

Military Resistance 8B12

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



Feb. 17, 2010: Pfc. Jason Estopinal of Dallas, Ga., 21, was killed in combat operations in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/U.S. Marine Corps)

**12 Foreign Troops Killed
In Marjah Battle, So Far:
“More Than Half The Fatalities
Thursday And Friday”
“There Remains Stiff Resistance
From The Insurgents”**

“The Operation Will Take Another 25 To 30 Days”

“Spokesmen Repeatedly Have Emphasized That Afghan Forces Were Taking The Lead, But There Has Been Little Evidence Of That So Far”

February 19, 2010 By ROD NORDLAND, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — Twelve NATO forces, including at least eight Americans, have died in the first week of the offensive in Marja, with more than half the fatalities occurring on Thursday and Friday.

Three of the troops were British and the nationality of the 12th soldier, killed Friday in small arms fire, was not yet divulged by the International Security Assistance Force, the name for the NATO-led troops.

The operation will take another 25 to 30 days “to be entirely sure that we have secured that which needs to be secured,” Maj. Gen. Nick Carter, the commander of British forces in the offensive and of the NATO forces in southern Afghanistan, said in a video teleconference with reporters in Washington on Thursday.

“The combined force is meeting determined pockets of resistance in both the north and east of Marja City.”

“In Marja itself, there remains stiff resistance from the insurgents,” General Carter said. “And U.S. Marines in partnership with Afghan security forces are still fighting an intense series of actions, in the process of clearing Marja as a whole.”

The mixed picture from NATO officials was in contrast to statements from Afghan military and government officials suggesting it was all but over.

NATO spokesmen repeatedly have emphasized that Afghan forces were taking the lead in the offensive, but there has been little evidence of that so far.

The United States and British military released scant detail on the deaths of the six troops killed Thursday.

The six men died in five separate episodes, the international force said, including an improvised explosive device that killed two, and four episodes of small-arms fire that killed one person each.

It appeared, based on incomplete official reports, that those five episodes took place at scattered locations in the area of the offensive.

ACTION REPORTS

Stupidity In Command [Outreach To New York National Guard]

From: RM
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Subject: Outreach Attempt
Date: Feb 4, 2010

While I was walking to work this morning I passed the [XXXX] New York National Guard Armory.

They had a coach bus outside the armory which soldiers were boarding with duffel bags.

I had the last 3 copies of Traveling Soldier - <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> - in my bag. **[See below for more about Traveling Soldier.]**

The first soldier I walked past, standing near the corner ,refused to take the literature when I offered it to him.

However, another soldier who had just finished putting his duffel bag in the luggage compartment took the literature as he boarded the bus.

As I walked away from the bus I noticed what appeared to be some sort of commanding officer (not sure of rank) standing on the steps of the Armory supervising. He had seen me hand off the literature to the soldier and he was not pleased with me.

He glared very intensely at me so I saluted him as I walk by. Needless to say he was not amused.

As I walked away I saw him walk over to the soldier getting on the Bus. I tried to stop and watch but my field of view was blocked from traffic at this point as I had crossed the street so I'm not sure if he took the literature away or not.

[If he took it away, the fool pissed off the soldier. Good. If he merely flash-blasted the soldier for taking it, the officer also pissed him off. Good. Either way, the idiot made exactly the wrong move. They never learn. T]

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.

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.

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:

FYI:

Traveling Soldier Is Published By The Military Resistance Organization:

MILITARY RESISTANCE TEN POINTS

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

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.

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888-711-2550**

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Welcome To Whack-A-Mole 2010: “The Mahdi Army Has Been Reactivated”

February 17, 2010 By Leila Fadel, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

A senior U.S. military official who has spent years in Iraq said he fears that as the drawdown begins, American forces are leaving behind many of the same conditions that preceded the sectarian war.

“All we’re doing is setting the clock back to 2005,” said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to offer a stark assessment. “The militias are fully armed, and al-Qaeda in Iraq is trying to move back from the west. These are the conditions now, and we’re sitting back looking at PowerPoint slides and whitewashing.”

In the past two months, the Mahdi Army has been reactivated, said Hussein Kamal, intelligence head at the Interior Ministry, which oversees Iraqi police. Authorities have seen an increase in training in southern Shiite provinces and heavy recruiting by the militia in the capital, he said.

Sadr had turned his militia into a civic organization, but the group never disarmed.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Six Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed In Marjah Thursday; Two British, Others Unknown: U.S.-Led Troops Battled For A Sixth Day To Capture The Town: “We’re Seeing More Fortified Positions. They’re Standing Their Ground, Essentially”

2.17.10 by Patrick Baz, AFP & BBC & 18th February 2010, By Ian Drury, Daily Mail & AAP & By Golnar Motevalli, (Reuters) & 19 February 2010 BBC

Foreign forces in Afghanistan say that six of their soldiers have been killed in a single day during their major offensive against the Taliban in the south.

A contingent of about 15,000 Afghan, US and NATO troops are conducting Operation Mushtarak (Together) against about 400 to 1000 Taliban fighters.

They will need about 25 to 30 days to secure the area, said British Major General Nick Carter, commander of the NATO-led force in southern Afghanistan.

“We know the Taliban have pushed out of the village and are still operating around the area to our south, northeast and west,”

The fighting in Marjah has followed a similar pattern over the past few days: relatively light in the morning with sniper fire intensifying through midday before subsiding at nightfall.

Marines have come across bullet casings from M-16 rifles -- a NATO weapon unlike the usual AK-47s the Taliban usually use -- suggesting the group has more sophisticated weaponry than previously thought. **[Wrong. Suggesting the group has worse weaponry than previously thought. The M-16 is a piece of shit.]**

"We still face a significant indirect fire and IED threat outside the pork chop," said Greenlief, referring to the area around Karu Chareh, shaped like a pork chop.

Two of those who died on Thursday were British; the nationalities of the other four have not been given.

Three of the soldiers were killed by mines, huge numbers of which have been planted by the insurgents in Marjah, and one was killed by gunfire.

On Thursday, NATO said four soldiers had died and Britain's Ministry of Defence confirmed that two Britons were among them.

Then, in a brief statement, NATO said two further service members had died during Operation Moshtarak on Thursday.

"One service member was killed by small-arms fire and another died following a separate small-arms fire incident," it said.

U.S. and Afghan forces are facing stubborn resistance in an operation now in its sixth day.

Marines traded machine-gun fire after coming under attack by insurgents with rocket-propelled grenades. One Marine company attacked Taliban positions surrounding them at dawn.

NATO said in a statement that a number of enemy fighters remaining in Marjah were engaging in direct combat, although combined forces have taken key areas.

Marines and Afghan troops continued to battle "stiff resistance" in different parts of town, a Marine spokesman said Thursday

"We're seeing more fortified positions. They're standing their ground, essentially," Lt. Josh Diddams said.

Bravo Company of the First Battalion, Sixth Marines, has not had it easy since they were ferried in by helicopter on Saturday.

They have come under repeated heavy gunfire and faced highly skilled Taliban snipers. The fear of being blown up by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) -- some of the biggest killers in the conflict in Afghanistan -- has also bogged them down.

In a battle update Wednesday, NATO acknowledged Taliban resilience, calling the insurgents “tactically adept” and “cunning.”

“Mining is significant in areas and the combined force must be very deliberate in its movement in order to minimise local Afghan and combined force casualties,” it added.

Journalist Jawad Dawari, based in Lashkar Gah, told BBC Pashto that Taliban fighters remained in many residential areas of Marjah and were defending their positions with heavy weapons.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Marjah Friday; Nationality Not Announced

Feb. 19 AP

One servicemember died following a small-arms fire attack during Operation Moshtarak in the Marjah area of Afghanistan today.

Marine From Navajo Nation Killed In Afghanistan

February 18 Associated Press

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - A Marine from the small Navajo community of Rock Point, Ariz., has died in Afghanistan.

The remains of 23-year-old Lance Cpl. Alejandro Yazzie arrived at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Thursday.

The Defense Department says Yazzie died on Tuesday while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. That’s the site of a major offensive by U.S. and Afghan forces against the Taliban.

He was assigned to 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, in Camp Pendleton, Calif.

A spokesman for the Navajo Nation president says 11 Navajos serving in either Iraq or Afghanistan have been killed.

Tribal officials say Yazzie was a 2004 graduate of Rock Point High School and is survived by his parents, three brothers, a sister and his grandmother.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

North Carolina Marine Killed In Marjah

February 17, 2010 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 116-10

Lance Cpl. Noah M. Pier, 25, of Charlotte, N.C., died Feb. 16 while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

New Hampshire Marine Killed In Marjah

February 19, 2010 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 123-10

Pfc. Eric D. Currier, 21, of Londonderry, N.H., died Feb. 17 while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Foreign Occupation “Service Member” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan; Nationality Not Announced

Feb. 19 IJC Public Affairs Office

A servicemember was killed by small-arms fire in southern Afghanistan today. This casualty is not associated with Operation Moshtarak.

Soldier From 1st Battalion Scots Guards Killed In Nad ‘Ali

18 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a soldier from 1st Battalion Scots Guards, part of the 1 Grenadier Guards Battle Group, was killed in Afghanistan today, Thursday 18 February 2010.

The soldier died as a result of small arms fire in the Nad 'Ali area of central Helmand province this afternoon.

Soldier From 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards Killed In Babaji

18 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with regret that the Ministry of Defence must announce that a soldier from 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards was killed today, Thursday 18 February 2010.

The soldier, who was serving as part of Combined Force Nahr-E Saraj (South) [formerly known as Battle Group (Babaji)], died from wounds received as a result of an explosion in the Babaji area of Nahr-e Saraj in central Helmand.

This incident was connected to Operation MOSHTARAK.

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

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

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

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

Snipers:

“Five Marines And Two Afghan Soldiers Have Been Struck Here In Recent Days”



United States Marines after a Taliban ambush on Wednesday killed a Marine. They were ambushed while crossing a field. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

February 17, 2010 By C. J. CHIVERS, The New York Times [Excerpts]

MARJA, Afghanistan — In five days of fighting, the Taliban have shown a side not often seen in nearly a decade of American military action in Afghanistan: the use of snipers, both working alone and integrated into guerrilla-style ambushes.

Five Marines and two Afghan soldiers have been struck here in recent days by bullets fired at long range.

That includes one Marine fatally shot and two others wounded in the opening hour of a four-hour clash on Wednesday, when a platoon with Company K of the Third Battalion, Sixth Marines, was ambushed while moving on foot across a barren expanse of flat ground between the clusters of low-slung mud buildings.

Almost every American and Afghan infantryman present has had frightening close calls. Some of the shooting has apparently been from Kalashnikov machine guns, the Marines say, mixed with sniper fire.

The near misses have included lone bullets striking doorjambes beside their faces as Marines peeked around corners, single rounds cracking by just overhead as Marines looked over mud walls, and bullets slamming into the dirt beside them as they ran across the many unavoidable open spaces in the area they have been assigned to clear.

On Wednesday, firing came from primitive compounds, irrigation canals and agricultural fields as the bloody struggle between the Marines and the Taliban for control of the northern portion of this Taliban enclave continued for a fifth day.

In return, Company K used mortars, artillery, helicopter attack gunships and an airstrike in a long afternoon of fighting, which ended, as has been the pattern for nearly a week, with the waning evening light.

The fight to push the Taliban from this small area of Marja, a rural belt of dense poppy cultivation with few roads and almost no services, has relented only briefly since Company K landed by helicopters in the blackness early on Saturday morning.

It has been a grinding series of skirmishes triggered by the company's advances to seize sections of villages, a bridge and a bazaar where it has established an outpost and patrol bases.

But this more familiar brand of Taliban shooting has been punctuated by the work of what would seem to be several well-trained marksmen.

On Monday, a sniper struck an Afghan soldier in the neck at a range of roughly 500 to 700 yards. The Afghan was walking across an open area when the single shot hit him. He died.

The experience of First Platoon on Wednesday was the latest chilling example. The platoon, laden with its backpacks, was moving west toward the company's main outpost after several days of operating in the eastern portion of the company's area.

Marines here often stay within the small clusters of buildings as they walk, seeking the relative protection of mud walls. But it is impossible to move far without venturing into the open to cross to new villages.

As First Platoon moved into the last wide expanse before reaching the command post, the Taliban began a complex ambush.

First bullets came from a Kalashnikov firing from the south, said First Lt. Jarrod D. Neff, the platoon commander.

The attack had a logic: to the south, a deep irrigation canal separates the insurgents from anyone walking on the north side, where the company's forces are concentrated. Vegetation is also thicker there, providing ample concealment.

There have been several ambushes in this same spot since the long-planned Afghan and American operation to evict the Taliban and establish a government presence in Marja began.

Each time, the Marines and their Afghan counterparts have run through the open by turns, some of them sprinting while others provided suppressive fire.

The routine had been a long and risky maneuver by dashing and dropping, without a hint of cover, as bursts of machine-gun bullets and single sniper shots zipped past or thumped in the soil, kicking up a fine white powder that coats the land.

At the end of each ambush, each man was slicked in sweat and winded. Ears rang from the near deafening sound of the Marines and Afghan soldiers returning fire.

As First Platoon made the crossing under machine-gun fire, at least one sniper was also waiting, according to the Marines who crossed. After the Taliban gunmen occupied the platoon's attention to the south, a sniper opened fire from the north, Marines in the ambush said.

The Marine who was killed was struck in the chest as he ran, just above the bulletproof plate on his body armor, the Marines said.

The others were struck in a hand or arm. (The names of the three wounded men have been withheld pending government notification of their families.)

All three were evacuated by an Army Black Hawk helicopter that landed under crackling fire.

Whoever was firing remained hidden, even from the Marines' rifle scopes.

"I was looking and I couldn't see them," said Staff Sgt. Jay C. Padilla, an intelligence specialist who made the crossing with First Platoon. "But they were shooting the dirt right next to us." The sniper also focused, two Marines said, on trying to hit a black Labrador retriever, Jaeger, who has been trained for sniffing out munitions and hidden bombs. The dog was not hit.

The platoon was just outside the company outpost when the ambush began. A squad from Third Platoon rushed out and bounded across the canal, trying to flank the Taliban and chase them away, or to draw their fire so that First Platoon might continue its crossing.

The squad came under precise sniper fire, too, while the company coordinated fire support.

**“The Taliban Are Better Shots.
They Don’t Spray The Way They
Used To”**

**“Last Year, They Didn’t Know How To
Fight”**

“Now They’re Using Better Tactics”



Taliban fighters display their weapons during a patrol in Ghazni province on January 23.
(AFP)

February 5, 2010 By John Vandiver, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

CHAPAWALA, Afghanistan — When 35-year-old Lance Cpl. Robert McGuinn enlisted four years ago, he knew what to expect.

But being poised to take part in a large offensive where casualties are a virtual certainty still makes for dark thoughts.

“Sometimes I wake up in the morning with a pit in the bottom of my stomach,” McGuinn said during a recent patrol in some of Helmand province’s most volatile territory. “Sometimes, when I’m walking around (on base), I’m so focused on it that I’m looking at the ground, watching where I step.”

For the Camp Lejeune, N.C.-based infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment who will be participating in the battle for control of Marjeh — the Taliban’s last major stronghold in Helmand province — it’s a time of quiet reflection as they prepare for what in the weeks ahead is expected to be one of the largest, and potentially most dangerous, military operations of the past year.

The Marines of 1-6, who deployed in December as part of the 30,000 extra troops being sent by President Barack Obama, have already taken losses in the build-up to the offensive. Last week, two of them were killed by a roadside bomb while on patrol just outside Marjeh.

Those deaths weigh heavily, according to Lance Cpl. Christopher Lima, a 21-year-old from Louisiana.

"I don't want to lose any more friends," Lima said as he pondered the Marjeh battle.

Lima said he's trying to stay focused on the mission at hand, imagining scenarios he will likely encounter.

"Last year, they (the insurgents) didn't know how to fight," said Lima, who is stationed at Patrol Base Mahafiz. "Now they're using better tactics."

Other Marines also say they expect to encounter a tougher enemy than they found on previous Afghanistan deployments.

"The Taliban are better shots. They don't spray (bullets) the way they used to," said Lance Cpl. Miguel Otero, 24. "They're doing more complex ambushes."

Thinking about his 2-year-old son and new baby due in March help take his mind off the danger ahead, Otero said.

"I think about home a lot," he said.

Occupation Air Force Helps The Resistance: Kills 7 Kunduz Collaborator Cops

2.18.10 Reuters & The New York Times

Seven police officers, believed to be Afghan, were killed and two were wounded in a NATO airstrike during a joint patrol in eastern Kunduz Province.

Insurgents in the village of Qurghan Tapa in the Imam Sahib district opened fire with small arms on the Afghan and international soldiers. An airstrike was ordered, and a bomb destroyed a police truck as it was approaching the military units, about 200 yards away.

Afghan police later reported that several of its officers had been killed by the airstrike, NATO said.

Most NATO troops in Kunduz are German.

Resistance Action

February 17, 2010 Associated Press & February 19, 2010 Xinhua,

Twin bomb blasts Thursday evening left six police officers wounded in Afghanistan's eastern Khost province.

A bomb planted by militants went off Thursday evening near a police vehicle on a road beside Ghazi Babrak Khan Park in Khost city, capital of Khost province, an eye witness who declined to be named told Xinhua.

“A second blast occurred as police officials rushed to the site,” he added.

“Six policemen were evacuated to provincial hospital this evening, and most of them sustained minor injuries,” Amir Badshah, head of provincial health department and a doctor of the hospital, told Xinhua. Most of them were in stable conditions, he added.

Afghan officials say four policemen have been killed and four others wounded when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan. The Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday that the four were killed on Tuesday in the Reg district of Kandahar province.

25 Afghan Police Defect And Join The Resistance: “They Left With All Their Weapons, Two Trucks And Machine Guns And Heavy Weapons”

February 18, 2010 By ROD NORDLAND, The New York Times & Alfred De Montesquiou, Associated Press Writers [Excerpts]

JALREZ, Afghanistan — A group of about two dozen Afghan national police officers defected to the Taliban.

The police officers left their posts in Chak, a remote district of Wardak, just before midnight Wednesday, and on Thursday morning a spokesman for the Taliban said that the officers had come over to them.

“They left with all their weapons, two trucks and machine guns and heavy weapons,” said Maj. Abdul Khalil, the police chief in the Jalrez district, just north of Chak.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said in a telephone interview that 24 police officers in Chak had joined the Taliban, with their weapons and two trucks.

“These policemen came on their own and told us they want to join with the Taliban,” Zabiullah Mujahid said. “Now they are with us.”

“They are safe now and will not be harmed and will be treated well under our code of conduct,” Mr. Mujahid said.

Mirza Khan, deputy provincial police chief. Khan said one of the policemen had previous ties with the Taliban.

In the Chak area where the police officers disappeared, there are no American or other NATO forces, although there are Afghan police officers and soldiers. Taliban fighters are active there and in much of Wardak Province, in central Afghanistan, just west of Kabul Province.

Clusterfuck In Zormat: Silly “Shura” Meetings To Win Hearts And Minds Roll On: “The Only Common Issue Among The Tribal Leaders Involved The Failings Of The American Occupiers” “The Taliban Are A Part Of Those Tribes,” Arrowsmith Said. “They Live With Them. They Have Families There”

February 4, 2010 By Thomas L. Day, McClatchy Newspapers

PAKTIA PROVINCE, Afghanistan — U.S. officials put a lot of hope last year in Haji Rashid, an up-and-coming community leader in the Zormat district of Afghanistan’s Paktia province.

They considered Rashid a unifying figure who was capable of bringing together about a dozen tribes in the area to work in support of the American-backed Afghan government.

Their hopes collapsed, however, when Rashid was kidnapped, tortured, mutilated and murdered and his groundwork to broker the support of the tribes in Zormat quickly foundered. **[Who could believe it? He goes to work for the occupation and gets killed?]**

In Zormat, U.S. and Afghan officials have turned to tribal leaders as a channel of communication with several small Taliban networks in the region, networks they think could be persuaded to join a peaceful political process.

American commanders declined to identify the Taliban commanders with whom they've been communicating.

Those efforts, however, risk feeding traditional tribal rivalries, to the detriment of any plan to undercut the Taliban.

"If you are seen as favoring one tribe over another, you are seen as an enemy to them," said 1st Sgt. Troy Arrowsmith of Odgen, Utah, the top enlisted soldier on the Paktia Provisional Reconstruction Team, a cooperative of about 100 troops and civilians from multiple U.S. agencies.

Unhappy tribes don't have to look far to find outside support.

"In Zormat, the tribes are fractured, and the Taliban are a part of those tribes," Arrowsmith said.

"They live with them. They have families there."

The chaotic nature of tribal relations was on display on a recent Sunday, when a panoply of American military, diplomatic and Department of Agriculture officials joined about 100 government and tribal leaders from the region for a "shura," or meeting, near the Pakistani border.

After introductions, no U.S. officials spoke during the shura. They only listened.

What they heard was a cacophony of complaints. As emotions rose, any formalities guiding the shura were quickly abandoned.

The only common issue among the tribal leaders involved the failings of the American occupiers.

"I'm glad the PRT commander is here," one Afghan participant told the other tribal leaders, referring to Lt. Col. Carlos Halcomb.

"They were going to build a hospital in our district, and it hasn't been provided yet."

The comment brought an uproar of support and dissent.

"If we don't have good security in the area, we're not going to be able to finish the projects," retorted Abdul Rahman Mangal, the deputy governor of Paktia. **[Fearlessly retorting, before leaving with his escort of U.S. soldiers.]**

For several hours, tribal leaders shouted their concerns, with no one attempting to regulate who had the floor.

One continued a harangue even after he'd left the lectern, directly in front of the provincial deputy governor and the U.S. officials seated in the back of the room.

Finally, the local director of the Afghan Intelligence Service approached the lectern and calmly delivered a clear message to the tribal chiefs: "Don't assist (the Taliban). Don't let them stay in your home overnight. Don't give them food. Just

tell them to leave.” [He said bravely, before leaving with his escort of U.S. soldiers.]

Turning away the Taliban isn’t easy, though, particularly in areas that Taliban fighters call home. [Ya think?]

American officials think the Taliban even have infiltrated some local political meetings — denouncing the U.S. occupation — and threatened other tribal leaders who attend these shuras. **[More stunning news.]**

“Have I been to a shura where there was Taliban infiltration?

“I’m pretty sure I have,” said 1st Lt. Luis Alberto Moreno, a U.S. civil affairs officer who specializes in tribal relations in the border region.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE
REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK
LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE
PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE
GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO
DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



A convoy from U.S. Marines, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines in the desert outside of Marjah in Afghanistan’s Helmand province Feb. 9, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



A U.S. Marine from the 6th Marines digs a sleeping hole outside of Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand province Feb. 9, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines patrol outside Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand province Feb. 11, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines from 6th Marine Regiment enter Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand province Feb. 13, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. soldiers fire as two others run for cover during combat with insurgents in the Badula Qulp area, West of Lashkar Gah in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Feb. 14, 2010. (AP Photo/Pier Paolo Cito)



U.S. Marines from 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment take cover as Taliban fire on them in the town of Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand province Feb. 15, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. soldiers exchange fire with insurgents during a patrol in the Badula Qulp area, West of Lashkar Gah in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Feb. 14, 2010. In the fight, one soldier was wounded. (AP Photo/Pier Paolo Cito)

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

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Afghan Soldiers Show Heroic, Unstinting Determination To Support U.S. Troops Occupying Their Country



Afghan National Army soldiers take the lead during the battle of Marjah, Helmand province, Feb. 17, 2010. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

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

“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

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR;

RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. searches an Afghan citizens' house during an armed home invasion in the Badula Qulp area, west of Lashkar Gah in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Feb. 17, 2010. (AP Photo/Pier Paolo Cito)

Afghani citizens have no right to resist home invasions by occupation soldiers from the USA.

If they do, they may be arrested, wounded, or killed.

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

One of the squadron's great successes over the past year, says Lt. Col. Kolenda, has been weaning less-committed local boys away from the hard-liners through jobs, schooling and support for the elders.

He says the young men of Mirdish village, for instance, joined the insurgency because a couple of years ago American troops kicked down some doors and searched some homes.

-- Michael M. Phillips, Wall St. Journal, 7.18.08

Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:

In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom. Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.



[images.google.com]

Redcoats soldiers search an American settler's house (1770's)

Got an opinion? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

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Please say how many you wish sent.

NOTE WELL: They will all be different issues of GI Special to satisfy DOD regs that you may possess copies, *provided you don't have more than one of the same issue.*

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Marine Sgt. Christopher Hrbek, Jan. 21, 2010, in Westwood, N.J. Hrbek, an artilleryman, was killed Jan. 14 by an IED in Helmand Province in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

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

February 19, 1942: A Day That Will Live In Infamy



Japanese American residents board the bus for Camp Harmony, 1942

Carl Bunin Peace History Peace History February 18-24

Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt 10 weeks after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, ordering all Japanese Americans (Nisei) evacuated from the West Coast of the U.S. and forcing them to live in concentration camps.

The document authorized the Secretary of War and military commanders “to prescribe military areas...from which any or all persons may be excluded.”

There was strong support from California Attorney General Earl Warren (later U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice), liberal journalist Walter Lippmann and Time magazine—which referred to California as “Japan’s Sudetenland”

112,000 citizens of Japanese ancestry were relocated, losing their businesses, homes, and belongings to whites.

In the entire course of the war, 10 people were convicted of spying for Japan, all of whom were Caucasian.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



They Got That Right!



A sign says “Revolution Is The Solution” as Mexican citizens condemn the visit of Mexico’s President Felipe Calderon in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, Feb. 17, 2010. They demanded the presidential resign after a recent massacre that killed 15 teenagers with no known gang ties. (AP Photo)

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