

Military Resistance 7K14



**UK Leaders Fear Anger
Of Frustrated Army
Families:
“Growing Public Opprobrium
Over Afghanistan Is
Approaching The Critical Stage”
“A Growing Antipathy Towards
Gordon Brown’s Government”**

Prime Minister Told To Keep Away From Procession Honoring Returned KIA:

**“The 81,445 Wives, Husbands And
Partners Of Service Personnel Could
Become A New Home Front”**



Wootton Bassett in the streets as six British soldiers killed in Afghanistan early last week pass by. Photograph: Matt Cardy/Getty Images

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

15 November 2009 Mark Townsend and Toby Helm, The Guardian [Excerpts]

Number 99 arrives tomorrow.

The 100th repatriation procession to pass through Wootton Bassett may follow within the week. As the cortege containing the bodies of the latest British soldiers killed in Afghanistan travels through the Wiltshire market town, emotions among military families will once again run high.

Those who have observed the coffins of the 209 British casualties to have travelled through Wootton Bassett over the past 30 months have noted a growing antipathy towards Gordon Brown's government.

The procession organiser drew a fresh line in hostilities, warning politicians including the prime minister they were not welcome at future repatriations.

“The families do not want politicians hijacking something that is for them,” said Anne Bevin, secretary of the Royal British Legion’s Wootton Bassett branch who has organised the town’s 99 repatriations to date.

Her warnings cap a fraught few days for Brown and his relationship with the Afghan conflict. Last week began with the prime minister being attacked by a mother for misspelling the name of her dead soldier son in a condolence letter. The next day, the eve of Armistice commemorations, the bodies of another six soldiers passed through Wootton Bassett and that was followed by the row over £47m in bonuses to MoD civil servants.

The pressure showed little sign of reducing as Peter Hain, the Welsh secretary, became the first cabinet minister to openly query the government’s Afghan strategy.

But this week attention will switch from Helmand province and the anger of the bereaved to the disquiet of the service families left behind as their loved ones serve on Afghanistan’s frontline.

Concern is building in Whitehall that the tens of thousands of wives, husbands and partners who live on the UK’s military bases could be the next to publicly voice concerns over their treatment.

Service charities have long warned the government that the idiosyncrasies of service life create a set of unique problems, particularly access to public services, such as childcare, education and healthcare, and employment.

Downing Street, aware that the growing public opprobrium over Afghanistan is approaching the critical stage, believes the 81,445 wives, husbands and partners of service personnel could become a new home front.

For several months defence officials have increasingly been told by families and charities that the stress of routine military deployments to Afghanistan on an already overstretched army is compounding the problems.

Mark Cann, chief executive of the British Forces Federation, believes the tension of those with loved ones deployed in Afghanistan combined with life on a British military base can exacerbate a sense of alienation.

On the internet message boards dedicated to helping service families cope with the pressures of having loved ones sent to war, parents yesterday exchanged candid insights into life on base.

The hunger charity Foodbank, based in the military town of Salisbury, Wiltshire, has organised food parcels for almost 250 military spouses and children over the past three years because they can barely afford to feed their families.

The Royal British Legion is among the organisations acutely aware that the routine movement from base to base of service families effectively ensures the partner, husband or wife has to frequently surrender their job. With unemployment rising to 2.47 million, finding work for service families is especially difficult, although no data exist for the numbers out of work.

The Army Families Federation and its Navy and RAF sister organisations are fuming about Brown's decision to axe childcare vouchers, tax breaks worth up to £2,400 a year.

Some 10,000 families are thought to benefit from the scheme launched two years ago and dissent is rising.

In particular, low-paid jobs would become untenable if the vouchers, which help pay for child minders, nursery places and after-school clubs, are scrapped.

Yet the central issue for those on bases throughout the UK and abroad is housing.

Although the MoD has upgraded 13,000 family properties over the past decade, the Army Families Federation says accommodation is the "most emotive" issue for their members. Minimal investment and defence cuts on service homes have exaggerated the sense of alienation and disenfranchisement felt among families, says the federation.

"No matter what any government says about commitment to soldiers and their housing, the fact remains that DE (Defence Estates) is hamstrung by tightly controlled Whitehall budgets in its aim to resolve long-standing problems caused by decades of under-investment," a spokesman said.

Families cite the findings of last month's public accounts committee report on service accommodation, which revealed that almost a third of service families considered their home to be in poor condition and almost a quarter deemed their properties to be poorly maintained.

Brown, though, has more immediate issues among service families to contemplate.

Four weeks have passed since he announced that he was ready to send an extra 500 troops to southern Afghanistan, providing the right equipment was available and that other countries made a contribution.

Senior officers warned that the delays are exerting a "corrosive" effect on the minds of families as Christmas approaches amid the uncertainty over whether it will be spent at home or in Helmand.

The former chief of the defence staff, General Sir Charles Guthrie, said families would find it deeply "frustrating".

Colonel Richard Kemp, former commander of British forces in Afghanistan, said: "The army obviously gets people ready to do things as quickly as it can and when decisions are deferred they are hanging on.

"They find it frustrating, their families find it wearing in many ways and not knowing whether their son or husband in a month's time will be off. The delay is a bit corrosive."

When scores of military families arrive at Downing Street for their views to be heard this Thursday, Cann will simultaneously be staging a morale-boosting family day in Aldershot.

But, like many who have contact with Britain's services, he is increasingly perturbed over the effect the negative media coverage of the prime minister and Afghanistan is having on families.

Cann said: "We disrespect the politicians at our peril, **[when military families and soldiers "disrespect the politicians," then the Canns of the world are the ones in peril]** and to take these cheap shots we are periodically doing is as much a disservice to the troops and their families as it is for the country as a whole. "Brown is getting a big kicking and I'm not his biggest fan, but I don't think the Tories will be any better either.

"The underlying complaint that can't be solved is that we're at war and no one really wants us to be."

Comment: T

Cann is right, too, and sees more clearly than most.

Yes, as Cann says, that is indeed the "underlying complaint."

It's not about the food or the housing or some child care vouchers.

The families and the soldiers have had too much of the Imperial war and this Imperial War Government.

And the families and the troops sense that the civilians share their growing mood of resistance.

The first part of the process of organizing rebellion to bring down a government that insists they fight an Imperial war is to pick up any stick, any issue, that can be used to beat the government.

They will pick up and discard many sticks before gathering enough strength and confidence to take the issue of the war on directly, and take down the Imperial government itself. But the temperature is rising, and the pressure building below.

The national furor last week over the Prime Minister's misspelling of the name of a KIA soldier in a condolence letter, which, in a war with popular support, would be so trivial as to escape notice, produced an explosion of rage sufficient to make writing "James" instead of "Janes" a national issue, for which the Prime Minister must publicly apologize.

Yes, they are afraid.

They are afraid that the soldiers and their families will decide that Cann is wrong when he says the issue of the war "can't be solved."

They are afraid, only half consciously, that the soldiers and their families, and the civilians who back them, will run out of patience and choose to impose their own solution to end the war, and obliterate any collection of politicians called a “government” that stands in their way when they decide to act for themselves.

The soldiers, with their families on one side, and the ruling government on the other, draw apart, and as they eye one another, begin to recognize who their real enemy is, and where the war is to be fought.

They are both right.

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

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“The Taliban’s Growing Presence
In Northern Afghanistan, Near The
US Supply Routes From The
North, Poses New Challenges”**

**“Their Numbers Appear To Be
Growing”**

**“In Areas Where They Are Hiding Right
Now, We Won’t Have Any Control During
The Winter”**

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

November 15, 2009 By Hal Bernton, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

MazariSharif, Afghanistan - The insurgents' tactics are familiar. Night letters warn village elders to cooperate or face death. Religious "taxes" must be paid, and fiery sermons in mosques attack the Karzai government and international forces.

The locale is startling, however: Afghanistan's northern Balkh province, which in the years after the fall of the Taliban emerged as one of the most stable – and in its urban hub of Mazar-i-Sharif – most prosperous places in Afghanistan.

The Taliban's growing presence in northern Afghanistan, near the US supply routes from the north, poses new challenges for the international forces, which until now have had a small contingent of 520 Swedish and Finnish troops to keep watch over Balkh and three other provinces.

In the first 10 months of this year, there have been 82 significant combat incidents in Balkh, more than triple the number in 2008, and the insurgency may be even more potent next year.

"In areas where they are hiding right now, we won't have any control during the winter," said Col. Olof Granander, a commander of Swedish forces in Balkh. "And there is a risk they will try to build up their capacity, and they will be tougher to fight during the upcoming spring and summer."

Some of the biggest Taliban gains have been in northern Kunduz province, where insurgents set up shadow governments in at least one district.

Across the country, in northwestern Faryab province, the Taliban have moved heavily into one district that's predominately Pashtun, according to US Army Capt. Samuel Weeks, who commands a company of US soldiers based in the province's capital city.

Weeks said that earlier this year he got a phone call from the Taliban after they captured a US surveillance drone.

They wanted to sell it back to the Army, an offer he quickly rejected because the drone had no intelligence value and he wasn't about to help fund the insurgency.

Weeks said the Taliban tend to stay in the western Faryab district, where they have the most support, and their numbers appear to be growing.

In Balkh, the Taliban work with smugglers who in the absence of government control have developed weapons smuggling routes, according to Western officials.

Many of the Taliban appear to be local residents who were refugees in Pakistan and have returned to rural districts with substantial Pashtun populations, according to Granander. These rural districts haven't shared in much of the economic growth that's revived the Balkh's urban center of Mazar-i-Sharif, a hub of trade and agriculture.

In an effort to spruce up the city, Gov. Mohammad Atta Noor even had European-style traffic circles built that feature statues and neon lights.

Atta is a former mujahideen fighter against the Russians – and later the Taliban – whom Karzai appointed in 2004.

Since then, Atta has emerged as an outspoken critic of Karzai's government. He says the Taliban gains have occurred as the central government failed to follow through with development efforts in the past several years.

"The central government has neglected northern Afghanistan, and that is why there is insecurity," Atta told McClatchy in an interview.

NATO officials said that Atta has been a strong partner in the fight against the Taliban but he has limited control over the police and army. He faces an uncertain political future, and the tension between him and Karzai has added another layer of volatility to Balkh province, with fears that the dispute eventually could trigger violence.

In the summer presidential campaign, Atta openly backed Karzai's challenger, Abdullah Abdullah, an ally against the Taliban from 1996 to 2001. All over Mazar-i-Sharif, posters left over from the election feature photos of Atta and Abdullah.

An oil portrait of Karzai still hangs on the wall in Atta's cavernous, ornate office, but Atta said that the election that recently made Karzai president for another five years included hundreds of thousands of fraudulent votes for the incumbent.

"This is not a legitimate decision to announce Karzai as the legitimate president of Afghanistan," Atta said.

Asked if he personally recognizes Karzai as president, Atta sighed and paused. He said his future support for Karzai depends what changes Karzai makes in his government, such as removing the minister of interior, whom Atta thinks has been a failure.

"Right now, Afghanistan is in a crisis of legitimacy," Atta said. "We will see what changes are made in the government, and based on that we will make our decision."

There have been reports that some Northern Alliance veterans are rearming themselves in case they have to fight Karzai, but the Swedish military couldn't confirm them, said Granander.

Atta said that he wouldn't support violence, but that he doesn't control everything that happens in the north.

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

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!**

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME



A U.S. Army soldier of 3/509PIR infantry 4BDE25ID Task Force Geronimo during a patrol near Tillman camp in Patikra Province November 8, 2009. REUTERS/Bruno Domingos

TROOP NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



Marine Lance Cpl. David R. Baker's burial services at Arlington National Cemetery Nov. 3, 2009. Baker, 22, of Painesville, Ohio, was killed Oct. 20 during a foot patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

Camos That Cost Lives #1: “Fuller Said Most Of The Army Does Not Want A New Uniform” “That Type Of Thinking Is What Caused A Near Mutiny In Vietnam”

11.9.09

Letters To The Editor
Army Times

Ever since the Army switched over to the Universal Camouflage Pattern I have heard nothing but complaints from noncommissioned officers who have deployed.

They have said that the pattern stands out against every type of background in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

The uniforms — especially the flame-retardant Army Combat Uniform — are easily torn, made of inferior materials, and the list goes on and on.

After my own deployment, I have to say that everything negative I have heard was correct. And after five years serving, the only thing positive that I can come up with is that at least I don't have to iron it.

That's sad.

But what's really sad is that Brig. Gen. Peter Fuller, commander of Program Executive Office Soldier, refuses to accept that they dropped the ball on the Army's uniform (“Camouflage called a low priority for soldiers,” Oct. 19).

Fuller said most of the Army does not want a new uniform.

That type of thinking is what caused a near mutiny in Vietnam when they switched from the M14 to the M16, which had nothing but issues.

They got a lot of people killed in Vietnam because the Army was incapable of critiquing itself.

Fuller goes on to ask what we would rather do: spend \$5 billion replacing our uniforms, or spend that money on more armored personnel carriers.

I would rather have the Multi-Cam.

And here's why:

Not all of us are going to be cruising around in vehicles over there. In Afghanistan, it's mountainous terrain without a lot of roads.

We do a lot of foot patrols.

And after Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus proved that we can't hide in our Strykers if we're doing counterinsurgency. We need boots on the ground so the people see us out there, helping them and dying for them.

Spc. Daniel S. Beddard
Fort Sill, Okla.

MORE:

Camos That Cost Lives #2: “Most Soldiers Have Known They Were Not Suitable From Day One” “All The While We Are Being Told That We Picked It”

11.9.09
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

Out of the blue, the debate over whether our uniforms are suitable for combat has begun.

Most soldiers have known they were not suitable from day one.

They are poorly made and have a camo pattern that doesn't blend anywhere but the ACU aisle of Clothing and Sales, and they fade after the first washing.

They also become unserviceable the minute the Velcro wears out on the sleeves.

But was anyone besides Congress surprised?

How surprised would they be to find out we were forced to wear headgear that is totally nonfunctional. Or better yet, that soon we will all be wearing a service uniform that is barely fit for high school JROTC.

All the while we are being told that we picked it.

General McChrystal's Adviser Calls For Action Against Power-Mad Politicians: "Those Are The Individuals That Successful Targeting Will Need To Remove From The Battlefield"

11.9.09 By Sean D. Naylor, Army Times [Excerpt]

"You've got your ideologically driven individuals or those who are driven by a hunger for power that are simply not going to be reintegrated peacefully into their communities, and so those are the individuals that successful targeting will need to remove from the battlefield."

"Or, as I've seen time and again, when communities have sufficient support and leverage they just start kicking these guys out of their local areas."

-- Col. Chris Kolenda, a special adviser to ISAF commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal, quoted by Sean Naylor, Army Times, 11.9.09

NEWS FROM THE 'STAN: Returning Scots Soldiers Treated Like Dog Shit: "As One Soldier From 3 Para Puts It Grimly: 'The Only Way To Avoid The Hassle Is To Come Home In A Fucking Box'"

From: William Bowles
To: Military Resistance
Sent: November 15, 2009
Subject: News From The 'Stan

[The author William Bowles has an outstanding website: <http://williambowles.info/>
“‘One-stop shopping’ for the real news hungry.” Highly recommended. T]

WHILE belated efforts begin to identify “rogue” elements in the Afghan police who may be more loyal to a bung from the Taliban than to the British who are training them, news emerges of the extra scrutiny faced by our own troops when they return from duty in Afghanistan.

Soldiers from Scottish units returning to Edinburgh Airport reveal that after getting off the frequently delayed RAF flights home “they find themselves subjected to a level of scrutiny by the UK Borders Agency above that of an asylum seeker”.

Despite still being in uniform and carrying an MOD90 identity card and a full British passport, it can take up to five hours to satisfy officials of their allegiance to the country they have just risked life and limb to serve.

One returning soldier who had already completed a tour in Afghanistan found himself at the back of a long line in front of a UKRA immigration officer who, when asked about passport requirements, was heard to remark: “Just the brown faced ones.”

The comment enraged troops serving alongside “brown faced” comrades who had faced identical threats, made identical sacrifices and won identical medals.

Complaints from troops deploying or returning to UK airports, including the main staging area at RAF Brize Norton, are legion.

Flights are often delayed while ancient aircraft are repaired or replacement aircraft chartered and it can take more than three hours just to check in.

Many of the problems arise when military flights are handled by civilian contractors who are more used to dealing with holidaymakers returning from Malaga rather than soldiers carrying kit and weapons.

As one soldier from 3 Para puts it grimly: “The only way to avoid the hassle is to come home in a fucking box.” — ‘Squarebasher’, Private Eye #1249, 13-26 November, 2009

“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

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

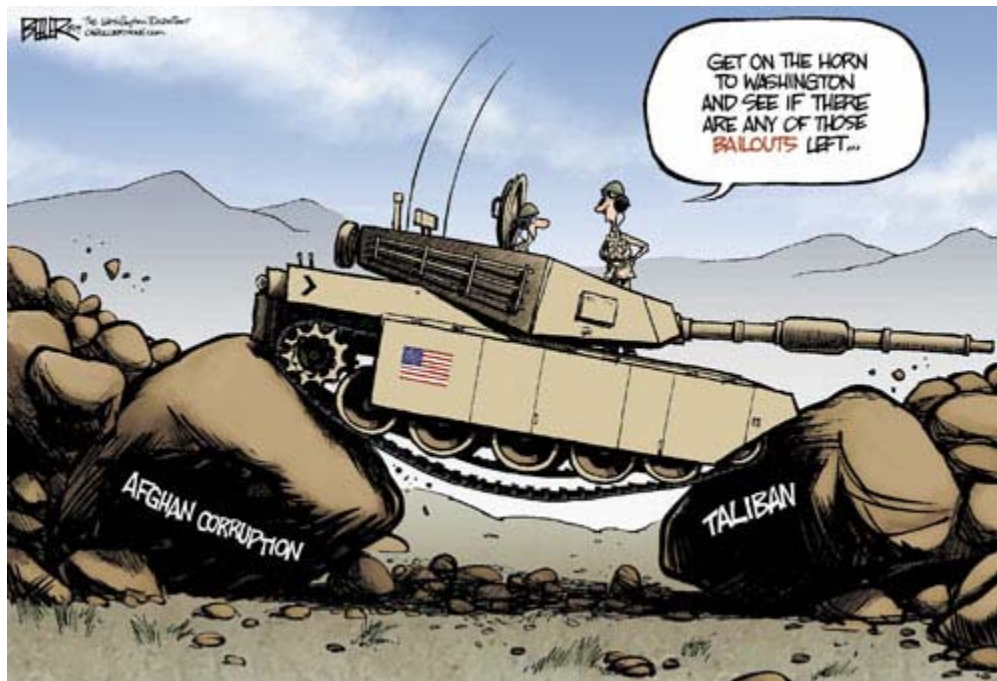
**“Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.”
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

“It’s Revealed For The First Time From Soviet Politburo Archives That In Late ‘79, The Soviet General Staff Advised Against Going Into Afghanistan, But Was Rebuffed By The Politicians”

“Obviously The Soviet Generals Paid Attention To History And Topography, Subjects Which McChrystal And Petraeus Apparently Did Not Do Well In At The Point”



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

[Thanks to Robert Sharlet, who sent this in.]

[He writes: “In case you missed this in the Times, 10/29/09, thought you’d find it interesting in re current US discussions on what to do in Afghanistan.]

[In the Op-ed, it's revealed for the first time from Soviet Politburo archives that in late '79, the Soviet general staff advised against going into Afghanistan, but was rebuffed by the politicians.

[Obviously the Soviet generals paid attention to history and topography, subjects which McChrystal and Petraeus apparently did not do well in at the Point.]

Mr. Gorbachev was also haunted by the image of the last Americans leaving Saigon in panic: "We cannot leave in our underpants ... or without any," he told his chief foreign policy aide, Anatoly Chernyayev, whose diaries have recently become available to scholars. Chernyayev himself called Afghanistan "our Vietnam. But worse."

October 29, 2009 By VICTOR SEBESTYEN, The New York Times [Excerpts]

THE highly decorated general sat opposite his commander in chief and explained the problems his army faced fighting in the hills around Kabul: "There is no piece of land in Afghanistan that has not been occupied by one of our soldiers at some time or another," he said. "Nevertheless much of the territory stays in the hands of the terrorists. We control the provincial centers, but we cannot maintain political control over the territory we seize.

"Our soldiers are not to blame. They've fought incredibly bravely in adverse conditions. But to occupy towns and villages temporarily has little value in such a vast land where the insurgents can just disappear into the hills." He went on to request extra troops and equipment. "Without them, without a lot more men, this war will continue for a very, very long time," he said.

These sound as if they could be the words of Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the top American commander in Afghanistan, to President Obama in recent days or weeks. In fact, they were spoken by Sergei Akhromeyev, the commander of the Soviet armed forces, to the Soviet Union's Politburo on Nov. 13, 1986.

Soviet forces were then in the seventh year of their nine-year-long Afghan conflict, and Marshal Akhromeyev, a hero of the Leningrad siege in World War II, was trying to explain why a force of nearly 110,000 well-equipped soldiers from one of the world's two superpowers was appearing to be humiliated by bands of "terrorists," as the Soviets often called the mujahideen.

The minutes of Akhromeyev's meeting with the Politburo were recently unearthed by American and Russian scholars of the cold war — these and other materials substantially expand our knowledge of the Soviet Union's disastrous campaign.

Much of the fighting during the Soviet war in Afghanistan was in places that have grown familiar to us now, like Kandahar and Helmand Provinces. The Soviets' main base of operations was Bagram, which is now the United States Army headquarters. Over the years, the Soviets changed their tactics frequently, but much of the time they were trying and failing to pacify the country's problematic south and east, often conducting armed

sweeps along the border with Pakistan, through which many of the guerrillas moved, as the Taliban do now.

That war was characterized by disputes between soldiers and politicians. As Russian documents show, the politicians ordered the invasion against the advice of the armed forces. The chief of the Soviet Defense Staff, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, raised doubts shortly before Soviet forces were dispatched on Christmas Day 1979. He told Dmitri Ustinov — the long-serving defense minister who had been a favorite of Stalin — that experience from the British and czarist armies in the 19th century should encourage caution. Ustinov replied: “Are the generals now making policy in the Soviet Union? Your job is to plan specific operations and carry them out Shut up and obey orders.”

Ogarkov went further up the chain of command to the Communist Party boss, Leonid Brezhnev. He warned that an invasion “could mire us in unfamiliar, difficult conditions and would align the entire Islamic East against us.” He was cut off mid-sentence: “Focus on military matters,” Brezhnev ordered. “Leave the policymaking to us.”

The Soviet leaders realized they had blundered soon after the invasion.

The Soviets saw withdrawal as potentially fatal to their prestige in the cold war, so they became mired deeper and deeper in their failed occupation. For years, the Soviets heavily bombarded towns and villages, killing thousands of civilians and making themselves even more loathed by Afghans. Whatever tactics the Soviets adopted the result was the same: renewed aggression from their opponents. The mujahideen, for example, laid down thousands of anti-tank mines to attack Russian troop convoys, much as the Taliban are now using homemade bombs to strike at American soldiers on patrol, as well as Afghan civilians.

“About 99 percent of the battles and skirmishes that we fought in Afghanistan were won by our side,” Marshal Akhromeyev told his superiors in November 1986. “The problem is that the next morning there is the same situation as if there had been no battle. The terrorists are again in the village where they were — or we thought they were — destroyed a day or so before.”

Listen to a coalition spokesman now explaining the difficulties its forces are facing in tough terrain, and it would be hard to hear a difference.

When Mikhail Gorbachev became Soviet leader in March 1985 he called Afghanistan “our bleeding wound.” He declared that ending the war was his top priority.

But he could not do it without losing face.

The Soviet leadership fatally prevaricated.

Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze wanted to pull out of Afghanistan immediately and blame Kremlin predecessors for the unpopular war. So too did Mr. Gorbachev’s most important adviser, the godfather of the perestroika and glasnost reforms, Aleksandr Yakovlev.

But Mr. Gorbachev dithered, searching for something he could call victory, or at least that other elusive prize for armies in trouble: peace with honor.

“How to get out racks one’s brains,” Mr. Gorbachev complained in the spring of 1986, according to Politburo minutes. “We have been fighting there for six years. If we don’t start changing our approach we’ll be there another 20 or 30 years. We have not learned how to wage war there.”

Mr. Gorbachev was also haunted by the image of the last Americans leaving Saigon in panic: “We cannot leave in our underpants ... or without any,” he told his chief foreign policy aide, Anatoly Chernyayev, whose diaries have recently become available to scholars. Chernyayev himself called Afghanistan “our Vietnam. But worse.”

Withdrawal was a long, drawn-out agony. By the time the last troops left in February 1989, around 15,000 Soviet soldiers and 800,000 Afghans had died.

“We must say that our people have not given their lives in vain,” Mr. Gorbachev told the Politburo.

But even his masterful public relations skills could not mask the humiliation of defeat.

Indeed, it marked the beginning of the end for the Soviet empire in Europe, as revolution swept through Eastern Europe in 1989, and of the Soviet Union itself two years later.

In 1988, Robert Gates, then the deputy director of the C.I.A., made a wager with Michael Armacost, then undersecretary of state.

He bet \$25 that the Soviet Army wouldn’t leave Afghanistan. The Soviets retreated in humiliation soon after.

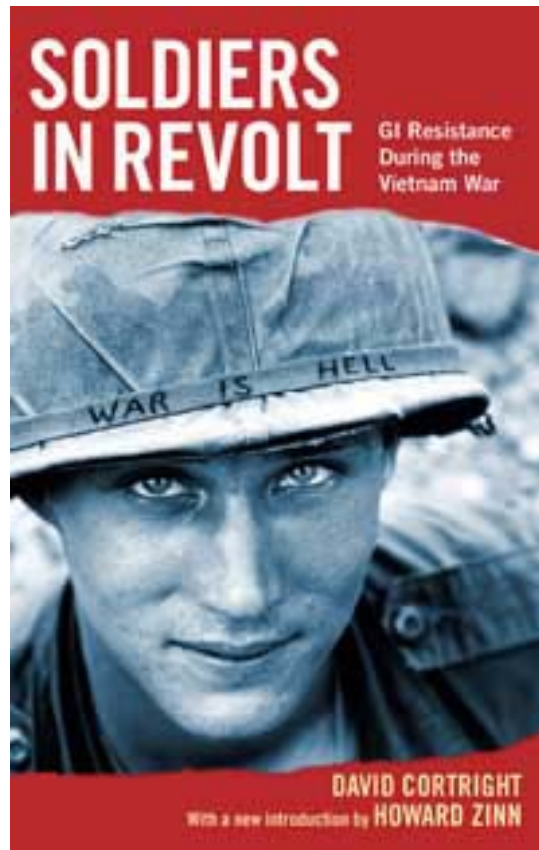
Mr. Gates, we can assume, paid up. But is there a gambling man out there who would lay money on the United States Army withdrawing in similarly humbling fashion?

And would the defense secretary accept the bet?

“To Avoid An Embarrassing Public Confrontation, The General Was Forced To Sneak In The Back Entrance Of His Hotel”

“Nearly One Hundred GIs Boldly Gathered Across From The Reviewing Stand Behind A Huge Banner Reading ‘GIs For Peace’”

“The Response From Soldiers Forced To March In The Parade Proved Embarrassing To The Assembled Commanders: Hundreds Raised Clenched Fists In Solidarity With The Demonstrators”



[A quantity of stupid drivel has appeared in the past few years asserting that it was the civilian opposition to the Vietnam war that led the movement in the armed forces. As you will see below, the sweeping upsurge against the war revealed by troops in 1969-1970 gave heart and leadership to the anti-war movement among civilians, whose public demonstrations were growing every smaller. Sound familiar? T]

Perhaps just as importantly, the May 16 actions had great impact on the civilian community. The spectacle of simultaneous soldier demonstrations at twelve separate bases finally convinced people that sweeping changes were occurring within the Army and aroused renewed appreciation of the potential of GI resistance.

From: SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1975. Now available in paperback from Haymarket Books. [Excerpts]

On October 11 [1969] nearly one hundred Fort Bragg soldiers, mostly Vietnam veterans, marched in a Moratorium demonstration in Fayetteville. On October 15, protests occurred in San Antonio and Colorado Springs.

At Fort Sam Houston, approximately 150 soldiers signed a petition sponsored by the new paper Your Military Left, requesting facilities for a meeting on post. Their plea was rejected, though, and the Moratorium gathering was held instead in downtown San Antonio.

At Fort Carson, Vietnam veterans Tom Roberts and Curtis Stocker, editors of Aboveground, encountered a series of command restrictions aimed at preventing them from attending an evening demonstration in Colorado Springs. Despite the obstruction, later documented in an official Fort Carson memorandum leaked to the New York Times, the two managed to elude their would-be captors and joined seventy-five fellow soldiers for the anti-war observance in Acacia Park.

A few days later, on October 20, the ASU [American Servicemen's Union] chapter at Fort Lewis called a meeting at an on-post service club to discuss the war and the need for GI organizing; the gathering was broken up by MPs, however, resulting in the arrest of thirty-five GIs and three civilians.

As the country prepared for the second wave of Moratorium actions, in November, an extraordinary full-page ad appeared in the New York Times Sunday edition of November 9.

A statement calling for an end to the war and support for the planned November 15 mobilization in Washington, D.C., was signed by 1,366 active-duty servicemen. Included among the signees were 189 soldiers in Vietnam, 141 GIs at Fort Bliss, and people on over eighty additional bases and ships throughout the world.

The statement had a dramatic impact within the peace movement and was at least partly responsible for the success of the events on the following weekend.

The huge November 15 peace rally in Washington (attended by some 250,000 people) was led by a contingent of over two hundred GIs, many of them associated with the local GI paper, Open Sights.

The next day, fifty of the servicemen joined in a picket line at the Court of Military Appeals Building to protest the injustices of military law.

A simultaneous rally in Los Angeles on the fifteenth also was headed by active-duty servicemen, including fifty Marines from Camp Pendleton.

The November Moratorium also witnessed a series of important actions by one of the most dynamic new groups of the GI movement, Fort Bliss "GIs for Peace."

The organization was formally launched on August 17, 1969, when several hundred soldiers, many of them assigned to the Defense Language Institute (DLI), gathered in El Paso's McKelligan Canyon to proclaim the following purposes: to promote peace, secure constitutional rights for servicemen, combat racism, improve enlisted living conditions, and provide aid to the local chicano community.

Through Gigline, an unusually well-written and articulate GI paper, the activists quickly attracted widespread local support -- and as a result, encountered serious repression. Paul Nevins, a drafted Ph.D. student and the group's first chairman, was shipped out to Germany; Gigline's first editor received abrupt orders to Vietnam; and three other leading organizers were suddenly transferred to different bases, just hours before a scheduled Moratorium protest. In all, ten soldiers received transfer orders in the organization's first five months of existence.

New members always rose to fill the vacuum, though, and the group's activities proved remarkably successful.

One of their first actions involved an anti-war protest at the traditional Veterans Day parade in El Paso.

As weapons and marching units filed by in the November 11 pageant, nearly one hundred GIs boldly gathered across from the reviewing stand behind a huge banner reading "GIs for Peace."

The response from soldiers forced to march in the parade proved embarrassing to the assembled commanders: hundreds flashed the "V" for peace sign or raised clenched fists in solidarity with the demonstrators.

On Moratorium day, the group urged students at DLI to boycott the noon meal and gather for a period meditation at a nearby chapel. Nearly a dozen plain-clothes men and officers showed up at the church to intimidate the protesters, but sixty soldiers braved the threats and carried out the prayer meeting as planned.

The neighboring enlisted mess hall, meanwhile, was three fourths empty - despite the rare attendance of a huge contingent of officers.

The anti-war upsurge culminated the following Saturday, when several hundred Fort Bliss soldiers marched at the head of a peace rally in downtown El Paso.

The third series of Moratorium protests, scheduled for December, produced two additional GI demonstrations, including one of the largest and most militant gatherings in the history of the GI movement.

At Fort Bragg, a growing GIs United Against the War sponsored another rally in Fayetteville, this time attended by two hundred soldiers and two hundred civilians.

The more significant action, however, came on December 14 in Oceanside, California.

In the largest Moratorium demonstration in the country on that day, an estimated one thousand servicepeople joined a crowd of four thousand in a march and rally near Camp Pendleton.

The event united black, white, and chicano GIs behind a strongly anti-imperialist and anti-racist program and marked the founding of an important new GI organization, Movement for a Democratic Military (MDM).

Operating out of the "Green Machine" coffeehouse in Vista, Camp Pendleton Marines launched the paper Attitude Check and established MDM as an openly revolutionary organization.

Their program called for the right to collective bargaining, constitutional rights for all servicepeople, abolition of the court-martial system and its replacement with a jury and court of peers, the end of officer privileges, the elimination of racism, freedom for all political prisoners, and an immediate pullout from Vietnam.

During a visit to the area in February 1970, Marine Commandant General Leonard Chapman labeled MDM "a serious threat to the defense of this country."

Because of internal disputes, however, Pendleton MDM faltered, and by the summer of 1970 split into factions, with a new paper, All Ready on the Left, replacing Attitude Check.

Despite these difficulties at Camp Pendleton, the idea of MDM proved attractive to other radical servicemen. During the first half of 1970, the group's program and name were adopted at six other locations: San Diego, Long Beach Naval Station, El Taro MCAS, Fort Ord, Fort Carson, and Great Lakes Naval Training Center.

As GI organizing flourished, the factionalism that hindered MDM became evident at other bases, with several separate organizations often existing on one post at the same time.

No such divisiveness hindered soldier organizing at Fort Bliss.

By adopting a broad, non-partisan approach, GIs for Peace successfully united a large number of servicemen and, despite a lack of civilian aid, carried on an extensive program of anti-war activity.

One particularly effective demonstration occurred during a January 1970 visit to El Paso by Army Chief of Staff William Westmoreland. When the former Vietnam commander arrived in the city on the fifteenth to deliver an address, he was greeted by a picket line of eighty local soldiers.

To avoid an embarrassing public confrontation, the general was forced to sneak in the back entrance of his hotel.

The largest GIs for Peace gathering, indeed one of the largest in the history of the GI movement, was a March 15 rally in El Paso's McKelligan Canyon. Approximately two thousand people, including more than eight hundred servicemen, came together for a festival of political speeches and rock music, in a massive display of local anti-war sentiment.

At Fort Devens, about twenty GIs join several hundred civilians for the first rally ever attempted at this base. The paper Morning Report appears for the first time.

Seventy-five soldiers and five hundred civilians gather for an anti-war march and rally outside Fort Meade.

The first anti-war demonstration in the history of Anniston, Alabama, draws fifty Fort McClellan service people and two hundred civilians.

At Fort Benning, one hundred GIs and some three hundred civilians attend a "people's tribunal" on American war crimes."

In Fayetteville, North Carolina, Rennie Davis, Jane Fonda, and Mark Lane address a crowd of 750 Fort Bragg soldiers and three thousand civilians in the largest Armed Forces Day rally in the country.

At Fort Hood, over seven hundred soldiers march through the streets of Killeen and rally in a nearby park.

At Fort Bliss, GIs' for Peace and local students, demonstrate against the war at the local University of Texas campus.

The first anti-Vietnam protest in Manhattan, Kansas, attracts over one thousand people, including four hundred soldiers from Fort Riley.

An MDM-sponsored rally in Colorado Springs draws thirty Fort Carson GIs and several hundred civilians.

Tom Hayden raps to approximately two hundred Marines and several thousand civilians in a rally near Camp Pendleton.

Fort Ord MDM sponsors a march and rally of more than three thousand people. Extra work assignments and riot duty mobilizations limit the GI contingent to only one hundred.

A festival and series of workshops near Fort Lewis draw sixty soldiers and two hundred civilians.

The events of Armed Forces Day not only demonstrated widespread anti-war sentiment within the ranks but sparked continuing political activity at many bases.

Several groups made their initial appearance during the time, and a number of others experienced an increase in active-duty involvement.

Perhaps just as importantly, the May 16 actions had great impact on the civilian community.

The spectacle of simultaneous soldier demonstrations at twelve separate bases finally convinced people that sweeping changes were occurring within the Army and aroused renewed appreciation of the potential of GI resistance.

As Abbie Hoffman quipped to the crowd at Fort Meade: "Behind every GI haircut lies a Samson."

GIs United [military band] members participated in various peace demonstrations in the New York area. One of the group's most unusual and daring activities occurred at a civilian-sponsored demonstration on October 31.

Led by Sp/4 Verne Windham, ten Fort Hamilton GIs marched up the streets of New York at the head of thousands of demonstrators -- undoubtedly the movement's first anti-war Army band.

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

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/)**

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Perfect



A composite portrait of Obama and Bush brought to an anti-U.S. wars rally, in front of the U.S. embassy in Seoul June 16, 2009. REUTERS/Jo Yong-Hak

CLASS WAR REPORTS



RECEIVED

Doctors Driven To Despair: Veteran

From: Sarie B
To: Military Resistance
Sent: November 15, 2009
Subject: RE: Military Resistance 7K13: A Soldier's Truth

I strongly disagree with this opinion by IVAW member Daniel Blain concerning the Fort Hood shooting rampage that tops today's issue of MR. I think the fact that Nidal Hasan is Arab, Muslim and Palestinian are factors to be appreciated and understood as to their contribution to the degree of empathy that Hasan must certainly have toward those under U.S. (brutal) attack – both directly and indirectly. There are other factors that Blain gives little or no regard, unlike IVAW Fort Hood Chapter co-founder Michael Kern, found in this article here:

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne%2BNews/World/Story/A1Story20091109-178694.html>

“Stress driving US army doctors to despair: veteran”

Last year 128 soldiers committed suicide, a tragic record which could be broken this year. -AFP

Reply: T

Soldier Blain made the following points:

“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.”

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*

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 send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 888.711.2550

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/gispecial/index-2009.html>: news@uruknet.info;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/

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