

Military Resistance 9L11



Crossing The Line

From: Dennis Serdel
Date: December 13, 2011 11:23:02 AM PST
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Subject: Crossing The Line

By Dennis Serdel, Military Resistance 2010; Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade; United Auto Workers GM Retiree

Crossing The Line

**Red beams, blue beams and purple
and gold beams shine through
the stained glass of the windows
of the church on the shiny grey
casket and the people in the pews
while the pastor gives lip service
that the young 22 year old Soldier
killed in Afghanistan was
protecting freedom in America**

and tells all the mourners as his
mother, brother, sisters and friends
sob, then the pastor holds the bible
high in the air and goes on a tirade
and proclaims that the bible is full
of wars and that there will always
be wars trivializing the young
Soldier's death, then the father of
the Soldier stands up with a stern
face and walks around the casket
with his son in it and hits the pastor
in the face blood running down
from his nose on his robe then
the father of the son says we don't
need a pastor and will the pallbearers
please come up and carry his
son in the casket to the awaiting
black hearse in the front of the church.

Shock Poetry written by Dennis Serdel for Military Resistance

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

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 and economic injustice, 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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Roadside Bombing Kills District Chief, 2 Officers In Southern Afghanistan

December 14th (BNO NEWS)

LASHKARGAH, AFGHANISTAN -- Three people were killed on early Wednesday afternoon when a roadside bomb hit a vehicle in southern Afghanistan, officials said. A local district chief was among those killed.

The attack happened at around 1 p.m. local time in the Taghaz area of Deshu district, which is located in the southern province of Helmand. The administrative chief of the Khanashin district, Masood Khan, was returning from an official visit to oversee an ongoing campaign against poppy cultivation.

The explosion, caused by an improvised explosive device (IED), killed Masood as well as two others, an intelligence operative and a police officer. In addition, three bodyguards who were also in the vehicle were injured.

Masood had been appointed as administrative chief in 2008 after an anti-Taliban operation was carried out by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Afghan forces.

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

**NO MISSION;
POINTLESS WAR:
ALL HOME NOW**



Dec. 1, 2011: Soldiers with Apache Company of Task Force 3-66 Armor, out of Grafenwoehr, Germany, walk down from an Afghan army outpost at Gulruddin pass in Sar Hawza district of Paktika province, south of Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Heidi Vogt)

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

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Happy Iraqis In Fallujah Burn U.S. & Israeli Flags



12.14.11: Fallujah residents demonstrate in celebration of the departure of US troops from Iraq. A bastion of anti-US sentiment since the 2003 US-led war on Iraq, demonstrators in the city, situated 60 kilometers west of Baghdad, chanted anti-US slogans and burned US and Israeli flags. (AFP Photo/)...

Resistance Action: “Production At The Country’s Largest Oil Field Cut In Half By Bomb Attacks”

Dec 11 (Reuters) & Dec 13 (Reuters) & AP

Iraqi officials said two large explosions have damaged an oil pipeline in southern Iraq and set off a huge blaze. The deputy head of the Basra provincial council, Ahmed al-Sulaiti, said firefighters were still battling the fire late Tuesday.

Security official in Basra said the explosions were set off by bombs.

The Iraqi Oil Ministry says production at the country's largest oil field has been cut in half by bomb attacks on domestic oil pipelines

KIRKUK - Two bombs exploded in quick succession and wounded three policemen and four Kurdish Asaish security officers as they gathered after the first explosion in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed two police officers and wounded three policemen near Baghdad hotel in the center of the Iraqi capital, a police source said.

FALLUJA - Insurgents using silenced weapons and a bomb attacked a minibus carrying judges near a police checkpoint, killing three people, including two policemen. Five others were wounded, including three judges and two guards, in central Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

MOSUL - Insurgents in a car shot dead a police colonel working for Facility Protection Services (FPS), part of the Interior Ministry, in front of his house in western Mosul, police said.

SHIRQAT - A sticky bomb attached to a car carrying a police officer killed him when it went off in Shirqat, 300 km (190 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Kenya Plagued By A Wave Of Low-Level Strikes Since Invading Somalia: Somali Red Crescent Society In The "Southern Somali Town Of Bardera Hit By An Air Strike"

Dec 12, 2011 By Mohamed Ahmed, Reuters & December 12, 2011 African Press Organization

Kenya, the region's biggest economy, has been plagued by a wave of low-level strikes since invading Somalia.

The third attack in two days came on Saturday when a senior intelligence officer in the town of Wajir, near the Somali border, was among several people injured by a roadside bomb while travelling back from celebrations to mark Kenyan independence day.

"We had just finished Jamhuri day celebrations. Everybody was either going back home or to the town when suddenly we had a huge blast, dust all over, the vehicle had been hit just opposite the Red Cross office," Rashid Mohamed, a resident who witnessed the incident, told Reuters.

On 10 December, a nutritional centre run by the Somali Red Crescent Society in the southern Somali town of Bardera was hit by an air strike. The facility, which was empty at the time of the incident, suffered material damage.

"We are alarmed about the situation in Bardera," said Pascal Mauchle, head of the Somalia delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "This incident is particularly worrying at a time when the population is in dire need of food assistance."

Once again, the ICRC and the Somali Red Crescent remind all parties to the conflict that civilians and civilian objects must be respected and protected at all times, in accordance with international humanitarian law. When launching an attack against enemy fighters, all those involved in the hostilities must take every feasible precaution to minimize the potential harm to civilians and to civilian objects, including clinics and nutritional centres.

MILITARY NEWS

Traumatic Injury Pay Now Covers Genital Trauma:

**"Since 2009, The Number Of Troops
With Major Injuries To Their
Reproductive Organs Nearly
Doubled"**

“Increase Of These Injuries Among Afghanistan Combat Veterans, Who Conduct Foot Patrols”

Dec 2, 2011 By Patricia Kime - Staff writer; Army Times [Excerpts]

Veterans whose genitals have been severely injured as a result of trauma are now eligible for a lump-sum payment under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury program, or TSGLI.

For males, the loss of one testicle would result in a \$25,000 payment; of both, \$50,000. The anatomical loss of a penis — or damage to the organ so severe it results in the complete loss of the ability to have sex — a \$50,000 payment.

Women who lose external sexual organs, their uterus or vaginal canal would receive \$50,000. Loss of one ovary would result in a \$25,000 payment; of both, \$50,000.

The change is due in part to the increase of these injuries among Afghanistan combat veterans, who conduct foot patrols and are vulnerable to attack from trailside improvised explosive devices.

Since 2009, the number of troops arriving at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center with major injuries to their reproductive organs nearly doubled from 4.8 percent to 9.1 percent. Since 2001, 570 service members have sustained these traumas, known as genitourinary injury, according to Defense Department statistics.

TSGLI is designed to provide a one-time payment to service members who have sustained severe traumatic injuries, in combat, during training or any time while they are on active duty.

The first payments for genitourinary trauma are available as of today, according to the Federal Register. Eligibility for the payments is retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001.

To apply, veterans can check out the following link, www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/TSGLI/TSGLI.htm, or contact their service branch's TSGLI office.

Bureaucrats Kill Life-Changing Wheelchair For Disabled Vets: “It All Comes Down To The Dollars”

“The Way That The Device Was Classified And Viewed By Government Agencies Was Perhaps A Bigger Impediment”



Former Chief Warrant Officer 5 Gary Linfoot lost his mobility following a severe spinal cord injury from a 2008 helicopter crash in Iraq. Linfoot has since benefited from the capabilities of the iBOT wheelchair, which has gone out of production because of bureaucratic policies and market realities. Philip Grey / The Leaf-Chronicle

To hear Linfoot and his wife, Mari, talk about the iBOT, particularly about its psychologically empowering benefits, you think you understand.

But until you see the couple in a social setting, you don't.

He has regained that mobility, crucial to the furtherance of anything approaching a normal life, as the result of a device that has been shown to be reliable, stable and highly effective

Dec 5, 2011 By Philip Grey - The (Clarksville, Tenn.) Leaf-Chronicle

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. — The iBOT Mobility System hit the market with great fanfare in 2003, when it was hailed as a game changer for people with severe mobility problems.

Unlike other power wheelchairs, the iBOT was capable of raising up on two wheels, gyroscopically self-balanced, which caused many to liken it to a Segway.

That was no coincidence. The inventor of the Segway, Dean Kamen, is also the inventor of the iBOT.

Together with medical giant Johnson & Johnson's Independence Technologies, Kamen launched the iBOT with great expectations that unfortunately collided with bureaucratic and market realities, causing manufacture of the chair to shut down in 2009.

The manufacturer is committed to provide maintenance support until 2013, when, as the chairs inevitably malfunction at some point, they will be gone.

The iBOT was and is far more than a power wheelchair.

For many who are paralyzed below the waist, or for double leg amputees whose injuries are so high up that prosthetics are not a good option, the iBOT has the capacity to navigate uneven terrain and, amazingly, to climb stairs.

Gary Linfoot, a former chief warrant officer who is paralyzed from the waist down and uses the iBOT, said, "It all comes down to the dollars."

"For a company, they have to be profitable," Linfoot said.

"When the iBOT first came out, the cost was \$25,000. You hear that and think, oh my gosh, that's the price of a nice new car, but for an electric wheelchair, that was the going rate at the time."

However, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services sets the standards for Medicare, which in turn sets the standards for all other insurers, and Medicare was only reimbursing the standard amount for a wheelchair — about \$5,000.

"They didn't see the stair-climbing ability or the upright capability as something that was medically necessary," Linfoot said, "so the only people getting these chairs were people that had the chairs donated to them, or those who had the money on their own."

Additionally, not all paraplegics or below-the-waist amputees were suited to the device.

In order to use the iBOT, the patient had to demonstrate sufficient upper-body mobility and, in the case of using the stair-climbing function, the use of at least one arm.

The relatively small number of people who could use the device was a market consideration, as was the lack of reimbursement, but the way that the device was classified and viewed by government agencies was perhaps a bigger impediment.

An Associated Press article from May 2009 cited Henry Claypool, himself a wheelchair user and director of the federal Office on Disability, as saying, "new

technology requires scientific evidence that it changes users' lives in ways existing alternatives cannot."

Linfoot and other iBOT users are certain, beyond a doubt, that the device has changed their lives.

To hear Linfoot and his wife, Mari, talk about the iBOT, particularly about its psychologically empowering benefits, you think you understand.

But until you see the couple in a social setting, you don't.

At the opening of the new Fort Campbell, Ky., USO center just a few days ago, the Linfoots were in attendance because Gary helped enormously in a special project — the restoration of an America's Huey 091 Foundation helicopter that was turned into a high-tech game station that is the facility's centerpiece.

Gary was in the iBOT, raised up to near his natural height of six feet, conversing at the doorway with his arm around his wife as passers-by marveled at the device.

In a short time, it was the iBOT that became unnoticeable, and you could easily forget that Linfoot was in a wheelchair at all.

Linfoot is gratified whenever he hears someone say that.

"When you talk to people (when in a regular wheelchair), it's an awkward situation," he said. "You have to look up and they have to look down. With the iBOT, I get to regain that bit of dignity I lost. It's hard to put a value on that. It's an intangible until you see it. When you see it, you get it. It makes sense."

Linfoot is forthright about contrary views on the iBOT, however.

He explained that the Veterans Affairs frowns upon power chairs because bureaucrats worry that people will stay in the chair and gain weight for lack of the exercise they would get in a manual chair.

But Linfoot, who recently rode a handcycle for more than 500 miles in a Ride2Recovery event, rarely uses the chair in the house, finding the manual chair more convenient, including for going to work at his Fort Campbell job.

He likens switching between chairs to switching shoes for different occasions or tasks.

"Still, the iBOT fills that need that no other device can," he said, referring to being able to walk his dog, working in the garage, going to see a NASCAR race at the track, or attending events, parties and barbecues with friends.

Linfoot lost his mobility in the course of performing his duties as a soldier when his helicopter crashed in Iraq in 2008.

He has regained that mobility, crucial to the furtherance of anything approaching a normal life, as the result of a device that has been shown to be reliable, stable

and highly effective in allowing people such as Linfoot to again do the things that most Americans take totally for granted.

“You don’t really know what you’ve lost until you’ve lost it,” Linfoot said, regarding his loss of mobility after his crash. “It’s the little things. I’m not trying to be dramatic, but it’s like the death by a thousand cuts.”

Soldiers like Linfoot cope with the loss when they have to, accommodating reality because there is no arguing with it. But as Kamen, the iBOT’s inventor, has said, “Game-changing technological advances that significantly improve the lives of disabled people should not simply fade away because of correctable bureaucratic flaws.

“For those of us benefiting from this wonderful device, allowing the iBot to become extinct would be like over-regulating and under-supporting insulin pumps or prosthetic hips until they were simply no longer available. Would America let that happen? I don’t think so.”

Gary Sinise, the actor and veterans advocate, may have put it best: “We have our own call to duty (as a nation), a wonderful chance to show veterans like these our gratitude, by supporting the efforts of America’s Huey 091 Foundation to build and distribute the iBOT.

“There is a lot that happens in this world that we may feel ... we can’t do anything about. Well, this isn’t one of those things.”

Oops: Navy Mine Washes Ashore On Miami Beach: The Training Mine “Wasn’t As Explosive As A Regular Mine”



A live Navy training mine that washed ashore is shown at Miami Beach, Fla., Dec. 5, 2011

Dec. 05, 2011 AP

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. A bomb squad has removed a Navy training mine that authorities say washed ashore on Miami Beach in an area dotted by numerous condominiums.

Police cordoned off the area around the mine with yellow tape Monday and kept bystanders away as Fire Rescue crews and a bomb squad examined the device.

Fire Rescue spokesman Jesus Sola says photos of the mine were taken and sent to the Navy. The device, which is 6 feet long and 2 feet in diameter, was later loaded onto a truck and hauled away.

Sola says the mine, which was painted white, still appeared to be live but it wasn't as explosive as a regular mine.

It was not immediately known how the mine washed ashore or where it came from.

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

**It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers**

Urgent!
**Re PBS Broadcast Of This Is
Where We Take Our Stand:
“Call And Email Your Local Station
And Urge Them To Broadcast This Is
Where We Take Our Stand”
“Allow These Veterans’ Voices To Be
Heard”**



From: Displaced Films

To: Military Resistance Newsletter

Subject: Urgent! PBS broadcast of This is Where We Take Our Stand

Date: Dec 12, 2011

Dear Friends,

I have good news and bad news.

The good news is that *This is Where We Take Our Stand*, the film about the Iraq Veterans Against the War Winter Soldier/Iraq & Afghanistan Investigation, has now been distributed to every PBS station in the country for broadcast in January and February.

Funded by the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and distributed by the National Educational Television Association (NETA), the film finally has the chance to be seen by people all across the country.

The bad news is that every individual PBS station can choose whether or not they will air the film.

And in today's political climate, we know that many, even most stations will not want to touch this compelling, vital film about the reality of America's wars in the Middle East. We need your help to convince them that they must show this film.

THIS IS AN URGENT SITUATION. Over the next two weeks, PBS stations will be setting their programming for January.

Call and email your local station and urge them to broadcast *This is Where We Take Our Stand* and allow these veterans' voices to be heard.

Also, please forward this email to your list and to everyone you know.

As we wrote in a letter to PBS programmers,

"These aren't political or theoretical arguments, but the eyewitness accounts of men and women who thought they were fighting for their country and learned that, as Jason Washburn, a Marine veteran with three tours in Iraq put it, "We were on the bully's team, and that's not what I signed up for."

'It is a wrenching, painful, and necessary story.

"This film reminds us that nothing is over. And it asks us to question what has changed. Certainly not the war in Afghanistan, which has expanded in the past three years, and not the killing and misery in Iraq, unleashed by 8 years of military occupation.

"*This is Where We Take Our Stand* is the story of hundreds of Iraq War veterans who risked everything to publicly tell their stories of killings of civilians, torture, and the widespread degradation and destruction of Iraq that was brought on by the policies of their government.

"And it is a story that needs to be told especially today. These brave soldiers and veterans are challenging a complacency that runs very deep underscoring a willingness

to accept unspeakable horrors committed in our name-as long as we don't know about them.”

Go to <http://www.thisiswherewetakeourstand.com> to watch episodes of the web series that the film is based on, and <http://ivaw.org> for information about Winter Soldier.

Thank you for your help.

In the coming weeks we will send out announcements of where and when This is Where We Take Our Stand will be broadcast.

David Zeiger and Bestor Cram
Co-Producers

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Cuts In Winter Heating Aid
Threaten To Kill Elderly:
“Obama Proposed Cutting The
Program Nearly In Half”**

“We Have A Lot Of Terrified People Who Can’t See How They Are Going To Survive” Thousands “Are Bracing For A Difficult Winter With Substantially Less Home Heating Aid Coming From The Federal Government”

12 December 11 By Andrew Miga, Associated Press [Excerpts]

Mary Power is 92 and worried about surviving another frigid New England winter because deep cuts in federal home heating assistance benefits mean she probably can't afford enough heating oil to stay warm.

She lives in a drafty trailer in Boston's West Roxbury neighborhood and gets by on \$11,148 a year in pension and Social Security benefits.

Her heating aid help this year will drop from \$1,035 to \$685. With rising heating oil prices, it probably will cost her more than \$3,000 for enough oil to keep warm unless she turns her thermostat down to 60 degrees, as she plans.

“I will just have to crawl into bed with the covers over me and stay there,” said Power, a widow who worked as a cashier and waitress until she was 80. “I will do what I have to do.”

Thousands of poor people across the Northeast are bracing for a difficult winter with substantially less home heating aid coming from the federal government.

“They're playing Russian roulette with people's lives,” said John Drew, who heads Action for Boston Community Development, Inc., which provides aid to low-income residents in Massachusetts.

Several Northeast states already have reduced heating aid benefits to families as Congress considers cutting more than \$1 billion from last year's \$4.7 billion Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program that served nearly 9 million households.

Families in New England, where the winters are long and cold and people rely heavily on costly oil heat, are expected to be especially hard hit.

Many poor and elderly people on fixed incomes struggle with rising heating bills that can run into thousands of dollars. That can force them to cut back on other necessities like food or medicine.

“The winter of 2011-12 could be memorable for the misery and suffering of thousands of frigid households,” New Hampshire’s Concord Monitor newspaper said in an editorial. “Heating oil prices are expected to hit record highs, and federal fuel assistance may reach a record low for recent years.”

Higher home heating oil prices and more families seeking aid due to the sour economy are straining resources. There’s a 10 percent surge in new applicants in Boston, Drew said.

“Our whole program could hit a rock soon,” said Mark Wolfe of the National Energy Assistance Directors’ Association.

Congress, which is locked in a bitter battle over reducing spending, still must decide how much money to give the program for the budget year that began Oct. 1.

But last February, President Barack Obama proposed cutting the program nearly in half, calling for about \$2.5 billion.

The House is considering \$3.4 billion for fuel assistance, while the Senate reviews a \$3.6 billion proposal.

“We have a lot of terrified people who can’t see how they are going to survive,” said Drew.

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 email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

**“A Leaked Intelligence Memo Claimed Russian Hackers Had Remotely Destroyed A Water Pump At An Illinois Utility”
“The Report Spawned Dozens Of Sensational Stories Characterizing**

It As The First-Ever Reported Destruction Of US Infrastructure By A Hacker” “Except, It Turns Out, It Wasn’t” “A Government-Funded Intelligence Centre Incorrectly Linked The Failure To An Internet Connection From A Russian”

01 December 11 By Kim Zetter, Wired.com [Excerpts]

It was the broken water pump heard 'round the world.

Cyberwar watchers took notice this month when a leaked intelligence memo claimed Russian hackers had remotely destroyed a water pump at an Illinois utility.

The report spawned dozens of sensational stories characterizing it as the first-ever reported destruction of US infrastructure by a hacker.

Some described it as America's very own Stuxnet attack.

Except, it turns out, it wasn't.

Within a week of the report's release, DHS bluntly contradicted the memo, saying that it could find no evidence that a hack occurred.

In truth, the water pump simply burned out, as pumps tend to do, and a government-funded intelligence centre incorrectly linked the failure to an internet connection from a Russian IP address months earlier.

Now, in an exclusive interview with Wired.com's Threat Level, the contractor behind that Russian IP address says a single phone call could have prevented the string of errors that led to the dramatic false alarm.

"I could have straightened it up with just one phone call, and this would all have been defused," said Jim Mimitz, founder and owner of Navionics Research, who helped set up the utility's control system.

"They assumed Mimitz would never ever have been in Russia. They shouldn't have assumed that."

Mimitz's small integrator company helped set up the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system (SCADA) used by the Curran Gardner Public Water District outside

of Springfield, Illinois, and provided occasional support to the district. His company specializes in SCADA systems, which are used to control and monitor infrastructure and manufacturing equipment.

Mimlitz says last June, he and his family were on vacation in Russia (above) when someone from Curran Gardner called his cell phone seeking advice on a matter and asked Mimlitz to remotely examine some data-history charts stored on the SCADA computer.

Mimlitz, who didn't mention to Curran Gardner that he was on vacation in Russia, used his credentials to remotely log in to the system and check the data.

He also logged in during a layover in Germany, using his mobile phone.

"I wasn't manipulating the system or making any changes or turning anything on or off," Mimlitz told Wired.com.

But five months later, when a water pump failed, that Russian IP address became the lead character in a 21st-century version of a Red Scare movie.

On 8 November, a water district employee investigating the pump failure called in a contract computer repairman to check it out. The repairman examined the logs on the SCADA system and saw the Russian IP address connecting to the system in June. Mimlitz's username appeared in the logs next to the IP address.

The water district passed the information to the Environmental Protection Agency, which governs rural water systems. "Why we did that, I think it was just out of an abundance of caution," says Don Craven, a water district trustee. "If we had a problem we would have to report it to EPA eventually."

But from there, the information made its way to the Illinois Statewide Terrorism and Intelligence Center, a so-called fusion center composed of Illinois State Police and representatives from the FBI, DHS and other government agencies.

Even though Mimlitz's username was connected to the Russian IP address in the SCADA log, no one from the fusion center bothered to call him to ask if he had logged in to the system from Russia.

Instead, the center released a report on 10 November titled "Public Water District Cyber Intrusion" that connected the broken water pump to the Russian log-in five months earlier, inexplicably stating that the intruder from Russia had turned the SCADA system on and off, causing the pump to burn out.

"And at that point ... all hell broke loose," Craven said.

Whoever wrote the fusion center report assumed that someone had hacked Mimlitz's computer and stolen his credentials in order to use them to hack into Curran Gardner's SCADA system and sabotage the water pump.

It's not clear whether it was the computer repairman or the fusion center that first jumped to this conclusion.

A spokeswoman for the Illinois State Police, which is responsible for the fusion center, pointed the finger at local representatives of DHS, FBI and other agencies who are responsible for compiling information that gets released by the fusion center.

“We did not create the report,” said spokeswoman Monique Bond. “The report is created by a number of agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, and we basically are just the facilitator of the report. It doesn’t originate from the (fusion center) but is distributed by the (fusion center).”

But DHS is pointing the finger back at the fusion center, saying if the report had been DHS-approved, six different offices would have had to sign off on it.

“Because this was an Illinois (fusion center) product, it did not undergo such a review,” a DHS official said.

The report was released on a mailing list that goes to emergency management personnel and others, and found its way to Joe Weiss, managing partner of Applied Control Solutions, who wrote a blog post about it and provided information from the document to reporters.

The subsequent media blitz identified the intrusion as the first real hack attack against a SCADA system in the US, something that Weiss and others in the security industry have been predicting would happen for years.

The hack was news to Mimlitz.

He put two and two together, after glancing through his phone records, and realised the Russian “hacker” the stories were referring to was him.

Teams from the FBI and DHS’s Industrial Control Systems-Cyber Emergency Response Team (ICS-CERT) subsequently arrived in Illinois to investigate the intrusion and quickly determined, after speaking with Mimlitz and examining the logs, that the fusion center report was wrong and should never have been released.

“I worked real close with the FBI and was on speakerphone with the fly-in team from CERT, and all of them were a really sharp bunch and very professional,” Mimlitz said. DHS investigators also quickly determined that the failed pump was not the result of a hack attack at all.

“The system has a lot of logging capability,” Mimlitz said. “It logs everything. All of the logs showed that the pump failed for some electrical-mechanical reason. But it did not have anything to do with the SCADA system.”

Mimlitz said there was also nothing in the logs to indicate that the SCADA system had been turned on and off. He cleared up another mystery in the fusion report as well.

The report indicated that for two to three months prior to the pump failure, operators at Curran Gardner had noticed “glitches” in their remote access system, suggesting the glitches were related to the suspected cyber intrusion.

But Mimplitz said the remote access system was old and had been experiencing problems ever since it was modified by another contractor.

“They had made some modifications about a year ago that was creating problems logging in,” he said. “It was an old computer ... and they had made network modifications that I don’t think were done correctly. I think that’s why they were seeing problems.”

Joe Weiss says he’s shocked that a report like this was put out without any of the information in it being investigated and corroborated first.

“If you can’t trust the information coming from a fusion center, what is the purpose of having the fusion center sending anything out? That’s common sense,” he said.

“When you read what’s in that (report) that is a really, really scary letter. How could DHS not have put something out saying they got this (information but) it’s preliminary?”

Asked if the fusion center is investigating how information that was uncorroborated and was based on false assumptions got into a distributed report, spokeswoman Bond said an investigation of that sort is the responsibility of DHS and the other agencies who compiled the report. The center’s focus, she said, was on how Weiss received a copy of the report that he should never have received.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“There Are More Soldiers Defecting” “Dissident Troops Burn Three Tanks” “Activists Say Fighting Has Erupted Daily For The Past Week In Towns Across Syria Between Government Troops And What They Say Are Defected Soldiers”

DECEMBER 14, 2011 By NOUR MALAS, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Armed clashes in Syria escalated sharply, with activists reporting Tuesday that 36 antigovernment protesters were killed and at least seven state-security officers left dead in an ambush on a convoy.

Activists say fighting has erupted daily for the past week in towns across Syria between government troops and what they say are defected soldiers. The intensified fighting has raised concern among some in Syria's antigovernment movement that the growing number of dissident soldiers and other armed civilians are acting out of step with the Free Syrian Army, the main armed contingent fighting President Bashar al-Assad's forces.

“There are more soldiers defecting, but the clashes are so frequent now it's hard to tell who is fighting whom,” said Rami Abdul Rahman, head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a U.K.-based group tracking events in Syria.

On Sunday, the coordination committees reported clashes in towns around the southern city of Deraa — the cradle of Syria's protest movement — in which dissident troops burned three tanks.

A video posted on YouTube on Monday shows what is described as a group of freshly defected soldiers in Jabal al-Zawiya, a vast northern region in Idlib that has been the scene of fighting between the army and dissident troops in earlier months of the uprising.

In the footage, at least two dozen soldiers in uniform — most smiling — pump their rifles into the air, chanting revolutionary slogans to the beat of a drum.

The Syrian Observatory said Tuesday's violence began when a gunbattle broke out between government loyalists and protesters in the town of Maaret Mesreen after a pro-government crowd broke shop windows to protest a strike.

Stores were closed for a third day in the town, as part of a nationwide general strike called by activists.

Two antigovernment activists were killed in the gunbattle, prompting activists from a neighboring town to block a main road with tires and rocks to pre-empt any military action.

Security forces shot at those makeshift roadblocks, killing at least seven more people, and a group of dissident soldiers opened fire on a security convoy, killing at least seven officers.

It isn't clear whether the Free Syrian Army planned the attack, one of at least a handful against government targets in recent weeks.

Avaaz, a global organization also tracking Syria's uprising, said the ambush on Tuesday was carried out by "armed revolutionaries claiming allegiance to the Free Syria Army." A soldier with the Free Syrian Army reached by telephone inside Syria said he wasn't sure whether the group had staged the Idlib attack.

MORE:

Countrywide General Strike Against The Butcher Assad: "The Success Of The General Strike And The Failure Of Elections Was Almost Directly Proportional Across Syria Today"

DECEMBER 13, 2011 By NOUR MALAS, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

Syrian antigovernment activists shut down shops and businesses in the second day of a countrywide general strike called to inaugurate a civil disobedience campaign against President Bashar al-Assad, as the United Nations said the death toll in the nine-month-long uprising has likely surpassed 5,000.

The general strike Monday, which activists said was heeded more widely than previous strikes, came as some Syrians voted in local council elections.

In Syria's protest hubs, the strike paralyzed businesses and very few people turned up to elect their representatives to the local administrative councils, residents and activists said.

"The success of the general strike and the failure of elections was almost directly proportional across Syria today," said Mohammad Saleh, a political activist and resident of the city of Homs, an epicenter of opposition and violence.

In places of protest, most people shut down their stores and stayed indoors amid tight security, leaving polling centers empty, activists said.

In the eastern city of Deir el-Zour, an active protest hub, activists shot footage of a polling station they appeared to have partly taken over, with people stuffing a box with fake ballots marked "leave" and "resign."

In Homs, Syria's third-largest city, Mr. Saleh said stores and shops were shut down entirely for two days into Monday, with only neighborhood supermarkets and pharmacies staying open.

Offices around government buildings in the city's center also opened.

"About 90% of commercial activity has been paralyzed," he said. "Most people here support the strike. Others complain that they want to open up shop, but see their neighbor is closed so roll the storefront back down."

Activists say the open-ended action — which they named a "dignity strike" — is part of a wider civil-disobedience campaign they hope will help sustain the momentum of a movement that started in March as peaceful street protests.

It comes at a time when the protest movement has turned increasingly violent, with clashes between lightly armed defected soldiers and the military erupting daily across the country.

On Sunday, heavy clashes broke out in a town in the southern province of Deraa, with activists reporting dissident soldiers burning three tanks.

Near midnight local time Monday, a blast ripped through a gas pipeline close to Homs, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported.

Troops Invited:

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Proud For The Cause #1



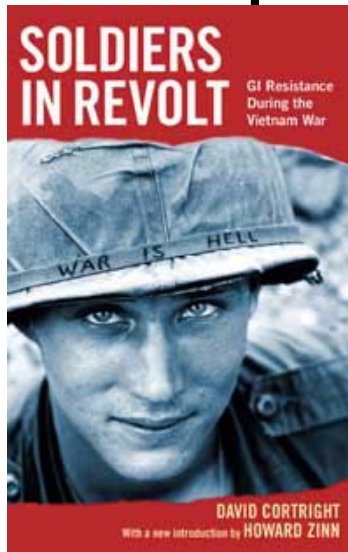
Police officers detain an opposition activist during a protest against vote rigging in St. Petersburg, Russia, Dec. 5, 2011. (AP Photo/Dmitry Lovetsky)

Proud For The Cause #2



Boston Police Department officers remove an Occupy Boston protester from Dewey Square in Boston, December 10, 2011. Police arrested dozens as they cleared away the remaining Occupy Boston encampment. REUTERS/Essdras M Suarez/Pool

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