

Military Resistance 9G16



**The Stupid, Silly, Fake Afghan
“Transition” Farce Rolls Out:
“It’s Hard To Point To Any New
Responsibilities That Afghans Are
Taking On”
“Foreign Troops Are Not Moving Out
Of Bases In The Transition Areas,
They’ll Just Officially Operate Under
The Oversight Of Afghan Forces”**

“‘I Measure My Progress In Hundreds Of Meters A Day,’ Said Lt. Col. Matthew Harsha”

And even Mehterlam district as it existed six months ago would not have been an option, because of insurgent infiltration in the rural western section of the district. As part of transition, however, the unruly western area was sliced off into a new district called Bad Pakh four months ago, leaving just the city of Mehterlam.

07.21.11 By HEIDI VOGT, Associated Press [Excerpts]

MEHTERLAM, Afghanistan -- In this city of 100,000, people are scared to wander out at night, the chief judge was recently fired for allegedly collaborating with insurgents, officials accuse each other of corruption and the police force is barely large enough to patrol the streets.

As of this week, Afghan forces are in charge of security, replacing the Americans who still keep insurgents from swarming into town through raids in the surrounding valleys of Laghman province.

The tenuous peace in Mehterlam shows the challenges Afghan authorities are facing as the U.S.-led coalition hands over responsibility for more parts of the country. The big question is whether Afghan forces are up to the job.

The first round of transition has so far been largely cosmetic, reflecting the worries over the readiness of Afghan forces.

It's hard to point to any new responsibilities that Afghans are taking on.

Foreign troops are not moving out of bases in the transition areas, they'll just officially operate under the oversight of Afghan forces.

Many of the areas transitioning in this first group never had many NATO troops, such as Panjshir and Bamiyan provinces, along with the cities of Mazar-i-Sharif in the north and Herat in the west.

The capital, Kabul, has nominally been operating under Afghan control for years. And the others - Lashkar Gah in the south and Mehterlam in the east - are cities that are still largely kept safe by the international forces surrounding them.

Of those two, Mehterlam is the one which most concerns international and Afghan officials.

While the city is relatively safe compared with much of eastern Afghanistan, it is surrounded by insurgent havens and there's very little local governance or security.

The city's police force has just a few dozen officers.

The chief can request officers from other areas if needed, but even the province-wide force has fewer than 1,000 police, according to U.S. military trainers.

"We do not have the numbers of police we need," said city police chief Shah Mahmood.

He said he was pushing his officers to their limit and stressed to them on Wednesday - the first full day of Afghan control - that they need to redouble efforts and cover the city with patrols.

Others in the city said they were worried about understaffed checkpoints on the edges of town.

The commander of the Afghan army battalion for the area said a quick-reaction force at the army base composed of police officers, army soldiers and intelligence agents that is supposed to be on call for major emergencies is regularly missing all the police officers because the police chief pulls his members for routine work.

"They pull them off for searching a suspicious area or for a patrol. It's like every day is an emergency for them," Gen. Shirzaman Waziri said.

The police, in turn, are angry at the courts, because they say corrupt judges let the people they arrest go free. Provincial police chief Ghulam Aziz Gharani said he's tired of arresting people only to have them back on city streets the next day.

"I don't want to accuse the entire court and say they're all bad, but there are certainly some very bad people among them," Gharani said.

The chief justice was recently fired for ties to insurgent groups after he "released a Taliban and he became a suicide bomber."

Abdul Hanif Manan, the deputy chief justice for Mehterlam said judges are constantly under threat from insurgents and should not be blamed if sometimes they release someone to protect their families.

"These threats are coming every day. And many of these judges live in unsafe areas. And here we are at a court with only three police to guard us," Manan said.

One official, who spoke anonymously to avoid retribution, said the mayor also has ties to insurgent groups, presenting as evidence that the mayor regularly visits insurgent-held areas that should be too dangerous for any government officials.

And provincial council member Miratam Tarakhil said the mayor has illegally parceled out valuable land to his cronies.

Mayor Abdul Moqim Niazi laughed off the accusations, saying that he had no link with any militants and that accusations of corruption were just anger from those who did not get land distributions. The mayor's office is in charge of reallocating government land for residents, and Niazi said everything was done within the law.

It is clear, however, that the mayor is not a key member of the transition team. U.S. military officials said that they did not have any regular dealings with him.

Ashraf Ghani, the head of the commission overseeing transition, said that while the provincial governor has an excellent reputation, much of the organization underneath him is disorganized or counterproductive.

"In terms of leadership, we have an able governor. The machinery of governance is still not geared yet to enable a governor who truly is able to govern effectively," Ghani said.

The pressure is taken off of these lower-level officials for the time being by active international security forces in the surrounding areas.

U.S. forces have slowly moved up the valleys around Mehterlam, pushing into insurgent-held areas and gradually forcing the militants farther back.

"I measure my progress in hundreds of meters a day," said Lt. Col. Matthew Harsha, an Oklahoma National Guardsman whose 1-179 Infantry Battalion operates in Laghman and neighboring provinces.

Meanwhile, other forces are conducting quick strikes on insurgent leaders.

It's unclear if Mehterlam would have been able to transition at all without these military operations.

Violence has increased so much in the east this year that it was difficult for the transition team to find a place in the mountainous, volatile region that could be considered for transition.

And even Mehterlam district as it existed six months ago would not have been an option, because of insurgent infiltration in the rural western section of the district.

As part of transition, however, the unruly western area was sliced off into a new district called Bad Pakh four months ago, leaving just the city of Mehterlam.

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

July 18 (Reuters) & July 20 (Reuters) & July 21 (Reuters)

KIRKUK - A roadside bomb exploded, killing one member of the government-backed Sahwa militia and wounding another, on the southwestern outskirts of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

MOSUL - Three insurgents were killed and two policemen were wounded during a raid in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

MAHAWHEEL - A roadside bomb blew up, wounding three policemen late on Sunday in Mahaweel, 60 km (35 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

SAADIYA - One policeman was killed when a roadside bomb exploded in Saadiya town, 100 km (70 miles) northeast of Baghdad, a local provincial official said.

MOSUL - Insurgents threw a hand grenade at an Iraqi army checkpoint in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, late on Wednesday, killing one soldier.

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**A Soldier, A Father, A Son, A Big
Brother:
Guilderland High Graduate Killed
Fighting In Afghanistan**



Rafael Nieves 2009. (Courtesy Sarah Nieves)

July 12, 2011 By BRYAN FITZGERALD Special to the Times Union

Those who loved Rafael A. Nieves Jr. and knew him best said they'll remember the 22-year-old father of two as a gracious, charming big brother who was passionate about serving his country.

Nieves was killed Sunday in Afghanistan, shot in the chest as he manned the top of a tank.

The Guilderland High School graduate, who had been stationed overseas as an Army infantryman since November 2010, was scheduled to come home for the first time since deployment in less than two weeks.

He would have been 23 on July 23.

"His smile," said Ashley Marie Santiago, one of Nieves' two younger sisters. "That's what I'll always remember. He had the biggest smile."

A specialist assigned to 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Ky., Nieves joined the Army shortly after graduating in 2008 from Guilderland High.

It was there that he met his wife, Sarah McKinney. She was living in Kentucky with their 3-year-old daughter, Emma, and 5-month-old son, Rafael, while she awaited her husband's return.

Sarah Nieves and her husband's parents, Rafael Nieves Sr. and Tina Roman, were at Andrews Air Force Base Monday, waiting for Nieves' body to be brought back from overseas. Funeral services have not yet been planned, but will likely be in New Jersey, said his father-in-law, Thomas Priolo.

Nieves was reared in New Jersey with his mother until he was 14, at which time he moved to Guilderland. Along with his two sisters, he had three younger brothers.

"Growing up, he was the bully in the house," joked Priolo. "Everyone looked up to him. He was always a respectable guy, always willing to help a friend."

Santiago said that while her big brother was never big on sports, he liked video games, books and movies. "Harry Potter and Twilight," she said with a giggle. "Those were two of his favorites."

Friends said he went through tough times but was focused on enlisting in the military upon graduation. He was a dedicated member of the Guilderland ROTC program.

"He always talked about joining the Army, always," Priolo said. "He wanted to better himself, his country and his life."

The flag at Guilderland High School was lowered to half-staff Sunday. It remained there Monday afternoon, softly whipping in the light summer breeze.

The Department of Defense said Nieves was killed when enemies attacked his vehicle with small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades in the Paktika province, a notoriously volatile remote region in southeast Afghanistan along the country's border with Pakistan.

Three American troops were killed in Paktika province on July 5, according to the Department of Defense. More than 1,500 American troops have died in Afghanistan since December 2001.

In June, President Barack Obama announced there would be a drawdown in the U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan, saying that all 33,000 U.S. troops would be out of the war-torn country by fall of 2012. Five thousand troops were immediately withdrawn and another 5,000 were to be withdrawn at the end of the year.

Priolo and Santiago said that while Nieves was growing up he loved reading war stories, but the birth of his daughter was what really convinced Nieves to join the Army, Priolo said. "He wanted to better himself, his country and his family."

Utah Man Killed In Afghanistan Found His Calling With Marines

Jul 13, 2011 By Kristen Moulton, The Salt Lake Tribune

Logan -- The son of Mexican immigrants, Utah's 61st military fatality in the war on terror was always spoiling for a fight.

But Marine Norberto Mendez Hernandez, 22, was not angry, just a spunky, fit young man who loved the martial arts and the physicality of a good living-room wrestling match, his friends said Tuesday.

The 2007 Logan High School graduate died Sunday in Helmand Province, the region of Afghanistan where the greatest number of coalition forces have been lost.

The Department of Defense announced late Monday evening that Hernandez died in combat. His family was told he died of a gunshot wound to the back of his head, suffered while on patrol in the Sangin district.

The infantryman was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division based in Camp Pendleton, Calif.

He leaves behind a wife, Lorena, 2-year-old son Anthony and 8-month-old daughter Audrey at Camp Pendleton, as well as his parents, Maria Mendez Hernandez and Norberto Mendez and four siblings in Logan.

He was the eighth Marine from his battalion to die in Afghanistan since they arrived this spring, and the 11th American and second Utahn to die this month.

Preston J. Suter, a 22-year-old Army police officer from Sandy, died July 5 in Paktia Province when his Humvee hit a roadside bomb.

His parents and 17-year-old brother, Thomas, returned early Wednesday morning from Dover, Md., where they and his wife met the jet returning Mendez Hernandez's remains.

The slain Marine's parents talked Wednesday of his lifelong ambition to join the military, which perhaps began with their gift of a wind-up toy soldier when he was still crawling.

They also spoke of their long effort to discourage him. "I would tell him there are other ways to help your country," his mother said through an interpreter, her son's friend, Carlos Rosales.

His father even threatened, at one point, to join the military if the son did. So Mendez Hernandez put his dad in a headlock to prove he wasn't fit enough.

Mendez Hernandez often read the Bible, and believed God wanted him to serve his country, his parents said. "He would say, 'I'm not happy with just my family being happy. There are kids suffering in other countries and I want to help,'" his mother said.

On Tuesday, friends placed bouquets of red, white and blue flowers and balloons on a flag-draped table. Pictures of Mendez Hernandez in his Marine uniform were propped in the grass, a U.S. flag was posted and candles were lit in the late afternoon shade.

"He's too young," said Chris Barrera, one of a half-dozen friends who gathered for the vigil.

Krystal Rosales, Carlos' wife, said the Marine and his wife had intended to return to Logan this fall to baptize their daughter at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, and had asked the Rosaleses to be the godparents. "He'll be here in spirit," she said through tears.

His friends used a lot of adjectives to describe the young Marine: stubborn, strong-willed, attention-loving, ripped.

But Victor Estrada said his memory keeps going back to that day at the start of sixth grade when they first laid eyes on each other. Neither 12-year-old could find his classroom, and the two passed in the hall. Estrada was laughing as he passed Mendez Hernandez, who, fresh from Anaheim, Calif., took it as an insult.

Estrada told Mendez Hernandez he looked like Frankenstein. Mendez Hernandez retorted that Estrada looked like the Pillsbury Dough Boy. The principal broke up the fight before either landed a punch. Partners on a science project that year, the two became friends.

In the years since, they and a large group of comrades would swim at Hyrum Reservoir, boat on Bear Lake, play paint ball in Logan Canyon, wrestle and play video games such as "Modern Warfare" and "Black Ops." "He was a fighter in every way," said Estrada.

As a boy, Mendez Hernandez would show his friends Army brochures, but his ambition shifted to the Marines when he learned of the Marine reputation for toughness.

"He had the perfect attitude for it," said Estrada. "He had a lot of courage for small guy."

Brandt Anderson, who met Mendez Hernandez at Gossner Foods, where the two men worked, said once he enlisted, Mendez Hernandez was all in. He had Marine stickers on the windows and bumper of his truck. He worked out with his recruiter. He even had a list of military lingo posted by his work station so he could bone up, Anderson said.

"He was just really strong-willed," Anderson said. "Once he decided something, whether you liked it or not, that was what he was going to do."

Darin Allen, Hernandez's supervisor at Gossner Foods for two years, said earlier Tuesday that Mendez Hernandez "had that kind of personality that radiated friendliness."

Hernandez was a filler operator, which meant he worked at the beginning of the production line that folds the paper cartons that are then filled with shelf-stable milk. Gossner supplies the military, and the Marine was photographed taking a gulp from one of his former employer's cartons. "He got a big kick out of that," Allen said.

As an employee, Hernandez was hard-working, Allen said. "If he ever made a mistake, he was the first one to admit it. He would ask how to improve."

"He had this commitment that he wanted to do something. He wanted to be a Marine because they're the best," said Allen. "He wanted to be part of something bigger."

Resistance Action: “Seven Police Officers Have Been Poisoned And Shot”

July 19 2011 Wexford People & REUTERS

Seven police officers have been poisoned and shot dead at a checkpoint in southern Afghanistan. The policemen were killed on Monday by one of their colleagues near Lashkar Gah. The city is expected to transfer to Afghan-led security this month.

LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan - A bomb exploded near a police station outside a crucial city in Afghanistan's south on Tuesday where Afghan forces are readying to assume security responsibility within hours. The roadside bomb hit a police vehicle near a newly built police station in Bolan, just outside the bustling market city of Lashkar Gah.

Insurgents attacked a police station in southern Kandahar city and killed its commander during a nine-hour gun battle. Three policemen were killed and six more wounded when two insurgents attacked police district one.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE
REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK
LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE
PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE
GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO
DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



U.S. Marines 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines based in Camp Lejeune, N.C., patrols through the village of Gurjat, July 18, 2011, Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/David Goldman)



U.S. Marine with the 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines based in Camp Lejeune, N.C., runs to a firing position during a fire fight with insurgents in the village of Salam Bazaar July 20, 2011, Helmand province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/David Goldman)...



U.S. Marine 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, during a joint patrol with Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers near the Patrol Base Karma in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, July 2, 2011. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov

MILITARY NEWS

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

The casket of U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Kyle Schneider, Phoenix, N.Y., at Arlington National Cemetery July 19, 2011. Schneider was killed on June 30 by an improvised explosive device in Helmand Province in Afghanistan.



REUTERS/Larry Downing



(Photo by Mark Wilson/Getty Images)



(Photo by Mark Wilson/Getty Images)



(Photo by Mark Wilson/Getty Images)

The New Issue Of Traveling Soldier Is Out!

July, 2011 - Issue 35

At:

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

**“The Pentagon Must Be Shit Worried Knowing
These Soldiers Have Minds Of Their Own And No
Fear In Expressing Their Opinions”**

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/7.11.action.php>

Afghanistan:

“All My Guys Are Hurt. No One Cares”

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/7.11.afghanistan.php>

**Americans Don't Support The War On
Afghanistan:**

“Lopsided Majority” Says Get Out

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/7.11.americans.php>

[And More.....]

TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

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

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

ANNIVERSARIES

**July 22, 1877:
American Workers Exploded With
Rage — And The Rulers Of The
Nation Feared The Fury Of The
“Terror” From Within:
“Pittsburgh Was ‘In The Hands Of Men
Dominated By The Devilish Spirit Of
Communism’”**

THE GREAT STRIKE OF 1877



REMEMBERING A WORKER REBELLION

Carl Bunin Peace History July 16-22

United Electrical Workers News - 06/02 [Excerpts]

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, American workers exploded with rage — and the rulers of the nation feared the fury of the “terror” from within.

A headline in the Chicago Times in 1877 expressed the capitalists' anxious outrage: "Terrors Reign, The Streets of Chicago Given Over to Howling Mobs of Thieves and Cutthroats."

After three years, the nation still suffered through a major economic depression.

A strike by railroad workers sparked a coast-to-coast conflagration, as workers driven by despair and desperation battled troops in the streets of major U.S. cities.

The foreign born were widely blamed for the unprecedented, collective expression of rage against economic hardship and injustice.

The ruling elite, badly shaken by the widespread protests, thought a revolution was underway.

The New York Sun prescribed "a diet of lead for the hungry strikers."

When the fires turned to cold ash and working-class families buried their dead, no one — neither labor nor capital — would be the same again.

If there ever was such a thing, this was no ordinary strike.

It was an explosion of "firsts."

The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 was the first major strike in an industry that propelled America's industrial revolution.

It was the first national strike, stretching from Atlantic to Pacific.

In some cities, especially St. Louis, the struggle became one of the nation's first general strikes.

This was the first major strike broken by the U.S. military.

Probably in no other strike had so many working people met a violent death at the hands of the authorities.

BORN OF DEPRESSION

The Great Strike was a creature of one of the periodic economic downturns that have caused misery for working people throughout U.S. history.

A bank panic on Sept. 18, 1873 disintegrated into depression. "Weekly the layoffs, wage cuts, strikes, evictions, breadlines and hunger increased," wrote Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais in *Labor's Untold Story*. The winter of 1873-74, especially in large cities, was one of great suffering for the tens of thousands of unemployed workers and their families who were starving or on the brink of starvation.

As the depression stretched into 1874, the unemployed demanded work and unions fought wage cuts. But the depression itself became a powerful weapon in smashing unions.

Millions suffered through months upon months of mounting misery. "By 1877 there were as many as three million unemployed (roughly 27 percent of the working population)," according to Boyer and Morais. "Two-fifths of those employed were working no more than six to seven months a year and less than one-fifth was regularly working.

"And the wages of those employed had been cut by as much as 45 percent, often to little more than a dollar a day." Newspapers reported cases of starvation and suicide.

FIXED ELECTION

Political crisis seemed to mirror the economic mess.

Many Americans in 1877 believed their new president had reached the White House through fraud.

Certainly Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, was not the man for whom a majority of voters had cast their ballots the previous year. Democrat Samuel Tilden overcame the Ohio governor in the popular vote but 20 disputed electoral votes from Florida and other states threw the election into House of Representatives.

Thomas Scott of the Pennsylvania Railroad reached a deal with Hayes: in exchange for a federal bailout of his troubled investment in the Texas and Pacific Railroad, the millionaire industrialist would deliver Congressional votes to Hayes.

As a further inducement, the Republicans promised to end Reconstruction, a blatant betrayal of African Americans. Southern Congressmen deserted Tilden, handing the election to Hayes.

President Hayes withdrew federal troops from the South, ending Reconstruction and its promise of political equality for former slaves. The troops would soon have other uses.

PAY CUTS

The Pennsylvania Railroad had already slashed wages by 10 percent when it cut wages by another 10 percent in June 1877. The following month that railroad company, the nation's largest, announced that the size of all eastbound trains from Pittsburgh would be doubled, without any increase in the size of crews.

Angry railroad workers took control of switches and blocked the movement of trains.

Meanwhile, on July 13, the Baltimore & Ohio cut the wages of all workers making more than a dollar a day, also by 10 percent. The company also reduced the workweek to only two or three days, a further pay cut.

On July 16 firemen and brakemen refused to work.

The company tried to bring on replacements — many experienced men were unemployed because of the depression — but the strikers assembled at Camden Junction, three miles from Baltimore, would not let trains run in any direction.

The word quickly spread to Martinsburg, W. Va., where workers abandoned their trains and prevented others from operating them.

The railroad company appealed to the governor, who called out the militia.

Militiamen and workers exchanged gunfire. The scabs ran off, the militia withdrew — and the strikers were left in control of their idled trains.

The strike swiftly followed the rails to Wheeling and Parkersburg.

As Harper's Weekly reported the following month, "Governor Matthews evoked the aid of the national government. President Hayes responded promptly."

Federal troops armed with Springfield rifles and Gatling guns arrived in Martinsburg on July 19. The show of force got the trains running, releasing the 13 locomotives and 1,500 freight cars bottled up in Martinsburg.

STRIKE SPREADS

But the strike was far from over. "Indeed, it was barely begun," reported Harper's Weekly.

"As fast as the strike was broken in one place it appeared in another," wrote Boyer and Morais. The revolt against the powerful railroad companies spread into western Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Ohio.

Believing that strikers in Cumberland were stopping the eastbound trains from Martinsburg, Maryland's governor ordered out the state militia.

Thousands of the jobless and underpaid in Baltimore clearly saw whose interests the governor's proclamation served.

Within a half hour of the call, "a crowd numbering at least 2,000 men, women, and children surrounded the (Maryland Sixth Regiment) armory and loudly expressed their feelings against the military and in favor of the strikers," according to Harper's Weekly. The crowd added bricks and stones to the curses hurled against the armory. The police were powerless.

Once the troops emerged for their march to Camden Station, shots were fired — and shots were exchanged.

The militia killed at least 10 and wounded many others, among them curious onlookers. The Fifth Regiment was also attacked, although no shots were fired.

BATTLE IN PITTSBURGH

Sympathy for the strikers was even stronger in Pittsburgh.

Here, said Boyer and Morais, the strike against Tom Scott's Pennsylvania Railroad "had the support even of businessmen, angry at the company because of extortionate freight rates." The police and local militia sided with the strikers, so the authorities had to appeal for troops from Philadelphia.

When the militiamen arrived and marched out of the station, they were met with the cries of an angry crowd — and, according to Harper's, "a shower of stones."

They emptied their rifles into the crowd, killing 20 men, women and children and wounding 29.

"The sight presented after the soldiers ceased firing was sickening," reported the New York Herald; the area "was actually dotted with the dead and dying."

A newspaper headline read: "Shot in Cold Blood by the Roughs of Philadelphia. The Lexington of the Labor Conflict at Hand. The Slaughter of Innocents."

As the news reached nearby rolling mills and manufacturing shops, workers came rushing to the scene.

Workers broke into a gun factory and seized rifles and small arms. Wrote Boyer and Morais, "Miners and steel workers came pouring in from the outskirts of the city and as night fell the immense crowd proved so menacing to the soldiers that they retreated into the roundhouse."

By midnight, Harper's said, some 20,000 surrounded the roundhouse, 5,000 of them armed.

Workers and soldiers exchanged gunfire throughout the night. The workers nearly succeeded in burning out the troops by sending a blazing oil car hurtling against a nearby building.

'A NIGHT OF TERROR'

A Civil War veteran among the besieged troops told a New York Herald reporter that he had seen some "wild fighting" in that conflict, but "a night of terror such as last night I never experienced before and hope to God I never will again."

The next morning the troops evacuated the roundhouse and fought their way out of town.

Pittsburgh policemen were among those reportedly taking aim at the strikebreakers.

The angry crowd then torched the railroad station, roundhouse, company offices and scores of railroad cars.

The New York World told its readers that Pittsburgh was “in the hands of men dominated by the devilish spirit of Communism.”

Meanwhile, on July 21, President Hayes had issued a proclamation warning strikers and their sympathizers to disperse within 24 hours. The next day, Pennsylvania’s governor had ordered every regiment in the state to report for duty. Clashes between troops and strikers in Reading added to the death toll among workers.

CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS

The strike continued to spread. Reported Harper’s, “On the morning of the 25th the strike had reached its height, when hardly a road was running, from the Hudson to the Mississippi, and from Canada to Virginia.”

The strike reached Chicago, as workers on the Michigan Central followed the example of the men on the other lines. General Sheridan’s cavalry, newly recalled from the South, attacked a group of workers there, killing many and wounding many more.

The workers of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad joined the strike in St. Louis, where the Workingmen’s Party coordinated a general strike.

The Workingmen’s Party had several thousand members.

At one of its huge meetings, writes Marieke van Ophem, “a black man was the voice for those who worked on the steamboats and levees. He asked: ‘Will you stand to us, regardless of color?’ The crowd shouted in response: ‘We will!’”

Not only did the trains cease running, but breweries, flour mills, foundries and other shops stopped operating as well.

As a result of this working-class solidarity, bosses agreed to pay raises and shorter working hours without a reduction in wages.

Then the military arrived — the U.S. Army and state militia, as well as armed vigilantes in the service of the bosses.

Although there had been no violence, St. Louis came under martial law. Strike leaders were thrown in jail. Bosses canceled the wage increases and the eight-hour day.

‘SHOT BACK TO WORK’

Business leaders became better organized, rallying their political allies, who mobilized the might of the military. Tom Scott of the Pennsylvania Railroad had recommended giving strikers “a rifle diet for a few days and see how they like that kind of bread,” in the

end, the government's ability to inflict violence on strikers and supporters got the trains rolling again.

As one worker put it, "We were shot back to work." By early August the strike had collapsed everywhere.

It had been an unforgettable event, and many railroad workers seemed to have been justifiably proud.

"Without any organization they had fought with bravery and skill and the country had been behind them," wrote Boyer and Morais. "The strike had been as solid as it was spontaneous. There had been few desertions and few scabs."

Some 100,000 workers had gone on strike, and countless unemployed workers in numerous cities had joined the strikers in protests against intolerable conditions. Farmers, who hated the railroad companies and their extortionate practices, fed the strikers.

More than half the freight on the nation's 75,000 miles of track stopped moving.

More than 100 had died and 1,000 had been jailed, although those imprisoned were not the ones directly responsible for the deaths.

The results of the Great Strike were mixed.

Even as they agreed to some worker demands, bosses were determined to never again allow workers the upper hand.

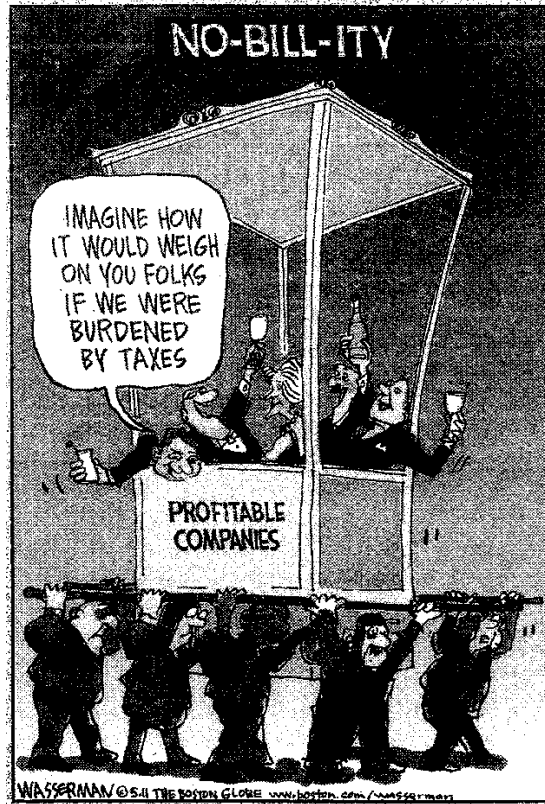
"The railroads made some concessions, rescinded some wage cuts, but also strengthened their 'Coal and Iron Police,'" writes van Ophem. "In several large cities, National Guard armories were constructed, with loopholes for guns."

Working people learned that without strong unions and nationwide organization they could not defeat the alliance of capital and government. America's Industrial Revolution was underway, and with it, born in the blood of men and women who yearned for a better life, a modern labor movement.

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



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

POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED

THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE WARS

**“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point
is the lack of outreach to the troops.”**

Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

GOT AN OPINION?

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