

Military Resistance 8H6



Notes From A Stupid Disaster:

Ghani Is A Hashish-Growing Warlord Directing A Semiofficial Police Force That Tortures Truck Drivers For Bribes:

**On A U.S. Funded Project, He Beats Up Building Workers That Displease Him:
“He Is Also U.S. Forces’ Main Partner”**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

July 29, 2010 By Karin Brulliard, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

NOW RUZI, AFGHANISTAN -- Haji Ghani is an illiterate, hashish-growing former warlord who directs a semiofficial police force and is known to show his anger through beatings.

In this Taliban nest west of Kandahar, he is also U.S. forces' main partner.

Never mind that the district governor says Ghani, 44, works against him, or that U.S. soldiers describe him as Godfather-like and his police as vaguely crooked.

"What's his is ours. What's ours is his," Lt. John Paszterko, 29, said of Ghani, a onetime anti-Soviet commander who now rules his tribal forefathers' lands. "He's a good friend to have."

With an AK-47 slung over his bony shoulder, he lords over 3,000 acres of his ancestors' farmland.

But Ghani's area, which includes three villages along the fertile Arghandab River, has suddenly become the focus of U.S. forces' latest push to defeat the Taliban. It lies along a critical entry point into Kandahar city used by the Taliban as a supply route, and government leadership here has long been feeble.



Ghani's area includes three villages along the fertile Arghandab River

So Ghani and his force of about 40 "soldiers" -- he has about 50 more in reserve -- are vital partners, according to U.S. troops, who said the force might eventually be incorporated into the new village defense plan.

American soldiers and the district governor say that only some of Ghani's men have law enforcement training but that the local police chief, an ally of Ghani, equips them all with uniforms and weapons anyway. On a recent day at Ghani's leafy compound, a few uniformed fighters cleaned tables and served lunch to guests.

The Afghan army soldiers set to share the U.S. outpost near Now Ruzi had not been deployed by early July. So when the Taliban ambushed Pazsterko's soldiers in late June, Ghani's police helped fight them off. After a roadside bomb detonated near the village, Ghani called in elders and menacingly told them to make sure it did not happen again.

Ghani is "one of the few people who does feel that responsibility" to fight the Taliban, said Capt. Paul N. DeLeon, 29, commander of Combat Outpost Durkin.

Ghani says his wealth comes from his land, which he leases to farmers, and from the "security services" he provides to a Japanese company operating the large gravel quarry on his property. Gravel blankets the U.S. outpost nearby -- a gift from Ghani.

His partnership has been rewarded.

U.S. soldiers make sure his fighters have ammunition. Flowing through Ghani's carefully tended garden is a gurgling canal, a project recently completed by the U.S. Agency for International Development that beautified a park on his land.

Outside, construction on the schoolhouse -- which U.S. troops refer to as "Haji Ghani's school" -- is almost done.

Yet DeLeon said the builders regularly complain that Ghani beats them when he is dissatisfied with their work.

Farther west on Highway 1, Afghan army Capt. Safi Ahmad, 36, said truckers complain that Ghani's police demand illegal tolls and torture those who cannot pay.

"By working with him, we're essentially enabling him," DeLeon said.

But DeLeon and NATO officials said they hold out hope that Ghani and others like him will serve as links between the population and the government, even though true government authority would probably work against the strongmen's interests. **[Nope, not satire from the Onion. Ghani certainly has "links" to the local population OK: the ones he fastens around their necks while his cops "torture those who cannot pay" as he beats up building workers. Afghans have every right to take up arms and go to war against him and the foreign occupiers who keep him in power. T]**

Ghani says the district governor, Karim Jan, is too "inexperienced" to be taken seriously as a leader. Jan, for his part, said Ghani spreads rumors denigrating leaders of rival tribes.

Over slices of watermelon on a recent afternoon, Ghani pleaded with DeLeon to allow his militia to clear Taliban fighters from the area west of his land to Combat Post Ashoque, which he insisted he could do in one day.

DeLeon assured him U.S. soldiers wanted that, too, but said first they must make sure there were enough Afghan soldiers or police to set up checkpoints in the cleared area.

"I'd like to take it slow, so they feel pressure from all sides," DeLeon said. "Then we'll take them out all at once."

Ghani reluctantly agreed, but then he pressed again.

He had just one condition.

"I will clear this area, I guarantee," Ghani said with a smirk.

"But during the operation, just don't ask me, 'Why did you arrest somebody? Why did you kill somebody?'"

ACTION REPORTS

“He Was Impressed By The ‘Sir! No Sir!’ I’d Given Him And Recommended It To The Private Beside Him” [Outreach To New York National Guard]

To: Military Resistance Newsletter
From: Alan S
Sent: August 03, 2010
Subject: Outreach to New York National Guard

7/27 Commuter Terminal Outreach

At around 12:15 pm, passing through one terminal to reach another, two National Guardsmen were approached and the sergeant, knowing me from previous encounters, said "here's the DVD guy again."

He was impressed by the "Sir! No Sir!" I'd given him and recommended it to the private beside him.

Naturally I obliged the sergeant.

I gave them both the handout from our last outreach which includes latest Traveling Soldier **[see below]**, GI Rights pamphlet, the MILITARY RESISTANCE contact card

[see below] MILITARY RESISTANCE organizing points and the double sided MILITARY RESISTANCE newsletter and Traveling Soldier announcement.

The sergeant took more cards for others and kept telling the private “to put it in the bag” as I gave him two copies of Stanley Howard’s torture statement as well.

When asked how he felt about the recent WikiLeaks revelations about Afghanistan he claimed it’s “bullshit” and “was put it out there to confuse us.” He’s suspicious of that but not Military Resistance, as he thanked me for material past and present.

Later on at the other terminal another sergeant took material – a DVD and handout plus cards for others.

We were interrupted, however, by a policewoman who asked the sergeant if “he was all right.”

He responded he was and put the material inside his shirt. The officer hung around, never addressing me but disturbing the soldier somewhat since he told me he’s not supposed to accept anything in uniform.

Nevertheless he seemed grateful for the attention and openly spoke of his career before the interruption.

Later that day another terminal proved empty of soldiers.

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. Reporting what went wrong and/or got screwed up is especially important, so that others may learn from you what to expect, and how to avoid similar problems if possible.

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.

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

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

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

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

MORE:

Military Resistance

Traveling Soldier
Newsletter



www.traveling-
soldier.org

(888) 711-2550

contact@militaryproject.org

Box 126, 2576 Broadway New York, NY 10025

SUPPORTING GI RESISTANCE

[front]

If you are a veteran who supports an immediate end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- the Military Project recommends you contact:

IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



www.IVAW.org

[back]

[Cards designed by Richie M, Military Resistance Organization]

MORE:

CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS31.pdf>

THIS ISSUE FEATURING:

ARMY LIFE: “THE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND THEIR GENERAL SELFISHNESS AND HABITUAL EXPLOITATION OF THE LOWER ENLISTED”

**By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent
Reporting from Germany**

“EVEN BEFORE I HAD LEFT THE NAVY I REALIZED THAT I WAS NOT PROTECTING FREEDOM OR DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITES STATES”

By F. Bouthillette (USNR, Veteran, Iraq Theatre)

MORE ARMY LIFE: “INTELLIGENCE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE A SENIOR IN THE MILITARY”

**By Soldier R, Traveling Soldier Correspondent
Reporting from Germany**

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

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

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization

FYI:

**Traveling Soldier Is Published By The
Military Resistance Organization:**

Military Resistance Mission Statement:

1. The mission of Military Resistance is to bring together in one organization members of the armed forces and civilians in order to give aid and comfort to

members of the armed forces who are organizing to end the wars of empire in Afghanistan and Iraq. The long term objective is to assist in eliminating all wars of empire by eliminating all empires.

2. Military Resistance does not advocate individual disobedience to orders or desertion from the armed forces. The most effective resistance is organized by members of the armed forces working together.

However, Military Resistance respects and will assist in the defense of troops who see individual desertion or refusal of orders as the only course of action open to them for reasons of conscience.

3. Military Resistance stands for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and other occupation troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Occupied nations have the right to independence and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation by force of arms.

4. Efforts to increase democratic rights in every society, organization, movement, and within the armed forces itself will receive encouragement and support.

Members of the armed forces, whether those of the United States or any other nation, have the right and duty to act against dictatorships commanding their services, and to assist civilian movements against dictatorship.

This applies whether a political dictatorship is imposed by force of arms or a political dictatorship is imposed by those in command of the resources of society using their wealth to purchase the political leadership.

5. Military Resistance uses organizational democracy.

This means control of the organization by the membership, through elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels.

Any member may run for any job in the organization. All persons elected are subject to immediate recall, by majority vote of the membership.

Coordinating bodies report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them, and may be overruled by a majority of the membership.

6. It is not necessary for Military Resistance to be in political agreement with other organizations in order to work together towards specific common objectives.

It is productive for organizations working together on common projects to discuss differences about the best way forward for the movement.

Debate is necessary to arrive at the best course of action.

Membership Requirements:

7. It is a condition of membership that each member prioritize and participate in organized action to reach out to active duty armed forces, Reserve and/or National Guard units.

8. Military Resistance or individual members may choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, but do not support a candidate opposed to immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

9. Members may not be active duty or drilling reserve commissioned officers, or employed in any capacity by any police or intelligence agency, local, state, or national.

10. I understand and am in agreement with the above statement. I pledge to defend my brothers and sisters, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

----- (Signed)

(Date)

----- (Application taken by)

Military Resistance: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
888-711-2550

MORE

**Take Action That Makes A
Difference:
Join The Military Resistance
Organization:
MILITARY RESISTANCE MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION**

Name (please print): _____

Armed Forces? (Branch) _____

Veteran? Years: _____

Union: _____

Occupation: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Phone (Landline): _____

Phone (Cell): _____

\$ dues paid _____
(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

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

**Military Resistance: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
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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 Afghanistan, 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

Resistance Action

Aug 6 (Reuters) & Aug 7 (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - One traffic police officer was killed and two wounded when a roadside bomb exploded in Haifa Street in central Baghdad, police said. Two policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in north-west Baghdad, police said.

“What they want is to push us into quitting our jobs,” another member of the force, Abu Mohammed, said as he took shelter from the late morning sun under a tree in an eastern Baghdad neighborhood. “Already, I have noticed that some of us did not come to work today.”

MOSUL - A bomber attacked a group of policemen, killing one policeman and wounding four policemen in the north of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. Armed men attacked an off duty prison warden attending a mourning service, wounding him and two others in western Mosul, police said.

A sticky bomb attached to a car of a policeman exploded, wounding him severely in southern Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad.

BAGHDAD - Clashes erupted between Iraqi security forces and guerrillas hiding in a house used to make car bombs and store weapons in Baghdad’s southern Saidiya district, killing four policemen.

GARMA - Several bombs exploded at the home of a government-backed militia leader, wounding nine members of his family including women and children in Garma, 30 km (20 miles) northwest of Baghdad.

GARMA - Several bombs exploded at the house of a policeman, killing four members of his family in Garma.

BAGHDAD – Nationalist fighters opened fire at a traffic police vehicle, killing one policeman and wounding another police officer in the northwestern Hurriya district.

FALLUJA - Nationalist fighters opened fire at an Iraqi police checkpoint, killing one policeman and wounding three others in western Falluja

BAGHDAD - Two Iraqi soldiers were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near an Iraq army patrol in western Baghdad, police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

August 7 AP

Two foreign servicemembers died following an improvised explosive device attack in southern Afghanistan today.

Polish Soldier Killed in Ghanzi; Five More Wounded

August 6, 2010 AFP

One Polish soldier died and five were wounded in a roadside bomb attack and hail of gunfire on a patrol in Afghanistan's eastern Ghanzi province on Friday, the Polish defence ministry said.

"Rebels prepared an ambush on a patrol of the operational forces of the Bravo battalion. There was an explosion and an exchange of fire. In result of the explosion of a roadside bomb, Staff Sergeant Dariusz Tylenda died and five other soldiers were wounded," said a ministry statement.

The wounded soldiers were evacuated by helicopter to a hospital at a base in Ghazni. One was in serious condition.

N.E. Soldier Wounded In Afghanistan

August 6, 2010 TheBostonChannel.com

BOSTON

A New England soldier seriously injured in an explosion in Afghanistan is recovering.

Brienne Travers was in intensive care Friday morning at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

She is a sergeant in the Massachusetts National Guard.

Travers' family said she was seriously wounded when the vehicle she was driving was hit by a roadside bomb Tuesday.

Travers is a 1998 graduate of Norton High School. She now lives in Marshfield and her family said she works as a nurse when she's not on active duty with the guard.

Her family flew down to Washington to be with her Thursday.

This was Travers' second tour of duty in Afghanistan.

July was the deadliest month ever for U.S. troops in that country.

Resistance Action

06 August 2010 VOA News & August 7, 2010 AP

Officials say a candidate in next month's parliamentary elections, who was captured by insurgents, has been found dead along a road in volatile eastern Afghanistan.

The Taliban captured Najib Gulstani 10 days ago in the Qarabagh district of Ghazni province, Kazim Allayar, the deputy provincial governor said.

Relatives, assisted by Afghan soldiers, recovered his body on Friday afternoon from the side of road that runs between Qarabagh and Ab Band districts, Allayar said.

Aziza Mysam, a member of parliament from Ghazi, said members of the local council in Qarabagh told the governor that the Taliban wanted two of their detainees released in exchange for the candidate.

She said the governor refused to entertain the exchange offer.

In Ghazni, NATO says three Afghan military construction workers were killed and two others wounded Thursday, when a bomb exploded in the Qarabaugh district.

Later in the day, nine more construction workers were killed in a separate roadside bombing in the Bar Kunar district of Kunar province.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

**“Demonstrators Carried Banners
Calling The United States The**

**‘Guardian And Master Of Ruling
Mafia In Afghanistan’
“If The Police Hadn’t Taken The
Americans Away, The People Would
Have Torn Them To Pieces”
“If I Had The Chance To Do That, I Would
Do The Same Thing”**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance, who sent this in.]

August 2, 2010 By Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

KABUL -- Afghan protesters marched through downtown Kabul on Sunday morning chanting anti-American slogans and denouncing NATO bombardments that have killed civilians.

Led by a police escort, the couple of hundred demonstrators carried banners calling the United States the “guardian and master of ruling Mafia in Afghanistan” as well as images of burned and bandaged children.

The protesters said they were angry not only about the civilian toll from ongoing NATO military operations in Helmand province but also a traffic accident Friday involving an SUV driven by DynCorp International contractors that killed four Afghans.

“Many times NATO troops and these cars have killed our innocent people. They never care whether we are Afghans or animals,” said Samia, 26, an activist from Kabul who took part in the demonstration.

Samia, who like many Afghans goes by only one name, said that she did not want the Taliban to return to power in Afghanistan but that NATO has only aggravated the situation over the past decade and fed a parasitic and dependent Afghan government.

“We want NATO troops and American troops to leave Afghanistan. Even with their huge army, they couldn’t do anything in the past 10 years. And in the future, they won’t be able to do anything.

“The result will be just death and casualties, and our innocent Afghan women and children will die,” she said.

“We poor people are not just here to be killed,” said an elderly woman named Rabia who was in Sunday’s protest.

She said she had witnessed the reaction to the traffic accident Friday.

“The people were so emotional. They were throwing stones at the Americans’ vehicles. If the police hadn’t taken the Americans away, the people would have torn them to pieces. If I had the chance to do that, I would do the same thing.”

**“Throughout Afghanistan,
Insurgent Attacks Have Gone
Up 51% Since The Official
Adoption Of COIN As The
Strategy Du Jour”**

**American Officer Says “What
We’re Fighting Here Now -- It’s A
Conventional War”**

**“Afghans Fighting In Their Cotton
Pajamas Take Western Reliance On
Heavy Armor As A Measure Of Our
Fear”**

**“The Local American Agriculture
Specialist Wants To Introduce Alfalfa To
These Waterless, Rocky Mountains To
Feed Herds Of Cattle Principally
Pastured In His Mind”**

On this eastern front, where the commander had served six years earlier, he now faces a “surge” of intimidation, assassination, suicide attacks, roadside bombs, and fighters with greater technical capability than he has ever seen in Afghanistan.

August 1, 2010 By Ann Jones, Tomdispatch.com [Excerpts]

Ann Jones is the author of *Kabul in Winter* (Metropolitan, 2006). Her newest book about women in conflict zones, *War Is Not Over When It's Over*, will be published by Metropolitan in September.

In the eight years I've reported on Afghanistan, I've “embedded” regularly with Afghan civilians, especially women.

Last June, I filed a request to embed with the U.S. Army.

Having been critical of American policies from the get-go, I saw nothing on the various Army bases I visited to change my mind.

I had already met a lot of older guys on other bases, mostly reservists who had jobs at home they felt passionately about -- teachers, coaches, musicians -- and wives and children they loved, who just wanted to go home.

One said to me, “Maybe if I were ten years younger I could get into it, but I'm not a boy anymore.”

The Army had sent me a list of ground rules for reporters -- mostly commonsense stuff like don't print troop strength or battle plans. I also got a checklist of things to bring along. It was the sort of list moms get when sending their kids off to camp: water bottle, flashlight, towel, soap, toilet paper (for those excursions away from base), sleeping bag, etc. But there was other stuff too: ballistic eyewear, fireproof gloves, big knife, body armor, and Kevlar helmet.

I turned down a military flight for the short hop from the Afghan capital Kabul to Bagram, the main American base -- a rapidly expanding “city” of more than 30,000 people. Instead, I asked an Afghan friend to drive me out in his car.

A Public Affairs officer warned me that driving was “very dangerous,” but the only problem we met was a U.S. military convoy headed in the opposite direction, holding up traffic.

For more than an hour we sat by the highway with dozens of Afghan motorists watching a parade of enormous flatbed trucks hauling other big vehicles: bulldozers and armored personnel carriers of various vintages from Humvees to MRAPs (Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles). My friend said, “We don't understand. They have all these big machines. They put them on trucks and haul them up and down the road. Why?”

I couldn't get an answer, but I got a clue when I took an Army chopper from Bagram to a smaller base and met a private contractor partly responsible for Army vehicle maintenance.

He gave me a CD to pass on to his foreman at the FOB I was headed for. Rather than music, it held an instruction manual for repairing the latest model M-ATV, a hulking personnel carrier with a V-shaped hull designed to repel the blast of roadside bombs.

These are currently replacing the older MRAPs and deadly low-slung Humvees. The Humvees are, in turn, being passed off to the Afghan National Army, whose soldiers are more expendable than ours.

Standing in a lot full of new M-ATVs already in need of fixing, the foreman seemed pleased indeed to get that CD.

Since no one can ever be secure, least of all in war, every new development is bound to prove insufficient and almost guaranteed to create new problems.

Hence the MRAP was designed to address a double whammy of fear: roadside bombs (IEDs) and ambushes.

I was trained to be a passenger in an MRAP for a mission that never materialized, but in the process I learned where the built-in handholds are for those frequent occasions when the top-heavy MRAP rolls down a mountainside.

The trainer talked so assuredly about what to do in case of a rollover that he almost gave me the impression you could swivel your hips and right the vehicle, like a kayak. But no, once it rolls, it's a goner. You have to crawl out and walk.

Then, one of those big trucks we saw on the highway to Bagram has to come out and haul it back to base, where the foreman with that new instruction-manual CD may have a go at fixing it.

That, in a nutshell, is why the 7-passenger MRAP is being replaced by the 5-passenger M-ATV, a huge armored all-terrain vehicle not quite so inclined to tip over.

Because it holds fewer soldiers, however, you have to put more of those vehicles on the road, and I'm sure you already see where that leads.

Afghans out there fighting in their cotton pajamas take Western reliance on heavy armor as a measure of our fear -- not to mention the inferiority of our gods on whose protection we appear unwilling to rely.

On the great scale of American bases, think of Bagram as a city, secondary bases as small towns, FOBS as heavily gated communities in rural landscapes, and outlying COPs (Combat Outposts) as camps you wouldn't want your kid to go to. A FOB is, by definition, pretty far out there on the fringe, but I have to say straight out that when the chopper dropped me off in full (and remarkably heavy) body armor and Kevlar helmet at my designated FOB, it didn't look at all like "the front" to me.

I should explain that my enduring image of war comes from the trenches of World War I, from which my father returned with a lot of medals, lifelong disabilities, and horrific picture books I wasn't allowed to see as a child.

The frontline FOB where I landed and its soldiers, by contrast, are spic-and-span. Credit for this goes largely to the remarkably inexpensive labor of crews of Filipinos, Indians, Croatians, and others lured from distant lands by American for-profit private contractors responsible for making our troops feel at home away from home.

The base's streets are laid out on a grid. Tents in tidy rows are banked with standard sand bags and their super-sized cousins, towering Hescos filled with rocks and rubble.

The tents are cooled by roaring tornados of air conditioning, thanks to equipment fueled by gasoline that costs the Army about \$400 per gallon to import.

It takes fuelers three to four hours every day to refill all the giant generators that keep the cold air coming, so I felt guilty when, to prevent shivering in my sleep, I stuffed my towel into the ducts suspended from the ceiling of my tent.

Plenty of soldiers don't leave the base.

They hold down desk jobs, issue supplies, manage logistics, repair vehicles or radios, refuel generators and trucks, plan "development" projects, handle public affairs, or update tactical maps inscribed (at certain locations I am obliged not to name) with admonitions like "Here Be Dragons" or "Here Do Bad Stuff."

As this is an infantry base, however, most squads regularly venture outside the wire and the characteristic, probably long-term disability the soldiers take with them is bad knees - from the great weight of the things they wear and carry.

I went outside the wire myself on one of these presence patrols, a mission to a village, and -- I'm sorry to say -- it was no friendly stroll.

It's a soldier's job to be "focused"; that is, to watch out for enemies. So you can't be "distracted" by greeting people along the way or stopping to chat.

Entering a village hall to meet elders, for instance, may sound cordial -- winning hearts and minds. But sweeping in with guns at the ready shatters that friendly feeling.

Speaking as someone who has visited Afghans in their homes for years, I have to say that this approach does not make a good impression.

It probably wouldn't go over well in your hometown either.

One day, near the end of my embed, I watched a public affairs officer frame a photograph of a soldier who had been killed in a firefight and mount it on the wall by the commander's office beside the black-framed photos of seven other soldiers.

This American fighting force had been in place at the FOB for only a few weeks, having relieved another contingent, yet it had already lost eight men. The Army takes a

photograph of every soldier at the beginning of his or her service, so it's on file when needed; when, that is, a soldier is killed.

Most American bases and combat outposts are named for dead American soldiers.

In a typical mess-up on the actual terrain of Afghanistan, Army experts previously in charge of this base had already had a million-dollar suspension bridge built over a river some distance away, but hadn't thought to secure land rights, so no road leads to it.

Now the local American agriculture specialist wants to introduce alfalfa to these waterless, rocky mountains to feed herds of cattle principally pastured in his mind.

Yet even as I was filling my notebook with details of their delusionary schemes, the base commander told me he had already been forced to "put aside development." He had his hands full facing a Taliban onslaught he hadn't expected.

Throughout Afghanistan, insurgent attacks have gone up 51% since the official adoption of COIN as the strategy du jour.

On this eastern front, where the commander had served six years earlier, he now faces a "surge" of intimidation, assassination, suicide attacks, roadside bombs, and fighters with greater technical capability than he has ever seen in Afghanistan.

A few days after we spoke, the Afghanistan command was handed to General Petraeus, the sainted refurbisher of the military's counterinsurgency manual. I wonder if the base commander has told Petraeus yet what he told me then: "What we're fighting here now -- it's a conventional war."

Being outside the wire had filled me with sorrow as I watched earnest, heavily armed and armored boys try to win over white-bearded Afghans -- men of extraordinary dignity -- who have seen all this before and know the outcome.

Being on the base was tedious, often tense, and equally sorrowful at times when soldiers fell.

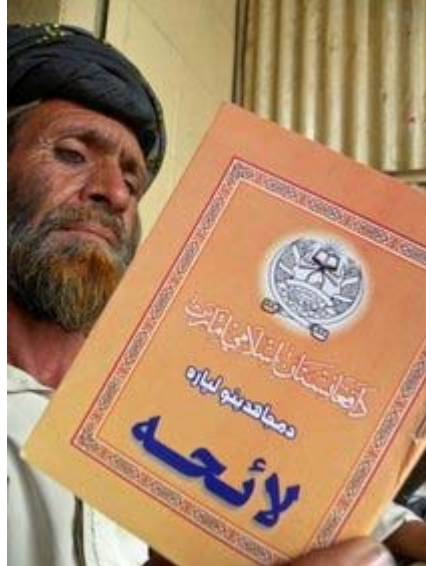
Then the base commander, on foot, escorted the armored vehicles returning from a firefight on to the base the way a bygone cavalry officer might enter a frontier fort, leading a riderless horse. The scene would look good in a Hollywood war movie: moving in that sentimental Technicolor way that seems to imbue with heroic significance unnecessary and pointless death.

One night I bedded down outdoors under a profusion of stars and an Islamic crescent moon.

Invisible in the dark, I couldn't help overhearing a soldier who'd slipped out to make a cell phone call back home. "I really need to talk to you today," he said, and then stumbling in his search for words, he broke down. "No," he said at last, "I'm fine. I'll call you back later."

The next day, carrying my helmet and my armor on my arm, I boarded a helicopter and flew away.

Updated Taliban Code Of Conduct Published And Distributed



Aug. 3, 2010: The code of conduct published and distributed by Taliban urges the insurgents' fighters to avoid killing civilians and seizing weapons and money from villagers in an attempt to win the hearts and minds of Afghans who are also being courted by international forces. The title of the booklet reads 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, code of conduct for Mujahideen.' (AP Photo/Shah Khalid)

Aug 3 By MATIULLAH ACHAKZAI, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

SPIN BOLDAK, Afghanistan – An updated Taliban code of conduct urges fighters to avoid killing civilians and forbids them from seizing weapons and money, a directive aimed at winning hearts and minds of Afghans also being courted by international forces.

But the document declares that people working for international forces or the Afghan government are “supporters of the infidels” and can be killed.

The Taliban began distributing their new code of conduct in southern Afghanistan a little over a week ago, shortly before the top NATO commander in the country, Gen. David Petraeus, issued guidelines that also urged soldiers to avoid civilian casualties.

“The Taliban must treat civilians according to Islamic norms and morality to win over the hearts and minds of the people,” said the 69-page Taliban booklet, which was obtained by The Associated Press on Tuesday from a Taliban fighter in the Afghan border town of Spin Boldak.

“All efforts must be made to avoid harming civilians in attacks,” said the booklet, which the insurgent said began circulating in Afghanistan 10 days ago. He spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of being targeted.

The Taliban urged their fighters not to surrender in their new code of conduct, saying “such acts enhance the morale of our enemies.”

The insurgents also declared that all fighters must have beards unless given special exemption and are prohibited from smoking cigarettes.

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.

THE UNDOUBTED SUCCESS OF THE U.S. MILITARY EFFORT MAY BE SEEN HERE, SHOWING THE VAST QUANTITIES OF AFGHANISTAN THAT HAVE BEEN LIBERATED, AND WILL FORM THE BASIS FOR A NEW, FREE, DEMOCRATIC AFGHAN SOCIETY



United States Marines during an operation near Musa Qaleh, in northern Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan, July 23, 2010. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)



Jul 26: US soldiers patrol in the Dand district of Kandahar Province. (AFP/Manpreet Romana)

MILITARY NEWS

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



The burial service for Sgt. Denis Kisseloff at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery May 22, 2010, in St. Louis, Mo. Kisseloff, 45, died May 14 when his unit was attacked with a rocket propelled grenade and fire from small arms in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

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

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

Poisoned Vets Sue War Profiteer KBR Over Toxic Smoke From Burn Pits In Iraq, Afghanistan: 'You'd Cough Up Black Stuff, And You Couldn't Seem To Catch Your Breath'

8/6/2010 msnbc.com

Some 241 military personnel and contractors who became ill after serving in Afghanistan and Iraq are suing a Houston-based firm, claiming they were poisoned by smoke from trash fires, the Washington Post reported Friday.

The claimants, who are from 42 states, are suffering from a range of conditions including cancer and severe breathing problems, which they blame on the thick, black smoke.

The symptoms were reportedly nicknamed "Iraqi crud" by troops.

They are taking legal action against Kellogg Brown & Root, which operated more than two dozen burn-pits in the two countries, the Post reported. It used to be a subsidiary of Halliburton, which is also a defendant in the case.

These were used to get rid of garbage including plastic water bottles, Styrofoam food containers, mangled bits of metal, paint, solvent, medical waste and dead animals by dousing it in fuel and setting fire to it, the newspaper said.

The paper said six people had died from blood-cancer leukemia and five others had the disease, while more than 12 had to use machines to help them breathe or monitor their breathing.

"You'd cough up black stuff, and you couldn't seem to catch your breath. And your eyes were burning," Anthony Roles, 33, a father and Air Force retiree from Little Rock, told the Post.

“I can still smell it to this very day.”

He was told that he had a blood disorder shortly after returning from Iraq in 2004, the paper said.

Roles added there was a nickname for the symptoms: “Iraqi crud.”

Air Force lieutenant colonel Michele Pearce of McLean, a 40-year-old mother of two, spent four months at Camp Victory in Iraq in 2006, where she developed an upset stomach, a rash across her face, irritated nostrils and a runny nose, the Post said. She exercised often, inhaling the fumes at the base.

She was told she had two rare cancers, in the lining of her stomach and in her lung, when she returned home.

“I want to know the truth about what I was exposed to,” Pearce told the Post. “I want to know the truth of the risks people took with my life and my health. I hope my experience can somehow benefit the process and provide answers, not only for myself but for others.”

Christopher Sweet said his wife, Jessica, an Air Force sergeant and mother of three, worked near a burn-pit at Bagram air base in Afghanistan for four months in 2007. Sweet was later diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia and died in February 2009 at the age of 30.

“She was convinced the smoke she was inhaling while she was in Afghanistan had to have contributed to the leukemia,” Sweet, who has joined the lawsuit, told the Post. “I didn’t care how it happened. I just wanted her to get better.”

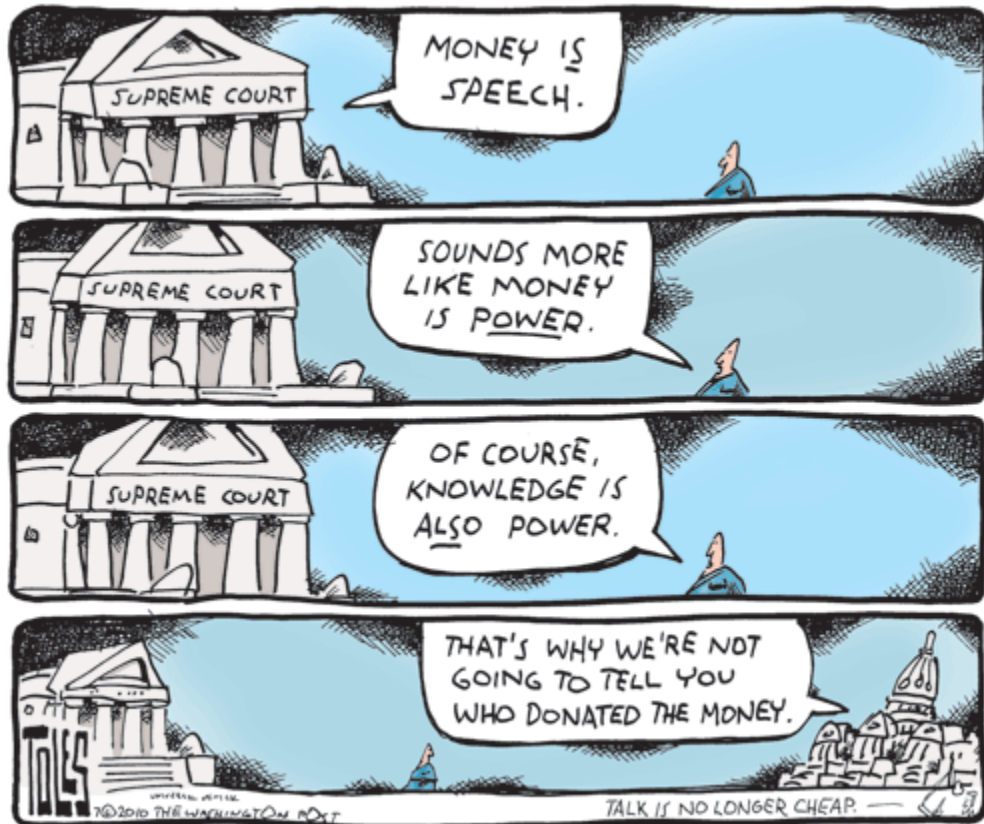
In April, the Department of Veterans Affairs identified burn pits as an environmental hazard and last month, the American Lung Association, warned of health risks and said the military should find another way of disposing of the trash.

KBR officials told the newspaper that the military made the decisions about when to use open-air burning, where to put the burn-pits and what should go in them.

“We have asked the Army whether they still believed it was okay for us to provide services to burn pits, and also be at burn pits, and that’s because we wanted to make sure our people were adequately protected,” Jill Pettibone, a KBR senior vice president, told the Post.

“We were assured it was.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



WikiLeaks Volunteer Detained, Questioned And His Phones Seized By Obama Regime Border Police:

“Two Officers Approached Mr Appelbaum After He Had Given A Talk On How To Subvert Chinese Government Internet Surveillance”
“All Governments Are On A Continuum Of Tyranny,’ He Said”

2 August 2010 By Stephen Foley in Las Vegas, The Independent [UK] [Excerpts]

A senior volunteer for WikiLeaks in the US has been detained, questioned and had his phones seized when he returned to the country from Europe, as the FBI steps up its investigation into the leak of thousands of Afghanistan war secrets to the whistleblower website.

Jacob Appelbaum, who has stood in for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange since he was advised not to travel to the US, spent three hours at a New York airport while customs officers photocopied receipts and searched his laptop, and he was again approached and questioned by FBI officers at a computer hackers conference in Las Vegas on Saturday.

Two officers approached Mr Appelbaum after he had given a talk on how to subvert Chinese government internet surveillance at the annual DefCon conference. He declined to talk to them.

The internet security researcher had returned to the US for the conference from the Netherlands on Thursday when he was detained. Border officials quizzed him on the whereabouts of Mr Assange, on his attitudes to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and on the philosophy behind WikiLeaks.

Mr Assange has not been to the US since WikiLeaks published a secret video showing US military personnel in Iraq celebrating a helicopter attack in which 12 civilians were killed, including Reuters journalists.

Mr Appelbaum, who works with the Tor project, which helps internet users to obscure their identity online, has long been a senior spokesman for WikiLeaks in the US. Last month he stood in for Mr Assange at a New York computer conference and used the event to ask for funding and volunteers. Fearing the authorities, instead of returning to the stage as promised after the helicopter video played, he left by a side entrance and used a decoy in a similar hooded top to walk out of the front.

Since the seizure of his electronic equipment last week, Mr Appelbaum's voicemail now says "this telephone number is no longer an appropriate way to reach me".

Talking to The Independent at DefCon at the weekend, he angrily rejected comments from the US joint chiefs of staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, who said of WikiLeaks and its volunteers last week that "they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family" because insurgents could use information in the documents to launch reprisals.

"When you have been waging war for 10 years, who are you to say that?" Mr Appelbaum said.

At DefCon, Mr Appelbaum refused to confirm or comment on his detention but defended WikiLeaks' commitment to exposing information that governments around the world want suppressed. "All governments are on a continuum of tyranny," he said.

“In the US, a cop with a gun can commit the most heinous crime and be given the benefit of the doubt. In the US, we don’t have censorship but we do have collaborating news organisations.”

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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“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

GET THE MESSAGE?



Teachers rally outside the presidential house in Tegucigalpa, Honduras August 5, 2010. The teachers denounced the government for not putting money in their retirement, while making sure police have plenty of money, according Federation of Honduras' Teaching Organizations (FOMH). REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

Military Resistance www.militaryproject.org

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



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