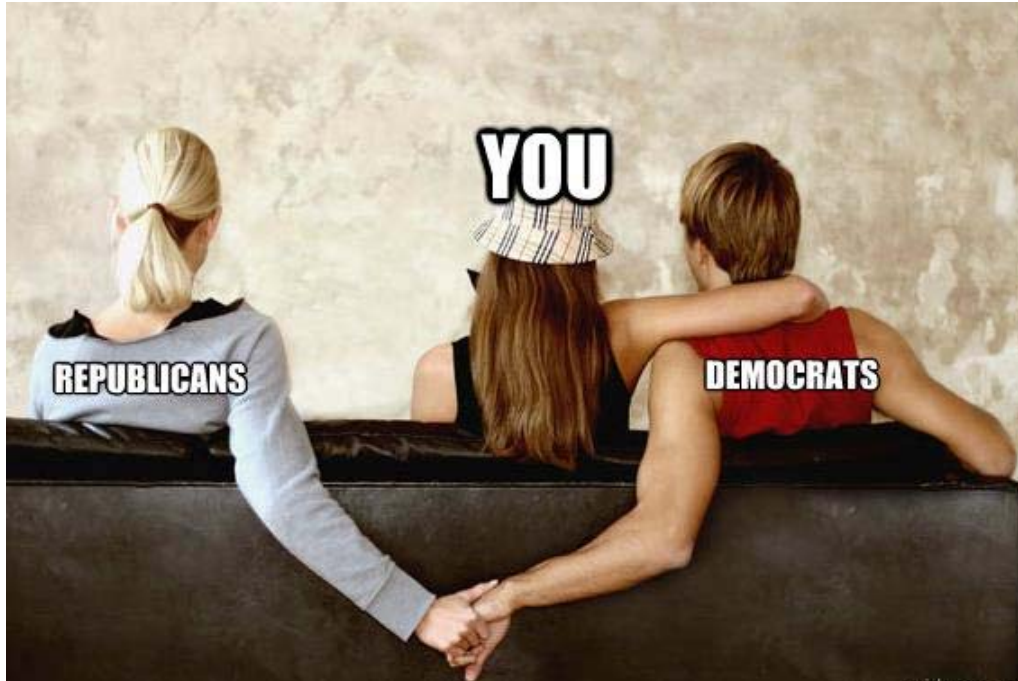


Military Resistance 1016



From Larry Christensen via Dennis Serdel

Afghanistan Theater: “U.S. Forces Suffered 139 Combat Casualties In The Week Ending September 6, Raising The Total To 35,821”

Sep 5, 2012 www.michaelmunk.com [Excerpts]

US military occupation forces in Afghanistan under Commander-in-Chief Obama suffered 139 casualties in the week ending Sept. 6, as the official casualty total for the Iraq and AfPak wars rose to 115,289.

The total includes 79,468 casualties since the US invaded Iraq in March, 2003 (Operations “Iraqi Freedom” and “New Dawn”), and 35,821 since the US invaded Afghanistan in November, 2001 (Operation “Enduring Freedom”)

AFGHANISTAN THEATER: US forces suffered 139 combat casualties in the week ending September 6, raising the total to 35,821

This includes 19,184 dead and wounded from what the Pentagon classifies as “hostile” causes and 16,637(-6) dead or medically evacuated (as of May 7!) from what it calls “non-hostile” causes.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Copter Down In Logar: Two U.S. Troops Killed;

Sept. 5, 2012 By MUHAMMAD LILA, ABC

A U.S. helicopter crashed today in Eastern Afghanistan, killing two U.S. troops, the third time in 10 days that a coalition helicopter has come down.

The two Americans, who have not been named, were the only crew aboard the OH-58 Kiowa helicopter, according to a Defense Department official.

The cause of the crash is under investigation and officials have not ruled out that the chopper was shot down.

The incident happened in Logar Province, an area patrolled mostly by U.S. forces.

The Taliban quickly claimed responsibility, saying one of their fighters shot the aircraft down.

Afghan sources in Logar say a heavy firefight broke out after the helicopter crashed.

Explosion Kills Michigan Soldier In Afghanistan

Aug 29, 2012 The Associated Press

CORUNNA, Mich. — A 20-year-old Michigan soldier has been killed during fighting in Afghanistan.

Army Pfc. Shane Cantu’s ex-football coach says the Corunna High School graduate died Tuesday after insurgents threw an explosive over a base wall.

Ex-Corunna coach Mark Sullivan tells Mlive.com that Cantu was a three-year starter at the mid-Michigan school.

Cantu's friend Army Spc. Ryan Friedrichs is the husband of Wayne State University law professor and ex-Michigan secretary of state candidate Jocelyn Benson. She tells The Associated Press her husband informed her of Cantu's death from Afghanistan.

Benson says Friedrichs and Cantu "went through basic training, airborne school, flights back and forth from their base in Italy to Michigan, and deployed together."

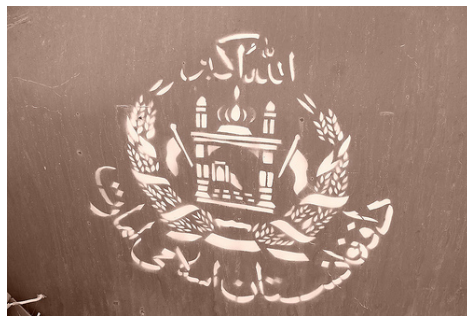
She calls Cantu's death "a heartbreaking, devastating loss."

The Pentagon hadn't yet announced the death Wednesday afternoon.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

Taliban's Tweet War: "They're All Over Twitter" "They're Incessantly Tweeting"



[Graphic:flickr.com/photos]

Aug 30, 2012 Jim Michaels - USA Today [Excerpts]

The military is ramping up efforts to counter the Taliban's growing presence on social media sites by aggressively responding to falsehoods and reporting violations of the sites' guidelines on violent threats, experts say.

Despite the Taliban's hostility to modernity, its members have adapted well to social media, military officials said.

"They're all over Twitter," said Marine Lt. Col. Stewart Upton, a spokesman for Regional Command Southwest. "They're incessantly tweeting."

Internet access remains limited in Afghanistan, but increasingly people have cellphones, and Taliban claims often spread from social media to satellite television and local news outlets. Militants also use a variety of languages on the Internet, including English.

The military has long struggled with how to counter enemy propaganda in Afghanistan. Insurgents post claims quickly, and the military had been slow to respond, waiting to get the full story.

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

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



A soldier from the U.S. Army's Charlie Company, 1-12 Infantry, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division keeps watch at night at Observation Post Mustang in Kunar Province on June 5. Tim Wimborne / Reuters

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

“Militants Have Made A Surprise Attack” On Government Military Base In Garbaharey And On Kenyan Occupation Troops In Miido

September 5, 2012 Sh. M. Network

GARBAHAREY (Sh. M. Network) — Al shabab militants have made a surprise attack on the country's south-western town of Garbaharey used by Somali government-backed troops as a base, reports said.

Witnesses confirmed that the Al-Shabab fighters used heavy weaponry in the attack which took place on Tuesday night on the outskirts of Garbaharey, which sets near the to the country's borders with its neighbors Ethiopia and Kenya.

The conflicts reportedly broke out late on Tuesday continuing overnight into early Wednesday when Al-

Shabab fighters attacked Garbaharey district, targeting Somali government forces using mortar shells and artillery fire.

At least two people were confirmed killed and three others have been injured who were taken to a hospital in the town for treatment, according to local residents.

Reports said heavy fighting between Somali forces backed by Kenyan army has again broke out on Wednesday the Miido village near Afmadow town in Lower Jubba region of southern Somalia.

“The battle was intensified this morning after Al shabab attacked Somali and AMISOM bases in Miido and both sides have used heavy weaponry, including artillery and mortars,” Miido resident said.

It was immediately unclear the exact casualties of the renewed fighting in Miido close to Afmadow town.

The situation is tense and the combat is going on in several villages located on the outskirts if Afmadow.

Afmadow is the second largest town in the south and only 115km (71 miles) from Kismayo, Al-Shabab's headquarters.

MILITARY NEWS

So Many Veterans' Claims Files "Accumulated" At North Carolina VA Office That "The Building Might Collapse"

Aug 30, 2012 The Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — The Veterans Affairs Department is notorious for red tape, but the piles of paperwork at a facility in North Carolina have grown so high that their weight had bowed the floor, prompting worries the building might collapse.

A recent report issued by the VA's Inspector General found the agency's regional office in Winston-Salem had huge numbers of folders containing veterans' benefits claims stacked on the floor and on top of filing cabinets.

The report advised that so much paperwork had accumulated that it "appeared to have the potential to compromise the integrity of the building," thereby creating an unsafe workplace for the federal employees.

According to the report, the VA has since begun moving the files to other sections of the building until a long-term solution is found.

"More Than 30 News Outlets And Media Organizations Lodged An Official Protest Tuesday Against Secrecy In The Court-Martial Of Pvt Bradley Manning"

**"Signing Onto The Brief Included The
Associated Press, Atlantic Media, Dow
Jones, Gannett, Hearst, CNN, McClatchy,
The New York Times, The New York Daily**

News, Reuters, The Tribune Co. And The Washington Post”

The brief also points out an odd irony: while legal filings in the military commissions trying alleged Al Qaeda members are — after significant lobbying by the media — published on a military-run website, filings in the highly newsworthy court martial of an American soldier are unavailable to the press and public through official channels.

9/4/12 By JOSH GERSTEIN, POLITICO LLC [Excerpts]

More than 30 news outlets and media organizations lodged an official protest Tuesday against secrecy in the court-martial of Pvt Bradley Manning, the Army intelligence analyst accusing of leaking hundreds of thousands of military reports and diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks.

The amicus brief filed with the military’s highest court, the Court of Appeals of the Armed Forces, supports a request from the Center for Constitutional Rights to allow public access to motions, briefs, written rulings and the docket in Manning’s court-martial.

While hearings in Manning’s case have been in large part public, the motions and briefs the prosecution and defense are arguing about are not available from the court. So, those watching the arguments often have trouble understanding precisely what the lawyers are arguing about.

“This Court should find that such an arrangement is unconstitutional,” lawyers Gregg Leslie and Kristen Rasmussen wrote in the brief, which was joined by POLITICO and parent company Allbritton Communications Co.

“The inability to view court documents filed in connection with a particular judicial proceeding burdens the news media’s constitutionally protected right to collect and disseminate the news and severely curtails journalists’ ability to do their jobs effectively.”

Others signing onto the brief included The Associated Press, Atlantic Media, Dow Jones, Gannett, Hearst, CNN, McClatchy, The New York Times, The New York Daily News, Reuters, The Tribune Co. and The Washington Post.

Military prosecutors have urged the court to reject the request for direct access to the court-martial filings.

Prosecutors say the public can seek to access the records through the Freedom of Information Act, although that process is almost always untimely and the military has flatly rejected past request for Manning related records.

Manning’s defense counsel David Coombs has published some filings on his blog, but the prosecution and the judge have forced him to delete the substance of the

prosecution's argument along with the names of virtually all individuals other than Manning mentioned in the documents.

The brief also points out an odd irony: while legal filings in the military commissions trying alleged Al Qaeda members are — after significant lobbying by the media — published on a military-run website, filings in the highly newsworthy court martial of an American soldier are unavailable to the press and public through official channels.

Court filings in federal civilian court cases are almost always immediately and directly available to the public and press through an electronic docketing system.

The Supreme Court has found a common-law right of access to court records and many courts have found a First Amendment right to such records in most circumstances.

Military courts have recognized a defendant's constitutional right to a public court-martial since at least the 1980s, the media brief says. And the Army Court of Criminal Appeals found a "qualified" First Amendment right of access to court-martial exhibits in 1998.

In March, media groups sent Defense Department General Counsel Jeh Johnson a letter seeking access to the Manning court-martial filings. Johnson, who was instrumental in setting up online access to the Guantanamo military commission filings, has not responded to the letter.

A Walk On The Wild Side: The Underground Railroad Slips Into Syria Past Assad's Guard Dogs: "A Free Syrian Army Soldier In A Black Jacket And Camouflage Pants, With A Pistol Strapped To His Belt, Greets Them Warmly"

“The Local Community Has Provided A Network Of Support, Without Which The Opposition Could Not Have Survived”

[Truly Outstanding Journalism: The Writer Walks The Walk And You’re Right There With Him.]

August 21, 2012 By Sharif Abdel Kouddous, The Nation

Zabadani, Syria—

Abu Amer sits among strangers in the courtyard of a farmhouse at the foot of a mountain spanning the Lebanese-Syrian border. It’s just after sunset. Young children scamper around a mother and grandmother as they clear plates of food off a plastic sheet spread on the concrete floor. The men smoke and drink tea.

The mood is relaxed, but Abu Amer is getting anxious.

He has been away from Syria for six months and tonight he will journey back in on foot under the cover of darkness.

The fighting has reached Damascus and he’s headed to rejoin his family there. His response to why he left Syria is curt: “circumstances.”

A friend of Abu Amer’s in the Syrian town of Zabadani, twenty miles northwest of the capital, has helped to organize his return trip through a smuggling route used by the Free Syrian Army to ferry in weapons and supplies from Lebanon.

As night falls, a car pulls up with its headlights off. Four men hop out and join the group. They are all Syrian, between 20 and 24 years old, and they crack jokes as they prepare for the trip.

Three of them are from a small Syrian town across the border that has a long tradition of aiding smugglers. Its residents pride themselves on their knowledge of the surrounding mountains and their ability to traverse them unnoticed by army soldiers or border guards.

The fourth, 21-year-old Ghazwan, is returning home to Zabadani.

Everyone is dressed in dark colors, except for Abu Amer, who wears a white T-shirt that practically glows in the moonlight. “You have something darker?” Mohamed, the 24-year-old lead guide, asks. Abu Amer nods, pulls out a black T-shirt from his backpack, and slips it on.

The group walks back to the car and the driver opens the trunk. Inside are two assault rifles, an AK-47 and a German-made H&K model G3, fitted with a scope. Mohamed’s face breaks into a wide grin. “Ya Allah,” he says with appreciation.

Everyone piles into the car. Two of the men hold assault rifles on their laps. Cellphones are turned off.

The car stops some 200 yards away from a Lebanese army checkpoint.

“Hurry, hurry!” says the driver. The group scrambles out and walks quickly to the foot of the mountain, where they begin the ascent. Mohamed leads. Abu Amer follows the group at the back. They climb straight up for ten minutes, then start to cross. The terrain is rugged, filled with loose rock, thorny bushes and steep inclines. They keep a fast pace. When the Lebanese soldiers are out of view they stop for a break. Everyone lights cigarettes.

Ghazwan introduces himself and talks about life in Zabadani, which has been under constant shelling by the Syrian army for months.

He recounts being detained by security forces three months ago, casually describing how he was hung from the ceiling by his wrists and repeatedly beaten and electrocuted. After two days he was let go.

The two carrying the assault rifles are 20-year-old Rashad and 22-year-old Hassan. Ghazwan asks if they are fighters with the Free Syrian Army. “We’re support,” Rashad says.

Abu Amer says he is returning to Damascus to be with his family, though he’s ambivalent when the others ask whether he will take up arms against the regime. Like nearly all Syrian men his age, Abu Amer, 25, had done mandatory military service. To change the subject, he asks where the Syrian border is. Mohamed points westward in the direction of the Lebanese capital. “The Syrian border is over there at Beirut,” he says, laughing.

They stamp out their cigarettes and continue up the mountain. It’s an arduous climb and Mohamed stops the group often for short rests; everyone is pouring with sweat. After about an hour they reach the top. From there, a flat, treeless expanse leads to another stretch of mountainous terrain.

“They Are Entering Syria”

They are entering Syria.

Mohamed stops and gathers everyone around in a huddle; the joking is over and his tone is serious. He whispers for everyone to walk single-file behind him and to tread as lightly as possible. He tells Rashad to take up the rear to make sure no one lags behind.

They walk in silence, betrayed only by the sound of their shoes crunching on the ground. The half-full moon bathes the mountainside in a monochrome of pale silver.

They continue for hours, rarely stopping. No cigarettes are lit. Every so often someone loses his footing, sending a stream of loose rock tumbling down and earning a glare of disapproval from Mohamed.

Finally, they reach a dirt and gravel path that winds along the side of the mountain. After a few minutes, the lights of a small town come into view. Mohamed stops to make a call, shielding the glow of his cellphone screen with his hand.

There is an army base and several checkpoints on the outskirts of the town. He continues forward, weaving his way across its perimeter, along dirt paths and through fruit orchards, in a giant zig-zag to avoid the unseen soldiers.

Mohamed and Rashad disappear into a fruit orchard and come back with handfuls of apples. They are small and green and sweet. "Those apples saved me," Abu Amer says after eating three. He is visibly exhausted.

A little more than five hours after they left, they finally reach their destination for the night. It's 2:30 in the morning.

A Free Syrian Army soldier in a black jacket and camouflage pants, with a pistol strapped to his belt, greets them warmly.

Shortly afterwards, a pickup truck with its lights off pulls up along a nearby dirt road. The group clambers into the back and is driven to a small house in town.

"He Served In The Army For Five Years And Says He Defected In June 2011, While Stationed In Deraa"

Everyone is ushered into a green-carpeted room with cushions on the floor. (Gatherings with tables and chairs are a rare phenomenon in the Syrian countryside.) A jug of water is passed around and food is spread out on a plastic sheet: sliced tomatoes, white cheese, French fries, olives, hummus and a hot pan of scrambled eggs.

No utensils; instead, everyone is handed a sheet of the large, circular flat bread that is a staple of every meal in Syria.

Mohamed, Rashad and Hassan are glad to be back in their hometown and are in high spirits as they greet people. For them, this is routine. They make the grueling trek nearly every night, ferrying people and supplies back and forth.

The soldier, 32-year-old Abu Riad, inspects one of the rifles, taking it apart then quickly reassembling it.

He served in the army for five years and says he defected in June 2011, while stationed in Deraa.

The conversation turns to the escalating fighting in Aleppo and Damascus. "We have hope, of course," Abu Riad says. "We help each other, so they will lose. But when Bashar goes we will have fifteen years of chaos. This is his fault."

Sunrise is approaching and everyone gets up to leave. Abu Amer is taken to a nearby house to sleep. Shalaan, a short, rail-thin 24-year-old, is hosting him in his family home

and leads him indoors to a similar-looking carpeted room with cushions lining the floor and walls.

“A Group Of Soldiers Stationed On The Edge Of Town Was Caught Trying To Defect And A Firefight Broke Out. An Officer Was Reportedly Killed”

When Abu Amer wakes up late the following day, Shalaan is already up. He instructs Abu Amer to stay in the room until nightfall, at which point he will start the second leg of his journey, over another mountain, to reach Zabadani.

Shalaan stays in the room to keep him company; he is talkative. “It’s calm in this town. We didn’t go out and demonstrate here,” Shalaan says. “But we support the revolution this way. We can be more helpful like this.”

Shalaan has three younger brothers. Two of them, twins, are currently in the army completing their mandatory service. One is serving in Aleppo, the other in Raqqa, both hundreds of miles to the north.

The brother in Aleppo has tried to defect, but problems arose with the meeting point he had arranged with his contacts. Shalaan worries he has been captured by the regime. “His phone is off. I haven’t heard from him in five days,” he says with a forlorn expression.

“My whole family is opposed to Bashar al-Assad.”

The day goes by slowly and both Shalaan and Abu Amer are fasting. Sunset finally approaches and the call to prayer rings out across the town. After they eat, they pray together, with Abu Amer leading the prayer after much insistence from Shalaan. As Abu Amer recites the fatiha, the opening lines of the Koran, he is interrupted by the crackle of gunfire in the distance.

As soon as they finish praying, Shalaan steps outside.

A short while later, his mother bursts into the room, a look of deep alarm on her face. Abu Amer has not met her until now. “Where’s Shalaan?” she asks. “He left,” says Abu Amer.

“The army is raiding houses, get your things together, it’s not safe,” she says. Shalaan returns minutes later, slightly out of breath and looking worried.

He explains that a group of soldiers stationed on the edge of town was caught trying to defect and a firefight broke out. An officer was reportedly killed.

“We have to move you to another house, a safer one. Yallah, quickly,” Shalaan says. They exit through the back of the house, where a friend is waiting. Shalaan tells his mother to turn the kitchen lights off.

Tensions are running high. Shalaan leads them in a semi-jog through a small farmyard and over a low-lying wire fence to a secluded house atop a hill.

Shalaan's friend unlocks the door and they enter in silence. The house is pitch-black; they dare not use even their cellphone screens for fear the light will be seen. They feel their way to a bedroom, where they sit on the floor and whisper. Shalaan goes to the window and peers out, his motionless silhouette the only visible shape in the room. They stay there for hours.

Life in this Syrian town had become a cat-and-mouse game, a daily regimen of hiding from the army.

The local community has provided a network of support, without which the opposition could not have survived. The players have been brought together by the camaraderie of joint resistance.

Shalaan leaves and returns with food for sohour—the pre-sunrise meal to prepare for the next day's fast. There will be no walk to Zabadani that night. It is far too dangerous. Abu Amer will have to wait another day in the safe house. With nothing to do, he sleeps through most of the next day.

Finally, night falls and it's time to go. Abu Amer steps outside with Shalaan to find Ghazwan standing waiting for them.

Shalaan leads them behind the house up a steep hill. Two men are waiting for them at the top, carrying the assault rifles brought in from Lebanon two nights before. Shalaan quickly greets them and introduces Abu Amer and Ghazwan before bidding farewell and heading home.

The men lead Abu Amer and Ghazwan on another grueling ascent. The terrain is easier but the incline is very steep. In two hours they reach the summit, where they are met by two youths, 16 and 18, both from Zabadani.

They offer canteens of water and walking sticks to Abu Amer and Ghazwan, before setting off with them.

As they cross the mountain peak, the lights of Zabadani come into view in the picturesque valley below, a peaceful scene that is shattered almost immediately by the deep booms of shelling that fill the night sky.

As they descend, the only sounds are of the intermittent shelling and a dog barking in the distance. One of the youths points out an army checkpoint jutting out on the side of the mountain.

He pauses to talk into a walkie-talkie before continuing down. After an hour and a half, they reach level ground, where they are greeted by an older resident holding a walkie-talkie. He leads them along a path to a farmhouse on the outskirts of town. Inside, they are offered fruits and tea. Abu Amer is exhausted but happy to have arrived; the journey from Lebanon has taken two days.

"I'll rest tomorrow," he says. "Then I need to see about getting to Damascus."

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



U.S. soldier in Bejjia village Iraq, Feb. 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. 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 war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.

Drunk Lt. Col. Arrested Outside Fayetteville “Nightclub” Attacks Fayetteville Police Officers “With A Deadly Weapon” “Court Documents Show Plummer Arrived At Fort Bragg Last Week”

Aug 30, 2012 The Associated Press

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. — An Army officer at Fort Bragg has been charged with driving under the influence and assaulting three Fayetteville police officers.

The Fayetteville Observer reported that 41-year-old Lt. Col. Alfonso T. Plummer was arrested Wednesday for an incident that occurred as he tried to leave a nightclub last weekend.

Plummer is charged with three counts of assault with a deadly weapon on a government official and one count each of driving while impaired and possessing an open container of alcohol in the passenger area of a vehicle.

Court documents show Plummer arrived at Fort Bragg last week.

It was not clear if Plummer has an attorney.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder and it is the working class who fights all the battles, the working class who makes the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely sheds their blood and furnishes their corpses, and it is they who have never yet had a voice - in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war.

They are continually talking about patriotic duty. It is not their patriotic duty but your patriotic duty that they are concerned about. Their patriotic duty never takes them to the firing line or chucks them into the trenches.
-- Eugene V. Debs

IN MEMORIAM: Gore Vidal: 1925-2012

By Fabian Bouthillette; September / October 2012 Humanist

Fabian Bouthillette was Gore Vidal's assistant, "naval attaché," and friend. He's currently writing a book about his military service and his time with Vidal.

"Style is knowing who you are, what you want to say, and not giving a damn," Gore Vidal famously said.

I came across the quote in his Los Angeles Times obituary. It wasn't the first time I'd heard it; Gore said it to me himself. Really, it's a humanist quote, applicable to any form of spirituality or philosophy that seeks happiness and enlightenment. The not giving a damn part was perhaps a bit aggressive, but that was Gore, and it's me too.

I entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1999 thinking that I would one day become an admiral.

After realizing the imperial nature of our government and armed forces, I left the Navy in 2005. The transition to civilian life was the most difficult task I have ever had to accomplish—ongoing, really.

From 2005 to 2008 I lived in New York City and gave much of my time to Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) and a group called Military Resistance. These two groups were my identity for those three years. They're still a part of me, but I've since found balance and peace with the entire world and myself — we're actually inseparable.

Finding that balance began when I moved to Los Angeles, California, in September 2008. Two months later, Gore Vidal called me on my cell phone, catching me in the middle of a slight hangover, and invited me to his house the following day. Gore's friend Jean Stein, whom I'd met in New York through anti-war activism, had told Gore I was a Naval Academy graduate engaged with anti-war organizing and that he should meet me.

The next day, Gore received me in his bedroom (where he died on July 31, 2012) and thus began a twenty-two month partnership that finally got my head settled into the civilian world, and forced me to mature into a man at a rate that was at times overwhelming. Basically, Gore challenged me to know who I am, know what I want to say, and not give a damn. He drilled me by pushing my brain and body to the brink of exhaustion as I accompanied him and pushed his wheelchair all over Los Angeles, New York, and much of Europe. He never referred to me as his assistant, rather as his "naval attaché." Serving him was the greatest duty of my life.

Gore was many things to many people, but at his core he was an anti-war veteran and also a humanist.

He avoided front-line duty in World War II (thanks to his family connections to West Point) but lost many childhood friends. His best friend (and lover), a Marine named Jimmie Trimble, was killed on Iwo Jima.

Gore never forgave the military machine for Trimble's death, nor for the deaths of all those used as cannon fodder. Iwo Jima was a battle of vanity, unnecessary for the conquest of Japan. Trimble and so many others were slaughtered for the glory of the United States and its generals.

Fortunately, the United States is going through an evolution of consciousness right now that's leading to some sort of revolution.

Gore Vidal was on the leading edge of that evolution — the "tip of the spear," as we military types so often like to think of ourselves.

It was he who longest taught, and resisted, the perils of the top 1 percent accumulating most of the nation's wealth.

And for my taste, Gore did it the best.

His writings, specifically the seven historical novels that are commonly referred to as his "Narratives of Empire," give personality and emotion to our nation's history. Understanding Gore's historical context would make any future political movement more united and therefore more successful.

While the loss of Gore and of his powerful voice is a blow, I feel sure that his lessons can be advanced into a new era, a humanist era, where love and compassion are the driving emotions.

USS Haditha Accidentally Sinks Fishing Boat, Machine-Guns Survivors



June 10, 2012 by G-Had, The Duffle Blog

Manama, Bahrain – In a rare setback for the international anti-piracy campaign off Somalia, US Navy officials today admitted that the American warship USS Haditha accidentally sank a Chinese fishing vessel just east of Somalia and then inadvertently machine-gunned the survivors.

This contradicted the Haditha's initial report, which said that it had been attacked by seven pirate skiffs and a pair of pirate-operated Mirage jets armed with Exocet missiles.

Vice Admiral Mark I. Fox, the commander of the United States 5th Fleet, spoke to reporters following reports that a fishing vessel had been “blown out of the water” by “an unusually well-armed warship that happened to be flying an American flag.”

Captain Erik King, the commander of the Haditha, claims that his ship was simply following the rules of engagement.

According to him, the Haditha originally spotted what it thought was a pirate vessel while patrolling 75 nautical miles east of Somalia.

“She was casually steaming up and down the coast with a group of armed men on board, obviously lying in wait for the next innocent ship to steam across her path,” Captain King said.

Many fishing trawlers carry armed guards while sailing through Somali waters.

When the Haditha demanded the fishing boat stop and be searched, its crew refused, claiming it was a sovereign vessel in international waters.

“Under our current rules of engagement, we're allowed to prevent any suspicious vessels from leaving the area, and that's what we proceeded to do,” said Captain King, referring to the Haditha's subsequent attack on the fishing boat with its 5 inch gun, Mark 46 torpedoes, and the Captain's 9mm sidearm, which he fired from the bridge.

After the boat sank, the survivors began swimming towards the Haditha, prompting Captain King to order all four of the ship's .50 caliber machine guns to open fire on them, as well as launch the ship's SH-60 Seahawk helicopter to drop depth charges.

"They were clearly attempting to board our vessel," said Captain King, "and the rules of engagement allow us to use deadly force to prevent potentially hostile individuals from 'closing with or boarding' our ship, so I'm unclear what the problem is."

According to an anonymous source from the Haditha, just before the attack Captain King also told his sailors that he'd rather "be tried by twelve than carried by six."

The Haditha is an Arleigh Burke--class destroyer, designed to operate in an asymmetric environment just off the coast of a hostile or potentially-hostile territory.

The ship has been particularly controversial for its habit of conducting escalations of force on Carnival Cruise ships with its Tomahawk Missiles, and of returning captains to their vessels with black eyes and claiming they fell off a ladder.

A YouTube video was also discovered last year showing two members of the ship's crew tossing baby seals off a glacier, although they claimed the seals were already dead at the time.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Heroic Zionist Army Attacks A Funeral Procession

September 6, 2012 Ma'an

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Israeli forces opened fire east of Gaza City on a funeral procession for two Palestinians and injured one of the mourners, medics said.

Soldiers were near the border east of Jabaliya and began shooting toward participants at a funeral at the eastern cemetery and struck one, the officials said.

Ashraf al-Qidra, a spokesman for the Ministry of Health, told Ma'an that one person was moderately injured and taken to Kamal Udwan hospital for treatment.

An Israeli military spokesman did not immediately return a call for comment.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Stupid, Cruel Filth In Action: Cop Attacks 12-Year-Old With Taser Inside Victoria's Secret: "I Guess He Got Mad Because I Was Crying Or Something, Then He Just Took It Out And Just Tased Me"

Jul 27, 2012 By Mike Rush, KSDK

South St. Louis County - A police officer tased a 12-year-old girl inside a Victoria's Secret Wednesday afternoon at South County Center.

Police say the officer came into the Victoria's Secret looking for the teenager's mom, who had warrants for her arrest. But it was the teen who got tased.

"This one goes in my chest. It was stuck in there so she had to keep on pulling trying to pull it out," said Dejamon Baker, as she pointed to a small wound on her chest.

Baker has a matching wound on her stomach.

"I had fell on the floor and I couldn't control myself. I just kept on shaking and stuff," said the girl.

Baker, her mother Charlene Bratton, and some other relatives were in the Victoria's Secret.

Bratton had just tried on some shorts and was about to buy them when she says a St. Louis County officer came looking for her. Bratton had warrants, she says, for numerous unresolved traffic tickets.

"He said, put your hands behind your back. I said for what. Next thing you know he tackled me down on the ground," said Bratton.

Baker said, "I was just crying. I guess he got mad because I was crying or something, then he just took it out and just tased me."

A police spokesman says the officer stated the girl was physically getting involved and would not back away, but Dejamon and her mother deny that.

"He should have had enough control to tell her to get back instead of pulling out his gun, I guess he was nervous or whatever, and tasing people," said Bratton.

The police spokesman says he believes the officer's actions were justified, but he admits it's a unique situation.

He suggests the mother report the incident to internal affairs to have in investigated.

The mother says that's what she plans to do.

Troops Invited:
Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Massacre Of The Striking South African Miners:

“My Father Asked For 12,500r, So They Killed Him. Can You Believe That?”

“You Have The Employer, The Government, The Police And Even The Trade Union Working Together”

04 September 2012 By Alex Duval Smith, The Independent

At the age of 22, Katiso Mosebetsane is too young to remember apartheid in South Africa. But he says the past week has taught him what it must have been like.

“You have the employer, the government, the police and even the trade union working together. They are supposed to look after you but they are against the people – that’s apartheid.”

Mr Mosebetsane has come to Marikana with his aunt, Anna, and sister, Veronica, from the rural Eastern Cape.

After the killing by police on 16 August of 34 striking miners, the family of 49-year-old winch operator Thabiso tried desperately to reach him on his mobile phone.

After four days of calling in vain, they borrowed money and made the 620-mile journey.

Now they sit, like strangers in their migrant breadwinner’s tidy shack, processing emotions of confusion, grief and anger.

“In the end, I found him in a morgue,” said Katiso.

“We do not know this area. We are country people who speak isiXhosa. But no one helped us. I went to all the police stations in the area, to all the hospitals and to the morgues. I found him in the Rustenburg morgue. Now we need to take his body back to our village, Mataitile,” he said, leaving an empty silence, which seemed intended to invite a divine solution to the daunting logistical challenge ahead.

The head-on view from Thabiso’s shack is of a parched, litter-strewn field beneath Lonmin’s giant processing plant. South Africa’s platinum belt, which holds 80 per cent of the world’s known stocks of the metal, has been disfigured by 40 years of mining.

Platinum’s main use is in catalytic converters, to clean the exhaust fumes of cars. But cleanliness, let alone prettiness or quality of life, never seems to have been on the agenda for the 25,000 men who travel from all over southern Africa to mine it here. The municipality has clearly decided that picking up litter around the shacks is Lonmin’s job.

Lonmin apparently sees the shacks as overflow housing, so it's just not done. Goats munch on it.

Even the settlement that ought to be the neat bit of Marikana – around the mine office, the hostels and the Lonmin hospital – looks neglected.

Further away, near the Chinese shops, there is a railway line but it is for ore, not passengers. Massive pylons hold up a web of megawatt cables from electricity substations to the processing plant. Weather-worn ventilation shafts pepper the landscape and emit a constant hum.

It is all about productivity; to produce 1oz of platinum, rock drillers operating 50lb hand-held machines have to break about 10 tons of raw ore below ground.

Like no other event since majority rule, the Marikana killings threw into sharp focus the fragile relationship established at the end of apartheid in 1994 between government, employers, trade unions, law enforcers, the justice system and ordinary people.

Yesterday those parties were sitting in the Lonmin offices – ringed with two layers of police razor wire – in a bid to achieve a handshake as a prelude to possible wage talks.

Outside, on the grass, a couple of hundred miners waited for news.

But it is very difficult to imagine any of these men going back to work any time soon. The only news that reached them yesterday were reports that police had opened fire with rubber bullets on gold miners.

The Marikana miners want 12,500 rand (£933) a month – a three-fold increase for some – and “if we don't get it the mine can close”, said a miner from Mozambique.

Thabiso Mosebetsane was a typical Marikana miner. “He worked in a gold mine before but seven years ago he started at Lonmin,” said Anna, 41. “We knew nothing of his life here, only that he was a member of the National Union of Mineworkers. He was like so many of our South African men – working hard to support five children and a granny in the Eastern Cape. We only saw him at Christmas.”

Since arriving, she said, she had discovered that he paid 3,000R a month in rent for his shack, and a further 6,000R for electricity, water and the use of an outside toilet.

Marikana is blanketed in silence.

Police riot control vehicles patrol the streets at snail's pace. No one says much. The processing plant emits a lazy plume of smoke – the boilers are running but not the conveyor belts. The only activity is at the taxi rank, where long-distance minibuses have turned up for business. It is Christmas for them: beds, fridges and cookers are being loaded on to trailers and taken to Swaziland, Lesotho and the Eastern Cape, where most of the dead miners were from.

Forty-four people died here last month; 34 on August 16 and a further 10 – including two police officers and two security guards – in the six strike days leading up to the disastrous police operation. On top of that, 78 men have been injured and 270 arrested,

though about half were released yesterday after the prosecution dropped controversial murder charges.

The government appointed an inter-ministerial committee, briefed to help the families of the dead and injured, issue death certificates, arrange counselling and help arrange and pay for funerals.

But Thabiso Mosebetsane's family has not felt supported by them.

“There is an office over there at Lonmin,” said Katiso. “They say they will send the body to the Eastern Cape and that the funeral will happen next Saturday. But we have many questions. Those people do not take time to explain. They treat us like we are inconvenient to them.”

His view sums up much of South Africa's view of the country's establishment in the wake of Marikana.

The African National Congress government's credentials to govern have been sliding. Around the country, violent service delivery protests have become a daily reality. Beset with crime and unemployment rates exceeding 50 per cent, township residents have lost patience with corrupt local politicians who have failed to deliver water, sanitation or textbooks.

Nationally, the ANC's governing alliance – consisting of the NUM-affiliated Confederation of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Communist Party – is perceived as being too cosy with the white-led corporations they opposed during apartheid.

Marikana has an emblematic example of this in former NUM leader and ANC heavyweight Cyril Ramaphosa, now a business tycoon who sits on Lonmin's board.

The disconnect between the South African people and the establishment was made complete at Marikana by the scenes of police opening fire on men carrying traditional clubs and spears.

The impact on public opinion of the three-minute blast of gunfire was all the greater because the recipients of the bullets – who according to autopsy results leaked to The Star newspaper were mostly shot in the back – were migrant workers feeding extended families all over the country.

President Jacob Zuma has indicated he would like to stay on when the ANC holds leadership elections in December. The judicial inquiry he has commissioned into the killings at Marikana is not due to report until the end of January. But that may not save him.

But for Veronica it is much simpler and much more painful: “My father asked for 12,500R, so they killed him. Can you believe that?”

MORE:

Strikers March At S Africa's Platinum Mine:

“At Least 1,000 Protest At Mine Where Police Shot And Killed 34 Miners, Demanding A Pay Rise In Renewed Demonstration”

05 Sep 2012 Al Jazeera

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

More than 1,000 striking South African miners have demonstrated at Lonmin's Marikana mine, where police shot dead 34 of their colleagues last month.

Dozens of police arrived at the scene on Wednesday while a helicopter hovered above the protesting rock-drill operators, whose strike to demand a hefty pay hike is now in its fourth week, crippling Lonmin.

One man at the front of the column waved a placard reading “We want 12,500 or nothing else”, a reference to the group's demand for a hike in base pay to \$1,500 a month, more than double their current salary.

Another protester, who did not wish to be named, said the demonstrators were heading to Lonmin's nearby Karee mine to “take out the people who are working in the mine shaft”.

Talks between Lonmin management, unions and the government to ease tensions and get the striking miners back to work were due to resume at 1000 GMT in the nearby city of Rustenburg.

MORE:

**Police Attacked Striking Gold Miners Near Johannesburg:
Company Spokesman Says “Nearly 12,000 Of Gold Fields' Workers ‘Continue To Engage In An Unlawful And Unprotected Strike’”**

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

04 Sep 2012 Al Jazeera

South Africa's mining violence has spread to Johannesburg, with police and security guards firing rubber bullets and tear gas at sacked gold miners who have been blocking colleagues from working, officials and police said.

Police there have arrested 13 people in connection with the violence at the Gold One mine outside Johannesburg.

According to police, four people were wounded when they were shot with rubber bullets by security guards on Monday at the mine that used to be partially owned by President Jacob Zuma's nephew.

As the violence spreads across several mines, workers have gone on strike and threatened to halt production in all mines if salaries and living conditions are not improved.

The clash at the Gold Fields mine east of Johannesburg, reported by police and Neal Froneman, the CEO of Gold One International, which runs the mine, was the latest violence to hit South Africa's mines in months of unrest.

Froneman said as police were called to disperse the protesting miners, they stoned a vehicle carrying people to work.

"Our security had to intervene, they used rubber bullets and police used rubber bullets and tear gas," Froneman told the Associated Press news agency. "Four people were slightly wounded and all have been released from the hospital."

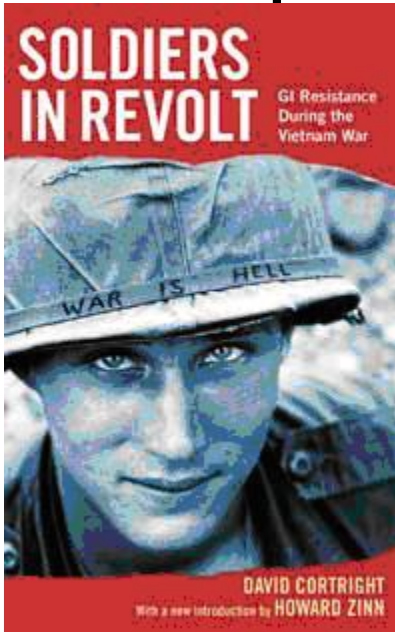
But Pinky Tsinyane, a police spokesman, said one of those wounded was in critical condition. The different versions could not immediately be reconciled. Tsinyane also said four people were arrested for public violence.

Sven Lunsche, the company spokesman, said nearly 12,000 of Gold Fields' workers "continue to engage in an unlawful and unprotected strike" that began on Wednesday.

A small black elite has grown rich while most South Africans continue to struggle against rising unemployment, abject poverty and a widening gap between rich and poor.

The mine where the violence took place on Monday has previous business ties to relatives of Nelson Mandela and Zuma - and was the site where firebrand politician Julius Malema, an avowed enemy of Zuma, pledged last week to make the nation's mines ungovernable.

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