

Military Resistance 9G12



**Unseen Attackers Are Striking
Down Foreign Troops “From A
Distance And Then Melting Away
Into The Surrounding
Countryside”**

**“With Every Step There Is The
Potential For An IED To Go Off Or
There Is Some Sniper Or
Sharpshooter Waiting In The Wings”**

“The Sniper Threat Was Particularly Acute In Contested Regions Of Helmand”

July 14, 2011 By Yochi J. Dreazen, National Journal [Excerpts]

U.S. and British troops in southern Afghanistan are facing another formidable danger in Helmand Province: well-trained foreign snipers, who are beginning to rival roadside bombs as a significant threat.

Maj. Gen. John Toolan, the top Marine general in Afghanistan, told National Journal that the sniper threat was particularly acute in contested regions of Helmand like Sangin and Garez, where forces are battling Taliban fighters trying to reclaim some of their former strongholds.

“It does effectively get inside the head of the soldier and the Marine when they know that with every step there is the potential for an IED to go off or that there is some sniper or sharpshooter waiting in the wings,” he said.

Snipers have killed approximately 20 troops in Helmand this year, according to a military official at the Pentagon familiar with the data.

Coalition forces have lost 84 troops in Helmand in 2011, according to icasualties.org.

Lt. Col. Ricco Player, a Marine spokesman in Helmand, said the command was reluctant to provide more precise details about how many casualties have been caused by insurgent snipers to avoid “providing Battle Damage Assessment to the enemy.”

The threat posed by the snipers was on vivid display in early February when a patrol of British and Afghan troops left a small base in Helmand. The troops were conducting a foot patrol in Nad-e-Ali, one of the province’s most violent towns, when they came under fire.

As the troops crouched for cover, a Taliban sniper killed two of the British paratroopers with a single shot. British officials later said the bullet blew through one soldier’s head before smashing into the neck of his colleague.

The dead men, both in their early 20s, were described as close friends.

In Afghanistan, by contrast, militants have traditionally employed crude roadside bombs that rely on sheer size rather than advanced design.

The situation is changing in some parts of Afghanistan, posing new risks to U.S. and British forces.

In Sangin and other parts of Helmand, meanwhile, unseen attackers are striking down coalition troops from a distance and then melting away into the surrounding countryside.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

July 15 (Reuters) & July 16 (Reuters)

KERBALA - A sticky bomb attached to a policeman's car went off near a checkpoint killing at least three people and wounding 15 others, mainly policemen, in eastern Kerbala, 80 km (50 miles) south west of Baghdad, police and provincial council officials said.

MOSUL - A roadside bomb went off near an Iraqi army patrol and wounded five soldiers in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, a local police source said.

MOSUL - An Iraqi soldier was killed in a shoot-out with insurgents in western Mosul.

MOSUL - A roadside bomb went off near an Iraqi army patrol and wounded one soldier in western Mosul, police said.

SAMARRA - A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol wounded a soldier in northern Samarra, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, an army source said.

BAGHDAD - A sticky bomb attached to a car of an off-duty policeman wounded him in Baghdad's southeastern Zaafaraniya district, police said.

MOSUL - A sticky bomb attached to an Iraqi soldier's car wounded him and another passenger in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Iraqi officials say a roadside bomb targeting a security patrol has killed one policeman and a passer-by in western Baghdad's Amariyah neighborhood near the capital's airport.

BAGHDAD - Insurgents in a speeding car using weapons equipped with silencers shot at a police checkpoint and wounded two policemen, in Baghdad's southeastern Zaafaraniya district.

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

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

July 16, 2011 AP

A foreign servicemember died during an operation in southern Afghanistan yesterday.

Forth Polk Soldier Killed In Logar

Jul 11, 2011 Army Times

A Louisiana soldier was killed over the weekend in Afghanistan, according to the Defense Department.

Sgt. Christopher P. Soderlund, 23, of Pineville, La., died Saturday in Logar province of wounds sustained when enemy forces attacked his vehicle with rocket-propelled grenade fire. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, out of Fort Polk.

Soldier From 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince Of Wales's) Killed In Nahr-e Saraj

17 Jul 11 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) was killed in Afghanistan on Saturday 16th July 2011.

The soldier was part of The Brigade Advisory Group, conducting a routine framework patrol with members of the Afghan National Army. He was in a fire support position, tracking the progress of a foot patrol from his Jackal vehicle. The foot patrol was returning to the vehicle when both teams came under small arms fire.

Spokesman for Task Force Helmand, Lieutenant Colonel Tim Purbrick, said:

"It is with great sadness that I have to announce the death of a soldier from the 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's).

"The soldier was on a routine partnered patrol with the Afghan National Army in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province, to engage with the local population, when the patrol came under small arms fire. The soldier received a fatal gunshot wound during this incident.

"A report that the fatal gunshot was fired by an Afghan National Army soldier is now the subject of a joint International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Security Force investigation.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the soldier's family and friends."

Prattville Soldier Succumbs To Afghanistan Wounds, Dies In Germany

Jun 24, 2011 By John Shryock, WSFA 12 News

PRATTVILLE, AL - Prattville soldier Nick Hensley passed away Friday morning, more than a week after stepping on a bomb in Afghanistan.

WSFA 12 News profiled Hensley's parents last week after they learned their son had been seriously injured.

"Nikko" as the man's father said his friends often called him, suffered the loss of both legs and at least one hand in the blast, but his parents were so thankful at the time that he survived. "I want to hold my baby so bad," his mom said during the interview.

The Hensley family traveled half-way around the world to be with their son in Germany where he was being stabilized before transport back to the United States.

The 2001 Prattville High School graduate, husband, father, son and soldier paid the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been announced. Prayers are being requested for the soldier's family and friends. WSFA 12 News offers our sincerest sympathy and condolences to the Hensley family.

Iowa Army Guard Soldier Killed In Afghanistan



Sgt. 1st Class Terryl Pasker

July 12, 2011 AP

JOHNSTOWN, Iowa -- An Iowa National Guard soldier killed over the weekend in Afghanistan was an upbeat, religious man who planned to start a family with his wife when he retired from the military next year, a friend and fellow soldier said Sunday.

Sgt. 1st Class Terryl Pasker, 39, of Cedar Rapids, was going through a routine security checkpoint in an armored vehicle when an Afghan National Directorate security officer inexplicably opened fire Saturday in Panjshir province, Guard spokesman Col. Greg Hapgood said.

Pasker was killed, while fellow guardsman Master Sgt. Todd Eipperle of Marshalltown, who fired back and killed the security officer, was injured, Hapgood said. Eipperle's condition wasn't immediately known. The shooting remains under investigation.

Pasker was on his second tour of duty in Afghanistan. He was expected to return home within a couple of weeks, Hapgood said.

His friend, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gronewold, said Pasker was a hard worker who owned a contracting business and wanted to start a family with his wife, Erica, after retiring from the Army. Pasker had been in the military since 1990.

"You could tell he had that construction mentality," Gronewold said during a news conference Sunday evening at Camp Dodge in Johnston.

"It's pretty tough on us," he added. "It's just a shock. You never get used to it. I never have and never will."

Pasker was assigned to the 334th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division based in Cedar Rapids.

He was the fourth Iowa National Guard soldier killed in Afghanistan since almost 3,000 Iowa National Guard soldiers deployed to Afghanistan last fall.

Along with his wife, Pasker is survived by his parents, Mary and David Pasker of Blairstown; brother Andrew of Lisbon; and two sisters, Christine Ross of Oakland, Tenn., and Rebecca Southard of Salem, Ore.

“It’s impossible to imagine the heartbreak that the Pasker family must feel right now,” Hapgood said at the news conference. “From all the information we have, Sgt. Pasker was very well liked, very well respected -- not only a good soldier, but a good guy. Our hearts go out to the Pasker family at this extremely difficult time.”

Funeral arrangements were pending.

Kyle Schneider Dies In Afghanistan, Pursuing His Military Dream



The remains of Cpl. Kyle R. Schneider Saturday at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Schneider, 23, of Phoenix died June 30 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

July 03, 2011 By Dave Tobin, The Post-Standard The Post-Standard

Nothing was going to stop Kyle Schneider from becoming a Marine and going to war.

Not the urgings of his family to go to college. He attended Onondaga Community College for one year. Not the offer from his great aunt to buy him a new car if he didn't enlist.

The 2006 graduate of Baldwinsville's Baker High School saw his life goal through. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps and graduated near the top of his class. He was offered training for a presidential security assignment in Washington, D.C., his grandparents said. He turned that down, too. He wanted to fight.

Cpl. Kyle R. Schneider, of Phoenix, Oswego County, died Thursday in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, killed by an improvised explosive device. He was 23.

Schneider was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division II Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

He was the 45th U.S. soldier to die in Afghanistan in June, and the eighth last week. That brought the U.S. death toll for the war in Afghanistan to 1,649.

The improvised explosive device was the second he'd encountered in a month, said his grandfather, Richard Vrotny, of Van Buren. The first blast knocked him unconscious, sent him to a hospital and left him with a concussion, hearing loss and headaches. Within 48 hours, he was back in the fight.

His parents, Richard and Lorie Schneider, and his brother, Kevin, were at Dover Air Force Base, in Delaware, Saturday, for the return of his remains. A memorial service will be scheduled for him in Baldwinsville, his grandparents said.

His grandparents remember him smiling, always smiling — the countenance of a positive disposition.

That relaxed smile appears over and over in family photos, right up through this past Christmas.

"That's not a staged smile," his grandfather said.

It was Christmas Eve when he proposed to his girlfriend, Theresa Dodge, an Air Force medic from West Columbia, Texas. They'd met when both were on assignment in Washington, D.C. Schneider had placed a diamond ring on the Christmas tree at his parents' house, and directed Dodge's attention to that "beautiful ornament," the story goes.

Schneider took the Marine motto "Honor, courage, commitment" to heart, his grandparents and his great aunt, Carole Ozark, of Weedsport, said.

He called them all from Afghanistan, just checking in, connecting with them. He called from the hospital after his first bomb blast and told his grandfather "the good thing is, I've had my first bath in six weeks," Richard Vrotny recalled.

The Vrotnys still have one of his quick, 30-second messages on their answering machine.

"Just want to say I love you guys and want to keep in contact as much as I can," he says in the message.

On June 16, a few weeks after his first bomb blast, he called his great aunt, Carole Ozark.

How are you? she asked.

"I'm doing OK," he said. "It's so beautiful over here. I look to the west and I see mountains. I look to the left and I see desert."

Kyle, when are you coming home?

"Aunt Carole," he said, "I can't tell you that."

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

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

**UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH;
ALL HOME NOW**



United States Marine onboard a medevac helicopter from the US Army's Task Force Lift 'Dust Off', Charlie Company 1-214 Aviation Regiment, after he was wounded in an IED strike near Sangin, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, June 4, 2011. (AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)



Marine on a medevac helicopter from the U.S. Army's Task Force Lift 'Dust Off', Charlie Company 1-214 Aviation Regiment after he got shot in the stomach outside Sangin, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, June 11, 2011. The Army's 'Dust Off' crew needed two attempts to get him out, as they were fired upon and took five rounds of bullets into the tail of their aircraft. (AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)

**“Mr. Karzai’s Government
Appears Increasingly Adrift. He
Appears Increasingly Isolated
And Overwhelmed”
“He’s Dealing With Six Or Seven
Crises And On Every Single One
He Is Creating New Enemies”**

“The Severity Of The Symptoms Has Become Alarming. “There Is No Plan”

“What We Have Is A Public Relations Strategy — ‘Everything Is Improving; It’s Hard But We’re Making Progress’”

July 13, 2011 By ALISSA J. RUBIN, New York Times [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — At midday, the glare and dust obscures Afghanistan’s horizon in what seems a metaphor for the position of the Afghan president as political and economic crises mount on every front: it is increasingly hard to see how he will find his way.

The death of President Hamid Karzai’s half brother, who was shot by a police commander on Tuesday, was only the latest in a series of blows to the stability of the government as the United States and Afghanistan’s other international backers have made it clear they want to reduce their commitments here.

Without his brother, who gave the president the assurance that he could count on the political and economic backing of at least a quarter of the country — the south — Mr. Karzai’s government appears increasingly adrift.

“The situation is very difficult for him,” said Ahmad Wali Massoud, the former Afghan ambassador to Britain who lost his own brother, Ahmed Shah Massoud, in a suicide bombing in 2001. “His brother’s killing is not just a political matter, but a personal and family blow as well.”

In Parliament, many members are talking openly about impeaching Mr. Karzai, who wants to dismiss a quarter of the assembly’s members over allegations that they gained their seats through electoral fraud.

Their deadlock with Mr. Karzai has meant that he has not been able to form a full cabinet for nearly 18 months.

The banking system is such a shambles that the International Monetary Fund has refused to extend its program here and the lack of one has meant the loss of at least \$70 million in aid.

More is likely to be lost this summer and fall; another Afghan bank appears to be mired in fraud and is likely to need a cash infusion.

Meanwhile, efforts to reconcile with the insurgency are barely moving, and Pakistan is firing artillery rounds over the border, even as it professes to support a peace plan

between Afghanistan and Taliban insurgents, many of whom live in the Pakistan's tribal areas.

The Pakistani bombardment is said to be an effort to repel Taliban insurgents who have taken refuge in Afghanistan. However, it is widely believed that the Pakistanis are trying to make the point that the Afghan government is weak and cannot protect its own borders and should look to Pakistan, not the Americans, for support.

In this case, President Karzai has seemed clear: he has resisted calls from Afghan nationalists to fight back, since Afghanistan cannot win a fight with Pakistan.

The troubles facing him, like the Pakistani artillery fire, are not all of his making, but some are, and he appears increasingly isolated and overwhelmed.

"He is under enormous pressure," said a knowledgeable businessman here, who did not want to be named because he feared retribution for his analysis.

"He's dealing with six or seven crises and on none is he really prevailing and on every single one he is creating new enemies."

Confronted at a news conference on July 6, Mr. Karzai played down the seriousness of the country's troubles. "Afghanistan has to go through these problems," he said. "These are maturity problems. As a child grows and grows teeth, he gets a fever; when his bones grow he feels pain. These all are signs of maturity. We should not worry about it."

But the severity of the symptoms has become alarming.

The problems with Parliament verge on a constitutional crisis and are in many ways self-inflicted. Mr. Karzai has struggled to address complaints of fraud from losing candidates — many of them his supporters — after the 2010 parliamentary elections, which the country's international backers and its election commission agreed were flawed but fair enough.

His solution — to set up a special court to adjudicate the complaints — has satisfied no one. Three weeks ago the court ruled that 62 members of Parliament should be replaced with candidates whose electoral defeat had been certified.

Parliament has refused to recognize the court or its order, and a majority decided to fight the president and began talking about impeachment. Although that option is unlikely, the mere discussion of it was a measure of the enmity between the president and Afghan lawmakers.

Mr. Karzai now risks either infuriating members of Parliament by allowing the court to force them out or infuriating the losing candidates, who have come to believe that they should be in office.

"When he set up the special court I don't think he thought about how the situation might turn out," said Fazal Ahmad Manawi, the chairman of the Independent Election Commission.

Mr. Manawi offered the president a way out last week: he offered to have the commission examine the cases of the losing candidates and determine whether there was fraud that needed to be reviewed by the attorney general's office. The president did not accept that approach and the fight goes on.

On the financial front, too, there are few signs of immediate relief.

The I.M.F. is demanding greater scrutiny of the banking system as well as a more legally binding way to ensure that borrowers with loans from Kabul Bank, the nation's largest bank, will pay back the bank, which was found to have nearly \$900 million in losses.

The president and his close associates want to draw a line, fearing that if they look too closely, the whole financial system may collapse, said several Afghan and Western officials.

"But if you need to audit two banks, you audit two," said a Western official here, who is familiar with the situation. "If three, you audit three. You need to look at the health of the whole system."

In the meantime, Afghanistan is without an I.M.F. program and has lost at least \$70 million because some of the money in the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, administered by the World Bank, can be doled out only if there is a working I.M.F. program.

As the problems mount, NATO's military commanders and civilian officials express cautious optimism that there will be "Afghan solutions." However, other analysts are far more doubtful and say that NATO lacks a strategy to handle the increasingly treacherous landscape.

"There is no plan," said Thomas Ruttig, a co-director of the Kabul-based Afghanistan Analysts Network, a research group.

"What we have is a public relations strategy — 'Everything is improving; it's hard but we're making progress,'" Mr. Ruttig said, quoting Western officials here.

"But for the president, the picture is gloomy. For Afghanistan, the picture is gloomy."

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.

MILITARY NEWS

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



The remains of Army Sgt. Jeremy R. Summers, July 15, 2011 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Summers, 27, of Mount Olivet, Ky., died July 14, 2011 in Paktika province, Afghanistan after insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire on July 13, 2011. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)...

**Federal Court Agrees With Obama
Regime Demand To Keep “Don’t
Ask Don’t Tell” Policy In Force:
“Lt. Col. Paul Hackett, A Lawyer In
The Marine Corps Reserve, Said
Military Officials Are Ready For The
Change And There Is No Need For A
Delay”
“Politicians Do What Politicians Do For
Whatever Their Political Need Is”**

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in. He writes: "Last 3 paragraphs are the best part; good quote from USMC lawyer about politicians too."]

7.16.11 By SHAYA TAYEFE MOHAJER, Associated Press [Excerpts]

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy is back in place for the time being, with one major caveat: the government is not allowed to investigate, penalize or discharge anyone who is openly gay.

A San Francisco federal appeals court ordered the military to temporarily continue the controversial policy in an order late Friday, the court's response to a request from the Obama administration.

The order is the latest twist in the legal limbo gay service members have found themselves in as the policy is fought in the courts simultaneous to its slow dismantling by the federal government, which expects to do away with it by later this year.

In its three-page ruling, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals said the ruling was based on new information provided by the federal government, including a declaration from Major General Steven A. Hummer, who is leading the effort to repeal the policy.

"In order to provide this court with an opportunity to consider fully the issues presented in the light of these previously undisclosed facts," the court wrote, that it would uphold an earlier order to keep the policy in place.

The court of appeals had halted "don't ask, don't tell" July 6 but the Department of Justice filed an emergency motion Thursday saying ending the policy now would preempt the orderly process for rolling it back, per a law signed by President Barack Obama in December.

The ruling was supported by Servicemembers United, an organization of gay and lesbian troops and veterans, but the group's executive director Alexander Nicholson voiced frustration over the slow process of dismantling "don't ask, don't tell."

"The situation with finally ending this outdated and discriminatory federal policy has become absolutely ridiculous," said Nicholson. "It is simply not right to put the men and women of our armed forces through this circus any longer."

The Department of Justice said in a statement that it asked the court to reconsider its order "to avoid short-circuiting the repeal process established by Congress during the final stages of the implementation of the repeal."

It said senior military leaders are expected to make their decision on certifying repeal within the next few weeks. In the meantime, the Justice Department said "it remains the policy of the Department of Defense not to ask service members or applicants about their sexual orientation, to treat all members with dignity and respect, and to ensure maintenance of good order and discipline."

The Justice Department noted that the Defense Department has discharged only one service member since Congress voted to repeal the policy, and that was done at the request of the service member.

Last year's ruling by the appeals court stemmed from a lawsuit filed by the Log Cabin Republicans against the Department of Justice.

The gay rights group persuaded U.S. District Court Judge Virginia Phillips to impose a worldwide injunction halting the ban last October, but the appeals court granted the government a stay, saying it wanted to give the military time to implement such a historical change.

The Log Cabin Republicans asked the court Friday to deny the motion, saying "an on-again, off-again status of the District Court's injunction benefits no one and plays havoc with the constitutional rights of American service members."

The plaintiff said while only one service member has been discharged since the congressional vote, three others have been approved for discharge by the secretary of the Air Force but the processing of those actions have been "stopped in their tracks" by the court's order.

Granting the stay the government wants would allow it to act on those discharges and also allow it to put recent applicants from gay enlistees in limbo, the group said.

Lt. Col. Paul Hackett, a lawyer in the Marine Corps Reserve, said military officials are ready for the change and there is no need for a delay.

"We're already taking steps to implement it," he said. "Politicians do what politicians do for whatever their political need is. It's an election year, so somebody is obviously taken that into consideration. I suspect that's what driving this."

Friday's order lays out a schedule for anticipated objections and motions from both sides: the Log Cabin Republicans have until 5 p.m. Thursday to file opposition to today's motion, and the federal government has until 5 p.m. the next day to file a reply supporting it.

The court also asks the federal government to explain by close of business Monday why the information on implementation of the Repeal Act wasn't provided sooner.

On Saturday, a contingent of active-duty troops and veterans are expected to march in San Diego's gay pride parade.

Former Navy operations specialist Sean Sala is organizing what is believed to be the first military contingent of troops and veterans to lead a gay pride parade.

Sala said the parade group wear T-shirts showing their branch of service. They will walk with two horses — one draped in an American flag and the other with the rainbow-colored Pride flag — to honor service members and those who have died for equality.

**DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE
MILITARY?**

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

**Military Families Sue Contractor
For Deaths In Afghanistan:
Mission Essential Personnel
Employee Killed Their Soldiers:
“Soldiers Were Alarmed By His
Strange Behavior, His Inability To Do
The Job And The Foul Condition Of
His Living Quarters”
“I Don’t Want Another Wife To Come
Home From Work To A Van In Their
Driveway Because MEP Can’t Do The
Right Thing”**

**[LONG, BUT A RARE WINDOW INSIDE A LITTLE REPORTED
DIMENSION OF THE WAR ON AFGHANISTAN]**

Mission Essential Personnel, better known as MEP, was founded in 2004 and is the U.S. government’s primary supplier of linguists, with more than 8,200 personnel in Afghanistan and a dozen other countries, according to the company’s website.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nasir Ahmad Ahmadi was hired to work as an interpreter alongside American troops in Afghanistan.

But soldiers were alarmed by his strange behavior, his inability to do the job and the foul condition of his living quarters.

They suspected he used drugs.

Just a few months after he arrived at an Army Special Forces base near Kabul, Ahmadi was ordered to pack his bags and leave.

Instead of getting ready for the next flight out, Ahmadi grabbed an AK-47 assault rifle from another interpreter's room on the base and started shooting. He killed two unarmed soldiers and wounded a third.

On Monday, nearly 18 months after the January 2010 shootings, the survivor and family members of the slain soldiers filed a wrongful death lawsuit against Mission Essential Personnel, the U.S. defense contractor that hired Ahmadi as it rushed to put more interpreters to work in Afghanistan.

During the rampage at Firebase Nunez, Ahmadi killed Specialist Marc Decoteau, a 19-year-old just a few weeks into his first tour of duty, and Capt. David Johnpaul Thompson, a veteran soldier and the father of two young girls. At close range, Ahmadi shot Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Russell, hitting him in the legs. Russell survived.

An alert Army sergeant ended the rampage when he drew his pistol and killed Ahmadi, a 23-year-old native of Afghanistan who had immigrated to the United States in 2009.

In their lawsuit, filed in federal court in North Carolina, Russell and the families of Decoteau and Thompson accuse Mission Essential Personnel, based in Columbus, Ohio, of negligence and breach of contract for failing to look into Ahmadi's background and not properly testing him to ensure he was psychologically sound before giving him a job.

"Knowing that an employee of Mission Essential Personnel, who was mismanaged, came up behind Marc in a dark hallway and shot him to death, took you back to square one in your sense of loss," said Nancy Decoteau, Marc Decoteau's mother, as she recalled reading the Army's investigation of the shootings completed several months after her son died.

"That was not how Marc wanted to give his life."

The families said MEP's reaction to the shootings compounded their grief.

No condolence letters.

No one from the company attended either funeral. No apologies.

“I would have been so much more receptive to them showing up at the funeral to say, ‘I’m sorry this happened,’” said Emily Thompson, David Johnpaul Thompson’s widow.

The lawsuit seeks financial compensation from MEP, although it does not specify an amount. Judgments or settlements in wrongful death cases are difficult to predict but can reach millions of dollars.

Mark Decoteau, Marc’s father and a West Point graduate, said money isn’t the objective. He wants to prevent tragedies for other military families.

“They’re using taxpayer dollars and they are not upholding their end of the contract,” he said of MEP. “They’re not doing what they are supposed to do and we can’t let that go on and have somebody else in our position. I just don’t know what I would do if that happens again.”

Even after the violence at Nunez, the Army increased MEP’s contract to provide thousands of Dari and Pashto speakers by \$1.2 billion as the demand for interpreters steadily increased. Dari and Pashto are the two primary languages in Afghanistan.

Most of the increase came in May 2010, weeks before the Army completed its investigation of the shootings at Nunez.

Earlier this year, the contract was increased again by \$525 million, pushing the total value to \$1.98 billion, according to government documents.

Seeking to expand its choices, the Army announced last week that it had selected MEP and five other companies for a linguist services contract worth as much as \$9.7 billion over the next five years.

But the government’s dependence on the private sector makes it especially difficult to impose what critics describe as effective accountability.

“The government is so reliant on contractors, particularly when it comes to translators or linguists, that when there’s a problem the government can’t do anything about it because the bottom line is they’ve got to have that contractor,” said Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a watchdog group in Washington.

“Records Describe Breakdowns In Management And Mirror The Lawsuit’s Claims That Ahmadi And Other MEP Employees Were Not Closely Supervised”

The violence at Nunez came as MEP was struggling to control its workforce in Afghanistan, according to confidential government reports written in 2009 and 2010 by U.S. officers in Afghanistan responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of MEP’s handling of the contract.

The records, obtained by The Associated Press, describe breakdowns in management and mirror the lawsuit's claims that Ahmadi and other MEP employees were not closely supervised.

The Army Intelligence and Security Command awarded MEP the contract in September 2007.

According to the contract terms, MEP would recruit qualified linguists, ensure they were medically and psychologically fit, perform security reviews, get them to Afghanistan and manage them while they were there. Interpreters were expected to live and work in harsh and hostile environments.

At the time, command officials estimated about 3,000 interpreters would be needed to support military operations in Afghanistan. But when troop levels swelled by the thousands to beat back a resurgent Taliban, so did the need for more Dari and Pashto-speaking interpreters, and the military counted on MEP to deliver them.

By early 2010, there were more than 6,800 linguists.

The records show MEP didn't know where all of its interpreters were, what units they were assigned to and whether they were even showing up for work.

"MEP's inability to track their linguists continues to be a problem," according to one of the military reports from late 2009. "Despite MEP's acknowledgment of this issue little has been done to correct the problem."

"MEP's Linguist Accountability Completely Collapsed ... Following Months Of Deterioration"

The trouble continued into 2010. "MEP's linguist accountability completely collapsed ... following months of deterioration," another military report said.

MEP told the AP that it provides daily reports to the military that track all its linguists on the ground, in transit and on leave.

The oversight team's reports were provided to the Intelligence and Security Command's headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va.

It's unclear how military commanders responded to the reports. The Intelligence and Security Command refused to discuss MEP's performance, saying such information is barred from release by federal acquisition regulations.

Another military report accused an MEP interpreter at a U.S. base in western Afghanistan of ties to the Taliban and said the interpreter was paying off tribal leaders and extorting money from local businessmen.

MEP was rebuked for failing to be more engaged with its employees and for "sheltering negative incidents" by waiting more than one month to tell military officials what had happened, according to the report.

An unspecified number of linguists hired in the United States were caught claiming to be at work when they weren't for months at a time — a few had even returned to the U.S. when they were supposed to be working in Afghanistan, according to another report, written in the late summer of 2010.

MEP terminated employees when they were caught.

But the root of problem had not been fixed: Linguists could access their payroll time sheets from any computer in the world claim to be working.

“MEP does not have in place an effective, systemic method of insuring that their U.S.-hire linguists are actually at their duty location performing the services they are being contractually paid to do,” the report said. MEP told the AP that it fired four employees in spring 2010 for submitting fraudulent time entries and said those were anomalies.

There is only a passing reference to Ahmadi's crimes from one of the reports written in early 2010. Immediately after the incident at Nunez, the Army opened a criminal investigation that kept details of the shooting under tight control.

**“It Wasn't Long Before Some Soldiers At Nunez Determined That Ahmadi Was A Liability”
“He Threatened To Kill A Co-Worker With An Axe”**

Ahmadi was born in southern Afghanistan in 1987, according to documents from the Army's investigative report that included portions of Ahmadi's employment application with MEP, his resume and other records obtained under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. Fluent in Dari and Pashto, he took English training while in high school in Kabul.

In 2004, he worked as an interpreter with a consulting company in Kabul.

A year later, the records show, Ahmadi went to work for International Management Services, a Maine company that provides interpreters to the U.S. military, militaries from other countries and businesses. While employed by IMS, Ahmadi served with U.S. Special Forces in Afghanistan and volunteered to accompany the troops on combat missions in hot spots like Helmand and Kandahar, according to his resume.

In early 2009, with a recommendation from an unnamed Army general, Ahmadi earned a visa allowing him to immigrate to the U.S., according to documents. As a U.S. resident with his language skills, Ahmadi's earning potential was 10 times greater than someone living in Afghanistan.

Ahmadi began working for MEP in August 2009, according to documents. His annual base salary of \$85,000 would kick in when he deployed to Afghanistan. He was also eligible for a new hire bonus of \$10,000 after 90 days, and hazardous duty and hardship pay, too. All told, Ahmadi could have made nearly \$155,000 in his first year, the records show.

He arrived at Nunez in mid-September 2009, according to the lawsuit, just a few months after the Special Forces compound was set up. The base was located on a larger U.S. military installation at Sayed Abad in Wardak province, about 20 miles southwest of Kabul.

It wasn't long before some soldiers at Nunez determined that Ahmadi was a liability, according to witness statements included in the Army's investigative report.

Ahmadi "was a horrible combat interpreter because he was always ad-libbing and making stuff up," an unnamed senior enlisted soldier told investigators. A verbal miscue could lead to serious problems, so they decided to keep Ahmadi on the base.

Soldiers described Ahmadi as timid, submissive and a loner. He could also be unnerving, according to witness statements.

He threatened to kill a co-worker with an axe. He was reading a book called "What Happens When You Die." Rotten food, dirty dishes and rat droppings littered his living quarters.

They thought he had a drug problem. The lawsuit accused Ahmadi of using "nass," a mix of finely cut tobacco, paint thinner and, occasionally, powdered hashish.

The lawsuit said soldiers at Nunez did not recall an MEP manager coming to the base to check on Ahmadi or the other company interpreters stationed there.

In November 2009, Ahmadi's supervisor at MEP gave him the second highest score possible on a performance evaluation, according to employment documents included in the Army's investigative report.

But Ahmadi's signature, required at the bottom of the evaluation form, appears substantially different from the signature he used on many other documents in the file.

The supervisor's name was removed from the document.

A handwriting expert who reviewed the documents for the AP said he could not say with certainty whether it was Ahmadi's signature because the documents were photocopies of the originals.

"There is evidence to suggest it's not written by Ahmadi," said Dennis Ryan, who is certified by the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners. "It's not consistent with the other signatures."

"MEP Knew That At Least Some Of Its Linguists Carried Weapons But Did Nothing About It And Sought To Keep That Information From The Military's Contracting Oversight Officers"

In written responses to questions from the AP, the Intelligence and Security Command said its contracting officers have never authorized MEP's linguists to carry weapons. It remains unclear why an MEP interpreter had an AK-47 and whether any other interpreters had weapons.

The lawsuit said MEP knew that at least some of its linguists carried weapons but did nothing about it and sought to keep that information from the military's contracting oversight officers.

The troops at Nunez made sure Ahmadi wasn't given a weapon, according to the lawsuit and the witness statements from the Army's investigative report.

MEP said it did not issue Ahmadi a weapon nor did it authorize him to use one.

Chief Warrant Officer Russell, 37, remains on active duty and is still recovering from his wounds.

Master Sgt. Eric Hendrix, a spokesman for U.S. Army Special Operations Command, said Russell declined the AP's request for an interview.

Henry, the attorney representing the families, said Russell had been ordered by his commanders not to speak to the AP.

Johnpaul Thompson and Russell, close friends and members of the 3rd Special Forces Group, arrived at Nunez within a few weeks of each other in January 2010. It was Thompson's third tour in Afghanistan, and Russell's fourth.

Decoteau, who was 11 when the Sept. 11 attacks occurred, got to Nunez the same time Thompson did. Like his father, he was an airborne soldier. Decoteau was assigned to the 4th Psychological Operations Group.

“That Was The Worst Moment Of Her Life. Telling Her Girls Their Father Had Died Was The Second Worst”

After conferring with his team and soldiers from the unit it was replacing, Thompson decided Ahmadi had to go, according to the investigative report and the lawsuit. Late in the afternoon on Jan. 29, the team's master sergeant informed Ahmadi of the decision.

Ahmadi became angry and said he was going to call his employer. One hour later, the soldiers at Nunez heard gunfire. Many assumed it was an accidental discharge. Then more shots rang out. Soldiers scrambled to unlock their weapons and grabbed their body armor.

Decoteau, who had no role in Ahmadi's dismissal, apparently was the first person Ahmadi came across. He was leaving his room, wearing a hooded sweatshirt and his camouflage Army-issue pants.

Ahmadi fired 10 rounds into him, killing him instantly. “He was not in any way ready for what happened to him,” Mark Decoteau, his father, said.

Thompson and Russell were in the camp's operations center when they heard the shots. They moved through the door, toward the sound of the gunfire and saw Ahmadi staring at them with an AK-47. Ahmadi fired as Russell pulled Thompson back through the door. Three bullets hit Thompson as he and Russell fell to the floor.

As Thompson lay fatally wounded, Ahmadi stepped over him and shot Russell, hitting him the left foot and right leg. One of the bullets went through his calf and into his elbow.

Before Ahmadi could fire again, Sgt. First Class Steve Kimsey, who was in the operations center, pulled his pistol and killed him.

A medevac helicopter rushed Thompson and Russell to another base where there was a surgical team. Thompson died from his wounds. He was 39.

Thousands of miles away in North Carolina, Emily Thompson had just picked up her girls from school and was driving home. As she neared the house, she saw a white van with government license plates in her driveway.

When an Army colonel stepped out of the van, she said, she knew.

That was the worst moment of her life. Telling her girls their father had died was the second worst.

"I want MEP to change," Emily Thompson said.

"I don't want soldiers to die because of their negligence. I don't want another wife to come home from work to a van in their driveway because MEP can't do the right thing."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



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

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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

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

“One Way Of Knowing If We Are Living In A Police State Is When Criminal Defendants Do More Time For Lying To The Police Than They Do For The Crimes They Allegedly Committed”

July 11, 2011 By Luke and Marti Hiken, Progressive Avenues

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Luke Hiken is an attorney who has engaged in the practice of criminal, military, immigration, and appellate law.

One way of knowing if we are living in a police state is when criminal defendants do more time for lying to the police than they do for the crimes they allegedly committed.

Right-wing prosecutors can’t get juries to go along with their unsubstantiated accusations against everyone from Barry Bonds to Casey Anthony.

Juries in both cases acquitted the defendants of the crimes they were accused of committing, but convicted them of lying to the police.

American atrocities throughout the world are so numerous that even the U.S. Justice Department is worried about the Texas refusal to comply with the Vienna Convention, wherein immigrants have a right to communicate with their consular offices prior to police interrogation.

Texas' refusal to recognize this right in any criminal case jeopardizes the protections that Americans need, particularly at this point, because of their criminal activity throughout the world. If Texas won't allow Mexican defendants to speak with their consular offices, surely U.S. mercenaries and "military attaches" can expect comparable treatment. [1]

Anybody who speaks without a total grant of immunity to police, the military, or grand juries is a fool in this country.

The state is quickly losing the ability to make the American people complicit in their crimes and depravity, so that all those in power have left is the sworn testimony of the police and military tribunals that "suspects" lied to them.

At least it is becoming gruesomely obvious whom these lackeys are there to "serve and protect."

[1] *Medellin vs. Texas*, 2008, 552 U.S. 491 (2008), the Texas Supreme Court refused to follow the Vienna Convention of 1963 on consular relations -- "A United States Supreme Court decision which held that while an international treaty may constitute an international commitment, it is not binding on domestic law unless Congress has enacted statutes implementing it or unless the treaty itself is "self-executing"; that decisions of the International Court of Justice are not binding domestic law; and that, absent an act of Congress or Constitutional authority, the President of the United States lacks the power to enforce international treaties or decisions of the International Court of Justice." (Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medell%C3%ADn_v._Texas)

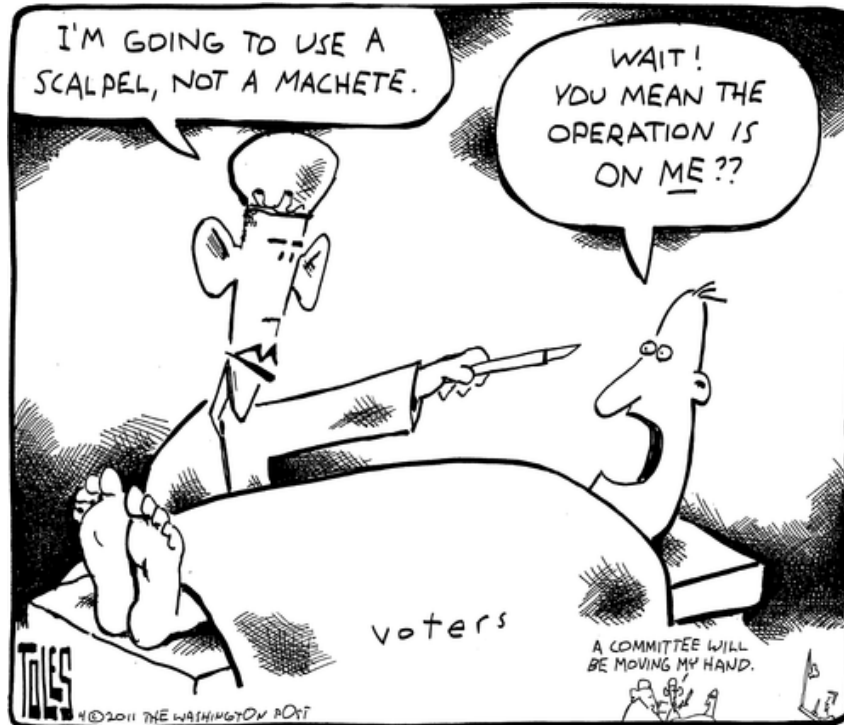
GOT AN OPINION?

Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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/>

And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



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