

## **Military Resistance 9L24**



# **“He Told Me He Was Deploying To Afghanistan Next Month” [Commuter Terminal Outreach To New York National Guard]**

From: Alan S., Military Resistance Organization  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Subject: 12/28 Commuter Terminal Outreach to New York National Guard  
Date: Dec 28, 2011

One of the more resistant terminals in Manhattan proved a little easier for outreach this evening.

I spoke to seven soldiers and was able to pass out 3 DVDs of “Sir! No Sir!” and 3 handouts comprised of the last two Military Resistance National Guard newsletters, the Military Resistance/IVAW intro card [see below]; a GI Rights Pamphlet and the Military Resistance [see below] statement to the troops: “Why We Are Here.”

I spoke to a sergeant in charge of the entire patrol detail and found him very friendly and earnest.

He had seen us before (at the [XXXX] Armory) and started talking about one of the DVDs he received. I began to realize it was “Querido Camilo” he was talking about since he was citing individual choice and anyone’s right to make one for themselves.

Once I ascertained this I quickly gave him a “Sir! No Sir!” and assured him it was different, about military resistance during the Vietnam War.

He then gave me permission to talk to one of his group who’d resisted taking anything minutes before since he needed his sergeant-in-command’s approval. I was then able to give him a DVD and lit pack.

He told me he was deploying to Afghanistan next month.

There were a few turndowns (par for the course) but I was able to distribute some introductory cards to one very young soldier who was at first dubious.

**MORE:**

## **ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!**

**An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.**

**If you’ve carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to Military Resistance for the Action Reports section.**

**Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.**

**They don’t have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.**

**If there were favorable responses, say so.**

**If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don’t leave them out. Reporting what went wrong and/or got screwed up is especially important, so that others may learn from you what to expect, and how to avoid similar problems if possible.**

**If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.**

### **NOTE WELL:**

**Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.**

**Identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.**

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the wars.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs identifying information be published in reporting on the action.

**MORE:**

## Military Resistance

Traveling Soldier  
Newsletter



www.traveling-soldier.org

(888) 711-2550  
contact@militaryproject.org  
Box 126, 2576 Broadway New York, NY 10025

**SUPPORTING GI RESISTANCE**

[front]

*If you are a veteran who supports an immediate end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- the Military Project recommends you contact:*

### IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



[www.IVAW.org](http://www.IVAW.org)

[back]

[Cards designed by Richie M, Military Resistance Organization]

**MORE:**

## Military Resistance Mission Statement:

1. The mission of Military Resistance is to bring together in one organization members of the armed forces and civilians in order to give aid and comfort to members of the armed forces who are organizing to end the wars of empire in Afghanistan and Iraq. The long term objective is to assist in eliminating all wars of empire by eliminating all empires.

**2. Military Resistance does not advocate individual disobedience to orders or desertion from the armed forces. The most effective resistance is organized by members of the armed forces working together.**

**However, Military Resistance respects and will assist in the defense of troops who see individual desertion or refusal of orders as the only course of action open to them for reasons of conscience.**

**3. Military Resistance stands for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and other occupation troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.**

**Occupied nations have the right to independence and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation by force of arms.**

**4. Efforts to increase democratic rights in every society, organization, movement, and within the armed forces itself will receive encouragement and support.**

**Members of the armed forces, whether those of the United States or any other nation, have the right and duty to act against dictatorships commanding their services, and to assist civilian movements against dictatorship.**

**This applies whether a political dictatorship is imposed by force of arms or a political dictatorship is imposed by those in command of the resources of society using their wealth to purchase the political leadership.**

**5. Military Resistance uses organizational democracy.**

**This means control of the organization by the membership, through elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels.**

**Any member may run for any job in the organization. All persons elected are subject to immediate recall, by majority vote of the membership.**

**Coordinating bodies report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them, and may be overruled by a majority of the membership.**

**6. It is not necessary for Military Resistance to be in political agreement with other organizations in order to work together towards specific common objectives.**

**It is productive for organizations working together on common projects to discuss differences about the best way forward for the movement.**

**Debate is necessary to arrive at the best course of action.**

## Membership Requirements:

7. It is a condition of membership that each member prioritize and participate in organized action to reach out to active duty armed forces, Reserve and/or National Guard units.

8. Military Resistance or individual members may choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, but do not support a candidate opposed to immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

9. Members may not be active duty or drilling reserve commissioned officers, or employed in any capacity by any police or intelligence agency, local, state, or national.

10. I understand and am in agreement with the above statement. I pledge to defend my brothers and sisters, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

----- (Signed)

(Date)

----- (Application taken by)

Military Resistance: Contact@militaryproject.org  
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657  
888-711-2550

MORE

**You Can Take Action That Makes  
A Difference:  
Join The Military Resistance  
Organization:  
MILITARY RESISTANCE MEMBERSHIP  
APPLICATION**

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Armed Forces? (Branch) \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran? Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Union: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Landline): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

\$ dues paid \_\_\_\_\_  
(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

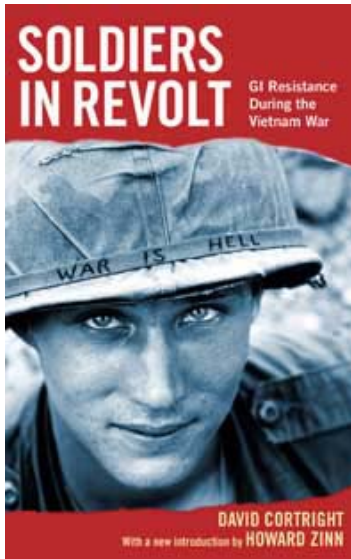
Comments:

NOTE: Civilian applicants will be interviewed, in person if possible, or by phone.

**Military Resistance: [Contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:Contact@militaryproject.org)  
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657  
888-711-2550**

**“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**

**FREE TO ACTIVE DUTY:  
A Vietnam Soldier Wrote The Book  
All About How An Armed Forces  
Rebellion Stopped An Imperial  
War**



**SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT**

**[CIVILIANS: \$16 INCLUDING POSTAGE:  
BUY ONE FOR A FRIEND/RELATIVE IN THE SERVICE.  
CHECKS, MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO: THE MILITARY  
PROJECT]**

**Requests from active duty or  
orders from civilians to:  
Military Resistance  
Box 126  
2576 Broadway  
New York, N.Y.  
10025-5657**

**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 or at 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**

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

December 30, 2011 AP

A foreign servicemember died following an improvised explosive device attack in southern Afghanistan, today.

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### **Three U.S. Soldiers Killed In Paktiya**

December 28 2011 Wexfordpeople.ie & December 29, 2011 U.S. Department of Defense News Release

Three U.S. soldiers have been killed by a roadside bomb in eastern Afghanistan. They were assigned to the 720th Military Police Battalion, 89th Military Police Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, saying the target was a US military convoy.

The deaths occurred on Tuesday.

The Taliban said the attack took place in Paktiya province, about 60 miles south of the capital, Kabul.

The latest deaths bring December’s toll of foreign troops killed in Afghanistan to 23, with a total of 539 deaths so far this year.

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### **Two French Soldiers Killed By Afghan Army Member**

Dec. 29 2011 The Associated Press

PARIS — France says two members of the French Foreign Legion have been killed in Afghanistan.



A statement from the office of French President Nicolas Sarkozy says a soldier in the Afghan National Army opened fire on the troops Thursday.

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## **Squadron Leader Anthony Downing Dies Of Wounds Sustained South Of Kabul**

29 Dec 11 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of Squadron Leader Anthony Downing, who died on 23 December 2011 following an incident in Afghanistan.

He had been seriously wounded when the vehicle he was travelling in was caught in an explosion south of Kabul on Thursday 22 December. He was flown back to the UK where sadly, he died of his wounds at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. His family were with him when he died.

Captain Tom Jennings, Royal Marines, whose death was announced separately by the Ministry of Defence, had been travelling in the same vehicle.

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## **Cedar Key High Grad Killed In Afghanistan**



A U.S. Army carry team transfers the remains of Army Spc. Ryan M. Lumley, of Lakeland, Fla., at Dover Air Force Base, Del., Dec. 5, 2011. Lumley was assigned to

Company A, 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, Ft. Bliss, Texas. (U.S. Air Force photo/Steve Kotecki)

December 8, 2011 By Karen Voyles & Cindy Swirko, Staff writers, Gainesville.com

The Department of Defense announced Thursday afternoon that a Cedar Key High School graduate was one of three soldiers killed in Afghanistan earlier this month.

The remains of Army Specialist Ryan M. Lumley, 21, most recently of Lakeland, were returned to the United States at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Monday.

In a news release, the federal agency said Lumley and two soldiers from California were fatally wounded Dec. 3 in Wardak province.

“Enemy forces attacked their unit with an improvised explosive device,” the news release states. All three soldiers were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, of Fort Bliss, Texas.

Lumley graduated from Cedar Key in 2008 and enlisted in the Army soon afterward, according to school records.

Within months of Lumley’s graduation from CKHS, his mother and her three other children moved out of the area, going first to Texas, officials said, and then moving to a northern state.

According to Army officials, Lumley had been living in Lakeland prior to his deployment.

School officials said they remember Lumley as a good kid who was pleasant to be around. The family was not originally from Cedar Key, but school officials said Lumley was active in sports and clubs there.

“He did discus and shot put — he still holds our school record in shot put,” said CKHS history teacher and track coach Brad Penney.

“He was a great kid, a hard worker. He was a fun-loving kid but a hard worker at discus and shot put — he really worked on his technique. His senior year he was interested in going into the military and looked forward to it.” Penney said he is broken up by Lumley’s death and lauded him for serving his country.

CKHS Principal Sue Ice and guidance counselor Jennie Lynn Hudson-Lane said Lumley was polite and mannerly. He was a good student academically, they added.

“He was a very likable student — well-liked by all of his classmates,” Ice said. “He was active in extra-curricular activities. I just think of him as a very good citizen. We’re all very upset about it.”

“He was very nice, very polite, had great manners,” Hudson-Lane added. “He was thoughtful, clean-cut and well-groomed.”

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

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

**Afghan Travelers Upload Into  
Cellphones A Collection Of  
Taliban Songs And Ringtones:  
“Songs And Ringtones  
Romanticizing The Insurgents’  
Jihad Against The Invaders Serve  
As Potentially Lifesaving Travel  
Insurance For Kabulis Who Brave  
Increasingly Perilous Countryside  
Roads”**

**“Sentries At Taliban Checkpoints,  
Some Only An Hour’s Drive Away  
From Central Kabul, Routinely Check  
Travelers’ Cellphones”**

**“Government Officials, Police, Soldiers,  
Security Guards, University Students,  
Translators For Western Companies,  
Construction Workers And Scores Of**

# Others Masquerade As Taliban Sympathizers”

DECEMBER 28, 2011 BY DION NISSENBAUM AND HABIB KHAN TOTAKHIL, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

KABUL—Afghan shopkeeper Nasratullah Niazai has developed a brisk new business over the past year. For about \$2 a pop, he uploads into customers’ cellphones a collection of Taliban songs and ringtones.

A skinny 22-year-old who operates a one-room computer store on the outskirts of the Afghan capital, Mr. Niazai is no Taliban. Neither are most of his customers.

**Instead, the songs and ringtones romanticizing the insurgents’ jihad against the infidel invaders serve as potentially lifesaving travel insurance for Kabulis who brave increasingly perilous countryside roads.**

Sentries at improvised Taliban checkpoints, some only an hour’s drive away from central Kabul, routinely check travelers’ cellphones.

**As a result, government officials, police, soldiers, security guards, university students, translators for Western companies, construction workers and scores of others go to extraordinary lengths to scrub their phones of any evidence of links to the coalition and the Afghan government—and to masquerade as Taliban sympathizers.**

**Business has boomed in the past year, Mr. Niazai said.**

The songs that buyers like best, he said, are “the emotional ones sung by children with beautiful voices.”

One consumer is Haji Mohammad Khan, a 35-year-old Kabul grocer.

Whenever Mr. Khan ventures out of the city, he deletes secular music clips from his cellphone, makes sure all his contacts are in Pashto—the predominant language of the Taliban—and uploads well-known insurgent hymns.

“If they search your phone and see your videos and songs, they will think you are their sympathizer,” he explained. “On occasion, it can save your life.”

Afghans who travel beyond the capital say insurgents have forced Afghans to eat SIM cards, broken phones on owners’ heads and interrogated travelers for hours about their contacts with foreigners.

**“If you are going 30 or 60 miles outside of Kabul, you will surely find Taliban on the road,” said a member of President Hamid Karzai’s government.**

“If you have Indian music or Afghan music ringtones, they will tell you that you are not obeying Islamic rules and, in most cases, break our mobiles.”

This official said that whenever he leaves Kabul, he routinely carries two SIM cards for his cellphone. One contains the numbers of Afghan leaders, Western officials, military officers and other contacts he needs to do his job. The other is the Taliban-safe SIM card that he pops into his phone outside the capital.

**United Nations officials, private security analysts and veteran aid workers in Afghanistan have all warned that it is becoming more dangerous to travel outside the Afghan capital.**

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban spokesman, said the Taliban now have some 40 singers “with their beautiful and attractive voices,” each of whom produces on average of one 12-song album every month.

The songs “give a lesson in bravery, manliness and protecting the country from the invaders,” and “feature the situation in an artistic way.” Plus, he said, they ensure that people don’t turn to ungodly secular music.

While keeping Taliban songs on their phones may provide some security for Afghans traveling through dangerous areas, it can also create problems with their own government.

Earlier this year, Mr. Khan, the grocer, said he was helping a friend report a traffic accident at a Kabul police station. His phone rang, and a Taliban song echoed through the office. “When I am martyred will you come to my funeral?” the phone blared. “Will you put flowers on my grave?”

The officer filling out the report glared at Mr. Khan and asked him why he had the insurgent ringtone.

“I told him that I hate the Taliban, but I travel to a lot of provinces and this can save my life,” Mr. Khan said. “The officer smiled and said: ‘You coward.’ “

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## **MILITARY NEWS**

**“The Commander Of The Guantanamo Bay Prison Has Signed An Order That Would Require A Security Review Of Legal Mail To Prisoners”**

# **“The New Rule Would Violate Attorney-Client Privilege” “The New Rules Would Deprive The Prisoners Of Their Constitutional Right To Counsel”**

Dec 28, 2011 By Ben Fox - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — The commander of the Guantanamo Bay prison has signed an order that would require a security review of legal mail to prisoners facing war crimes charges, a spokeswoman said Wednesday, rejecting arguments the new rule would violate attorney-client privilege and undermine long-delayed tribunals for five men charged in the Sept. 11 attacks.

**Rear Adm. David Woods considered the arguments of defense lawyers and made some modifications, said Cmdr. Tamsen Reese, a spokeswoman for the detention center aboard Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.**

**Those limits do not go far enough to avoid violating attorney-client privilege or making the order legal, said Bryan Broyles, the deputy chief defense counsel for the military commissions.**

**“What they keep wanting to do is to have their intelligence employees promise not to tell anybody about our communications and say that’s good enough,” Broyles said.**

**“And as a matter of law it’s not.”**

Broyles and the chief defense counsel, Marine Col. Jeffrey Colwell, said they were still doing a line-by-line analysis of the signed order that it appears that no substantive changes were made.

“They certainly didn’t take anything we said into account,” Broyles said.

Lawyers representing the five prisoners facing war crimes charges for helping to plan and carry out the Sept. 11 attacks had sent a memo to Woods opposing the order and calling for substantial changes.

Their memo said the new rules would deprive the prisoners of their constitutional right to counsel and make it impossible for lawyers, because of their professional and military codes of professional conduct, to participate in their long-delayed war crimes tribunal.

Broyles said that the defense believes that, for now, these new rules would only apply to the five prisoners who have been accused of helping to plan and carry out the Sept. 11 attacks.

That's because a military judge has already rejected the creation of a similar review process in the only other active case at Guantanamo, the trial of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, who is charged with orchestrating the attack on the destroyer Cole in 2000.

**“They will have to go back to the judge to have this process in place” in the Nashiri case, Broyles said. “I think that will be an interesting conversation.”**

There is no judge yet in the Sept. 11 case because the charges against the five prisoners accused of helping to plan and carry out the attacks, including self-proclaimed mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, have not been finalized. They are expected to be arraigned in 2012.

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## **HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?**



The casket of U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Vincent J. Bell December 27, 2011 at Arlington National Cemetery. Bell, an artilleryman for the 2nd Battalion of the 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force based in Camp Pendleton, California, was killed by an improvised explosive device explosion while he was on foot patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, during his fifth deployment in ten years with the Marine Corps. (Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)

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## **Army Crime Lab Kept Secret Evidence Favoring Soldiers Charged With Terrible Crimes:**

# **“Army Crime Lab Analyst Phillip Mills Had Falsified And Contaminated DNA Test Results”**

## **“I Think USACIL Intentionally Withholds, I Don’t Want To Say Their Bad Laundry, But Their Bad Paperwork”**

However, the brigade colonel, David E. Thompson, downgraded Holcombe to a discharge under other than honorable conditions. Explaining the discharge in an April 5, 2011, memo, Thompson cited “admission of guilt.”

Thompson hadn’t spoken to Holcombe, and Holcombe steadfastly denied guilt.

Dec. 29, 2011 By MICHAEL DOYLE AND MARISA TAYLOR, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

**At a crossroads, the military’s chief crime lab kept Army Staff Sgt. Kirk Holcombe in the dark.**

**Holcombe served 39 months in Iraq.**

**Roadside bombs repeatedly raked him hard and rattled his brain.**

**Then, home again, the decorated soldier faced a sexual accusation whose verisimilitude relied in part on DNA evidence.**

**Holcombe said he was innocent.**

**Belatedly, the crime lab revealed to him potential problems with the lab’s DNA expert.**

**But Holcombe, feeling trapped, took a general discharge last April that stripped away his veterans’ health benefits.**

**“It’s ruined me,” Holcombe said of his legal ordeal.**

The 31-year-old Indianapolis resident now is hoping to regain veterans’ benefits.

Pentagon investigators, meanwhile, are probing a question that goes well beyond Holcombe’s troubling case:

**Did the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory properly notify hundreds of defendants about potential problems that involved a different lab analyst?**



**Some attorneys fear that the answer is no; what happened with Holcombe, they worry, may be a recurring problem.**

“I think USACIL intentionally withholds, I don’t want to say their bad laundry, but their bad paperwork,” said Duane Kees, Holcombe’s attorney.

“USACIL knows exactly what’s going to happen when they turn it over: It automatically calls into question their findings.”

Based near Atlanta, the Army crime lab processes evidence used against members of all branches of the military. The analysts handle more than 3,000 cases annually, examining everything from blood and semen to hair strands and handguns.

The painstaking work can help nail the guilty.

**Sometimes, though, it can be flawed, leaving lab officials with the legal obligation to let defendants know about potential problems.**

The Army added earlier this year that required notification letters of potential lab errors were distributed to military justice attorneys and investigators worldwide.

In some cases, though, notification has seemed haphazard.

**Navy Lt. Roger House, for instance, resigned in 2003 after he realized that his military career was over.**

**Harris had been reprimanded after an enlisted woman’s allegation, rejected by a court-martial panel, that he’d raped her.**

**House later learned that Army crime lab analyst Phillip Mills had falsified and contaminated DNA test results in a different case.**

**The lab discovered Mills’ problems in 2005, after House’s discharge. Then a 2006 retest of Mills’ work cleared House. House learned of the 2006 retesting only in May 2009, however.**

**“For reasons unexplained, this exculpatory information was provided neither to plaintiff nor to his counsel at or around the time it was discovered,” U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge Francis M. Allegra noted this July, calling the failure an injustice.**

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**In a separate case newly uncovered by McClatchy, the attorney for Pvt. Abdi Mohamed, who was convicted in 2004 of stabbing a fellow soldier, says he was never notified after re-testers found discrepancies in Mills’ work.**

**Mills had identified blood on the knife, but the re-testers didn’t find it, according to documents McClatchy obtained.**

**The re-testers also detected the DNA of an unknown person that Mills had missed.**

“He had a due-process right to know if mistakes were made,” James Culp, Mohamed’s attorney, said in an interview, adding that even if the results wouldn’t change the trial, “I should have been told.”

**McClatchy also has learned that last May, the government didn’t immediately reveal in a capital murder case that another Army crime lab analyst had flubbed a fingerprint during a proficiency test.**

The defense attorney was prompted to seek more information after seeing McClatchy’s lab coverage. By the time that information was turned over, the analyst already had testified. The unhappy judge threw out her testimony.

Also prompted by McClatchy’s reporting, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, a Vermont Democrat, joined Republican Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa in asking the Defense Department’s inspector general to investigate.

So far, the investigators have identified 461 of 465 criminal cases that Mills worked on. They’ve have asked military judge advocates to provide proof that each defendant “received notice concerning the discredited lab work, or the reason such notice was not provided,” Assistant Inspector General John Crane wrote the senators Dec. 7.

Military and civilian judges agree that defendants deserve to know potentially exculpatory information, or information that undermines the credibility of government witnesses.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Mark S. Jackson, for instance, was accused of using methamphetamine in 2000 while stationed at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. Jackson’s attorney wasn’t informed of testing problems with lab analysts from an Air Force facility in Texas until well after the court-martial.

In 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces dismissed Jackson’s conviction, noting that the non-disclosure of lab problems “deprived the defense of information that could have been considered by the members as critical, the reliability of the lab report.”

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Kirk Holcombe thinks this is what happened to him.

The Grand Rapids, Mich., native entered the Army after his 1999 high school graduation. He planned on a military career.

**In April 2003, while with the 3rd Infantry Division, Holcombe was awarded the Bronze Star for exposing himself to hostile fire in order to get a clean shot at nine Iraqi soldiers. He kept returning to Iraq on other combat tours.**

A roadside explosive hammered Holcombe in August 2007, while he was with a scout platoon. He suffered a concussion, lacerations and a torn tendon. Eight months later, another roadside bomb knocked him out cold and blew out an eardrum.

Holcombe now is prescribed medication for pain, depression and anxiety. Without Ambien, he can't sleep easily. Sometimes he wakes up thrashing. His lower back hurts. His knees and shoulders feel wrecked, an old armored cavalryman's lament. He needs psychotherapy, but must forgo it because he can't afford it.

**He's been denied Veterans Affairs benefits because of the events that began unfolding in June 2010, while he was stationed at Fort Knox in Kentucky.**

**An 11-year-old friend of his stepdaughter's said that month that Holcombe had tried to unzip her shorts while she was asleep.**

**Holcombe denied it.**

**The girl's story was inconsistent on certain points, and child protective services in Hardin County, Ky., wrote Jan. 18 that "the charges have been found to be unsubstantiated." That same day, Holcombe's captain wrote that the case "should have been stopped" early.**

**Nonetheless, the Army had proceeded, with Holcombe's colonel citing "the scientific nature of the DNA evidence" analyzed by an Army crime lab worker named Alejandro Vara.**

**The evidence showed a possible match between Holcombe's DNA and skin DNA - not blood or semen - found on the girl's zipper.**

**The girl had been sleeping on the Holcombe family couch for some seven hours, presenting an alternative scenario to explain picking up DNA.**

Still, on Oct. 29, 2010, the crime lab attorney had assured Holcombe's attorneys in writing that "neither the USACIL nor I am in possession of any derogatory information or materials relating to Mr. Vara."

"It was the usual rubber-stamp answer," attorney Kees said.

And it was incomplete.

**At the urging of its own DNA expert, Holcombe's defense team resubmitted more detailed questions. Last January, several months after the lab's original reassurances, the defense struck gold.**

**On Oct. 20, 2010, the lab revealed, a technical reviewer had noted in a memo "several discrepancies" in Vara's work in reviewing other cases.**

**A supervisor agreed "there does seem to be an issue with (Vara's) attention to detail." The supervisor had taken to double-checking Vara's work.**

Other discrepancies were noted, and lab officials prepared a "corrective action plan" for Vara on Nov. 5, 2010, designed to "address his lack of attention to detail."

**This belatedly delivered information may have undermined the government's case, but it arrived after an Army hearing officer had let the case proceed, building the momentum against Holcombe.**

**After the lab's complete report was provided, and after considering the alleged victim's testimony, Army officials offered Holcombe a general discharge in lieu of a court-martial.**

**The choice meant Holcombe could risk prison in hopes of acquittal, or he could leave 12 years of Army service with less-than a perfect discharge. He picked discharge.**

**"It seemed like nothing was going my way," Holcombe explained. "I wasn't risking going to jail and having to register as a sex offender." But military justice still cornered him.**

Holcombe's captain supported a general discharge under honorable conditions, leaving him eligible for VA benefits.

**However, the brigade colonel, David E. Thompson, downgraded Holcombe to a discharge under other than honorable conditions.**

**Explaining the discharge in an April 5, 2011, memo, Thompson cited "admission of guilt."**

**Thompson hadn't spoken to Holcombe, and Holcombe steadfastly denied guilt.**

**Rather, Holcombe says, in accepting the general discharge, he was acknowledging that prosecutors had enough evidence to find him guilty, over his objections.**

**It was an administrative concession, not a legal admission. And it was made, he said, without realizing that a downgraded discharge would eliminate VA aid.**

**Thompson couldn't be reached for comment.**

Holcombe now is working as a recycling plant manager, keeping his marriage together and hoping, somehow, to secure veterans' health benefits.

"I just want my name cleared, and to get the help I need," he said.

### **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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.**

## ANNIVERSARIES

### December 30, 1936: Class War At GM



Workers sit down at GM



Supporters pass in food to sitdown strikers

Peace History Dec 26 - Jan 1 By Carl Bunin

Members of the United Automobile Workers sat down at a General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan. GM, the world's largest corporation at the time, had refused to recognize or negotiate with the union, despite passage of the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) in 1935 which promised unions the right to organize.

The local's membership adopted a tactic developed by French workers. Instead of picketing outside a factory only to be ignored or forcibly cleared away, the sit-down strike enabled workers to halt production and seize the plant "from the inside."

The strike began just days after the end of a successful sit-down at Ford supplier Kelsey-Hayes.

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# Happy Anniversary December 31, 1970 The Day The Liars Were Repudiated

Peace History Dec 31 - Jan 6 By Carl Bunin

**The U.S. Congress repealed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which in 1964 authorized a dramatic increase in U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in response to an attack on U.S. forces that was later revealed to be fictitious.**

## How The Tonkin Gulf Lie Launched Vietnam War

July 27, 1994 By Jeff Cohen and Norman Solomon, Media Beat

Thirty years ago, it all seemed very clear. "American Planes Hit North Vietnam After Second Attack on Our Destroyers; Move Taken to Halt New Aggression", announced a Washington Post headline on Aug. 5, 1964.

That same day, the front page of the New York Times reported: "President Johnson has ordered retaliatory action against gunboats and 'certain supporting facilities in North Vietnam' after renewed attacks against American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin." But there was no "second attack" by North Vietnam -- no "renewed attacks against American destroyers."

**By reporting official claims as absolute truths, American journalism opened the floodgates for the bloody Vietnam War. A pattern took hold: continuous government lies passed on by pliant mass media...leading to over 50,000 American deaths and millions of Vietnamese casualties.**

The official story was that North Vietnamese torpedo boats launched an "unprovoked attack" against a U.S. destroyer on "routine patrol" in the Tonkin Gulf on Aug. 2 -- and that North Vietnamese PT boats followed up with a "deliberate attack" on a pair of U.S. ships two days later.

The truth was very different.

Rather than being on a routine patrol Aug. 2, the U.S. destroyer Maddox was actually engaged in aggressive intelligence-gathering maneuvers -- in sync with coordinated attacks on North Vietnam by the South Vietnamese navy and the Laotian air force. "The day before, two attacks on North Vietnam...had taken place," writes scholar Daniel C. Hallin. Those assaults were "part of a campaign of increasing military pressure on the North that the United States had been pursuing since early 1964."

**On the night of Aug. 4, the Pentagon proclaimed that a second attack by North Vietnamese PT boats had occurred earlier that day in the Tonkin Gulf -- a report cited by President Johnson as he went on national TV that evening to announce a momentous escalation in the war: air strikes against North Vietnam.**

**But Johnson ordered U.S. bombers to “retaliate” for a North Vietnamese torpedo attack that never happened.**

**Prior to the U.S. air strikes, top officials in Washington had reason to doubt that any Aug. 4 attack by North Vietnam had occurred. Cables from the U.S. task force commander in the Tonkin Gulf, Captain John J. Herrick, referred to “freak weather effects,” “almost total darkness” and an “overeager sonarman” who “was hearing ship’s own propeller beat.”**

**One of the Navy pilots flying overhead that night was squadron commander James Stockdale, who gained fame later as a POW and then Ross Perot’s vice presidential candidate. “I had the best seat in the house to watch that event,” recalled Stockdale a few years ago, “and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets -- there were no PT boats there.... There was nothing there but black water and American fire power.”**

In 1965, Lyndon Johnson commented: “For all I know, our Navy was shooting at whales out there.” But Johnson’s deceitful speech of Aug. 4, 1964, won accolades from editorial writers. The president, proclaimed the New York Times, “went to the American people last night with the somber facts.” The Los Angeles Times urged Americans to “face the fact that the Communists, by their attack on American vessels in international waters, have themselves escalated the hostilities.”

An exhaustive new book, *The War Within: America’s Battle Over Vietnam*, begins with a dramatic account of the Tonkin Gulf incidents. In an interview, author Tom Wells told us that American media “described the air strikes that Johnson launched in response as merely ‘tit for tat’ -- when in reality they reflected plans the administration had already drawn up for gradually increasing its overt military pressure against the North.”

Daniel Hallin’s classic book *The ‘Uncensored War’* observes that journalists had “a great deal of information available which contradicted the official account; it simply wasn’t used. The day before the first incident, Hanoi had protested the attacks on its territory by Laotian aircraft and South Vietnamese gunboats.”

What’s more, “It was generally known...that ‘covert’ operations against North Vietnam, carried out by South Vietnamese forces with U.S. support and direction, had been going on for some time.”

In the absence of independent journalism, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution -- the closest thing there ever was to a declaration of war against North Vietnam -- sailed through Congress on Aug. 7. (Two courageous senators, Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska, provided the only “no” votes.) The resolution authorized the president “to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.”

The rest is tragic history.

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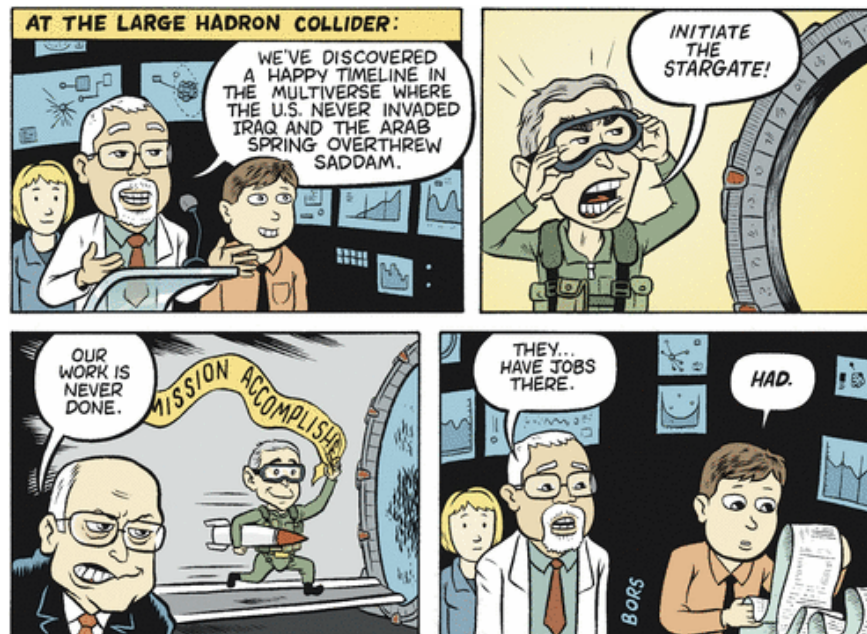
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Peace History December 25-31 By Carl Bunin

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