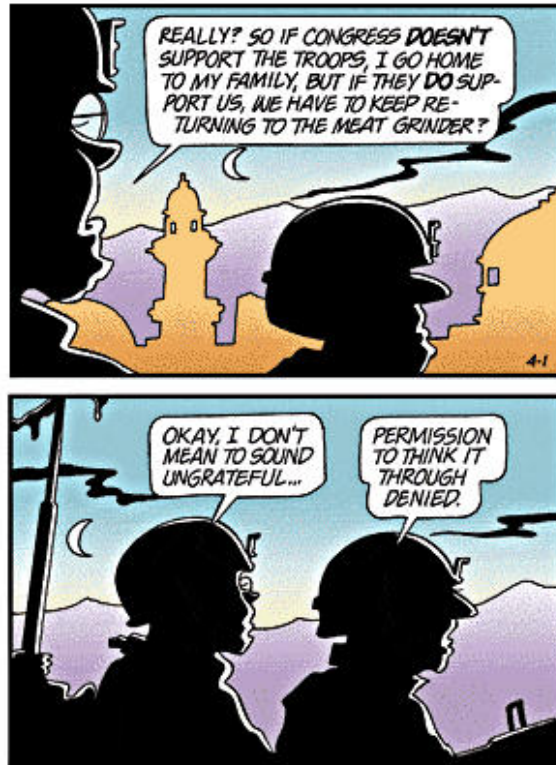


Military Resistance 9G18



**“Morale Was Down”
Marine Command In Sangin
Admits Morale Shattered By
“Thousands” Of IEDs:
“More Than 50 Have Been
Detonated By Marines On Foot
Patrols, Killing And Wounding
More Than 100 Troops”**

“A Couple Of Platoon Commanders Have Had A Hard Time With It” Lt. Col. Announces The Good News: “I’m Not Taking 50 Per-Cent Casualties”

[For command to openly admit to a reporter that there are serious morale problems is a devastating admission that there is little morale left. To twice mention to this reporter how units are “pulling together” after severe casualties is simply the reverse of saying that some units were shattered. There is no need to “pull together” squads that are functional. T]

July 25, 2011 By Gina Cavallaro, Marine Corps Times [Excerpts]

SANGIN, Afghanistan -- Lance Cpl. John Farias parked himself in front of a video camera June 2 and fumbled his way through a seven-minute greeting to his family in Texas.

A rifleman with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, he discussed the austere living conditions at his patrol base, and his craving for sushi.

Farias, 20, talked about the way Sangin -- easily the nastiest place left for Marines in Afghanistan's Helmand province -- was forcing him to “grow up.”

“If you don't take your responsibility to the fullest,” he told the camera, “one of our friends might die.”

Three-and-a-half weeks later, Farias was killed when his squad came under enemy fire during a patrol in the Upper Sangin Valley. His video appeared on YouTube several days later.

As of July 13, Farias is one of 12 men assigned or attached to the battalion lost here since it arrived in March from Camp Pendleton, Calif. Marines engage the enemy directly, but improvised explosive devices remain the biggest threat, officials said.

“We're taking more casualties than anybody else, but this isn't Tarawa -- I'm not taking 50 percent casualties,” said Lt. Col. Tom Savage, 1/5's commander, referring to Marines' epic fight in the South Pacific during World War II.

“The sky isn't falling in Sangin,” he said. “We're going to take casualties this summer, but it's because this place is a minefield.”

The mission here is straightforward: Hold on to gains made over the fall and winter by Camp Pendleton's 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, which also took heavy casualties in Sangin.

So far, only fragile inroads have been made in allowing the local government to take hold.

Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, and members of 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, both out of Camp Lejeune, N.C., were sent to Sangin to supplement 1/5, inflating the battalion's end strength to about 1,200.

Another 40-plus replacement Marines were expected to arrive soon and help round out some of the squads hit hard by casualties.

There are thousands of IEDs within 1/5's area of operations, which includes about 25 positions.

And Savage's Marines will never find them all, he said.

Although they've unearthed nearly 400 unexploded bombs, more than 50 have been detonated by Marines on foot patrols, killing and wounding more than 100 troops.

Since the poppy and wheat harvests concluded, the Taliban have gone into high gear in their fight against Marines. It's profitable terrain that the Taliban want to keep at all costs.

June was a turning point.

The Marines had been patrolling in relatively calm areas that seemed to light up overnight.

More gunfights erupted, and dormant bombs began exploding underfoot, Savage said.

It was as though the enemy had "unplugged IEDs" that were lying in wait while the harvests were finished, he said.

"This place is a sieve for the Taliban. There are literally thousands of IEDs here," Savage said. "We find some but not all, and they keep putting in more. We just have to get through the summer fighting season."

When Marine Corps Times arrived in Sangin in early July, Farias' unit, 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, had experienced the battalion's toughest direct firefight to date, Savage said.

He described the morale among those men as "not happy, but stoic."

"Shooting back helps," he added, referring to the frustration his troops feel when they're targeted by IEDs, and unable to see or respond to their attackers.

Savage makes it a point to punch out often from the battalion headquarters at Forward Operating Base Jackson and visit his Marines when they've been in tough fights and taken losses.

“We talk a lot about the ‘hunter, not hunted’ mindset,” he said. “And it’s not just the Marines.

“A couple of platoon commanders have had a hard time with it. ... The best thing is to get them right back out.”

Lance Cpl. Jack Woodworth, 22, was the only one left on his team in 3rd Platoon after the others were killed or wounded.

He was put on the bench at FOB Jackson for almost a month before he was cleared to return to duty.

Farias, whom he described as a close friend, was killed while Woodworth was still sidelined at Jackson. The two were looking forward to celebrating Farias’ 21st birthday when 1/5 returns home later this year.

“He was every average Marine: single, loved to party,” Woodworth said. “We were going to go out for his first legal drink when we got back.”

Capt. Ryan Hunt took command of Bravo Company on June 11 when the company’s commander was wounded by an IED.

Hunt had been commander of Headquarters and Service Company, and, at the urging of Savage, had kept current on intelligence and activity throughout the AO.

“I knew it was more kinetic, morale was down.

“But we did a lot of talking about things, and they’re pulling together,” Hunt said of Bravo Company.

“Some squads pulled together faster, but they’re all back in the fight and ready to close with and destroy the enemy.”

Bravo’s 1st Platoon is the hardest hit, Hunt said. But the experience has “bonded those guys.”

So far, Hunt has held a couple of “mini shuras” with local elders, but progress is slow. One held recently at Patrol Base Atoll, not far from Jackson, focused on security rather than deep government engagement. Nothing can happen here in earnest until the people feel safe to work with the district community council or the Americans.

Living conditions are rough at the company’s patrol bases, he said, and the Marines are often faced with drinking treated well water while on patrol because they can’t keep themselves supplied with enough bottled water at the base.

The battalion pushes out supplies to the company as quickly as it can, he said, and they send help when it’s requested, whether it’s attack aircraft or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets.

“Higher headquarters understands we’re fighting in a minefield, pretty much,” Hunt said. “The company gets air support when it needs it: rotary, fixed-wing, even armed ISR.”

Half of his squads are led by corporals, but he expects to be able to get sergeants into those slots once replacements trickle in.

On July 2, Woodworth loaded up his gear in a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle and headed back with his guys from Bravo to Patrol Base Faheem, north of Jackson. Officials described it as the northernmost company positions in 1/5's AO.

The Marines' objective there is to siphon enemy activity away from Sangin's district center.

It's treacherous up there. Farias died not far from Faheem, named for a fallen Afghan soldier, and Woodworth said he expected he'll soon see more firefights and more carnage from IEDs.

"I can't just stay here at Jackson," he said. "I'm a leader of Marines. I want to go do my job."

MORE:

“‘We See The Americans,’ A Taliban Spotter Said. ‘They Have 15 People’”

“Radio Chatter Picks Up Whenever Marines Go On Their Daily Patrols”

“Two Taliban Fighters On Motorcycles Had Flanked The Patrol And The Insurgents Fired At The Troops From Two Directions”

“Motorcycle-Borne Taliban Still Control Roads With Checkpoints And Mines”

The result has been a scattered archipelago of Helmand towns that are cut off from one another, a hobbled economy and provincial government institutions that cannot extend essential services.

July 24 By Associated Press

SIRAQULA, Afghanistan — Shortly after the call to prayer resounded over the harvested poppy fields near Salaam Bazaar, two Taliban commanders were heard on their radios asking how their forces are doing.

The number of Taliban fighters who respond varies, but in the last month a squad of U.S. Marines at a small patrol base here in northern Helmand province counted 80 to 100 different radio call signs.

The fighters usually thank God for their fortunes, report their casualties and track movements by the Marines.

Then, using secret numerical codes, the commanders deploy fighters to the mud-walled farming compounds surrounding the Marines' base.

Radio chatter picks up whenever Marines go on their daily patrols.

On one recent day, the sound of men speaking in Pashto crackled over the Marines' scanner five minutes after the troops left the base to conduct a patrol.

"We see the Americans," a Taliban spotter said. "They have 15 people."

In fact, six Marines, eight Afghan soldiers and two Associated Press reporters were on the dusk patrol.

As Helmand's provincial capital of Lashkar Gah marked the official start of its transition from NATO to Afghan control on Wednesday, the fierce fighting in the market town of Siraqula served as a reminder that the war is still on in what remains the country's deadliest province for coalition forces.

Lashkar Gah is one of five provincial capitals and two provinces that President Hamid Karzai deemed ready for Afghan control in the next several months.

The Marine patrol base in Salaam Bazaar is in a blocking position at the junction of three roads connecting the northern district centers of Nawzad to the northwest and Musa Qala to the northeast and Gereshk to the south.

Although Marines improved security in many of Helmand's main population centers last year, motorcycle-borne Taliban still control roads with checkpoints and mines.

The result has been a scattered archipelago of Helmand towns that are cut off from one another, a hobbled economy and provincial government institutions that cannot extend essential services.

With its 100 stalls, Salaam Bazaar was once a regional commercial center for farmers and small businesses until opium and arms dealers took it over and insurgents used it as a base to disrupt traffic on the Gereshk road.

In May, Marines set up a patrol base less than a mile from the bazaar and tried to clear it for the second time in a year, but somehow the insurgency learned of the plan.

During the next several days, surveillance cameras mounted on an 80-foot tower at the patrol base monitored Taliban fighters planting a belt of mines around the bazaar.

Marines are building a new 10-stall bazaar along the main road to give traders an alternative to the Taliban-controlled marketplace and are trying to contain the insurgents so that roads to the north and south stay open.

But the Taliban still use the old bazaar as a base.

Just as the Marines closely watch the Taliban with frequent patrols and constant electronic surveillance, the insurgents view the Marines, using spotters at scattered farming compounds and from roving motorcycles near their patrol base.

As Afghan dignitaries walked a red carpet to usher in autonomy for Lashkar Gah, U.S. Marine Capt. Mark Paige led a joint patrol of Marines and Afghan soldiers through fields of powdery sand and harvested poppy stalks toward Salaam Bazaar.

Minutes after leaving the gate, Pashto speakers were heard on the scanner.

“Do you see the Americans?” asked one.

“Yes, they are west of us,” said another.

“Pay attention to everything they do,” said the first voice.

Thousands of dried poppy bulbs, each one of them meticulously scored by razors, crunched underfoot as Paige led the patrol across several fields to a residential compound. Opium, Afghanistan’s richest cash crop, is the financial lifeblood of the insurgency.

A Marine engineer walked ahead of the troop line sweeping a mine detector along the ground near the walls of the compound.

Marines monitoring the radio scanner back at the patrol base told Paige he and his men were being watched and that an attack was likely imminent.

“If you see the Americans, shoot them,” said a Pashto speaker over the radio.

Two Marines and two Afghan soldiers set up mounted machine guns to face another building southwest of the patrol and waited.

“We got two guys at that compound in front of you,” said a Marine on the radio.

“I got them,” Paige answered, seeing figures along a wall on the other side of a field.

“They’ve got a weapon,” said the Marine back at base. “Shoot them.”

The Marines fired deafening bursts and then ordered their Afghan trainees to shoot as well. Several Afghan boys chased a small herd of goats across a field and away from the Marines.

The other Afghan troops, including their commander, 1st Sgt. Ismatullah, stood behind the machine guns along the compound wall. One held a bag of FM radios he hoped to pass out to residents.

Another sat on the ground with his rifle in his lap. Ismatullah later said he and most of his men held their fire because they were conserving ammunition until they could actually see the enemy with their own eyes.

Marines would later complain about their Afghan partners’ lack of motivation to fight.

Taliban gunmen shot back from the compound to the southwest of the Marines.

The two parties exchanged fire for several minutes across a distance of about 200 yards, until other guns were heard shooting at the Marines from the south.

Two Taliban fighters on motorcycles had flanked the patrol and the insurgents fired at the troops from two directions.

The Marines and the Afghan soldiers who were standing against the wall dived to the dirt and began blasting rounds toward the sound of the Taliban’s second position.

As the gunbattle continued, an elderly farmer named Aqatar Mohammad emerged from the house the Marines were using for cover. Mohammad smiled at the Marines, but he was trembling.

“If the Marines come here, the Taliban shoot. If the Taliban come, the Marines shoot,” he said over thunderous rifle reports. “We are between two mountains.”

Mohammad said the area has become increasingly dangerous since the Marines set up their base this summer, but he is staying because he is too afraid of the bombs lining the roads to Lashkar Gah.

During a different patrol, an opium farmer named Shahazada begged Marine snipers who had taken up positions on his roof to leave his property. He showed the Marines bullet holes in his wall and said the troops’ presence was scaring his children.

“We don’t have any other place to live,” he said, pointing to a small vegetable garden. “This is our meat. This is all we have to live on. If you don’t leave, the Taliban will say I am a spy and they will take over my house.”

As the gunbattle continued Wednesday, Marines back at the patrol base sent four armored personnel carriers to the Taliban compound. Taliban spotters dutifully called in the new development.

“We stopped firing because tanks are coming,” a Pashto speaker said over the radio.

By the time the Marines unleashed .50-caliber machine gun rounds into the Taliban’s hide-out, the insurgents had stopped firing and the joint patrol was returning to base.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**“In The Last Month, There Have Been
At Least Four Raids By The Army
And Police On USAID Contractors’
Compounds In Baghdad’s Fortified
Green Zone”**

**“The Raids Are Believed To Be Under
The Supervision Of Maliki’s Son”**

June 24, 2011 By Ned Parker, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Militia groups, some with ties to the Iraqi government, are intent on hitting U.S. diplomats, soldiers and contractors employed by the embassy.

And it is no longer clear how far Prime Minister Nouri Maliki and his security forces can go in reining the groups.

Civilian contractors working on projects to help build the country’s democracy are also coming under intense pressure from the Iraqi police and army.

In the last month, there have been at least four raids by the army and police on USAID contractors’ compounds in Baghdad’s fortified Green Zone.

The deputy head of a USAID program was detained for about a week by the Iraqi security forces; he was released Thursday.

The unsettled environment has left U.S. government contractors between a rock and a hard place because, even as they are targeted by armed groups, they also face Iraqi army and police raids at their compounds in the Green Zone.

The raids are believed to be under the supervision of Maliki's son, Ahmed, according to Iraqi and Western sources, as Iraqi officials seek to regain control of the Green Zone.

On June 14, the company RTI, which has run the USAID's project to promote local governance, was told to produce a lease for its compound or it would be evicted in two days.

The company decided to move, but 30 armored cars were confiscated because they were not properly registered. The army and police units also took documents on the company's Iraqi personnel. An RTI official in Baghdad declined to comment on the incident.

At the same time, the compound for Aecom, which runs USAID's Legislative Strengthening Project, was searched and a senior civil servant detained for about a week.

Jamal Abukhadijeh, who was the program's deputy head, was released Thursday by Iraqi security forces who had arrested him after they found an Iraqi army uniform in his room.

Iraqi security forces have also raided two other compounds in the Green Zone housing USAID contractors and their security details.

NO MISSION; POINTLESS WAR: ALL HOME NOW



ISKANDARIYA, IRAQ - JULY 14, 2011: Soldiers with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment patrol on July 14, 2011 in Iskandariya, Babil Province, Iraq. Violence against foreign troops has recently picked up, with June being the worst month in combat-related deaths for the military in Iraq in more than two years. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)



ISKANDARIYA, IRAQ - JULY 17, 2011: Soldiers with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment patrol on July 14, 2011 in Iskandariya, Babil Province, Iraq. (Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Army Sergeant Who Grew Up In San Jose Dies In Firefight In Afghanistan

07/09/2011 Lisa Fernandez, San Jose Mercury News

His friends knew him as “Nic,” a nickname for Nicanor, which means victorious. But in a sad ending to an illustrious military career, the 36-year-old Army sergeant who grew up in San Jose fell to insurgents during a firefight in Afghanistan.

Nicanor Amper IV died Tuesday when insurgents attacked his unit with a rocket-propelled grenade in Shemal District.

“He was a man of good character and who finished what he started. That was my son. He stayed to protect his men,” said Amper’s father, Nicanor Amper III of Burlingame.

He was also a praying man. According to his father, the troop cavalry scout prayed in his truck before each mission -- and he’s sure his son did just that before his death.

“We haven’t gotten the full report yet,” said the elder Amper, a hairstylist at Lucy’s Hair Salon in Saratoga, who also served in the Air Force.

There are five generations of Nicanors in the Amper family, many who served in the military and many who are devout Christians. Nicanor's name comes from the New Testament, as one of the seven "honest men" in the Acts of the Apostles.

Amper IV was set to finish his tour of duty in a few months, according to friends. He had been in the military for 16 years. After graduating from Campbell's Westmont High School in 1994 where he played football, Amper IV went straight to the Marines, said his father, though he ended up leaving after four years. After some time, Amper IV enlisted in the Army, where he's been ever since.

An Army official said Amper IV began his military service as a Marine rifleman in October 1995 and transferred to the Army in September 2005. He arrived at Fort Knox, Ky., in January 2010 and the deployment to Afghanistan was his first combat mission, Army officials said. In addition to accolades and service medals Amper previously received, officials said in a news release that he will receive the Bronze Star and Purple Heart posthumously.

"He's wanted to be in the military ever since I took him to Fleet Week when he was 7 years old," his father said.

Amper IV leaves behind a wife, whom family members declined to name. She is still living at Fort Knox, where he was based.

Amper IV also leaves behind two sons, 7 and 9, from his first marriage and who live in Santa Clara County. Amper IV is also survived by his mother and a younger brother, neither of whom wanted to be identified.

Memorial services are planned in Fort Knox and Afghanistan, the Army said in its release. A service in the Bay Area has yet to be scheduled.

Fort Carson Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

Jul 17, 2011 The Associated Press

FORT CARSON, Colo. — The Defense Department says a Fort Carson soldier was killed in combat in Afghanistan. The military said Sunday that 40-year-old Sgt. Lex L. Lewis of Rapid City, S.D., was killed Friday when insurgents attacked his unit with small-arms fire in Farah Province.

Lewis was a cavalry scout assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, part of Fort Carson's 4th Infantry Division.

He joined the Army in 1999 and was on his third deployment. Fort Carson officials say he served in Iraq in 2003 and 2004 and again in 2008 and 2009. His decorations included two Army Commendation medals, five Army Achievement medals and two Meritorious Unit citations.

He had arrived in Afghanistan in June of this year.

Hood Specialist Killed In Afghanistan

Jul 18, 2011 The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — A Fort Hood soldier from the Tampa Bay area has died of injuries suffered when an improvised road mine overturned the military vehicle in which he was riding.

A Defense Department statement Sunday says 25-year-old Spc. Frank R. Gross of Oldsmar, Fla., died Saturday at a camp in Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan. That's after the attack in the Khowst province along the Afghan-Pakistani frontier.

He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 38th Cavalry regiment, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas.

MILITARY NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The remains of Army Pfc. Brian J. Backus of Saginaw Township, Mich., upon arrival at Dover Air Force Base, Del., June 21, 2011. Backus died when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire in Kandahar province. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

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

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

**Pentagon Crosses \$1 Trillion
Threshold In War Spending:
“It Draws A Natural Comparison To The
Other Big Budget Numbers We Keep
Hearing: A \$1.6 Trillion Deficit This Year,
A Proposal To Raise The Debt Limit By
\$2 Trillion”**

Jun 21, 2011 By Tony Capaccio, BLOOMBERG L.P. [Excerpts]

Spending growth on Afghanistan operations helped push the Pentagon over the \$1 trillion mark, increasing to \$6.2 billion per month in April from \$4.3 billion in the first two months of fiscal 2011 that began Oct. 1.

Afghanistan spending in fiscal 2009, as Barack Obama became president, averaged \$3.9 billion per month.

The spending total includes war-related operations, transportation, special combat pay and benefits, food, medical services, maintenance, replacement of lost combat equipment and building the Iraq and Afghanistan security forces.

Still, the \$1 trillion does not include about \$95 billion in funds appropriated but still to put on contract or paid to personnel to cover operational costs over the rest of the fiscal year as well as procurement of replacement weapons systems and construction that take years to spend, said Amy Belasco, a Congressional Research Service budget expert.

It also does not include about \$100 billion the Pentagon excludes as not 'war-related,' such as intelligence, Belasco said.

Nor does it include long-term costs for Veterans Administration care, disability costs for wounded Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, or all reconstruction funding for the war-damaged countries.

“This figure represents how much we have actually spent on the wars up to this point,” said Todd Harrison, a defense budget expert with the non-partisan Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington. “What it doesn’t tell you is how much money has been appropriated by Congress, which is \$1.2 trillion. The difference between these two figures is how much money is already in the pipeline waiting to be spent.”

The Pentagon through April 30 said it has spent \$691.4 billion on Iraq and \$288.5 billion on Afghanistan operations.

“[P]assing the trillion dollar mark stands out to people,” Harrison said.

“It draws a natural comparison to the other big budget numbers we keep hearing: a \$1.6 trillion deficit this year, a proposal to raise the debt limit by \$2 trillion.

The cost of the wars is a hot topic given the pressure on the president to bring down troops in Afghanistan more quickly,” Harrison said.

Now Who Do You Suppose Pocketed The \$46 Billion?

Jul 18, 2011 Reuters

The U.S. military has essentially the same size, force structure and capabilities as it did a decade ago but costs 35 percent more, an independent public policy think tank said on Monday in an analysis of the 2012 defense budget.

The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, in a 75-page report, also said the Defense Department had spent some \$46 billion over the past decade developing weapons systems that were ultimately never fielded, either due to cost overruns or technical challenges.

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.

The New Issue Of Traveling Soldier Is Out!



Traveling Soldier Front Page Cartoon

July, 2011 - Issue 35

At:

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

FEATURING:

“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>

TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more

than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

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

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

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“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 past year – every single day of it – has had its consequences. In the obscure depths of society, an imperceptible molecular process has been occurring irreversibly, like the flow of time, a process of accumulating discontent, bitterness, and revolutionary energy.

-- Leon Trotsky, "Up To The Ninth Of January"

Libya: "The Right To Protect" Has Triggered A Humanitarian Disaster:

"'Humanitarian Intervention', Designed To Make The Notion Of Blowing People To Bits, More Palatable To Domestic Audiences"
"In The Ninety Years That Has Passed Since Churchill Ranted On About Gassing "Uncivilized Tribes" Not A Damn Thing Has Changed Except The Language Used To Describe And Justify Such Barbarism"

June 16, 2011 by William Bowles, Global Research,

"I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes." -- Winston Churchill 1920

Now let me get this straight: In order to save civilian lives (the infamous 'Right to Protect'), the Empire, through its Rottweiler NATO, not only deindustrializes Libya but it also causes a mass exodus of refugees hundreds of whom drowned and many thousands more were left stranded, attacked and abused.

The Pirates attempted to assassinate Gaddafi but succeeded in killing women and children instead. The Pirates bomb educational infrastructure, communications, power,

agriculture and terrorize the population from the air and sea with the combined military might of the most powerful countries on the planet.

So this is what humanitarian intervention looks like?

The reality of it is that in the 'good old days' they made no bones about the issue of keeping the natives in their place, phrases like humanitarian intervention would have made Churchill laugh.

Though perhaps, just as with our current leaders and its lapdog mass media, Churchill would have appreciated the propaganda value of 'humanitarian intervention for domestic audiences.

And after all, the Libyans, Iraqis, Afghans, Pakistanis, Somalis, Yemenis and Serbians don't need to be told what 'humanitarian intervention' really is.

Check out the following to get an idea of how the Pirates viewed the 'peasants' back in 1920:

"On 19 February, 1920, before the start of the Arab uprising, Churchill (then Secretary for War and Air) wrote to Sir Hugh Trenchard, the pioneer of air warfare. Would it be possible for Trenchard to take control of Iraq?

"This would entail 'the provision of some kind of asphyxiating bombs calculated to cause disablement of some kind but not death...for use in preliminary operations against turbulent tribes.'

"Churchill was in no doubt that gas could be profitably employed against the Kurds and Iraqis (as well as against other peoples in the Empire): 'I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes.'

"Henry Wilson shared Churchill's enthusiasm for gas as an instrument of colonial control but the British cabinet was reluctant to sanction the use of a weapon that had caused such misery and revulsion in the First World War. Churchill himself was keen to argue that gas, fired from ground-based guns or dropped from aircraft, would cause 'only discomfort or illness, but not death' to dissident tribespeople; but his optimistic view of the effects of gas were mistaken.

"It was likely that the suggested gas would permanently damage eyesight and 'kill children and sickly persons, more especially as the people against whom we intend to use it have no medical knowledge with which to supply antidotes.'

"Churchill remained unimpressed by such considerations, arguing that the use of gas, a 'scientific expedient,' should not be prevented 'by the prejudices of those who do not think clearly'.

"In the event, gas was used against the Iraqi rebels with excellent moral effect 'though gas shells were not dropped from aircraft because of practical difficulties.'"

-- 'British Use of Chemical Weapons in Iraq'

So what's the difference between the Pirates of today and those of yesteryear?

None as far as I can see, all that's changed is that these days, our rulers have to be more prudent and work a lot harder to sell us the idea of recolonization, disguising the entire sordid affair as 'humanitarian intervention'.

And, if it wasn't for the direct collusion between the Pirates and the media, I'm certain it would be a lot more difficult to pull off such an outrageous stunt.

To bring it up to date, Churchill's modern-day equivalent, British foreign secretary William Hague would no doubt be saying that the use of 'bunker buster' bombs on the people of Libya was a 'scientific expedient', though no doubt we'll have to wait fifty years (if at all) before we get to read Hague's private thoughts on the subject.

And what's more, Churchill's view that "only discomfort or illness, but not death" would result parallels the current notion that 'precision targeting' and 'smart weapons' somehow know the difference between military combatant and civilian.

Aside from the sheer imbecility of the idea, it is, just as with 'humanitarian intervention', designed to make the notion of blowing people to bits, more palatable to domestic audiences.

In the meantime, we'll have to make do with the BBC's view of 'humanitarian intervention'.

In a puff piece for the invasion, the BBC tells us that following a visit to Benghazi William Hague was "'inspired' by Libyan rebels". The piece goes on:

""But we are also encouraging the National Transitional Council to put more flesh on their proposed transition, to lay out in more detail this coming week what would happen on the day that Gaddafi went. Who would be running what, how a new government would be formed."" -- 'William Hague 'inspired' by Libyan rebels', BBC Website, 5 June 2011.

Hague's statement that he needs to know "Who would be running what, (and) how (would) a new government be formed"? reveals the real nature of the invasion and especially of the Empire's view of its so-called allies in Benghazi.

The bottom line is that in the ninety years that has passed since Churchill ranted on about gassing "uncivilized tribes" not a damn thing has changed except the language used to describe and justify such barbarism.

The BBC is quite at home glorifying the use of such gruesome weapons as the following 'news' items illustrate:

VIDEO: Preparing Apaches for action in Libya

UK Apache attack helicopters have been used over Libya for the first time, Nato has confirmed. BBC News 04/06/2011

or,

RAF to get Libya ‘bunker busters’

The addition of 2,000lb “bunker busting” bombs to the weaponry of the Royal Air Force is set to boost capabilities for missions over Libya, the Ministry of Defence. BBC News 29/05/2011

How easily the warfare state’s mantras roll off the BBC’s slick tongue.

Blowing people up is now “boost(ing) capabilities for missions”.

Any idea that this means blowing people to pieces has been surgically removed by the slick media meisters in the BBC’s propaganda/editorial department, espousing views that would not be out-of-place in the England of the 1920s (or even the 1820s!).

“What Are, Generally Speaking, The Characteristics Of A Revolutionary Situation?”

Comment: T

Whatever you may think of the politics of this writer, he was rather skilled at figuring out when a revolutionary situation was present:

He describes the essential ingredients:

- 1. A ruling class split and at war within itself about what to do: “a crack through which the dissatisfaction and the revolt of the oppressed classes burst forth”**
- 2. An economic crisis hammering the working class**
- 3. A war that breaks the passivity of “peacetime” politics.**
- 4. He might have added, had this been written later, a ruling class so blind and stupid it can’t conceive of a whole population rising in revolution against it, and an army happy to join the mass movement from below.**

1915, Excerpts from Collapse Of The Second International & IMPERIALISM AND SOCIALISM IN ITALY, Kommunist, Nos. 1.2, 1915, By V. I. Ulyanov. [The writer used the pen name “Lenin” to keep the government from terrorizing his family. Excerpts]

For a Marxist there is no doubt that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, we know that not every revolutionary situation leads to revolution.

What are, generally speaking, the characteristics of a revolutionary situation?

We can hardly be mistaken when we indicate the following three outstanding signs:

(1) it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their power unchanged; there is a crisis “higher up,” taking one form or another; there is a crisis in the policy of the ruling class; as a result, there appears a crack through which the dissatisfaction and the revolt of the oppressed classes burst forth.

If a revolution is to take place it is necessary that “one is incapable up above” to continue in the old way;

(2) the wants and sufferings of the oppressed classes become more acute than usual;

(3) in consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses who in “peace time” allow themselves to be robbed without protest, but in stormy times are drawn both by the circumstances of the crises and by the “higher-ups” themselves into independent historic action.

Without these objective changes, which are independent not only of the will of separate groups and parties but even of separate classes, a revolution, as a rule, is impossible.

The co-existence of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation.

This situation existed in 1905 in Russia and in all the periods of revolution in the West, but it also existed in the seventh decade of the last century in Germany; it existed in 1859, 1861 and in 1879-1880 in Russia, though there was no revolution in these latter instances.

Why?

Because a revolution emerges not out of every revolutionary situation, but out of such situations where, to the above-mentioned objective changes, subjective ones are added, namely, the ability of the revolutionary classes to carry out revolutionary mass actions strong enough to break (or to undermine) the old government, it being the rule that never, not even in a period of crises, does a government “fall” of itself without being “helped to fall.”

“Much Has Been Left In The World That Must Be Destroyed By Fire And Iron For The Liberation Of The Working Class”

Take the present army. It is one of the good examples of organisation. This organisation is good only because it is flexible; at the same time it knows how to give to millions of people one uniform will.

Today these millions are in their homes in various parts of the country. Tomorrow a call for mobilization is issued, and they gather at the appointed centres. Today they lie in the trenches, sometimes for months at a stretch; tomorrow they are led into battle in another formation.

Today they perform marvels, hiding themselves from bullets and shrapnel; tomorrow they do marvels in open combat. Today their advance detachments place mines under the ground; tomorrow they move dozens of miles according to the advice of flyers above ground.

We call it organisation when, in the pursuit of one aim, animated by one will, millions change the forms of their intercourse and their actions, change the place and the method of their activities, change the weapons and armaments in accordance with changing conditions and the vicissitudes of the struggle.

The same holds true about the fight of the working class against the bourgeoisie.

Today there is no revolutionary situation apparent; there are no such conditions as would cause a ferment among the masses or heighten their activities; today you are given an election ballot - take it.

Understand how to organise for it, to hit your enemies with it, and not to place men in soft parliamentary berths who cling to their seat in fear of prison.

Tomorrow you are deprived of the election ballot, you are given a rifle and a splendid machine gun equipped according to the last word of machine technique: take this weapon of death and destruction, do not listen to the sentimental whiners who are afraid of war.

Much has been left in the world that must be destroyed by fire and iron for the liberation of the working class.

And if bitterness and despair grow in the masses, if a revolutionary situation is at hand, prepare to organise new organisations and utilize these so useful weapons of death and destruction against your own government and your bourgeoisie. .

This is not easy, to be sure.

It will demand difficult preparatory activities. It will demand grave sacrifices.

This is a new species of organisation and struggle that one must learn, and learning is never done without errors and defeats.

The relation of this species of class struggle to participation in elections is the same as storming a fortress is to maneuvering, marching, or lying in the trenches.

This species of struggle is placed on the order of the day in history very infrequently, but, its significance and its consequences are felt for decades.

Single days when such methods can and must be put on the programme of struggle are equal to scores of years of other historic epochs.

The question has been put squarely, and one cannot fail to recognise that the European War has been of enormous use for humanity in that it actually has placed the question squarely before hundreds of millions of people of various nationalities: either defend, with, rifle or pen, directly or indirectly, in whatever form it may be, the great-nation and national privileges, in general, as well as the prerogative or the pretensions of "our" bourgeoisie, that is to say, either be its adherent and lackey, or utilize every struggle, particularly the clash of arms for great-nation privileges, to unmask and overthrow every government, in the first place our own, by means of the revolutionary action of an internationally united proletariat.

There is no middle road; in other words, the attempt to take a middle position means, in reality, covertly to join the imperialist bourgeoisie.

ANNIVERSARIES

July 25, 1898: Birth Of An Infamous Empire



Carl Bunin Peace History July 19-25

July 25, 1898

With 16,000 troops, the United States invaded Puerto Rico at Guánica, asserting that they were liberating the inhabitants from Spanish colonial rule, which had recently granted the island's government limited autonomy.

The island, as well as Cuba and the Philippines, were spoils of the Spanish-American War which ended the following month. Puerto Rico remains a U.S. possession.

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



"BUT BECAUSE OF OUR DEEP BELIEF IN PERSONAL FREEDOM, WE THINK YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE ANY KIND OF LIGHT BULB YOU LIKE."

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Growing Resistance In Belarus Confuses Stupid Dictator:

“Belarusians Have Been Getting Out In The Hundreds Into The Main Squares Of Big And Small Cities Across The Country On Wednesdays At Seven In The Evening”
“They Clap, Or Let Their Mobiles Ring All At Once”
“On Independence Day Parade Jul. 3, The Police Announced Strict Restrictions On Clapping”

23 July 2011 By Claudia Ciobanu, Inter Press Service [Excerpts]

Prague - For the past nine weeks, Belarusians have been getting out in the hundreds into the main squares of big and small cities across the country on Wednesdays at seven in the evening. They clap, or let their mobiles ring all at once.

The ‘Revolution through Social Networks- movement’ started by five students, and growing on the Russian equivalent of Facebook, Vkontakte, is posing a new threat to the Lukashenko regime.

“This is not a movement of the traditional Belarusian opposition: the participants are people who were never involved in opposition actions and never protested before,” Mikita Krasnou, one of the five founders of the movement, told IPS. “People in Belarus were looking for new organisers, for new representatives.

“The traditional opposition is also interested in playing a role in this movement, and this has caused them to become more united,” adds Krasnou.

The tactics of the group have confused the authorities.

On Independence Day parade Jul. 3, the police announced strict restrictions on clapping: you could only applaud the parade if you were a veteran or an ex-serviceman.

Otherwise, you would risk being arrested.

The authorities have also been placing limitations on the Internet: more than 40 percent of Belarusians have access to the Internet, but those using it from work, if this is for a state company, cannot access independent sites.

Since last year, those wanting to use Internet cafes need to present their passports. And, from this June, all Belarusian websites are forced to use the national domain, '.by', making them easier to control. All Internet services are from the state provider, and the connection is both expensive and of low quality. More recently, access to Vkontakte has been blocked on Wednesdays.

But the KGB (security services) has employed more brutal repression tactics against the online activists: on Jul. 3, many were arrested on the spot; others, whose mobile phones were tracked down to have been used in the main squares at the time of the actions, have been brought in for interrogation.

Getting arrested in Belarus is no longer unusual. Many opponents of President Alexander Lukashenko have been arrested at least once; since the clapping protests began, around 1,500 people have been detained. Some are arrested for a few days, others receive year-long sentences.

"Fifteen years ago, if you belonged to the opposition, you were either a politician or a fighter, but now you just have to be a fighter," Aliaksey Shydlovski, one of the first political prisoners of post-independence Belarus and co-founder of Young Front and Bizon movements, tells IPS.

Shydlovki is a revolutionary from the previous wave. In exile in Prague for the past two years he says, "people getting out on the streets today in Belarus are braver than us, especially the women. The regime has gotten more insecure and hence tougher."

The insecurity of the regime stems largely from the economic crisis gripping the country since last year, after Russia spiked gas prices at the end of 2009-2010.

This year, the Belarusian currency has been devalued by over 50 percent; prices for basic goods and gas have increased, and people are hoarding staples and other products.

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.

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