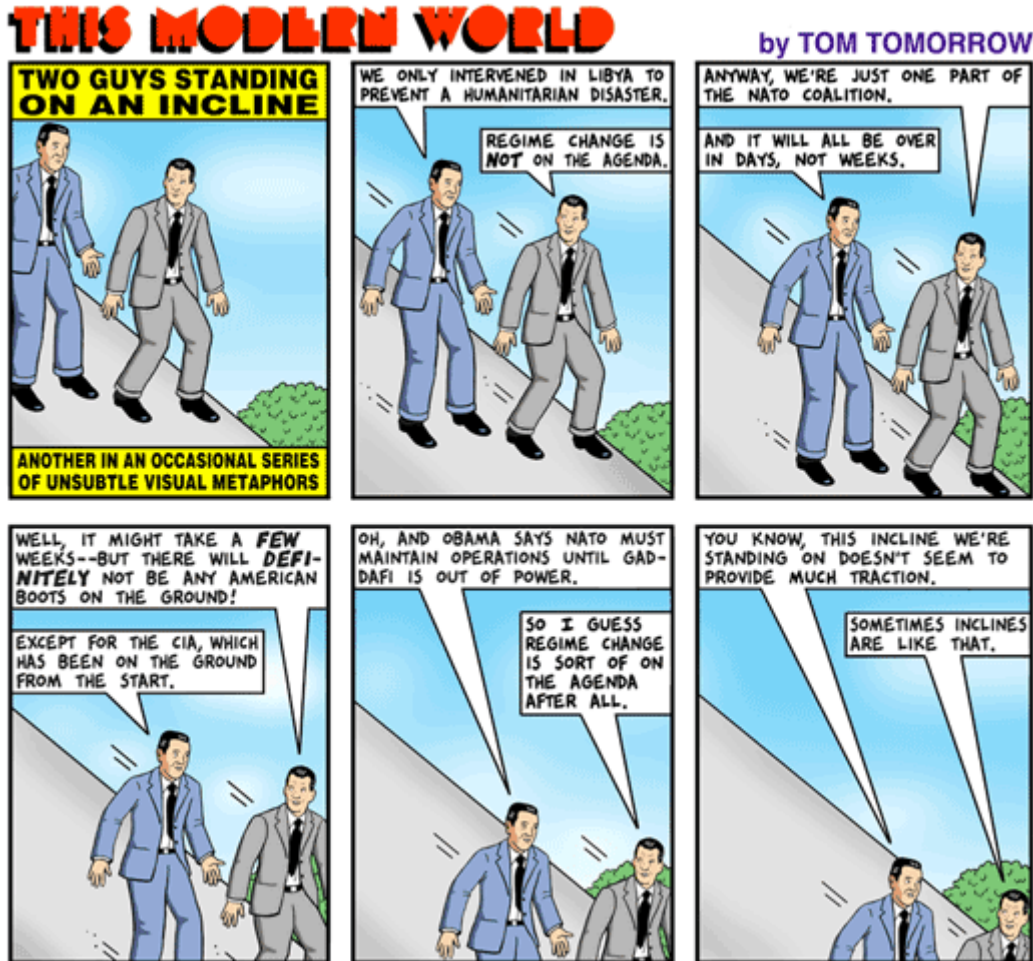


Military Resistance 9E2



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

Hamilton, NJ Soldier Killed In Iraq

“Why So Much War?”

“Why Are Our Young People Dying?” She Asked”

April 25, 2011 By Nora Muchanic, WPVI

HAMILTON, N.J. --- “I never realized it was going to be my Omar,” said Maria Vazquez of Hamilton.

Vazquez is grieving the loss of her youngest, 25-year-old Army Lieutenant Omar Vazquez, who was killed in Numaniyah, Iraq on Friday when a bomb exploded under his vehicle.

"I'm proud of him," she told Action News, "of his dream for dying for what he believed in."

But at the same time Vazquez is a heartbroken mother asking painful questions.

"Why so much war? Why are our young people dying?" she asked.

His family says since Omar was little he wanted to be a soldier. He joined the ROTC at 11-years-old and loved to dress up in uniform so much that his father's coworkers used to call him Barracks Boy.

"I feel proud of him because all he wanted to do was defend democracy," said Omar's father, Pablo Vazquez.

"After 9-11 that's when he really say that he really wants to serve his country," said Omar's aunt Loily Rodriguez.

On his first tour in Iraq, Lieutenant Vazquez was a serious student. He earned a master's degree from Rutgers University Camden and got his undergraduate degree from Rider University in 2007.

The chairman of the History Department at Rider told Action News Omar would still visit the campus and remembers him as a friendly, focused student who was sure he wanted a career in the Army.

"He was committed," said Professor Anne Osborne. "It was really what he wanted to do, and he did it. And from what I understand, he loved it and he was doing it really well."

His mom says when she would worry about his safety, Lieutenant Vazquez would try to calm her.

"He said, 'Mom, it's my job. I have to do it. You have to get used to it,'" said Maria Vazquez.

Lieutenant Vazquez was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fort Hood, Texas.

Killed in the same attack was Pfc. Antonio G. Stiggins, 25, of Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

“April Was The Deadliest Month For U.S. Military Forces In Iraq In Nearly A Year And A Half”

“Some U.S. Service Members Say They Have Sensed A Surge In Mortar Attacks On U.S. Bases In The South”



The remains of Pfc. Antonio G. Stiggins upon arrival at Great Southwest Aviation in Roswell, N.M., April 30, 2011. Stiggins, 25, died of wounds suffered April 22, in Numaniyah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Roswell Daily Record Mark Wilson)

April 30, 2011 By Aaron C. Davis, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — April was the deadliest month for U.S. military forces in Iraq in nearly a year and a half and the worst by far for American troops since they officially ended combat missions in the country last year, according to military and independent record keepers.

In a statement released here Saturday, U.S. forces said an 11th soldier died Friday while conducting an operation in southern Iraq. With that death, the U.S. military tied its highest body count in Iraq since November 2009, when 11 soldiers also died, according to the Web site icasualties.org.

Five of the deaths were attributed to bombings and mortar or other attacks, mostly in the majority-Shiite south. Six were classified as noncombat-related.

Some U.S. service members say they have sensed a surge in mortar attacks on U.S. bases in the south amid the mounting political pressure in Baghdad for a decision on the deadline.

This week, warning sirens sounded on the U.S. base in the southern port city of Basra when mortar fire struck the airfield, not far from the building that is expected to be turned over to the State Department later this year for use as a consulate.

Resistance Action

April 30 (Reuters) & KUNA

MOSUL - A bomber killed five soldiers, and wounded two soldiers, when he blew himself up at an Iraqi army checkpoint next to a market in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, Nineveh province police Lieutenant Colonel Mahmoud al-Jibouri said. The bomber exploded himself at the entrance where Iraqi soldiers were manning a checkpoint to frisk people entering the market. The attack took place at the peak business hours for this market.

TAJI - Insurgents detonated bombs at the house of a judge, Tuma Jabar Lafta, killing him, his wife and two daughters in Taji, 20 km (12 miles) north of Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said. In a separate attack, insurgents using silenced weapons shot dead a policeman who was assigned to provide security for the judge, at the officer's home nearby, the source said.

Unknown armed group using silencers killed on Saturday a Colonel from the Iraqi Defense ministry after attacking his vehicle on Mohammad Al-Qassem highway in Baghdad. A police security source told KUNA that the unknown armed men fired their weapons against Colonel Mustapha Hassan, while he was driving his vehicle, killing him instantly and severely injuring his wife. The source added, the Colonel vehicle kept running and accidentally hit a police checkpoint injuring two policemen.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**NATO Says 8 U.S. Troops Were
Armed When Afghan Pilot Killed
Them:
7 Of 8 Were Commissioned Officers**

April 30, 2011 By Molly Hennessy-Fiske, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Kabul, Afghanistan—

Eight U.S. troops killed by an Afghan pilot earlier this week at a military compound at Kabul International Airport were all armed, according to a NATO statement released Friday, prompting more questions about how the pilot managed to kill them and a U.S. contractor and escape the room before dying of gunshot wounds.

The eight troops were identified by the U.S. Department of Defense on Friday as Maj. Philip D. Ambard, 44, of Edmonds, Wash.; Maj. Jeffrey O. Ausborn, 41, of Gadsden, Ala.; Maj. David L. Brodeur, 34, of Auburn, Mass.; Master Sgt. Tara R. Brown, 33, of Deltona, Fla.; Lt. Col. Frank D. Bryant Jr., 37, of Knoxville, Tenn.; Maj. Raymond G. Estelle II, 40, of New Haven, Conn.; Capt. Nathan J. Nylander, 35, of Hockley, Texas; and Capt. Charles A. Ransom, 31, of Midlothian, Virginia.

MORE:

Foreign Soldiers “Can Never Be Exactly Sure Who’s Standing Next To Them”

“The Taliban Is Boasting That It Has Placed Infiltrators Throughout Security Regiments”

May 1, 2011 By Teri Schultz, Globalpost.com [Excerpts]

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan — The timeworn adage that “you can’t buy an Afghan, you can only rent one” — referring to the universally-acknowledged difficulty in securing loyalty from that wary population — may need revision.

Last week nine Americans were killed by a man wearing the uniform of an Afghan army pilot. The prior week five other NATO troops, along with five Afghans, were killed by a suicide bomber in an army uniform. Also, an Afghan police chief was assassinated by a bomber in a police uniform and a man dressed as an army colonel walked unhindered in a bomb vest into the Afghan Defense Ministry looking for a high-ranking official to blow up.

This spate of incidents involving uniformed attackers follows NATO's investment last year of \$9.3 billion in training, equipment and other support for Afghan security forces.

Within International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) programs, trainees are not just instructed in how to use weapons — they are also fed, housed, taught to read and given

life skills beyond fighting. If an investment like that doesn't secure the "rental" contract, maybe it's truly not possible.

But official army and police uniforms are sold like flea-market junk in bazaars, and the Taliban is boasting that it has placed infiltrators throughout security regiments. Alliance soldiers can never be exactly sure who's standing next to them.

“The Taliban Announced They Will Begin Their Spring Offensive Sunday”

“The War In Our Country Will Not Come To An End Unless And Until The Foreign Invading Forces Pull Out Of Afghanistan”

01st MayJapantoday.com & By Molly Hennessy-Fiske, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

KABUL —

The spring fighting season in Afghanistan geared up this weekend with a war of words.

The Taliban announced they will begin their spring offensive Sunday, pledging to attack military bases, convoys and Afghan officials, including members of the peace council working to reconcile with top insurgent leaders.

In a statement, the Taliban warned civilians to avoid public gatherings, military bases and convoys, as well as government buildings.

“All Afghan people should bear in mind to keep away from gatherings, convoys and centers of the enemy so that they will not become harmed during attacks of mujahedin against the enemy,” the statement said.

“The war in our country will not come to an end unless and until the foreign invading forces pull out of Afghanistan,” the Taliban said in a two-page statement released by the leadership council of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, which is what the movement calls itself.

In announcing their spring offensive, the Taliban said insurgents would target “foreign invading forces, members of their spy networks and other spies, high-ranking officials of the Kabul puppet administration ... and heads of foreign and local companies working for the enemy and contractors.”

MORE:

**“When Drops Of Rains Become
Flood, Mountains Are Not Able To
Prevent Them From Carving Their
Way Forward”
[Statement Of The Afghan Resistance
“Regarding The 19th Anniversary Of The
Victory ...”]**



[Thanks to Felicity Arbuthnot, who sent this in. She writes: “A history lesson from Afghanistan: ‘You have the watches, we have the time,’ one resistance leader remarked. This shows what he meant.

But it would also apply to any country under occupation - how ever long it takes, from longevity colonial invasions and occupations, to present day ones, the invader always loses eventually.

28 April, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Shahamat-english.com

Statement of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Regarding the 19th Anniversary of the Victory of Mujahideen in Afghanistan.

19 years ago, on 28 April (8 Saur, 1371 Hijri solar year), the Jihadic resistance of the people of Afghanistan culminated into victory versus the Red Army and their internal (Afghan) puppets.

This was not an easy success.

Almost 1.5 million Afghans had sacrificed their lives to reach this great day of realization of hopes and aspirations, by forcing the dreadful Red Army of the former Soviet Union to flee the country — an Army which even the Westerners had acknowledged as being undefeatable.

Unfortunately, some well-known leaders of the Jihadic resistance could not safeguard the fruit of the resistance which was, in fact, a historical pride for the Ummah as a whole. They acquiesced in embracing the internal ideological enemies in their ranks against whom they themselves had been fighting for more than a decade. Contrarily, they were not ready to tolerate unity and fraternity with their brothers-in-arm. The obsession of power grabbing frustrated the caravan of aspirations of the people which, though, by then, had approached its destinations.

Ultimately, the splendid victory of the Mujahid people evolved into a tragedy.

Some opportunist armed men turned to violating the lives, property and honor of the people, cashing in on the factional fighting. The path of establishment of Islamic regime took up the form of a battle for power. Even the clandestine enemies of Islam were predicting that, as a result of the factional fighting, the Afghan people will be disappointed and oppressed to the point that, in future, they will welcome any non-Islamic regime with open arms.

At this time, some sons of this proud soil gathered under the banner of the Taliban Islamic Movement to bring the great aspiration of the establishment of Islamic regime to its destination — an aspiration that both Mujahideen and the Afghan people had offered 1.5 million martyrs for its sake. In fact, at that critical phase, the Taliban Islamic Movement played the role of (real) heirs of the spiritual legacy of Mujahideen. They implemented the aspirations of Mujahideen in 95% land of the country. However, the internal and external enemies of Islam and the country could not tolerate the regime.

Today, the true sons of this land offer their lives for the protection and success of the same goal.

But the world of infidelity under the leadership of America wants to impede the realization of the said goal by dent of force. It is not possible now.

The Afghan Mujahid people have thrown down the gauntlet by assembling under a sole leadership. When drops of rains become flood, mountains are not able to prevent them from carving their way forward.

We would like to say, no difference between a Talib and a Mujahid.

The Mujahid and the Talib of yesterday who were fighting against the Red Army of the Soviet Union or fighting against America today, are, in fact, brothers-in-arm and share common goal.

At this final phase of victory, all Afghans who follow the Truth and love God, any ethnicity they may belong to, should join hands with each other for the sake of bringing about Islamic regime. They should strictly avoid those blunders and flaws that take us away from our prideful goal.

Protection of a revolution is as important as its precious winning.

The enemy has lost its morale and strength. Only need for a country-wide uprising.

The day is not far off when the (current) invaders, like their predecessor of the 27th April (7th Saur), will be forced to leave our land with humiliation and debasement.

--(Forward towards) independence of the country and an early establishment of the Islamic regime.

--Away with invaders and their puppet and shame on them.

--Pride and final victory to the sacrificing warriors of the way of Truth.

**“American Taxpayers’ Money
Has Been Going To Someone
With Ties To An Insurgency
That Has Killed American
Soldiers”**

**When Construction Crews Faced
Attacks While Working On An
American-Financed Highway,
Contractors Paid Off A Powerful
Local “Who Was Suspected To
Have Links To Afghanistan’s
Insurgents”**

**“Subcontractors, Flush With
American Money, Paid Mr. Arafat At
Least \$1 Million A Year To Keep
Them Safe”**

Payoffs To Insurgent Groups “Are Routine”



TROUBLED ROADWAY The Gardez-Khost Highway is over budget but far from complete. Finished stretches are already falling apart and remain treacherous.

May 1, 2011 By ALISSA J. RUBIN and JAMES RISEN. Sangar Rahimi contributed reporting from Kabul. [Excerpts]

GARDEZ, Afghanistan — When construction crews faced attacks while working on a major American-financed highway here in southeastern Afghanistan, Western contractors turned to a powerful local figure named simply Arafat, who was suspected to have links to Afghanistan’s insurgents.

Subcontractors, flush with American money, paid Mr. Arafat at least \$1 million a year to keep them safe, according to people involved in the project and Mr. Arafat himself.

The money paid to Mr. Arafat bought neither security nor the highway that American officials have long envisioned as a vital route to tie remote border areas to the Afghan government.

Instead, it added to the staggering cost of the road, known as the Gardez-Khost Highway, one of the most expensive and troubled transportation projects in Afghanistan.

The 64-mile highway, which has yet to be completed, has cost about \$121 million so far, with the final price tag expected to reach \$176 million — or about \$2.8 million a mile — according to American officials. Security alone has cost \$43.5 million so far, U.S.A.I.D. officials said.

The vast expenses and unsavory alliances surrounding the highway have become a parable of the corruption and mismanagement that turns so many well-intended

development efforts in Afghanistan into sinkholes for the money of American taxpayers, even nine years into the war.

The road is one of the most expensive construction projects per mile undertaken by U.S.A.I.D., which has built or rehabilitated hundreds of miles of Afghan highways and has faced delays and cost overruns on similar projects, according to the special inspector general for Afghan reconstruction.

After years of warnings that Mr. Arafat was making a small fortune playing both sides in the war — and after recent queries by The New York Times about payments to him — American officials said they had finally moved to cut him off in April.

Despite the expense, a stretch of the highway completed just six months ago is already falling apart and remains treacherous.

The unfinished portion runs through Taliban territory, raising questions about how it can be completed.

Cost overruns are already more than 100 percent, all for a road where it was never certain that local Afghans wanted it as badly as the American officials who planned it.

At their worst, the failures have financed the very insurgents that NATO and Afghan forces are struggling to defeat.

Some American officials and contractors involved in the project suspect that at least some of the money funneled through Mr. Arafat made its way to the Haqqani group, a particularly brutal offshoot of the Taliban.

Critics say that payoffs to insurgent groups, either directly or indirectly, by contractors working on highways and other large projects in Afghanistan are routine.

Some officials say they are widely accepted in the field as a cost of doing business, especially in areas not fully under the control of the United States military or the Afghan government.

As a result, contracting companies and the American officials who supervise them often look the other way.

“Does it keep the peace?” asked one United States military officer with experience in volatile eastern Afghanistan. “Definitely. If the bad guys have a stake in the project, attacks go way down.”

The officer, like many of the people interviewed, did not want to be named for fear of retribution for criticizing a project that is considered a priority by the American and Afghan governments.

Some also suspected that Mr. Arafat had been staging attacks himself to extort more money for protection, a vicious cycle of blackmail that contractors and American officials acknowledged was a common risk.

“The Possibility Money Has Been Going To Someone With Ties To An Insurgency That Has Killed American Soldiers”

The possibility that American taxpayers' money has been going to someone with ties to an insurgency that has killed American soldiers and Afghan civilians is just one of the many problems of the Gardez-Khost Highway.

From the beginning in 2007, no one thought that building the road would be easy. Traversing high, rugged terrain, the road rises to more than 9,000 feet. In winter, it is buried in deep snow. In summer, it is covered by a thick layer of chalky earth that engineers refer to as moon dust, which turns to mud in the rain.

But American officials judged the original price tag of \$69 million to be worth the cost. The highway was seen as an important way to connect two mountainous provinces in southeast Afghanistan — Paktia and Khost — and wrest from the insurgents a route that they had long used to move money, men and guns into Afghanistan from Pakistan's tribal areas.

Development officials hoped that the road would better link Afghanistan's strategic border region to the central government in the capital, Kabul, and encourage commerce. The military hoped it would provide faster access for supplies and fresh troops.

However, interviews with more than 20 current and former American government officials, as well as military officers, private contractors, Afghan officials and local Afghan tribal leaders, show that despite the lofty goals the highway project was troubled virtually from the start, and problems quickly mounted.

The United States Agency for International Development, which has financed the project, turned it over to a joint venture of the Louis Berger Group, a New Jersey consulting and construction services firm, and Black & Veatch, a construction company in Kansas.

In November, the Louis Berger Group paid one of the highest fines ever in a wartime contracting case to the federal government for overbilling.

Louis Berger hired an Indian subcontractor, which was a joint venture of two companies, BSC and C&C Construction, to handle the construction, and a South African private security contractor, ISS-Safenet, to provide security.

Both sides in turn subcontracted to Afghans like Mr. Arafat, who did not even have a registered company, according to the Afghan Interior Ministry.

Each subcontract raised the costs as everyone took a share, and it was not long before the money allocated for the project had been drained.

“There would be a string of subcontracts, where the subcontractors would take a cut and subcontract it out again,” said a civilian who worked with the military on the project. “And we had a problem that with the final subcontractors, they didn't have enough money to get the work done.”

Monitoring the money was a problem.

The Agency for International Development has faced significant cuts in recent years and “cannot conduct serious oversight,” said one military officer who was stationed near the road. “U.S.A.I.D. is a shell of its former self,” the officer said. “Now, it’s just a big contracting mechanism.”

The hiring of an Indian subcontractor stoked resentments among Afghans, who believed the business should have been given to them, according to Afghan and American officials.

Most important, both sides of the border are dominated by the Haqqani group, whose leaders are from Khost, and Paktia’s powerful Zadran tribe.

The Haqqani group is the Taliban offshoot that has long acted as a proxy in Afghanistan for Inter-Services Intelligence, the Pakistani military and intelligence service. Hiring a subcontractor from India — Pakistan’s mortal enemy — in a region dominated by people with close ties to Pakistan was like waving a red flag at Pakistan’s insurgent proxies.

“Politically Driven Timelines And Locations Which Make No Sense, Or Which Force Us Into Alliances With The Very Malign Actors”

Not least among the problems was that construction began before the region was cleared of insurgents. “You are talking about pushing development before there’s security,” said a former American government official who was involved in the project.

“And you have military or politically driven timelines and locations which make no sense, or which force us into alliances with the very malign actors that are powerfully part of the broader battles we are fighting,” the official said.

“No one steps back and looks at the whole picture.”

Within weeks of starting work, a construction camp was hit with rocket-propelled grenades, said Steve Yahn, the former chief engineer for the Gardez-Khost Highway project.

Afterward, the provincial governor and the police chief told the Americans that if they had hired the right people for security, the attack would never have happened.

“We got the message,” Mr. Yahn said.

That is when Mr. Arafat and 200 of his men were brought in to protect work crews. He was recommended by tribal elders from the Zadran tribe, said Paktia’s governor, Juma Khan Hamdard.

Mr. Arafat is feared in the area and has deep roots there.

A local businessman, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution, said Mr. Arafat spent part of his childhood in the same area as the sons of the insurgent

leader Jalaluddin Haqqani, who heads the group named for him, and had maintained close ties with them.

“Despite all the building by the P.R.T.’s, by the U.S., this area is strongly under Haqqani influence — it has been for years,” said Gul Bacha Majidi, a member of Parliament from Paktia, referring to the Americans’ Provincial Reconstruction Teams, responsible for many development projects. “And if you are working there or living there, you must have links with Haqqani.”

A former U.S.A.I.D. worker described the area as a place where the American military and development officers had no idea whom they were dealing with.

“The Haqqanis were out there, HIG, Al Haq, ISI,” the worker said, rattling off a host of insurgent groups and the Pakistani intelligence agency, which maintains ties to many of them. “Everyone was there, and the local population is as likely to sabotage a project as to protect it.”

Indeed, some suspected Mr. Arafat of arranging attacks himself.

However, they were reported up the American military chain of command like almost all other attacks, without any hint that they might have been staged for the purpose of squeezing money from the United States government.

In one instance in 2009, Afghan soldiers searched a small car in Gardez and found it filled with explosives, and the two men riding in it quickly explained that they worked for Mr. Arafat. The explosives disappeared and the men were freed before they could be handed over to the United States military, according to an American official familiar with the case.

Another American contractor said that an Afghan worker had told him that he had been ordered by security subcontractors to write “night letters” — anonymous death threats — to the Americans working on the highway to frighten them into paying more for security.

Shootings and other violence often broke out on paydays, said one American official who worked on the road, adding that those were the only occasions when many of the local security guards would show up, even though on paper there were supposed to be nearly 1,000 guards.

“On paper, the G.K. road was paying an enormous security detail of local-hire Afghans,” said one United States official. The highway contractors “would make a big deal out of their camps’ getting hit from time to time, and some of their guys would get shot in night attacks, but every instance I ever heard about coincided with payment negotiations with the Afghan security detail, of whom Arafat was the chief point of contact,” the official said.

It is impossible to determine how many of the attacks on the highway may have been staged by Mr. Arafat or his men.

Despite all the money spent on security, however, there have been 364 attacks on the Gardez-Khost Highway, including 108 roadside bombs, resulting in the deaths of 19 people, almost all of them local Afghan workers.

“There Was A Conspiracy Of Silence Among Both The Americans And The Afghans To Keep The Project Running”

Mr. Arafat’s insurgent connections appear to have been known to virtually everyone, yet there was a conspiracy of silence among both the Americans and the Afghans to keep the project running, contractors and others said.

The U.S.A.I.D. inspector general first investigated Mr. Arafat’s ties to the insurgency in 2009, but top agency officials concluded there was insufficient evidence to take action against him, an official at the agency said.

Similarly, United States military officers in the region declined to take action against Mr. Arafat, even after they were warned about his ties to the Haqqanis, said Matt Mancuso, an American contractor who was the liaison between the security contractor, ISS-Safenet, and the United States military in 2009.

No action was taken even though Mr. Arafat was on the United States military’s joint prioritized effects list — the record of those suspected of ties to terrorism and singled out for capture or killing — in early 2009 because of his suspected ties to the Haqqanis.

[Therefore, those above mentioned “United States military officers” may be arrested, tried and imprisoned for treason, which is exactly what they have committed. T]

Mr. Mancuso said he proposed a plan to lure Mr. Arafat onto an American base to be captured so that he could collect the reward. He was told days later by American military commanders that Mr. Arafat had been taken off the list.

He said he believed they removed Mr. Arafat’s name because they did not want to risk instability along the highway.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yahn said he believed that Mr. Arafat was dropped from the target list after appeals from contractors working on the highway. “We told them, ‘He’s keeping relative peace, and if he’s killed we are worried that there will be infighting and there will be more problems,’ “ Mr. Yahn said.

How much money might the Haqqanis have received through their ties to Mr. Arafat?

Mr. Mancuso said that during his time working on the project, ISS-Safenet paid Mr. Arafat \$160,000 a month to provide security for the road in Paktia Province. The amount, he said, was grossly inflated above the legitimate costs of security.

As The New York Times pressed U.S.A.I.D. and the military for information on the project, American officials finally decided to disqualify Mr. Arafat as a subcontractor, saying in response to queries that he was “no longer eligible to receive U.S.A.I.D. funds.”

Similarly, in April, the military's Task Force 2010, which handles anticorruption issues, disqualified one of the Afghan construction subcontractors working on the road because of "derogatory information," according to Lt. Bashon Mann, a spokesman for the task force. The term "derogatory information" referred to evidence that the local construction company had ties to the Haqqani group and was paying it off.

While Mr. Arafat's dismissal may reduce the payments that may have been funneled to the Haqqanis, some officials fear he may try to endanger the project by sabotaging his successors, which could drive costs up further.

"Since I have left the security of the road, it's chaos there," Mr. Arafat said. In fact, security officials have not seen any significant incidents since Mr. Arafat's departure, they said.

A military officer who asked not to be identified said that contractors working in remote stretches of Afghanistan constantly faced such dilemmas.

Do you keep paying off insurgents, or others, to keep the peace, even though they could use the money to buy weapons and sustain the insurgency?

"It's a tradeoff," said the officer. "It's Afghanistan; there is never a good answer."

More Resistance Action

1 May 2011 BBC & VOA News

A bomber struck a crowded market in Paktika province, killing a local official.

In Ghazni City, an insurgent opened fire at a police checkpoint, killing two police officers.

In one of Sunday's attacks, the Taliban claimed responsibility for a bombing in a marketplace in the southeastern province of Paktika that killed the head of a district council in the Shakeen area.

Insurgents ambushed a police vehicle in the eastern province of Ghazni, triggering a gunfight in which two policemen.

In Ghazni, a bomb planted on a bicycle blew up near the provincial police headquarters, wounding at least 11.

Insurgents on a motorbike killed an Afghan soldier in the southern city of Kandahar.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATIONS</p>
--

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. Marine with a gunshot wound in the arm due a battle against Taliban insurgents is medevaced aboard a helicopter in Helmand province, Afghanistan, April 8, 2011.
REUTERS/Denis Sinyakov

LIBYA WAR REPORTS

**“U.S. Intervention In Libya Has
Nothing To Do With Humanitarian
Concerns”**

**“It Is About Reestablishing The U.S.'S
Right To Intervene Militarily
Whenever Washington Feels Its
Interest Are Threatened”**

**“Setting A Conservative, Pro-American
Regime In Place In Libya’**



April 27, 2011 By Nicole Colson and Alan Maass, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

When Barack Obama explained U.S. involvement in a speech a week after the first bombs fell in Libya, he insisted that “broadening our military mission to include regime change would be a mistake.”

But by mid-April, Obama had co-signed an op-ed article with British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy which argued that “so long as Qaddafi is in power, NATO and its coalition partners must maintain their operations so that civilians remain protected and the pressure on the regime builds. Then a genuine transition from dictatorship to an inclusive constitutional process can really begin, led by a new generation of leaders. For that transition to succeed, Colonel Gaddafi must go, and go for good.”

And by the way, the “new generation of leaders” that the U.S. and friends have in mind are people they can “do business with”--members of Libya's elite who have come out against Qaddafi, former officials from the regime, military officers who switched sides, and the like.

The uprising against Qaddafi that began in February was a mass rebellion inspired by the revolutions against dictators in neighboring Tunisia and Egypt. But the West's intervention is aimed at promoting figures and political forces that represent the opposite--ones who will serve the interests of the U.S. and other powerful nations.

Its real aim is becoming clear--the reassertion of Western power in a region that has seen a wave of upheavals and two successful revolutions since the start of this year.

The Western intervention is also having an effect on the character of the Libyan opposition to Qaddafi.

As the weeks have progressed, high-level defectors from Qaddafi's regime, such as Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, a former justice minister, have stepped forward to position

themselves as “leaders” of the opposition--even brokering various agreements with Western nations.

This isn't to say that everyone in the anti-Qaddafi opposition has become a puppet of the West, as some on the left have claimed.

But it is certainly true that Western countries are using every opportunity to push to the fore pro-U.S./European figures--while pushing aside anyone who has different ideas.

The war in Libya can't be understood outside the context of other uprisings in the region.

The U.S.-led intervention is a way of pulling the reins on a wave of popular revolutions sweeping the Middle East and North Africa.

At the same time that the “no-fly zone” was imposed in Libya, other regimes in the region facing popular pro-democracy movements dramatically increased repression--most of all in Bahrain.

According to Independent journalist Patrick Cockburn:

“(T)he Bahraini monarchy, backed by troops from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, has brutally but effectively crushed the protesters in the island kingdom. Pro-democracy leaders are in jail or have fled abroad. The majority Shia population is being terrorized by arbitrary arrests, torture, killings, disappearances, sackings, and the destruction of its mosques and religious places.”

This crackdown had tacit approval from the U.S.--even as Washington claimed to be using its military machine in Libya to “stop a massacre.”

The U.S. government has always been willing to tolerate repression and violence if its interests are served, as they are in Bahrain today.

In fact, the U.S. was happy to do business with Qaddafi himself until a few months ago--the Libyan leader reviled today by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton was a loyal ally in the “war on terror” not long ago.

All this shows that Western intervention was never about supporting the mass opposition to Qaddafi, but harnessing the forces that led to ouster of dictators in Egypt and Tunisia, and that threatened them elsewhere.

U.S. intervention in Libya has nothing to do with humanitarian concerns.

Rather, it is about reestablishing the U.S.'s right to intervene militarily whenever Washington feels its interest are threatened--and trying to stem the tide of the Arab revolution by setting a conservative, pro-American regime in place in Libya.

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MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



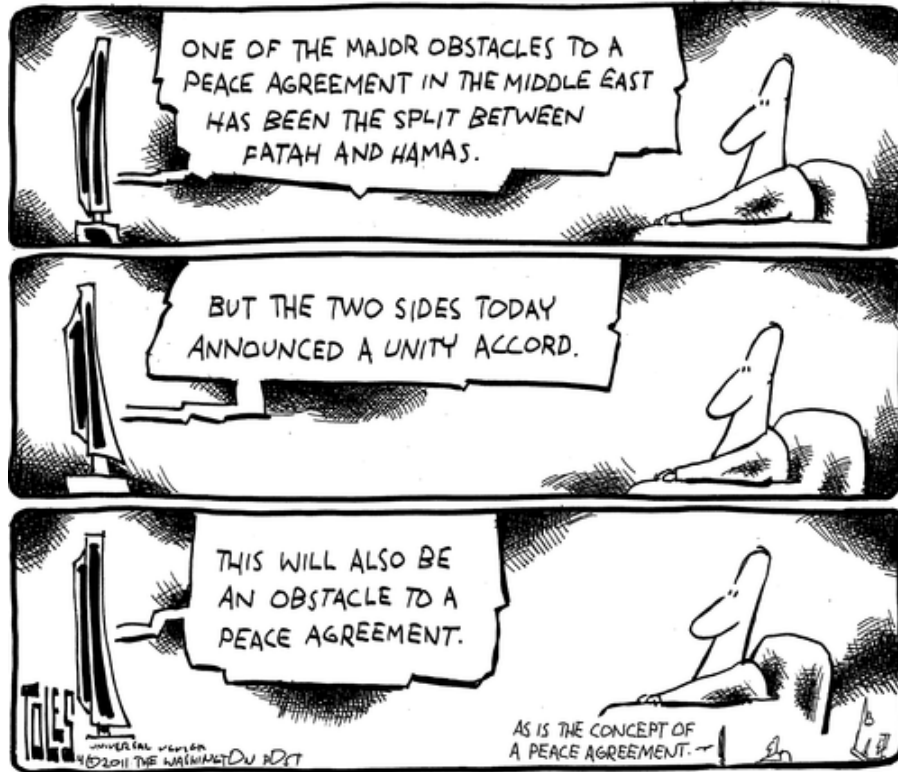
The casket of Army Spc. Joseph A. Kennedy April 28, 2011, at the Church of St. Patrick in Inver Grove Heights, Minn. The 25-year-old Kennedy, a native of Inver Grove Heights, was killed in combat in Afghanistan April 15. He graduated from Simley High School in Inver Grove Heights in 2004 and joined the Army in 2009. His unit was based out of Fort Knox, Ky., and deployed to Afghanistan in January. He was on his first combat tour and had aspirations of becoming an engineer in the Green Berets. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. (AP Photo/Pioneer Press, Jean Pieri)

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OCCUPATION PALESTINE



[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

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

Pregnant Woman Who Tried To Kill Herself Faces Possibility Of Life Imprisonment For “Feticide” Murder:

“Laws Against ‘Feticide’ Follow Decades Spent Criminalizing Women Who Carry Pregnancies To Term While Addicted To Drugs”

“Most Of The Women Charged Under Such Laws Were African American”



Bei Bei Shuai is led into court for a hearing

April 28, 2011 By Rachel Cohen, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

BEI BEI Shuai was 33 weeks pregnant when her boyfriend suddenly dumped her.

Though he'd promised to marry her and raise their child together, he abruptly confessed he was already married and then abandoned her in an Indianapolis parking lot, leaving her kneeling on the ground, crying.

With no family in the United States, the grief-stricken Bei Bei turned to the hardware store nearby.

She purchased rat poison, which she swallowed, attempting to kill herself.

Bei Bei was hospitalized and survived the suicide attempt. Soon after, doctors induced labor, and Bei Bei gave birth to a baby girl, whom she named Angel. Four days after she was born, Angel died.

Bei Bei suffered a second breakdown, spending a month on suicide watch in a psychiatric ward. She emerged from the hospital to stay with friends and begin picking up the pieces of her life.

But Indiana authorities had other plans: Bei Bei was arrested in March and charged with murder and attempted feticide.

Indiana is just one of a number of states--including Utah, Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa and South Carolina--that have recently pressed charges for “feticide” against women accused of endangering their pregnancies.

Bei Bei's case makes plain how heartless these charges are: a woman who attempted to take her own life is given no consideration for the pain that caused her suicide attempt.

Instead, she's been sent to jail, without bail, where she faces the possibility of life imprisonment.

As Alexa Kolbi-Molinas, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union, told Britain's Guardian:

“This case has huge implications for pregnant women, not only in Indiana but across the country...If we allowed the state to put a woman in jail for anything that could pose a risk to her pregnancy, there would be nothing to stop the police putting in jail a woman who has a drink of wine or who smokes. So where do you draw the line?”

Bei Bei's ordeal--and several recent cases in which extraordinary punishment is being pursued against women who do not appear to have intended to end their pregnancies--have rightly shocked and horrified many.

But laws that can be used to criminalize even unintended miscarriages also target women who resort to desperate measures to their end pregnancies simply because access to abortion has been eroded beyond reach.

Michele Goldberg wrote for The Nation about one of the most high-profile such cases, in which:

“Utah prosecutors and conservative politicians are determined to lock up the young woman known in court filings as J.M.S. for the crime of trying to end her pregnancy.

“Her grim journey through the legal system began in 2009, when she was 17 and pregnant by a convicted felon named Brandon Gale, who is currently facing charges of using her and another underage girl to make pornography.

“J.M.S. lived in a house without electricity or running water in a remote part of Utah. Even if she could have obtained the required parental consent and scraped together money for an abortion and a couple of nights in a hotel to comply with Utah's 24-hour waiting period, simply getting to the nearest clinic posed an enormous challenge...

“And so, according to prosecutors, in May 2009, in her third trimester and desperate, J.M.S. paid a stranger \$150 to beat her in the hope of inducing a miscarriage. The assault failed to end her pregnancy, but that didn't stop police from charging her with criminal solicitation of murder.”

The Roe v Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion still presents too great a barrier for states to outlaw abortion outright. Feticide laws, which exist in 38 states and at federal level, only ban termination of pregnancies outside the medical system.

Nonetheless, the right wing sees the codification of “fetal rights” as a stepping-stone toward overturning Roe. And anti-choice bigots make no effort to conceal their eagerness to prosecute as many women as possible in order to make the legal precedent seem more sound.

Samuel Casey, the head of the Christian Legal Society, explained, “In as many areas as we can, we want to put on the books that the embryo is a person...That sets the stage for a jurist to acknowledge that human beings at any stage of development deserve protection--even protection that would trump a woman's interest in terminating a pregnancy.”

THE RIGHT has been pursuing its case for “fetal rights” for years. As Lynn Paltrow of National Advocates for Pregnant Women argues, laws against “feticide” follow decades spent criminalizing women who carry pregnancies to term while addicted to drugs.

Dorothy E. Roberts, author of Killing the Black Body, has written widely on the deeply racist way in which the right campaigned in the 1980s and 1990s to create a moral panic over “crack babies.”

She reports that at least 250 women faced charges for drug use during pregnancy between 1985 and 1995, and in 1990 alone, 34 states considered legislation against substance abuse during pregnancy.

Roberts points out that most of the women charged under such laws were African American--not because rates of drug use generally are greater among Blacks than whites, but because infant toxicology screenings tend only to be routinely performed in hospitals that serve poor communities and communities of color.

These charges separated women from their children and deterred pregnant women addicted to drugs from seeking treatment for fear of denial of their custody rights, and even imprisonment.

Throughout the 20th century, efforts to restrict women's access to abortion and birth control have come alongside brutal measures to restrict motherhood and fertility for African American, Puerto Rican, Native American and immigrant women.

These seemingly contradictory lines of attack have worked to divide and conquer, and have been linked to the wider oppression of working and poor women and families.

The drive to criminalize drug use during pregnancy in the 1980s and 1990s accompanied the devastation of welfare and other social services.

Today's "feticide" laws extend the assault on reproductive rights just as more and more women face unemployment, eviction, and the slashing of public services--in other words, just as the potential need for abortion grows. In fact, recent studies suggest illegal, self-induced abortions are on the rise.

An implicit premise to the criminalization of even accidental termination of pregnancies is that women ought to welcome the responsibility of parenthood, whatever the challenges, as part of our "innate nature" as caretakers.

If women choose to end a pregnancy or are simply accused of failing to adequately protect a pregnancy, we can lay the fault at the feet of individual women as isolated failures. But the entire system fails women and children, particularly single mothers.

The right's professed concern for the "rights" of fetuses apparently ends as soon as babies emerge from the womb.

The contempt of the anti-choice right for children born to poor and working families has been on display yet again in Congress, where the same Republicans and Democrats pursuing a litany of anti-choice legislation have also begun exchanging proposals to gut the public health care system, including Medicaid.

One in three births in the United States is covered by Medicaid, and those babies depend on the one year of automatic coverage they receive for crucial developmental care and for vaccinations.

Or take the example of Tanya McDowell, a single mother raising her 6-year-old son in Norwalk Connecticut without a home.

When she used the address of a babysitter to register her son for public school, she was arrested and charged with first-degree larceny.

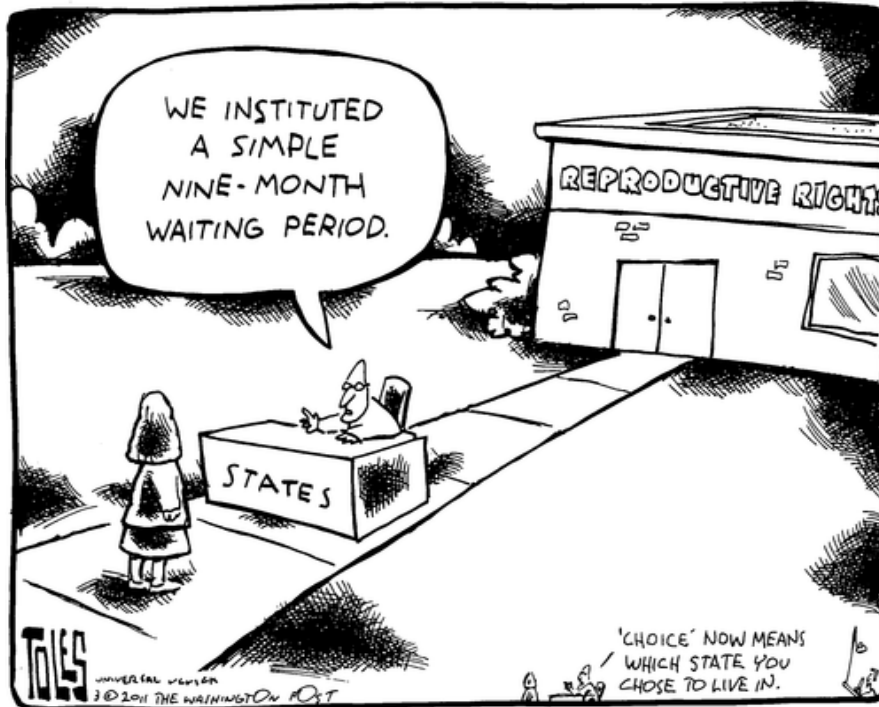
The babysitter has been evicted from her residence in public housing as punishment for her role in the "crime." Mayor Richard Moccia boasted that these devastating penalties are justified because they "send a message to other parents."

It also sends the message that the combined assaults on working and poor women and families demands an answer.

Women like Bei Bei Shuai charged with feticide are victims of a cynical campaign that heaps punishment on top of personal tragedy.

But the right also hopes to use the destruction of their lives to redefine the terms of all women's lives and rights.

The only way to stem the tide of outrageous prosecutions and attacks on women's lives is to organize a new fight to defend safe, legal abortion and all reproductive rights, and to build the struggles for economic justice and genuine equality for all.



NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization.

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

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

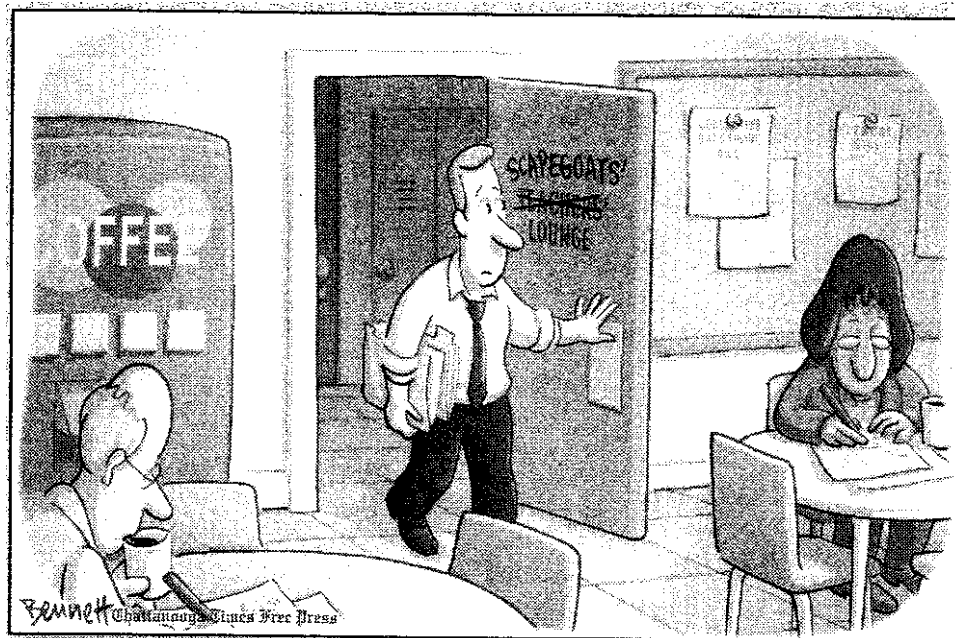
If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

Guess Who Can't Vote In The Obama Regimes' Favorite Royal Dictatorship



Saudi women gather outside a voter registration centre for the upcoming municipal elections in the Red Sea city of Jeddah on April 23, in a symbolic move to demand the right to vote. More than 60 Saudi intellectuals and activists called for a boycott of their country's municipal election in September, in an online petition posted on Sunday May 1, 2011. (AFP/File/Waleed Ahmad)

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Class Against Class” [Get The Message?]



Left protesters hold a banner that reads “Class against class” during May Day demonstrations in Hamburg May 1, 2011. REUTERS/Tobias Schwarz

GOT AN OPINION?

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Yemeni Anti-Government Protests Against The Dictatorship Continue



5.1.11: Yemeni anti-government protesters against the dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh during a demonstration in Taiz, south of Sanaa. Gulf states said on Sunday they are to renew efforts to end a deadly political crisis in Yemen, after the opposition accused Saleh of having torpedoed their bid at the weekend. (AFP)

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THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

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