

Traveling Soldier

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contact@militaryproject.org

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THE UNFAIR TREATMENT OF SINGLE SOLDIERS: "The Army Treats All Single Soldiers As If They Were Children"

From The Editors: To protect the writer, ID has been removed from all email published here. The Military Resistance organization, which produces Traveling Soldier, will follow up with the writer privately.

We welcome letters from all members of the armed services.

To: Traveling Soldier

By: SGT. I.T.A.

March 09, 2010

This article goes along side the October, 2009 Issue article "If You Are A Private, You Are Treated Like Complete Dog Shit." [Editors: <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/10.09.dogsh.php>]

I am a single, Noncommissioned Officer stationed at Fort Eustis. I was previously stationed at Fort Drum. Being that Fort Drum is a Combat Unit, and Fort Eustis is a TRADOC (Training Doctrine and Command) base.

Such being said, comparing the similarities of both would cover pretty much the entire scope of the Army.

This article will cover both the



differences and likenesses of both units and their treatment of single soldiers compared to that of married soldiers.

I came up through the ranks from

Private First Class to Sergeant and am still single.

This means that, by regulation, I am required to live in the Barracks.

As with all single Soldiers, I am subject to the discrimination of a single Soldier, as to be stated in this article.

The first thing I am going to start with is being chosen for details. The first place many leaders go is to the Barracks for last minute details.

"I need someone to fill this spot on CQ," or "We need someone to do Post Police," and the such.

The first place they go is to the barracks.

God forbid you are standing in the hallway when it happens. They will grab a single soldier for these details in a hot second.

Why not call a married soldier? What makes them choose the Barracks?

First of all, I am fairly sure the first thing that is on their mind is, "What kind of excuse can PVT Joe have for not being able to do this duty today, he doesn't have a family."

Reason number two?

Easy access. There is always someone in the Barracks. It is like fishing in a bucket. I strictly recall a string of incidents when I was stationed at Fort Drum when I was a PFC where I had Staff Duty, which is a 24 hour duty, 8 weekends in a row. All of them Fridays and Saturdays with no compensation time because the day after was a weekend day.

Only one of those duties was mine. The rest were when people didn't show up or gave some kind of

"family excuse" that was never verified and because I lived in the Barracks, I apparently didn't have a life.

How can this be fixed?

Keep a record of all the extra duties you have been singled out for as well as your fellow singled Soldiers at the last minute.

All command policies I have come across strictly prohibit the use of the Barracks as a "duty hunting grounds."

If it is an ongoing trend, contact

"I am subject to the discrimination of a single Soldier."

your local Inspector General (IG) about the issue.

I can guarantee that your chain of command and Noncommissioned Officer Support Channel will deny using the Barracks as such.

Issue number two I would like to cover is the complete and total lack of privacy and the grip that the military holds on the life of a single Soldier.

I would like to first point out that to join the service, you have to be a grown man or woman of legal age to sign a contract.

This being said, the Army treats all single Soldiers as if they were children. Unexpected room inspections that are held at an entirely too high standard as well as the lack of comfort ability and quality of life.

I would like to point out that I

understand that if a Soldier is letting trash pile up in his or her room with dirty clothes hanging off of furniture and piled on the ground, that is a health issue and should be handled as such, but when a Senior Noncommissioned Officer comes into my room and tells me I have to GI my Barracks room because I have a pizza box sitting on top of a half empty trashcan and three articles of dirty clothes in a MILITARY ISSUE LAUNDRY BAG instead of a laundry basket, there is an issue.

On top of that, God Forbid you have any swimsuit models hanging on your wall. Those could be offensive.

I have never seen a house inspection for a married soldier.

Does the Army seem to think that just because a Private is married, he has more "discipline" than a single Noncommissioned Officer? A married Soldier could be growing pot in their closet and never be caught but a single Soldier will get called out and tore up because they found a cigarette butt in their Barracks room. Everyone should be held to the same standards.

Quality of life is one of the biggest factors that determines a Soldiers motivation and happiness.

I would first like to discuss the topic of the DFAC (Dining Facility).

The DFAC is open for an hour and a half for each meal, every day of the week. If you don't wake up before 0730 in the morning on Saturday and Sunday, or they keep you an extra 30 minutes after Physical Training

in the morning, you don't get to eat. The Army doesn't give single Soldiers even partial BAS (Basic Allowance for Sustenance) to buy their own food in these cases.

Just days pass between when one Soldier leaves the room and another enters. There is no repairs to the room.



On top of that, they don't even supply single soldiers with stoves to cook their own food and they ban the use of cooking utilities such as hot plates and boilers.

What do they give you? A grill made of an old oil drum with some rusted metal welded to the top of it, outside.

Who is going to go outside in the middle of winter because they want to cook some hotdogs or some chicken.

The living conditions of the Barracks rooms is another thing that gets to me.

When a Soldier clears the room,

they must pay for any deficiencies in the room.

Where does that money go?

Just days pass between when one Soldier leaves the room and another enters. There is no repairs to the room.

The walls are left looking like the DEA just went through it and the furniture dilapidated.

Then when that Soldier leaves, he or she ends up paying for the same damages as the last one. In the end, the stuff never gets fixed.

The Army has also decided to remove individual temperature controls from the rooms. They set a standard temperature of 68 Degrees Fahrenheit. During the summer months, this isn't a bad temperature.

As for the winter months, you need several blankets for your bed just to sleep comfortably in your own "home" as the Army calls it.

A single Soldier is also limited on what he or she can own due to the small size of the rooms.

In one room, you can barely fit the bed and the dresser that come with the room and barely enough closet space to store your uniforms and issued equipment. If you have too much stuff in your room, it is considered cluttered and unorganized.

As for the laundry, they complain about Soldiers having dirty laundry or not having a clean uniform, yet half of the machines are broken, so there are up to two hour waits before you can even get your clothes into a washer and another hour after that before there is an available dryer for the Soldier to use.

This is the first of several Articles, and hopefully and on-going correspondence from myself.

DIDN'T WE ALL TAKE THE SAME OATH?

Comment On "The Unfair Treatment Of Single Soldiers"

*Jeff Englehart, Iraq Veteran,
Traveling Soldier Editorial Board*

Every single soldier in the military is treated in much of the same fashion, and for good reason.

The military is the most class-based hierarchy in American society. Married soldiers are treated much better because "family values" are highly encouraged by the chain of command. The military knows that

"Comment" cont'd.

if an atomized family life is rewarded and given fringe benefits, it will serve to encourage young troops to get married, have kids, own consumer goods, and pay off a lifelong debt. This results in a process of being dependent on the military, thus being trapped in an endless cycle of reenlistments.

Family life is one of the best ways to maintain retention, because not only will YOU depend on the military for your pay, food, housing, and health care, but so will your wife and children.

The best way to avoid this prejudiced system is to get the fuck out! With a VA home loan you can own your own house, find a better job, and your children won't have to see Daddy go to a godforsaken war zone every three years."

Army Life

By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent Reporting from Germany

March 09, 2010

Right now I work on a desk as a dispatcher/paper pusher. I answer phones, do paper work and work radios. The highlight of my job is that I get to listen to music. I do get three days off every six, but I haven't gone anywhere interesting due to money being a rare commodity around here.

I will talk about two of the most interesting things that happened to

me lately.

Friday when I woke up for work, my supervisor called me and asked if I wanted the night off.

Well, what would you have said?

I knew there had to be a catch, but as I was asking what it was, he told me. I had to report in civilian clothes to post headquarters ready to work.

Now civilian clothes sounds awesome at first, but usually means there's something you'll have to do that would normally mess up your uniform.

Not so in this case, but it did take all day. We drove around in two TMP vehicles putting up poster board signs with pictures of the Commander, CSM and Deputy Commander (who is a civilian).

This whole ordeal got interesting when I realized that there were three of us from my detachment (two specialists and a staff sergeant, also in civilian clothes) working the hammer and nails for one sign at each building and it was taking a CSM and a MSG to tell us where to put it and whether or not it was crooked.

The first two or three buildings included a couple civilians who maintained the keys, so all together for one sign in one building each, it took seven people to do a job that, in my opinion, would normally only take one or two people.

I also found it ironic and kind of funny that the CSM was complaining about working with females (a female herself) and telling me and my friend that if we work closely with military when we get out that the military will always view us as, ". . . ate the fuck

up."

The irony is that without the two civilians to which she was referring, we wouldn't have been able to gain access to at least three of those buildings and therefore would have failed.

It was also ironic because though their only job for the day was key control, hers was even less than that.

Actually, I'm not sure what her job was except to tell us whether a sign with her picture on it was crooked or not. Something anybody with a level set of eyes could do.

The second event happened just this morning.

It was pretty funny.

My Operations Sergeant, a very quiet and laid back Sergeant First Class, was standing with myself, my first line supervisor and our Provost Sergeant inside the gym. I was explaining to him what we had done on Saturday, putting up signs, and I pointed to one that we had put inside that gym.

He made a comment about them being useless, stupid and how the General probably didn't even see any of them.

Not half a second later, all four of us noticed the CSM walk by, mostly because my NCO gave her the greeting of the day.

She had ear muffs on, so she probably didn't hear his comment, but I still shook his hand and said, "Perfect timing, sir. Perfect timing."

* * *

U.S. Command Admits IEDs Can't Be Stopped: "We Will Never Win In That Space"

By Craig Whitlock, Washington Post Staff Writer & By Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY [Excerpts]
[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

March 18, 2010

Taliban fighters more than doubled the number of homemade bombs they used against U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan last year, relying on explosives that are often far more primitive than the ones used in Iraq.

The embrace of a low-tech approach by Taliban-trained bombmakers -- they are building improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, out of fertilizer and diesel fuel -- has stymied a \$17 billion U.S. counteroffensive against the devices in Iraq and Afghanistan, military officials say. Electronic scanners or jammers, which were commonly deployed in Iraq, can detect only bombs with metal parts or circuitry.

"Technology is not going to solve this problem," said Army Lt. Gen. Michael Oates, director of the military's Joint IED Defeat Organization, or JIEDDO.

"I don't think you can defeat the IED as a weapon system. It is too easy to use."

Despite the insurgents' crude approach, the explosive power of their IEDs is growing. Each bombing in Afghanistan, on average, causes 50 percent more casualties than it did three years ago, Oates said Wednesday at a House committee hearing.

U.S. officials say even armored troop-transport vehicles that were designed to protect against roadside bombs are now vulnerable. All told, the U.S. military recorded 8,159 IED incidents in Afghanistan in 2009, compared with 3,867 in 2008 and 2,677 the year before. These bombs are the leading cause of

U.S. casualties by a large margin.

It was even worse when comparing February 2010 with February 2009, attributed in part to a Marine-led offensive in the town of Marjah in Helmand province. This year, insurgents planted 721 bombs compared with 291 last year. Those attacks killed or wounded 204 troops this February compared with 51 in February 2009.

Because of the country's mountainous terrain, surveillance drones have a harder time spotting bombers at work. Unlike in Iraq, most of the roads are unpaved, making it more difficult to detect bombs buried in the dirt.

"It's just a tough environment," said Command Sgt. Maj. Todd M. Burnett, who oversees training programs for JIEDDO. "It's the harshest conditions imaginable for a soldier."



March 4, 2010: A US Army flight medic, far right, leads US Marines as they rush a critically-wounded comrade to a waiting medical helicopter in Helmand province, Afghanistan. The Marine died later of his wounds, incurred when his armored vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device which also wounded another Marine, who is seen being treated at far left. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

Kenneth Comer, JIEDDO's deputy director of intelligence, said insurgents in Afghanistan and Iraq were constantly adapting their bombmaking tactics to stay a step ahead of U.S. technological advances. He said that it was unlikely that the U.S. military would ever catch up but that it needed to keep trying until broader counterinsurgency efforts take root. The alternative, he said, would result in higher U.S. casualties and more momentum for enemy forces.

"We will never win in that space," he said. "But we can lose in that space."

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 Editorial Board

J. Englehart (Iraq Veteran); P. Binh; F. Bouthillette (USNR, Veteran, Iraq Theatre); A. Winslow; T. Barton

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Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



Invitation to Submit

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 *Traveling Soldier* at contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Phone #: 888.711.2550

"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms." --*Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.*

It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.

-- Larry Christensen, *Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers*

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.-- Al Jaccoma, *Veterans For Peace*

Military Resistance Ten Points

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 US 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 service, 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 any candidates 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 sisters and brothers, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Signature

Date

(Application Taken/received by)

MILITARY RESISTANCE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (please print): _____

Armed Forces? (Branch) _____

Veteran? ___ Years: _____

Union: _____

Occupation: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Phone (Landline): _____

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\$ dues paid _____

(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
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Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

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

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