

Military Resistance 7K13



A Soldier's Truth In An Ocean Of Bullshit:

"There Are Thousands Of Anti-War Soldiers Who Don't Go Out And Kill Their Fellow Soldiers"

"There Are Hundreds Of Thousands Of Soldiers With Real PTS/D Who Would Never Go Blow Away Their Fellow Soldiers"

**“There Are Hundreds Of Thousands
Of Soldiers And Veterans Who Have
Deployed Multiple Times Who Do Not
Shoot Up Their Local Military Base”
“Lets Stop Trying To Blame Everybody
And Everything Else And Realize That
The Fault Lies With A Man Who Tried To
Solve His Problems With A Gun”**



11/09/2009 By Daniel Blain, Iraq Veterans Against The War

Branch of service: Army Reserve (USAR)

Unit: B Co, 787th MP Bn, 94th RRC, 302nd CSB, 412th Engineer Command

Rank: PFC

Home: West Springfield, Massachusetts

Served in: Ft. Leonard Wood, MO; CONUS; Bocas Del Torro, Panama

On Thursday, this nation received word of another tragedy.

According to military and law enforcement reports, a US Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan opened fire at an Army Readiness area. In the ensuing gun battle, 12 people were killed and around 30 were wounded.

Within hours of the first report, all the major news networks featured experts in every field from PTS/D to Islam to Terrorism.

Everyone started speculating as to the motives behind this deadly rampage.

Some have claimed he did it because he was a Muslim; others have claimed he did it because he had contact PTS/D from counseling soldiers.

Still others are claiming he opened fire on his fellow soldiers because he didn't want to be deployed.

First, we must remember that this man is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. I know it is hard to do this in the face of the media/law enforcement community releasing all sorts of juicy details giving us a reader digest version of this man's entire life.

Second, although many experts have pointed out the very important facts about the stress these wars have placed on the military, and the very high suicide rate among active duty personnel, they are at best, irrelevant to the shooting itself.

This Major was not deployed.

We have no record that he even trained overseas during peacetime.

He did not have PTS/D.

To blame contact PTS/D for this shooting does a great disservice to those who actually do have to deal with PTS/D on a daily basis.

The major had no more difficult of a time than many other soldiers.

In case some of you are not aware of the problems, the military isn't exactly known for encouraging diversity.

Other soldiers have been harassed for far worse than their faith and haven't decided to go out and kill 12 fellow soldiers.

Muslims are no more violent than Christians, Jews, Buddhists or the followers of any other faith. There are currently between four and ten thousand Muslims serving in the military.

I researched this for the past few days and could only find two cases since 9/11, including Thursday's attack, where a soldier's Muslim faith was called into question as a possible motive for a violent crime.

At just one base during that time, non-Muslim soldiers killed 11 innocent people.

So, while the right has blamed his religion and the left seems to want to somehow blame Bush for this, I think we cannot blame anyone else but the shooter himself.

For whatever reason (the reason itself is not important) this man (allegedly) decided that the only way to solve his problems was by attempting to kill 41 people. Here lies the heart of the issue.

The problem is not with PTSD, with the war, or with his being bullied. The problem is not his faith.

The problem is that he believed violence would somehow solve all his problems.

There are thousands of anti-war soldiers who don't go out and kill their fellow soldiers.

There are hundreds of thousands of soldiers with real PTS/D who would never go blow away their fellow soldiers.

There are thousands of Muslim soldiers who aren't killing their fellow soldiers.

There are hundreds of thousands of soldiers and veterans who have deployed multiple times who do not shoot up their local military base.

This tragedy was brought about by one man who ignored counsel to solve his problems non-violently; ignored the legal and non-violent means of getting out of the military.

He even ignored the advice of his fellow Muslims who urged him to pursue legal and non-violent methods to solve his issues with deployment and service in the military.

Lets stop trying to blame everybody and everything else and realize that the fault lies with a man who tried to solve his problems with a gun.

MORE:

Side Effects

From: Dennis Serdel
To: Military Resistance
Sent: November 13, 2009
Subject: Side Effects
Written by Dennis Serdel, Military Resistance 2009

Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

Side Effects

**The Counselor sits behind his desk
while Duane sits in front of him
talking around a room on a chair
His Counselor is like a God
overlooking life and death
as he writes down secrets
and at the end He walks Duane**

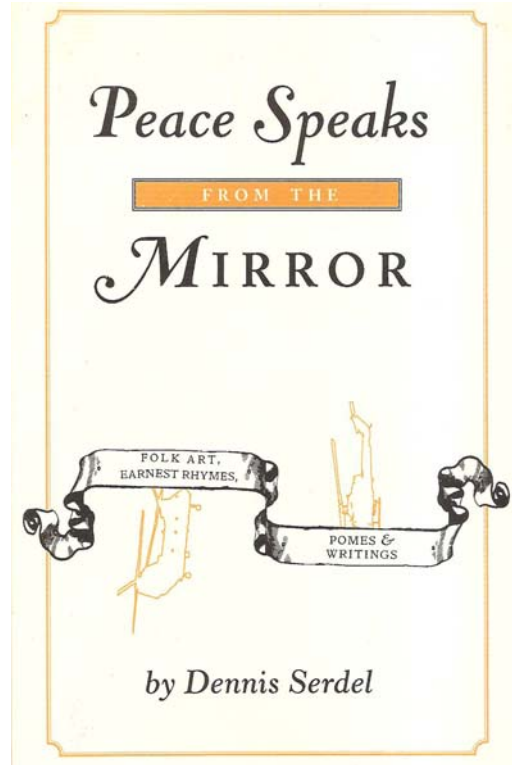
to the door and pats him on his back
telling him how much his Country
is so proud of him for serving
while Duane thinks the Counselor
is just talking about himself
In between visits He hands him
two new prescriptions
that might work
Later in the night in his home
in dark fear
Duane pleads to his wife
to take the gun
hide it because these pills
make him feel like he wants to
kill himself
The next day, he feels depressed
even more since seeing
his Counselor
The next week's visit is
shrugged off
as just a side effect
Duane tells him he shot
a pregnant woman
in the stomach and told
the other guys it was like
killing two birds with
one stone on night patrol
as some laughed with him
some deplored him
Today it gnaws on him
it looks so different in the reality
of a place called "home"
and sanity

MORE:

MORE OF DENNIS SERDEL'S WORK IN *PEACE SPEAKS FROM THE MIRROR*:

Get Some While There Still Are Some To Get:

[You know the power of the poems by Dennis Serdel from the front pages of
Military Resistance: now they're in book form: Ordering information below: T]



DENNIS SERDEL:

Shipped to Vietnam in November 1967.

Returned home in October 1968 to Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Joined Veterans For Peace in January 1990.

Joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War when Iraq and Afghanistan War started.

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Perry,
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**Walt Whitman
Carl Sandburg
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Now: Dennis Serdel**

T

ACTION REPORTS

“We’ll Probably Be Deploying In 2010”

“This War Is Based On Lies”

[New York National Guard Outreach 11.7.09]

From: Lauren P, Military Resistance
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: November 11, 2009
Subject: 11.7 New York National Guard Outreach Report

On a brisk early morning of Saturday 11/7, we met at the [XXXX] Armory to do outreach to National Guard troops who were leaving to participate in Veteran’s Day celebrations elsewhere.

There was a big turnout of soldiers, who seemed to come later than usual. I was on the lookout for the Guard who has been very receptive in the past in order to establish more formal contact, and maybe get an email, but that soldier wasn’t at this muster.

We brought 35 (total) DVD copies of SIR! NO SIR! and QUERIDO CAMILO, as well as 120 lit packs containing a special National Guard issue of Military Resistance (formerly G.I. Special), which we distributed all of – except about 5 lit packs.

The soldiers were generally receptive – many were willing to introduce themselves when asked. I observed that about 40% of them turned us down. This may have been because nerves were still raw from the recent Fort Hood tragedy (which unfolded earlier in the week). Those that did take materials were grateful and friendly.

I handed a copy of QUERIDO CAMILO to one and mentioned that it was about a member of our group. He responded: “Oh, it’s about a member of your group? I’ll definitely watch it.”

Another had already seen QUERIDO CAMILO, but requested another copy to pass on.

As usual, there was a sprinkling of apathy.

But our regular presence continues to make an impression. One officer said, “You guys miss fewer drills than some of my soldiers!” [Another participant heard it as: “You guys area better organized than some of my soldiers!”]

PEACE.
Lauren P

More from Alan S, Military Resistance, north side of Guard building:

The sergeant I approached before the outreach (an E-7 paygrade, 1st Sergeant) was the same one who provided a tirade (unprompted as we had only handed him lit) against Bush several years ago. I ran into him on my way to meet Military Resistance members near the armory. Always friendly though no longer accepting lit he seemed pleased to see me but his demeanor changed quickly and this is, generally, what he said:

“We’ve spent 3 1/2 trillion dollars on the Middle East without anything to show for it. The commanding general, several years ago, Ricardo Sanchez, said we’d be there for 20 years. Within 24 hours that sound byte was gone from the media and he himself (the CG) was removed shortly after.

“This war is based on lies. They least they could do is let us in on the truth; if they say something, admit it and stick to it so we know where we are.”

He also added “we’ll probably be deploying in 2010.”

Another soldier, a private, asked about Afghanistan said “I’m just back from Kabul; you don’t want to know what it’s like there.”

More from T, Military Resistance, south side of Guard building

The reception on this corner was definitely hot. Few turn downs, and lots of warm smiles and confident words of encouragement. In fact, this was the most welcoming reception for our publications -- always totally opposed to the Imperial wars and the government -- that I can recall over the past 4 years.

Something is changing in the mood of the troops, seen today and confirmed by the sudden arrival of emails over the past month from active duty troops who want their point of view against the Empire and the armed forces leadership printed in *Traveling Soldier*.

One soldier came past and said “After all these years, I still don’t want your handouts,” but even he sounded a bit wistful and half-hearted. For “all these years” previously the most we got from him was a curt “no thanks.”

MORE:

ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

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

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

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

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

If there were favorable responses, say so. If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out.

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

NOTE WELL:

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

All identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

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

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

**DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE
MILITARY?**

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**A Bankrupt, Dying U.S. Empire
Can't Do Business In Iraq:
U.S. Corporations Need Not Apply:**

“Being Seen As The Occupier Is Just Not Good For Business”

Even those who are interested and want to come are hampered by American companies' reputation here for overcharging and shoddy workmanship, an outgrowth of the first years of the occupation, and a lasting and widespread anti-Americanism.

: November 12, 2009 By ROD NORDLAND, New York Times [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD— Iraq's Baghdad Trade Fair ended Tuesday, six years and a trillion dollars after the American invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, and one country was conspicuously absent.

That would be the country that spent that trillion dollars — on the invasion and occupation, but also on training and equipping Iraqi security forces, and on ambitious reconstruction projects in every province aimed at rebuilding the country and restarting the economy.

Yet when the post-Saddam Iraqi government swept out its old commercial fairgrounds and invited companies from around the world, the United States was not among the 32 nations represented.

Of the 396 companies that exhibited their wares, “there are two or three American participants, but I can't remember their names,” said Hashem Mohammed Hatem, director general of Iraq's state fair company. A pair of missiles atop a ceremonial gateway to the fairgrounds recall an era when Saddam Hussein had pretensions, if not weapons, of mass destruction.

The trade fair is a telling indication of an uncomfortable truth: America's war in Iraq has been good for business in Iraq — but not necessarily for American business.

American companies are not seeing much lasting benefit from their country's investment in Iraq.

Some American businesses have calculated that the high security costs and fear of violence make Iraq a business no-go area.

Even those who are interested and want to come are hampered by American companies' reputation here for overcharging and shoddy workmanship, an outgrowth of the first years of the occupation, and a lasting and widespread anti-Americanism.

While Iraq's imports nearly doubled in 2008, to \$43.5 billion from \$25.67 billion in 2007, imports from American companies stayed flat at \$2 billion over that period.

Among investors, the United Arab Emirates leads the field, with \$31 billion invested in Iraq, most of that in 2008, compared to only about \$400 million from American

companies when United States government reconstruction spending is excluded, according to Dunia Frontier Investments, a leading emerging-market analyst.

“Following this initial U.S.-dominated reconstruction phase, U.S. private investors have become negligible players in Iraq,” Dunia said in a recent report.

Indeed, even those companies that prospered during the war and occupation, including many of the big military contractors, will simply leave with the United States military as it completes its pullout over the next two years.

KBR was among the earliest contractors in Iraq and has \$33 billion in contracts to support American bases.

Yet it has not had any contracts with the Iraqi government to support those facilities when they're handed over — or for that matter, to build anything else in the country.

“KBR is currently assessing the business environment in Iraq in order to make an informed decision regarding potential government contract opportunities there,” said a spokesperson, Heather Browne.

A few big American multinationals, like Bechtel, will still be in the midst of long-term projects like power plants and waterworks — but those were five- and 10-year undertakings kick-started with American reconstruction aid.

Now, Iraq is doling out its own oil-financed funds for capital projects, and American companies have so far received surprisingly little of it.

Sports City, a billion-dollar complex of stadiums and housing in Basra planned for the Gulf Games in 2013, was awarded to an Iraqi general contractor, Al Jiburi Construction, over 60 other bidders, many of them American.

“We have a couple American companies as our subcontractors,” said Adai al Sultani, an assistant to the firm's owner, with evident pride.

When the transportation ministry put up more than \$30 billion in railroad expansion contracts recently, they went to Czech, British and Italian companies.

Those nations had been members of the coalition led by the United States, although all pulled out long before the United States.

But one of the biggest beneficiaries of Iraqi contract money is Turkey, which wouldn't allow American warplanes to use its airbases during the invasion of Iraq, followed closely by Iran.

Turkey has gone from almost no legal trade with Iraq before the war to \$10 billion in exports last year, five times as much as the United States. Turkey's trade minister, Kursad Tuzmen, predicted that number would triple in the next couple years.

Both Turkey and Iran had huge pavilions at the trade fair, crowded with businessmen discussing deals. So did France and Brazil, also not coalition countries.

Last month FedEx, which has been flying packages in and out of Iraq since 2004, announced it was suspending its operations.

The reason is that Iraqi officials gave RusAir, a Russian airline, exclusive rights to cargo flights.

FedEx was one of the very few American businesses that braved the risks of working not only on American bases but also in the Red Zone, back when it was particularly dangerous to do so. Now that the danger is much less, its business is being thwarted by an upstart Russian come-lately.

It is almost an article of faith among many Iraqis, judging from opinion polls, that the United States invaded Iraq not to topple Saddam Hussein, but to get their country's oil.

If true, then the war failed in even more ways than some critics charge.

It wasn't until last week that the first major oil field exploitation contract was signed with a foreign company — British Petroleum, in a joint deal with China's state-run China National Petroleum Corporation.

Exxon Mobil, an American company, has an oil field deal awaiting final approval from Iraq's oil ministry. The Italian oil giant Eni, whose junior partner is the American-owned Occidental Petroleum, is expected to sign a similar deal. These, however, are service contracts, so the foreign oil companies don't actually own rights to any new oil they may find.

The newest edition of the Iraqi Yellow Pages, a business-to-business directory, doesn't have a single ad from an American company.

"Turkish companies are acceptable to all different Iraqi ethnic groups, because they are not an occupier, and they can implement big reconstruction projects at a lower cost," said an executive of the Iraqiya company, a leading Iraqi construction firm that often works with the Turks.

He did not wish to be identified for fear of offending American clients

Being seen as the occupier is just not good for business.

Even Iraq's prime minister, Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, has described Americans as occupiers to curry electoral support.

One European ambassador, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of his government's policy, said his own country's trade opportunities greatly increased in Iraq after it withdrew the last of its troops more than a year ago.

"Being considered an occupier handicapped us extremely," he said. "The farther we are away from that the more our companies can be accepted on their own merits."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Baltimorean Dies In Afghanistan

November 15, 2009 By Julie Bykowicz, The Baltimore Sun

A 43-year-old Baltimore man who joined the Army Reserve just shy of the cutoff date for enlisting and was deployed to Afghanistan two weeks ago was killed there Friday in a roadside bombing, his family said.

Spc. Christopher James Coffland had spent his life counseling, coaching, traveling, and studying people and cultures, at one point pursuing anthropology graduate work that took him to Gabon, Africa. A month before he turned 42, the enlistment age limit, he signed up to become an Army intelligence specialist, relatives said.

"Desk jobs were not for him," said Sharon Kroupa, a cousin from Baltimore, speaking on behalf of the family. "Everything he did had to have meaning."

Coffland trained for more than a year for his mission in Afghanistan. He and two Marines were killed when the vehicle they were in exploded in the Sayed Abud region, where they were investigating another blast, relatives said. Coffland's body arrived Saturday night at Dover Air Force Base, according to base officials.

Coffland was a 1984 Gilman School graduate and earned an undergraduate degree from Washington and Lee University in 1988.

His biography reads like that of several people combined: played professional football in Finland, coached football in Australia and lacrosse at Boys' Latin School of Maryland, worked as a university counselor at Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles, tended bar in Baltimore, studied anthropology at Washington State University, lived with Pygmies in Africa.

When he was in Baltimore, he stayed with his sister, Lynn Coffland, and her husband in Homeland. His parents, Dave and Toni Coffland, live on the Eastern Shore.

"He never married and had a family, so he was part of everyone's family," Kroupa said.

Many of his Gilman friends drove in a caravan to Delaware to support the family after they received Coffland's body. Willie Franklin, who was among them, said Coffland was a "selfless person who wanted to serve his country."

"He knew the dangers involved," he said. "But he was a very courageous person. He was absolutely the kind of guy, who, when the going gets tough, you want him on your side."

Friends and relatives said Coffland had considered military service many times and had won an appointment to West Point but declined because of the six-year commitment.

"He liked the idea of service," Kroupa said. "The idea of regiments and authority - not so much."

About two years ago, Coffland talked with an Army Reserve recruiter who found his skills and interest in others cultures a good fit for military intelligence work.

Family members said he graduated at the top of his group in boot camp and at Army intelligence school.

Franklin, his high school classmate, met Coffland for lunch in Washington last month, just before he was deployed.

"He was confident and ready to go," Franklin said. "He seemed fearless."

For all his career changes, Kroupasaid, Coffland had "found a place where he could do something meaningful."

"If this defines how he'll be remembered," she added, referring to his military service, "I think he would be proud of that."

In addition to his parents and sister, Lynn, a Baltimore designer, Coffland is survived by sisters Karen Bresnahan and Laurie Bartlett and a brother, David Coffland.

British Soldier Killed Near Sangin

15 November 2009 (AFP)

LONDON - A British soldier has been shot and killed while on foot patrol in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Defence in London said Sunday.

The soldier, from the 7th Battalion The Rifles but attached to the 3rd Battalion The Rifles Battle Group, was killed near Sangin in Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan.

Plant City Grad Dies In Afghanistan



Eric Lembke

October 26, 2009 The Ledger

PLANT CITY: Two years ago, Plant City High graduate Eric Lembke joined the Army. His brother said Lembke, then working at a grocery store, hoped to give his family a better life by the time his tour in Afghanistan ended next year.

On Friday, the 25-year-old Army specialist was killed when an explosive device hit his vehicle, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. His body was returned to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Sunday.

Lembke's brother, 47-year-old Robert Lembke, and Robert's wife, Mary, of Denver, said they didn't know Lembke had been deployed, and they never said goodbye.

Lembke was adopted by his foster mother, Robert's mother, Dorothy Lembke, when he was a teenager. At the time, his name was Michael Beckum, Mary said. He changed it to Eric Lembke when Dorothy took him in.

Because the two were so far apart in age, Robert Lembke said he and his brother didn't get to know each other until later in life. Robert remembers how interested Eric Lembke was in the Army. Robert had served and their father was a veteran.

At the time, Eric Lembke was working at Kash n' Karry - a good job, but "he wanted to take better care of his family," Robert said. "He wanted something better to do with his life."

Eric Lembke married young and eventually had two children, now 7 and 3, Mary Lembke said. He and his wife, Mashalle, moved to Colorado Springs, Colo., in 2008.

"He did everything he did to provide for his family," Mary Lembke said. "It's just really heartbreaking."

Second Soldier From Valley Dies In As Many Weeks

October 28, 2009 By Martha L. Hernández, The Monitor

ALAMO — Another Rio Grande Valley family is mourning the loss of a loved one in an overseas war.

U.S. Army Sgt. Fernando De La Rosa, 24, of Alamo, was killed by a roadside bomb at 10:43 a.m. Tuesday in Afghanistan, his mother, Rosa De La Rosa, said Wednesday.

Military personnel visited her Tuesday night and informed her of the death of her son, with whom she had last spoken two weeks ago.

One of the military representatives indicated final confirmation of the death was still pending, because Sgt. De La Rosa was not wearing his dog tags at the time of the attack, his mother said.

“They need to do DNA tests” she said. “But in the roster, it was said that he was in that Humvee” that was hit by the bomb.

The news did not come as a surprise to her, she said. She had sensed a foreboding heaviness in her son during their conversations and in their correspondence.

“He was sad,” she said. “I think already he kind of like knew, because in the other times he was out there — he had been in Iraq for the last two tours — he would call and he was OK. But this time that he was in Afghanistan, he sounded a little bit different — he sounded a little more sadder.”

“He was happier in other times,” added his mother, an Hidalgo County Head Start employee. “It sounded like he wanted to tell me something but he didn’t. And his letters, in the first one he sent me, he said that ‘There were a lot of things I wanted to tell you but I don’t want to do it,’ and he did not.”

Sgt. De La Rosa described his latest tour on his Facebook page this month, calling it a “crazy couple of months” and noting that access to phones and Internet was limited.

“Some bad things but we’re all helping each other through them,” he wrote in a post on Oct. 4. “Thanks for all the prayers. We all love you and hope to see you soon. Internet and phones isn’t easy to come by but we’ll try to keep in touch as much as we can.”

Sgt. De La Rosa also had a MySpace page that he apparently last logged in to on Oct. 24, three days prior to his death.

The Army offered to fly Rosa De La Rosa to Delaware to observe the arrival from Afghanistan of the coffin containing what military officials believe are her son’s remains, but she declined the offer. “I was not going to be able to touch the coffin,” the mother said. “They were going to let me see the casket get off from the plane and into the building. There is no reason for me to go, so I will just wait for him to come home.”

Military representatives told her the DNA test would take 10-15 days, she said. Once he is positively identified, his remains will be sent to the Valley, where he will be buried.

Sgt. De La Rosa is survived by his mother and his father, Rolando De La Rosa, and four younger siblings: Rolando, Alfredo, Rogelio and Rayven, all of Alamo. Alfredo is also in the Army and is stationed in Korea.

Also surviving Sgt. De La Rosa are his wife, Karen, and two sons: 4-year-old Fernando and 10-month-old Juan Carlos. They are living in Washington state and are expected to attend the funeral in the Valley prior to flying to Peru, where she is from.

Born in McAllen on June 21, 1985, Sgt. De La Rosa was a team leader in Company C, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, stationed in Fort Lewis, in Tacoma, Wash.

He picked Fort Lewis as his station after serving six years in Germany, his mother said. Sgt. De La Rosa had planned to serve the Army for 10 years and then retire, his mother said.

“He was crazy, very lovable, outgoing, mischievous,” she said.

“He liked girls, a lot of girls,” she added. But she noted that he was raised Catholic and that he became very spiritual after he joined the Army.

Sgt. De La Rosa graduated in 2003 from Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Memorial High School and immediately enlisted in the Army, his mother said. He was a good student, played sports and preferred vegetables rather than meat. “He was always looking after his weight,” his mother said as she sat outside her Alamo home holding a photo of her son.

Immediately after hearing the news of his death Tuesday, Alamo Mayor Rudy Villarreal ordered that all flags in the city be lowered to half-staff in memory of the fallen soldier. The young man’s death marked the first time someone from Alamo has died in military combat since World War II, the mayor said.

Sgt. De La Rosa is the third Valley service member to be killed in Afghanistan and the 29th to be killed in the ongoing wars there and in Iraq.

He is also the second Valley service member to be killed in as many weeks. Army Staff Sgt. Bradley Espinoza, 26, was killed by an improvised bomb in Iraq on Oct. 19. His funeral is at 11 a.m. today at San Martin de Porres Catholic Church in Alton.

Prior to his death, the latest Valley soldier to die in the ongoing wars in the Middle East was a Mission High School graduate who served as an explosives expert with the Army. Spc. Alex Gonzalez, 21, of Mission, was killed in May 2008 when insurgents fired upon his patrol vehicle, family members told The Monitor.

A total of 4,354 U.S. military personnel have died in Operation Iraqi Freedom since that campaign began in March 2003, according to the latest casualty report from the Pentagon, updated at 9 a.m. Wednesday. Of those, 3,475 were killed in action.

Another 815 U.S. military personnel have died in and around Afghanistan — including in Pakistan and Uzbekistan — since Operation Enduring Freedom began eight years ago this month, according to the latest Pentagon count. A total of 632 of those were combat deaths.

Eight U.S. service members and an Afghan civilian working with NATO’s International Security Assistance Force were killed Tuesday in multiple complex improvised bomb attacks in southern Afghanistan, ISAF announced in a news release Tuesday. Sgt. De La Rosa appears to have been one of those eight.

Sgt. De La Rosa’s family has been told his remains will arrive in the Valley in 10-15 days. Meanwhile, they are waiting for veterans group the Last Patrol to install a U.S. flag in the front yard of their home on Citrus Street in Alamo.

Rosa De La Rosa was remarkably serene Wednesday as she spoke with The Monitor.

“Como yo le digo a mis (Like I tell my) friends, ‘Your life is written in a book. There is nothing you can do: No matter how much you protect your kids, you are going to die, regardless.’”

Later, though, the bereaved mother suddenly burst into tears as she recalled the reason her son was fighting in a faraway war.

“He told me he was the only one who could defend his friends and family, and that is why he kept joining,” she said. Her voice broke as she repeated his words to her: “Mom, I feel that I am the only one that can defend you all.”

German Defence Minister Shot At During Afghan Visit [Better Luck Next Time]

Nov 15 (AFP)

A helicopter convoy carrying German Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg came under fire from the ground during a recent surprise visit to troops in the area, his ministry said on Sunday.

None of the three helicopters in the convoy were hit during the attack, which happened on Friday morning after the minister visited German soldiers in the northern area of Kunduz, a spokesman said, confirming earlier reports.

Deadly Incompetents Command French Troops: The Idiots Are Sending A Huge Clunky Armored Column Up An Isolated Valley Against Afghan Resistance: [In The Fifty + Years Since The French Command Lost North Vietnam, They

Have Learned Nothing And Forgotten Nothing]

11.15.09 By ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

TAGAB VALLEY, Afghanistan – Hundreds of French and Afghan troops on Sunday pushed into a hostile valley in eastern Afghanistan where militants launch quick attacks, then disappear into hillside villages. The mission: secure the area for a planned bypass road around the Afghan capital to move supplies from neighboring Pakistan.

About 700 French troops, joined by 100 Afghan soldiers, moved into the Tagab valley before dawn with more than 100 armored vehicles. U.S. and French attack helicopters roared overhead as insurgent snipers fired from the roofs of houses onto the advancing column of vehicles, according to a reporter for The Associated Press traveling with the French troops.

Intelligence officers estimated there were 60 to 80 armed insurgents directly on the column's path, said Capt. Vincent, who went only by his first name because of French Foreign Legion anonymity rules.

Insurgents could be seen firing on the column of vehicles and then sliding back into houses before attack helicopters could fire back.

The reporter witnessed a man dressed like a farmer fire a rocket-propelled grenade at French troops, then drop his weapon and run into a field where he disappeared into a group of villagers.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



U.S. military personnel at Orgun-E Camp, November 5, 2009. REUTERS/Bruno Domingos

TROOP NEWS

**THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THE TROOPS
HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**

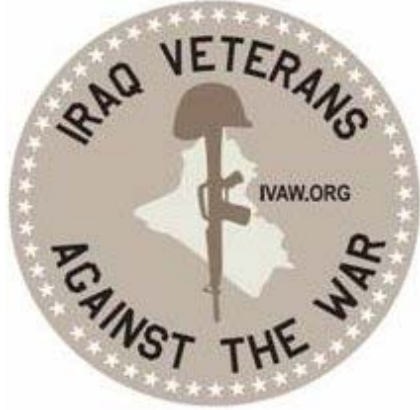


The funeral for Army Spc. Stephen Mace at Arlington Cemetery in Arlington, Va., Monday, Oct. 19, 2009. Mace, of Lovettsville, Va., was killed earlier this month in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

**“In Anything Besides A War
Setting I Would Be In Jail For What
I Did Over There”**

**“I Wish I Didn’t Have To See Anyone
On Veterans Day”**

“I Wish It Didn’t Exist”



11/09/2009 By Michael Kern, Iraq Veterans Against The War. [Via Lovella Calica, Warrior Writers Director and Aaron Hughes, IVAW]

Michael Kern
Branch: United States Army (USA)
Rank: Spc
Home: Texas

I don't want to be a veteran

Friday evening formation - the formation where the chain of command tells you about the upcoming events of the week.

First off the normal, "don't drink and drive, don't beat your wife and room inspections will be happening first thing Monday morning after mandatory urinalyses."

Also, they mention Veterans Day is coming up. I feel like I die a little bit inside.

As the commander is talking, I think back to when I was younger and what Veterans Day meant to me. I wanted to be a veteran, I wanted to be thanked and have a whole day to myself for the sacrifices I have given this country.

Back to formation - I wish I didn't have to see anyone on Veterans Day.

I wish it didn't exist.

I don't want to be thanked for what the United States thinks I did over there. I don't want a day like this to happen.

In anything besides a war setting I would be in jail for what I did over there, probably awaiting the death sentence.

So why should you thank me for the lives I took, for the things I stole, for the families I have destroyed.

Last thing, make sure you thank a veteran for the joy he took in all of these actions when over there.

“I Consider The Burn Pits Like The Agent Orange Of The Iraq War,” Said Capt. Jeffrey Cox: “The Burn Pits Are Still Going On”

Nov 10, 2009 Brett Barrouquere, The Associated Press & Nov 12, 2009, By Lisa Guerriero, GateHouse News Service [Excerpts]

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky — An Air Force veteran and a one-time contractor who served in Iraq are suing military contractors Halliburton Co. and KBR Inc., accusing the companies of exposing them to toxic fumes by burning everything from human remains to tires in massive open-air pits.

The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Louisville on Monday by former Air Force Sgt. Sean Alexander Stough and ex-contractor Charles Hicks.

“The burn pits are still going on,” said attorney Susan Burke, who represents the men.

“In many ways, I consider the burn pits like the Agent Orange of the Iraq War,” said Capt. Jeffrey Cox, of the Massachusetts National Guard, who filed a lawsuit in Boston last week.

Cox, 40, of Salem, Massachusetts, served as a combat stress social worker in an Army Reserve medical unit at Balad, the Green Zone and Camp Liberty from 2005 to 2006.

He said smoke from the massive pits would often drift over the hospital and living areas at the base.

“There would be nights it would be so foggy and full of this smoke ... you could smell it and it would just go in and you would breathe it all night,” said Cox, who reports he suffers from a chronic cough as a result of his exposure to the burn pits in Iraq.

Cox said the smoke would rise from the pits and travel to where he was living.

“This is not your little leaf fire,” Cox said, adding that the burn pit was downwind from a hospital. “This is 10 acres or greater.”

The other plaintiff is James Garland, of Osterville, who reportedly suffers from a carcinoma. The two soldiers were not stationed in the same place.

Oral Sex By A Member Of The Military? That Could Get You “Dishonorable Discharge, Forfeiture Of All Pay And Allowances And Confinement For Five Years” If Consensual Oral Sex Were Prosecuted “Everybody Would Be In The Brig”

11.16.09 By William H. McMichael, Army Times [Excerpts]

Sodomy between consenting adults should not be a crime in the military justice system, a blue-ribbon commission that periodically reviews military law concluded in a new report.

Repealing Article 125 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, a step the Cox Commission first recommended in 2001, essentially would decriminalize all private sexual conduct between consenting adults.

Such a move would also fall in line with a 2003 Supreme Court decision that struck all state laws prohibiting consensual sodomy as violations of the fundamental right to privacy.

The military defines sodomy as “unnatural carnal copulation with another person of the same or opposite sex or with an animal.”

Maximum punishment for consensual sodomy is dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and confinement for five years.

“Unnatural” is defined in the Manual for Courts-Martial as oral or anal sex, as well as sex with an animal.

Gay-rights advocates say the military’s sodomy statute is part and parcel of the law that bans open service by gay men and women and the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy stemming from that law.

The eight-member commission called for repeal on two counts, said Walter Cox, the retired military judge who chairs the group.

In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Texas law that made it a crime for two people of the same sex to engage in “deviate sexual intercourse.” The two men involved,

wrote Justice Anthony Kennedy, “are entitled to respect for their private lives. The State cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime.”

In addition, Congress in 2007 passed what Cox called a “pretty comprehensive” criminal sexual misconduct bill — an updated Article 120, which formerly covered only rape and sex with a minor — that now covers “the type of sodomy that you would want to prosecute,” Cox said, citing examples such as forcible sodomy and bestiality.

The new Article 120, along with three other UCMJ articles, “provides an adequate basis to prosecute any criminal sexual misconduct,” the commission concluded.

“We just feel that the waterfront is covered now, and Article 125 is just outdated and no longer needed,” Cox said.

As such, the only residual crime remaining under Article 125 is consensual sodomy — “not frequently prosecuted, but the potential is there,” Cox said.

He said that’s a serious issue.

“It’s been my opinion for a long time that if you have a law that people don’t obey, it causes kind of a general disrespect for law,” Cox said. “And it’s just not good to have them on the books.” Washington-based attorney Eugene Fidell, president of the National Institute for Military Justice, agreed. “Basically, it can be used in an arbitrary manner,” Fidell said of Article 125.

If consensual sodomy were prosecuted to its fullest extent under Article 125, Fidell said, “everybody would be in the brig.”

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.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**“Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.”
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

Encore



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: November 09, 2009
Subject: Encore

Encore

Conservatives are going after Obama with a vengeance, in order to bury the insanity of the Bush Administration. It is very effective politics and it works. That is how the Elites cover their tracks, even though Obama is still empire. The past has to be buried in order to make room for repeat performances.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
November 7, 2009

Photograph taken by Mike Hastie
Portland, Oregon 2005

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

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[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



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

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT 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.

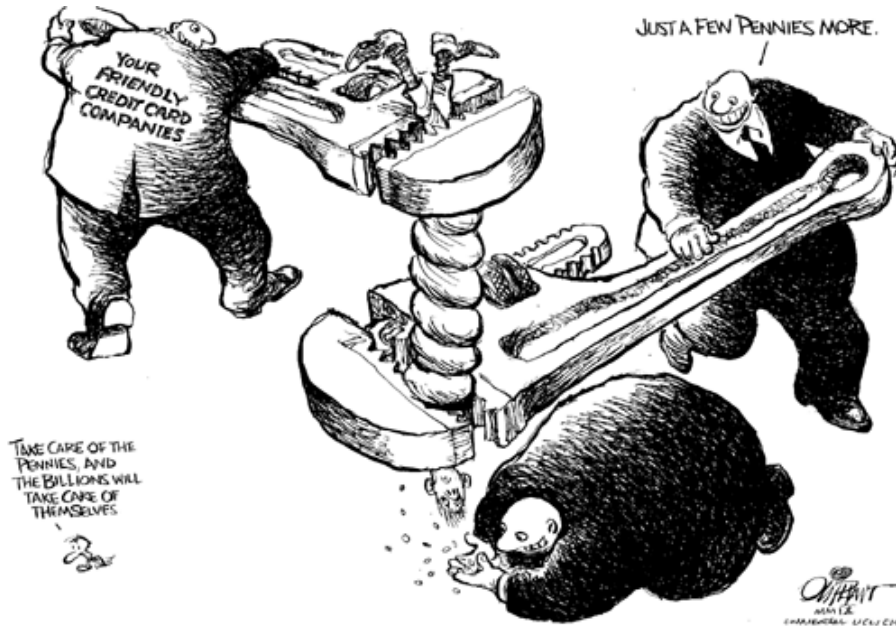
Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

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/> **And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



*Military Resistance is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org*

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

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

“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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