

# Traveling Soldier

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## Army Life:

### ***“The Chain Of Command And Their General Selfishness And Habitual Exploitation Of The Lower Enlisted”***

*April 14, 2010 By Soldier R,  
Traveling Soldier Correspondent  
Reporting from Germany*

I would like to take this opportunity to explain the chain of command and their general selfishness and habitual exploitation of the lower enlisted.

One of the few friends I have here in Germany [#1] has been nothing less than the unit's personal and only "gofer" ever since we arrived.

To start off his terrible situation, in the first couple months here, his wife decides to go home because she does not like it here, he has to get rid of both his dogs because the Army puts him in the barracks, his wife is already pregnant, cheating and wants a divorce.

The Army raised his minimum commitment from two years to three since his wife was over here and he had signed for housing, but since she went back, even though he cleared housing and only lived there for

two months, they are making him serve all three.

He is also not getting any refund for the month that he was not living there, even though he had cleared in plenty of time. This is only the middle of March and he is nowhere near finished being walked on.

So as we slowly and very inconspicuously become integrated into our new unit, [#1], [#2] and myself find ourselves painting the entire downstairs of the unit's building for at least two weeks.

My two friends also got into huge trouble for failing their driver's test, even though they have multiple opportunities to pass and are never completely ineligible. . .

*Army in Europe Regulation 190-1*

*(b) Applicants who fail the test twice will be ineligible for retesting for 2 weeks. If an applicant fails the test a third time, the applicant will be declared ineligible for retesting*

*for 60 days. (In cases of exceptional hardship, the 60-day waiting period may be waived. Normally, a waiver will be granted only if recommended by the commander or supervisor and approved by the officer responsible for operating the testing station.) Retesting will begin with the test the applicant failed.*

So after we finished painting, they had us do several stupid little details around the unit, but eventually myself and my one other friend [#2] got placed into positions and trained.

[#1] got stuck doing little stuff around the unit.

First he was told to train in one office so he could pick up on the procedures and eventually do the job himself.

Later he was sent downstairs to train and learn a completely different job. He was sent back upstairs, downstairs and upstairs again before they finally figured out that he will just do whatever they need done for each day,

regardless of whether or not he gets lunch and breaks.

He has cleaned a grill, inside and out, stripped it and painted it.

He has done a police call outside and around the parking lot looking for trash and other things that may not belong, including sticks. He has mowed the lawn including the upper parking lot.

Today he was sent to the range, sent back because he had a test to raise his general technical score on his ASVAB and it was suppose to take two hours, but took five instead.

Every single time [#1] goes to his supervisor, he sends him to another NCO for answers.

Every time he goes to another NCO for help, his supervisor gets upset that [#1] did not go to him first.

Whenever I ask the same supervisor a question, he has to ask his supervisor the same question. I would prefer a

supervisor who is willing and able to make on the spot decisions on his own with a minimum of an educated guess.

Making stuff up turns you into a liar and asking every question again to your own supervisor makes you obsolete. I do not want to place him into either category, but I think he places himself.

The other bad part about this whole situation, especially for [#1] is that our NCO's supervisor is a civilian who, though retired, knows nothing about the Army.

Something I would like to stress is the fact that things change. .often. The Army is changing on a daily basis.

It is not the "Real Army" or "New Army". It is the "Old Army" and "Real Army". Things change in hopes of making them better. Most of the changes made are made by soldiers who have been in and serving for more than ten, fifteen maybe even twenty years.

Why is it when things change and someone does not understand them, they claim it is the "New Army", but when it is something they like they claim it is the "Real Army"?

Change is inevitable and those of us involved in it need to learn to adjust and embrace it. "Adapt and overcome" is one famous motto that comes to mind.

How can you learn to do so if you dwell in the past.

I remember back in my day. . . well stop.

War is all over history and we have yet to learn from it because we have been, are and ever will be involved in some kind of war. I realize that many may disagree with me, but it is about putting yourself in the other person's shoes, not necessarily understanding them.

**Please forward your responses to Traveling Soldier and Military Project. I would love to hear what every one has to say. [At: [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org) ]**

## **More Army Life**

### ***"Intelligence Is Not Required To Be A Senior In The Military"***

### ***"This Is The Place Where Your Tax Dollars Go When D.C. Flushes Them"***

*April 27, 2010 By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent Reporting from Germany*

I would like to focus on some unfortunate soldier's stories for the second part of my writing.

One of my buddies' wife already headed back to the states because she was bored and alone. Another one is heading back soon for the same reason. The moral is that if you are not a

motivated and interested military spouse, Europe is not for you.

When you come over here, you have to get out, see things and do stuff. The Morale Welfare and Recreation center and

Education center offers tons of things to do and take up time for the entire family and you do not always have to spend money to occupy your time.

Now there are two of my good friends over here that will be without their significant other because they did not get involved. The furthest I have traveled is three hours away and I have had a blast.

The down side to being in the Army is that they can tell you to do almost anything and get away with it.

Morality and legality is suppose to factor in, but sometimes it turns gray.

Now, one of the guys keeps getting shoved around. First he's working upstairs, but then when our first line supervisor went to school, one of the other guys in charge tells him he has to work downstairs again.

The biggest problem with this is that the downstairs job is Monday through Friday and the upstairs job is four on and four off. So, last week he worked seven days straight and then they sent him back downstairs so he is not going to get a day off until next week.

Apparently intelligence is not required to be a senior in the military.

Again, they require us to sign for the things we use at work. That is fine, though the hand receipt is seven pages long, it still only requires one signature.

Now they want us to sign for the keys and our weapon on separate sheets. The amount of paper work is expected at a desk job, me and my friend [X] have decided it is becoming humanly impossible to keep up with all of it.

The Army is so focused on doing things by the regulations and the

right way, yet they refuse to give us what is required to accomplish things the right way.

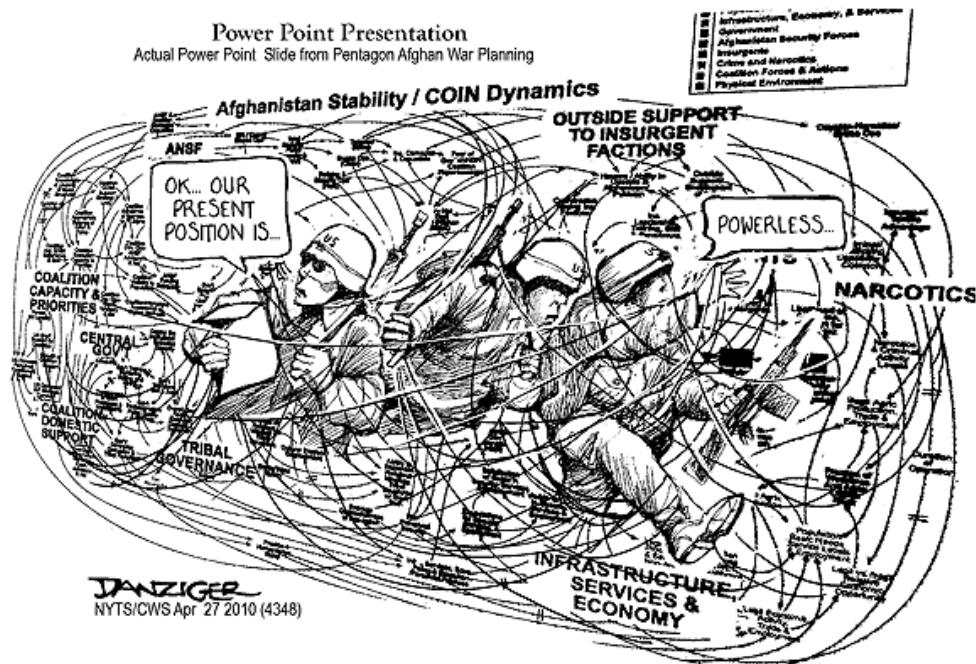
They complain when something is spelled wrong, but require us to type it in all upper case so that the spell check will not work.

There are simple ways around such difficulties, but why should each individual have to compensate for the short comings of the whole?

One of the biggest problems is that this is the only duty station I have ever heard of that does not use COPS for Military Police Reports.

And then they get upset when things are wrong. That would cut back on our overall paper, ink, stapling costs.

Just know that this is the place where your tax dollars go when D.C. flushes them.



# How Bad Is It?

## ***In 120 Districts The Pentagon “Views As Critical” “The Government Has Full Control In Fewer Than A Half Dozen” U.S. Col. Says The Karzai Government Is “Rotten” And Civilians “Help The Insurgents Who Attack It***

5.13.10 By ALISSA J. RUBIN,  
*New York Times* [Excerpts]

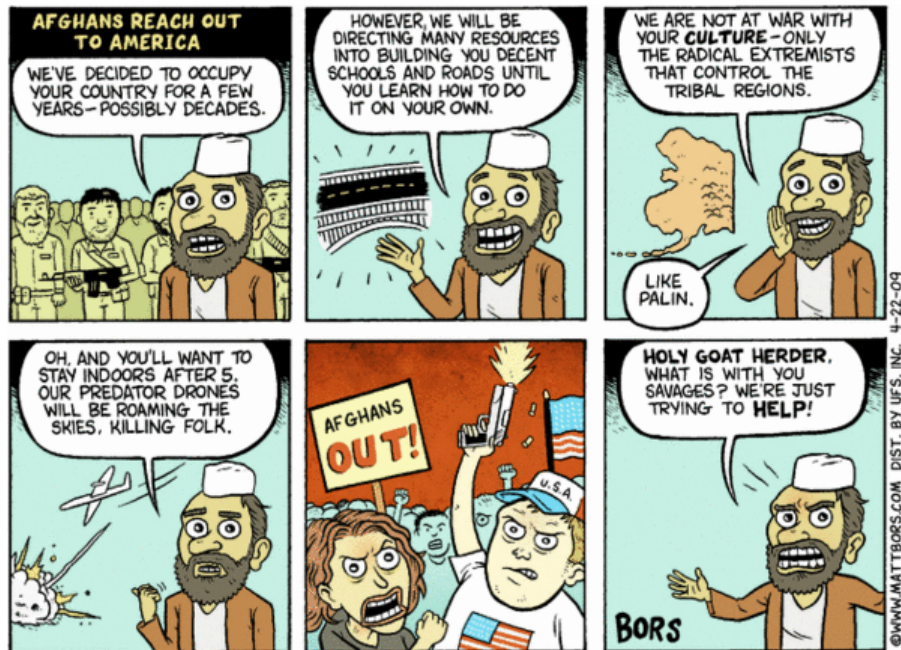
JALALABAD, Afghanistan — Nearly a year into a new war strategy for Afghanistan, the hardest fighting is still ahead, but already it is clear that the biggest challenge lies not on the battlefield but in the governing of Afghanistan itself.

In 120 districts that the Pentagon views as critical to Afghanistan’s future stability, only a quarter of residents view the government positively.

And the government has full control in fewer than a half dozen of these districts.

Even as American troops clear areas of militants, they find either no government to fill the vacuum, as in Marja, or entrenched power brokers, like President Karzai’s brother in Kandahar, who monopolize NATO contracts and other development projects and are resented by large portions of the population.

In still other places, government officials rarely show up at work and do little to help local people, and in most places the Afghan police are incapable of providing



security. Corruption, big and small, remains an overwhelming complaint.

Col. Randy George of the Fourth Brigade Combat Team, Fourth Infantry Division, who has responsibility for the four easternmost provinces, tries to build relationships with tribal leaders in most of his territory, at gatherings called shuras, although he has given up ground to the insurgents in some areas.

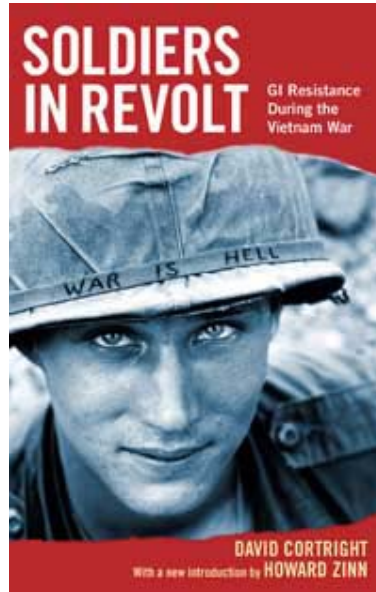
The strategy inevitably means allowing the insurgents some havens, as long as those are in sparsely populated areas where the insurgents are unlikely to

have much impact. Colonel George said he hoped that if he could embolden Afghan citizens to combat corruption in the more populated river valleys and provincial towns in their areas, they would at least create a government they could support, rather than help the insurgents who attack it.

“Part of that is making sure that we are continuing to connect the Afghan people to the Afghan government as a whole, and when you’ve got a rotten piece of that, the people don’t want to connect to it,” he said.

# **A Vietnam Soldier Wrote The Book All About How An Armed Forces Rebellion Stopped An Imperial War**

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2576 Broadway  
New York, N.Y.  
10025-5657**

## **Traveling Soldier Editorial Board**

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

*Traveling Soldier* is brought to you by the *Military Resistance Organization*

# **“For Over Six Years We Have Been Welcomed By The Significant Majority Of Attending Troops”**

## **“We Do Not Intend To Stop Until The Current Twin Disasters End With Our Troops Permanently Withdrawn”**

By Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization

In January, 2004 a group of anti-war activists -- civilian and U.S. Military veterans -- from the Military Project (now Military Resistance) began outreaching to a National Guard armory in New York City.

Understanding troops are crucial to ending the criminal conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan (as they were in Vietnam), the group collected at the armory site each succeeding month on drill date, regardless of weather conditions, a.m. or p.m., with publications opposing the Imperial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, DVDs and home baked cookies.

An average of 65-75 packages of information are given out at each outreach.

For over six years we have been welcomed by the significant majority of attending troops.

We do not intend to stop until the current twin disasters end with our troops permanently withdrawn.

The report below gives depicts a typical outreach; in this case the most recent:

\*\*\*\*\*

On April 9th, Military Resistance met, for a pleasant change, at 5:45 pm for our monthly

outreach at a New York City Army National Guard armory.

There were six of us present, and, because it was a warm afternoon rather than a frigid early morning, the soldiers seemed exceptionally friendly.

By the end of the evening we had handed out 63 copies of *Traveling Soldier* and probably even more packages of cookies, as well as 22 copies of *Sir! No Sir!* and 14 copies of *Querido Camilo*.

One soldier told us that she had seen both of the films, and preferred *Sir! No Sir!* because *Querido Camilo* had too much talking. This shows that whatever else we are doing, we are giving the soldiers material that they are engaging with.

There were signs indicating that at least some of the soldiers reporting were MP's. Most of the soldiers accepted our material, and many--particularly a few very young soldiers--were clearly encountering us for the first time.

Others, though, were familiar with our work, and one soldier told us that she “always reads your stuff.”

As always, the cookies were a big hit, with one soldier enthusiastically noting that they were “home baked.”

Toward the end of the outreach, we were approached by a young soldier who took the material and asked if we ourselves had served in the military, and what our experience had been. AS responded that his experience had been both positive, in terms of meeting people from all over the country, and negative because of overly-authoritative officers.

The young soldier responded, “Good answer,” and told us that he supported what we were doing, seeming to be familiar with *Traveling Soldier*.

Although he declined an invitation to attend a Military Resistance meeting at this time, he did want to stay in touch, and we gave him our contact information. We hope to hear from him soon.

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

# **“Even Before I Had Left The Navy I Realized That I Was Not Protecting Freedom Or Defending The Constitution Of The United States”**

**“Rather, I Was Simply An Officer In The Imperial Navy Of The United States”**

***“I Have Found That The Anti-War Philosophy Of Military Resistance Fits Closely To My Understanding Of How A War Of Empire Can Be Ended”***

*By Fabian Bouthillette, USNR, Veteran, Iraq Theatre; Traveling Soldier Editorial Board & Military Resistance Organization*

One of the perks of graduating from the United States Naval Academy is the opportunity to choose your first assignment as an officer in the Navy. Of course, one's rank within the graduating class determines the order of choosing, but my rank was high enough that I could have virtually chosen any class of ship to serve on at any of the Navy's domestic or international bases.

Always in pursuit of the unknown and the maximum amount of adventure, I chose to serve aboard a guided missile destroyer stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. This is the same base that was once used by the Imperial Japanese Navy, and where the radio order sent to the Japanese fleet to bomb Pearl Harbor originated from.

Yokosuka is now home to the Navy's Seventh Fleet, the same fleet responsible for much of the action in the Pacific during World War II. Today, seventh fleet is comprised of an aircraft carrier and her squadron of escort ships and other combat vessels.

During my time of service – September 2003 to July 2005 – the specific carrier assigned to seventh fleet was USS KITTYHAWK, the same carrier that experienced a revolt of sailors during the Vietnam War, an incident my Navy would rather never have mentioned again.

KITTYHAWK, at the time of my service, was the Navy's oldest ship still in active service, and the only carrier still powered by gas and not nuclear power like the rest of the Navy's carrier fleet.

This was not a coincidence.

The people of Japan and Yokosuka, not wanting a giant nuclear powered ship parked next to their town (because of environmental concerns and resistance to more sailors camped out in their backyard), had managed to block the U.S. Navy's plans to decommission KITTYHAWK and replace her with a more modern, larger, and nuclear powered aircraft carrier, thus forcing the Navy to continue to maintain the aging KITTYHAWK.

But it was well known among the officers in seventh fleet, and most of the enlisted sailors as

well, that our admirals were still actively lobbying the Japanese to allow a nuclear carrier in. The admirals almost seemed desperate to make this exchange happen.

This desperation led our admirals to keep our junior sailors on a short leash, worried about a public relations disaster that could result from a potential crime committed by an American sailor.

The leash came in the form of a midnight curfew for our most junior sailors. While more senior sailors and officers were allowed to enjoy living in a beautiful “host” nation – I spent many weekends in Tokyo drinking entirely too much Japanese beer – our junior sailors were subjected to a very poor standard of living, and robbed of the opportunity to explore a foreign culture.

Many knew it was because of their commander's desire to bring in a new supercarrier. Attitudes towards the leadership in Yokosuka from the junior sailors were not very positive.

To add to the degradation, sailors were further induced to behave as “model citizens” by a policy commonly known as the

Blue Card policy. Junior sailors who maintained good behavior and discipline during a six-month probationary period would be issued a blue card that would represent their privilege to remain off the base overnight. In practice, however, sailors were usually not given a blue card after six months of model behavior, and the probationary period dragged on.

Morale was sacrificed for the politics of bringing in the much-desired nuclear carrier.

I had become friends with one of these junior sailors, a skilled signalman who was in my watch section on the bridge of our destroyer when at sea. Many times after our night watches, we would hangout (technically fraternize, and technically against regulation) and talk about our current operations.

Often, the blue card issue came up as a major gripe. The signalman made it clear to me that he felt robbed of the opportunity to see Japan because of the policies of our admirals and our government. I did sympathize with him, but there was nothing to be done. At least he had the opportunity to unload some his frustration to an officer, and I had the opportunity to gain some insight into the life of a junior sailor.

Our ship's supply officer, a Lieutenant more senior to me, had in his previous assignment served at Diego Garcia, a very isolated island base. This Lieutenant was a career Navy man. He had decided to serve at the remote Diego Garcia base because it was considered a hardship tour of duty.

After a hardship tour it is often Navy policy to allow an officer to pick his or her next assignment, thus giving motivated officers an opportunity to be more proactive with the management of their own careers. In this way, Navy policy is designed to keep one of our most strategic bases staffed with motivated and disciplined personnel. This officer was rewarded with career options for his hardship at an overseas base while the junior sailors in Yokosuka were simply ordered to endure. The United States Air Force, however, did not seem as caught up in keeping its junior enlisted personnel on a leash, as I observed in Okinawa where our ship would often pull into port for supplies.

During these visits most of the crew would find itself at Kadena Air Force base.

If you look at a map of Okinawa, Kadena is the giant blob taking up a large percentage of the island. We Navy types, happy to enjoy the amenities of Kadena, were also disgusted with the size of Kadena. Perhaps for some of us it was more of a jealous reaction than ideological stance; I have to imagine that my ship's sailors felt disrespected by the difference in standard of living between them and the junior airmen at Kadena.

While Yokosuka was home to over 15,000 sailors and their families crammed on a relatively small peninsula in Tokyo Bay, Kadena had four lane roads and two, yes two, golf courses.

Hanging out at Kadena felt more like going to an elite country club than a strategic base.

While Okinawans were forced to live on top of each other, and subject to the noises of constant military aircraft coming and going, Americans at Kadena were afforded much space and comfort. Really, Kadena was closer to being a U.S. colony than a base serving any important wartime purpose.

America's military and civilian leadership is obsessed with maintaining good public relations with the nations that host bases.

### **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/>

Perhaps it is ignorance, or just arrogance, or perhaps even racism that blinds America's leaders to the fact that relations are already poor.

Or perhaps America's leadership is not blind, and they do know



relations are poor and always will be until we just leave.

Indeed, our leadership does not negotiate with the citizens of host nations, but simply the government officials of host nations. Our leadership is not concerned with the people of our host nations, but rather only their governments.

I must admit that at Yokosuka many sailors, other than non-blue cardholders, enjoy their experience. For me, it was my first experience outside of America for any extended period of time, and I feel very fortunate to have lived within a foreign culture. My pay was good and I was able to live in a three-bedroom house off the base with another young officer happy for the chance at adventure.

Sadly, and ironically, my Navy adventure did not make me feel that Yokosuka, or any overseas base, is a worthwhile convenience for Americans, or even a necessity, but rather I was embarrassed to be an occupier, a relic of World War II and the racism that was prominent during that war in the Pacific.

The junior signalman whom I spent nights with conversing after watch is at least one other sailor who shared this sentiment.

Graduating from the Naval Academy and driving warships for a living had truly been dreams come true. I had achieved a life of adventure, adrenaline, and – so I thought – meaning.

But even before I had left the Navy I realized that I was not

protecting freedom or defending the constitution of the United States. Rather, I was simply an officer in the Imperial Navy of the United States. Our mission was not to promote peace, but to maintain American economic influence around the world, and our weapon was fear.

I love a good fight, but I am not a gangster.

**After my tour in Japan I separated from active service, and went back to being a civilian for the first time since high school.**

**Two organizations landed in my lap, and I have remained active in both for the last five years: Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) and Military Resistance.**

**Both groups are dedicated to bringing the occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan to an immediate end.**

The veterans and civilians dedicated to each organization may have different ideas on politics in general, but both understand the lies that have been told to the American people by our own government to maintain support for the wars.

The members of both organizations, who represent a diverse cross section of America, also understand that America is this planet's first global empire.

There might not be literal colonies propped up around the world, but with giant bases like Kadena that look more like small American towns, America can try

to maintain its economic influence.

Relations might seem peaceful on the surface, but only because we are holding our host nation's citizens hostage at the end of a giant barrel.

**I have found that the anti-war philosophy of Military Resistance fits closely to my understanding of how a war of empire can be ended.**

**By actively reaching out to members of our armed forces, through newsletters or actual face-to-face interaction, members of Military Resistance work to encourage the culture of resistance growing within the active duty military itself.**

**In Vietnam, the degradation of the American military's capability to execute operations, due to the low morale of the troops, is what forced America's politicians to end that war.**

**I believe morale in Iraq and Afghanistan is so low already that the capability of our military to fight and win battles is too degraded to accomplish anything.**

**Our politicians already realize that there is nothing further that can be won in Afghanistan or Iraq, and they will bring our troops home to where they belong, or resistance within the armed forces will become so great that they will be forced to do so.**

The anti-war movement in America can and should serve

as a catalyst in helping troops resist fighting in the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, even as the U.S. global network of bases would remain in place even after troops are returned home.

In fact, the network still strives to grow. USS KITTYHAWK returned to the United States in 2008 where she was decommissioned. USS

GEORGE WASHINGTON, a bigger nuclear powered aircraft carrier, now occupies the aircraft carrier pier at the Yokosuka Navy Base where she continues the legacy of KITTYHAWK and all Seventh Fleet carriers before her.

**Nevertheless, the citizens of the nations hosting American bases will keep up their spirit**

**of resistance as more American service members realize that they are not supporters of freedom, but rather they are occupying troops in foreign nations supporting the global empire known as the United States of America.**

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## ***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.**

---

**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): \_\_\_\_\_

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

\$ dues paid and receipt given by \_\_\_\_\_  
(See next: Calendar year basis)

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Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

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

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