

"Don't Believe the Hype!" – *Truth in Recruiting* – NOW!

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Jan 2011

(scroll down for details about any story)

Lead Story from the past month's news:

San Diego Schools Restrict Military Recruiters

The Associated Press

December 1, 2010.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego schools have voted to rein in aggressive military and college recruiters.

The school board voted Tuesday night for a policy that allows recruiters to visit high school campuses only twice each school year. They must stay in assigned areas and wait for students to approach them. Recruiters can pass out contact information but can't collect a student's contact information.

City News Service says one student told the board that Army recruiters set up games and an obstacle course at her school, told her she needed to register to play, took her photo and asked for personal information.

The policy also bars recruiters from using confidential information taken from students' career aptitude tests.

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/dec/01/san-diego-schools-restrict-military-recruiters/>

related story:

Youth in Oakland Win Against Army Recruiters in their Schools

OAKLAND, California -- American Friends' Service Committee in partnership with BAY-Peace have been supporting Oakland Youth in taking a bold step to demilitarize their schools. Watch the video "Youth Manifesto AFSC" on YouTube.

<http://afsc.org/video/youth-oakland-win-against-army-recruiters>

page 1

Two towns attempt to ban **military recruitment of minors, citing international law**

--circuit court strikes down municipal restrictions; appeal being considered

University President Named "Faust" Makes Deal with the Devil

--Harvard to allow **ROTC recruitment on campus**; not since the Vietnam War

facts & figures:

A potential barrier to Harvard getting its own unit is **lack of student interest**. Over the past two years, the Army ROTC has enrolled only one Harvard freshman. The university is considered a bastion of liberalism. Meanwhile, Harvard alumni subsidize student involvement in ROTC, ponying up between \$100,000 and \$400,000 a year, for the U.S. military's soft-sell.

quote:

‘While I do have some interest in this, I really want to be a doctor. and I don’t see how this can fit into my future right now.’

~Harvard freshman participating for only half a semester in ROTC on-campus programme

Don't Go, Don't Kill!

--DADT repeal is not a rights victory, says Cindy Sheehan, Gold Star Mom & Peace Activist

Yet More Homeless Among Returning Veterans of Foreign War (VFW)

--veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan Wars **forced to live in cars** upon returning to America

related story:

Veterans of Recent Wars Confront Grim Employment Landscape

--*The Washington Post* reports: "Unemployment rates for combat veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been higher than the overall rate since at least 2005."

--veterans often earn less than comparable workers - an **income gap** that lingers long after they leave active duty

--people in the civilian job market perceive many combat veterans to be troubled, e.g. by PTSD

featured: antiwar radio interview

Losing Faith in the Civic Religion

Frank Dorrel, publisher and distributor of the **antiwar comic book** *Addicted to War*, discusses how he turned to antiwar activism after serving in the US Air Force

Cable reveals US behind airstrike that killed 21 children in Yemen

--wikileaks discloses information about **'covert ops' that lead to 'blowback'**

Afghans Fume as Petraeus Ramps Up Air War

--under Gen David Petraeus, Afghan **anger over air strikes** is soaring

facts & figures:

Planes recently tallied 2,600 attack sorties between June and October, a 50 percent increase over the same period in 2009.

related story:

file under: **Do airmen do any good?**

Civilian Casualties Create New Enemies, Study Confirms

--air attacks have been provoking deep hostility toward the U.S. and the Kabul government

quote:

"If the U.S. is killing innocent civilians — however accidentally, and however in pursuit of dangerous fanatics — what story can Washington tell to reassure the relatives of the innocent dead?"

file under: an increasingly aerial occupation

An Estimated 700 Civilian Deaths each year from U.S. Drone Attacks since Obama Assumed Office

--Both the U.S. and Pakistan underreport civilian deaths in **Drone War**, according to latest report

facts & figures:

In the month of September 2010 the Central Intelligence Agency more than doubled the monthly bombings by drones in Pakistan, "an ally," to 20 attacks, for a total of 74 so far this year.

quote:

Drone warfare is "so cruel as to be beyond the pale of human tolerance."

~Lord Bingham, one of Britain's most senior judges, 2009.

TPF comment: When will U.S. judges declare drone warfare a war crime, according to existing U.S. law?

Organ Donation among Troops Declared **Brain Dead**

--Jeremy Barnett died at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany on Feb. 24, 2007, of wounds he sustained in Iraq. His heart was donated to a 51-year-old woman in Europe, saving her life.

file under: Why did U.S. get involved in occupying Iraq?

A Lot of Blood for Little Oil

--**Neoconservatives in Washington** lied in order to find political support for the invasion, saying that the money from Iraq's oil would be used to pay for the war and the reconstruction.

--There is evidence that ExxonMobil, Shell and BP, the three largest privately-held oil companies, and at least two smaller firms, were in on discussions that led to the invasion and occupation.

--See below for the **Consumers Guide to Blood-free Oil & Gasoline**

file under: the militarization of civilian life

Selling the wars (link to You Tube video)

--The Pentagon budgets half a billion dollars to market its wars in the US. Call it public relations or call it **propaganda**, it's meant to win the hearts and minds of Americans. But does this **agitprop** come at the price of the truth?

--and is it legal for the Pentagon to propagandize the American public?

comment from Tulsa-based politician:

"Selling the wars to sell the weapons to make the profits that pay for the congressmen."

~Mark Manley, former Democratic candidate in OK1 primary, 2008

follow up: U.S. dirty bombs in Iraq

Iraq, Kuwait dust may carry dangerous elements

--no explicit mention of "depleted uranium" in this news article; **likely heavily redacted (censored)**

--studied refusal to mention radioactive munitions used by the U.S. in Iraq, both in 1991 and in 2003

related event, in Washington D.C.:

JANUARY 15, 2011: 20 YEARS OF US WAR ON IRAQ!

WE COMMEMORATE 20 YEARS OF US WAR ON IRAQ & RECOMMIT OURSELVES TO DR KING'S DREAM

January 15, 2011 marks the 20th year since the United States began to bomb Iraq. Since then millions of Iraqi people have been militarily occupied, injured, starved, killed, tortured, and imprisoned. Millions more have become internally displaced or refugees in other countries. Come to Washington, DC

Saturday, January 15, 2011 to commemorate the US slaughter, and rededicate our lives to living out Dr. Martin Luther King's dream of abolishing war and injustice.

Join **Pax Christi Metro DC** for a Mass celebrated by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton tentatively set for 9AM. We will then march at 11am to The White House for a public witness. Other events are being planned for this day that will end with a 7PM candlelight vigil at The White House that will mark the time the Tomahawk missiles exploded in the center of Baghdad.

Contact: JANUARY15PEACECOMMITTEE@POST.COM Co-sponsoring groups: The January 15 Peace Committee, Witness Against Torture, Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Gold Star Families Speak Out, Code Pink, United National Assembly Committee, Consistent Life, WARISACRIME.ORG, Peace-Action, Pax Christi Metro DC, Little Friends for Peace, Dorothy Day Catholic Worker (DC), Father Charlie Mulholland Catholic Worker (NC), Northern Virginians for Peace & Justice, Peace-Action Montgomery County (MD), Jonah House (MD).

TPF: Two grassroots members from Tulsa will be attending.

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U.S. Medic Jailed For Firing on Unarmed Afghans

--TACOMA, Washington (Reuters) - nine months in prison after pleading guilty to shooting at unarmed Afghan farmers

--U.S. Army Medic agreeing to testify against other **U.S. soldiers accused of terrorizing civilians.**

Justices Hear Case on Denial of Help to Veteran

--Did Congress intend to deny help to veterans because of the very disabilities for which they sought help?

quote:

"a Kafkaesque adjudicatory process in which those **veterans who are most deserving of service-connected benefits will frequently be those least likely to obtain them.**"

~according to a dissent written by three judges on the court

further recommended reading:

Kafka. *The Trial*. (fiction, an existential classic, written in 1925 - original title in German: *Der Prozeß*)

also see film adaptations:

In the 1962 Orson Welles movie adaptation of *The Trial*, Josef K. is played by Anthony Perkins. Kyle MacLachlan portrays him in the 1993 version.

follow up: threat of sexual violence in the military

More sex assaults reported at military academies

--at the three U.S. military academies, **sexual assault reports rose 64 percent** in the 2009-10 academic year

file under: rape and abuse in the U.S. military

Military sexual abuse rates 'staggering'

--U.S. service **women are "citizens minus" with their rights denied**, when it comes to being a victim of

rape

facts & figures:

In 2007, there were 2,200 reports of rape in the military. Two years later, in 2009, there was an increase, up to 3,230 reports of sexual assault.

Bradley Manning's Detention: UN Probing Whether Case Counts As Torture

--Private first class in U.S. military being **held without trial** by the U.S. Marines, for more than 7 months straight, in solitary confinement

backpage

Okinawans Try to Vote US Base Out!

--victory of a Japanese prefect governor opposed to the base on Okinawa give Japan's national government a powerful bargaining stick in negotiations with the US over the military base
--some question whether the base will exist on the island or not, as part of collective security

No safe haven for displaced Iraqis

--More than seven years after the United States and United Kingdom-led invasion of Iraq, **millions of displaced Iraqis** have nowhere to go.

facts & figures:

Of the estimated 4 million displaced persons (D.P.), some 2 million are internally displaced within Iraq, and some 2 million have taken refuge in countries outside of Iraq

Epitaph for this edition of "Truth in Recruiting"

~from Norman Mailer, d.2007 (see last page, or scroll down to bottom of this document)

upcoming event, in Tulsa:

Tulsa Peace Fellowship

TPF will be participating as an official parade entry in the **annual MLK Parade**, down N. Greenwood Ave., in Tulsa, on **Martin Luther King Day**, a holiday for many that falls on Monday this year, on January 17th 2011.

Come join us! The parade passes right by **Peace House Tulsa**, at 1314 N. Greenwood Avenue. The theme of this year's parade is:
"Honoring Our Heritage, Inspiring Change!"

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship is directly inspired by the antiwar advocacy of Martin Luther King Jr.. TPF aims to help make peace, social uplift, and nonviolence the nation's top priorities, rather than militarization.

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Jan 2011
lead story

Restricting military recruiting becomes focus of new San Diego schools policy

By Hailey Persinger

December 1, 2010

SAN DIEGO — A policy aimed at balancing post-graduation recruiting efforts across the San Diego Unified School District has placed the spotlight on military recruiters armed with gifts for students who relinquish personal information.

School board members approved a policy Tuesday that limits the frequency of campus visits to twice a year for all recruiters, including those from universities and for-profit colleges. But some parents and students have focused their arguments against the presence of military recruiters on campus, some of whom have had — until now — unfettered access to students as they determine their post-high school plans.

Board member John de Beck, who introduced the policy two weeks ago, said despite all the fuss on military recruiters, the policy was never meant to eliminate them from campuses.

Instead, the policy restricts all recruiters — for the sake of equity, said de Beck — to two yearly school visits and prohibits them from requiring student contact information as a condition to participate in activities or take home gifts. Some at the meeting noted that military recruiters sometimes staff tables with games and gifts like T-shirts or faux dog tags for students contingent on their willingness to fill out information sheets,

In recent budget discussions and policy decisions, de Beck has routinely exhorted the school board to strive for equity throughout the school district, the very concept he said inspired the newly-approved policy — the last one he'll sponsor before he leaves the board next week in the wake of election defeat.

One speaker during Tuesday's meeting said the military tends to focus its recruitment efforts in areas populated with less affluent students who may see military benefits like sign-on bonuses and college tuition and immediately rule out other options of college or technical school. Others said students in

wealthier areas have little interaction with military recruiters.

Tim Johnston, a retired military recruiter who worked primarily on college campuses offered unlikely support for the policy.

“It’s necessary to ensure that students’ privacy is not invaded, that these students are not pressured into going into areas that they will later regret,” he told the board, noting he has seen first-hand attention-grabbing methods used to recruit students to the military.

Despite support from parents, students and four other board members, trustee Katherine Nakamura, who was also defeated for re-election, did not support the new policy.

She said the restrictions implied hostility toward the armed services and would offend the large military population in San Diego.

The district previously had no specific restrictions, similar to Sweetwater Union and Grossmont Union high school districts, which have no written policies on college or military recruiters.

The policy is set to take effect within the next 30 days.

hailey.persinger@uniontrib.com (619) 293-2836

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/dec/01/military-recruiting-becomes-focus-of-new-city/>

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Jan 2011
more stories worthy of *page 1* coverage

Court upholds ruling on military recruitment bans in Eureka and Arcata

C. Johnson
12/17/2010

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- A federal appeals court is upholding a decision to strike down measures in two North Coast cities barring military recruitment of minors.

Eureka and Arcata overwhelmingly passed the Youth Protection Act in 2008. A trial judge [struck down the legislation], and the 9th U.S. District Court of Appeal upheld that decision Friday.

Brad Yamauchi, a lawyer for the cities, said his clients are still considering their next step.

The cities previously said the case gave them chance to air concerns about U.S. compliance with a 2002 international treaty that they say bans children under 17 from being recruited by armed forces.

The Associated Press
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<http://www.news10.net/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=112600>

file under: the militarization of civilian life

After four decades, Harvard lifts ban on ROTC recruiting on campus

By Tracy Jan, Boston Globe Staff
December 21, 2010

Harvard University will welcome ROTC back to campus now that Congress has repealed a ban on gays and lesbians serving openly in the military, university president Drew Faust said.

The move will end a four-decade standoff between one of the nation's most prestigious universities and its armed forces. The tension began over the Vietnam War and continued in recent years as university administrators, faculty, and students objected to what they saw as discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Faust, the daughter of a decorated World War II veteran, said she expects to begin talking with military officials about bringing the program back to campus soon. Faust has repeatedly said that the "don't ask, don't tell" policy was the final barrier to reinstating the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

"At Harvard, ROTC has been like the crazy uncle in the attic: We know he's up there but we don't want to tell anyone that he's there," said Paul E. Mawn, a 1963 Harvard graduate and retired Navy captain who is chairman of Harvard Advocates for ROTC.

A potential barrier to Harvard getting its own unit is lack of student interest, Mawn said. Until several years ago, he said, students were not even allowed to list ROTC as an activity in the yearbook or post related fliers around campus.

Harvard alumni subsidize student involvement in ROTC, paying MIT between \$100,000 and \$400,000 a year, a cost that Mawn said Harvard should pick up if the university is serious about recognition.

"It's not just up to president Faust to bring ROTC back on campus," Mawn said. "For ROTC to survive at Harvard, you need to have more people, and right now, there is not enough people to justify it. You can't have a battalion with only five people in it."

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/12/21/after_4_decades_harvard_opens_door_to_rotc/

Don't Go, Don't Kill!

--DADT repeal is not a rights victory, says Cindy Sheehan, Gold Star Mom & Peace Activist

The repeal of don't ask, don't tell for gays in the US military is not a positive step for equality, activist says.

by Cindy Sheehan
23 Dec 2010

The recent repeal of the US military policy of "Don't ask, don't tell" is far from being the human rights advancement some are touting it to be. I find it intellectually dishonest, in fact, illogical on any level to associate human rights with any military, let alone one that is currently dehumanising two populations as well as numerous other victims of its clandestine "security" policies.

I cannot - as a peace activist - rejoice in the fact that now homosexuals can openly serve next to heterosexuals in one of the least socially responsible organisations that currently exists on earth: The US military.

It is an organisation tainted with a history of intolerance towards anyone who isn't a Caucasian male from the Mid-West. Even then I'm sure plenty fitting that description have faced the terror and torment enshrined into an institution that transforms the pride and enthusiasm of youth into a narrow zeal for dominating power relations.

Wrong battle for equality

It is hard to separate this issue from the activities of the military. War might be a "racket", but it is also the most devastating act one can be involved in, whether you are the aggressor or a victimised civilian, no one can shake off the psychological scars of war. No one.

Its effects on the individual as well as collective human psyche are terminal. Championing equal rights is an issue of morality, war is immoral, and the US military is heading further and further down the path of immorality.

Even with the advent of WikiLeaks, transparency and accountability of US military activity has been sucked into a black hole of silence. Drone attacks, illegal cross-border interventions, extra-judicial assassinations all occur in the name of national interest. It is not in the interest of equal rights activists to support an institution that is intent on ignoring every protocol of human decency.

Face it, gays are now and have been in the military since before Valley Forge during the Revolutionary War. The only difference being one can now admit their orientation without fear of official recrimination.

Don't equal human rights extend to those that the Empire has mislabeled as the "enemy"? Or do we now have to ignore the fact that innocent people are being slaughtered by the thousands?

Some of us in the peace movement work really hard to keep our young people out of the hands of the war machine that preys on disadvantaged young people in inner cities and poor rural settings.

The US military is not a human rights organisation and nowhere near a healthy place to earn a living or raise a family. My email box is filled with stories of mostly straight soldiers and their families who were deeply harmed by life in the military.

Because of the callous and violent nature of the system, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is on the rise and suicide rates among veterans and the spouses of active duty soldiers are skyrocketing.

Veterans still find it very difficult to access the services, benefits and bonuses that were promised to them by their recruiters. I cannot imagine the repealing of DADT significantly improving the material

conditions experienced by gays during military service.

While the children of war profiteers and politicians are protected from any kind of sacrifice, this Empire preys on the rest of our youth - gay/straight; male/female - and spits their mangled or dead bodies onto the dung heap of history, without a qualm or a twinge of conscience.

Joining the US military should never be an option for the socially conscious while our troops are being used as corporate tools for profit, or hired assassins for imperial expansion. Soldiers are called: "Bullet sponges," by their superiors and "dumb animals" by Henry Kissinger, the former secretary of state.

While soldiers are dehumanised and treated like dirt, they are taught to dehumanise "the other", and treat them as less than dirt. It is a vicious cycle, and the way to stop a vicious cycle is to denounce and reject it, not openly participate.

full article here: <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2010/12/2010122314043803810.html>

Homelessness Among Veterans

Veterans From Iraq and Afghanistan Wars Seek Homes Upon Returning to America

By Bob Woodruff and Ian Cameron
Dec 26, 2010

Washington - Jose Pagan is a decorated veteran who survived two tours of duty in Iraq as a road clearance specialist. Just three days after leaving the military he was homeless and living on the streets of the Bronx.

Jose says being homeless after his service is something he never would have imagined. "It was embarrassing," Pagan says.

"Honor, pride, duty, loyalty, all these things that we -- that kick in as a soldier, you know. And then to find yourself here," as he points to the park benches where he slept for almost two months.

Tara Henry was a chemical weapons specialist with the 101st Airborne and served two deployments to Iraq. Her second tour of duty came only four months after her son was born, but while in Iraq her husband filed for divorce and was granted custody of their two kids.

"When I found out about court and everything else, I said, 'You know what? I gotta get a lawyer.'" Henry says. "So, I was trying to deal with those things while I was in Iraq. So that's where my money was going."

Henry has lived in shelters, hotels, even in a car on the street. She hasn't told her children that she's homeless. "I don't really think they would understand that," she says.

Vice Chief of the Army General Peter Chiarelli told ABC "This Week" anchor Christiane Amanpour in an exclusive interview Sunday that repeated deployments are creating instability away from the frontlines of war. "We need more time at home before deployment," Chiarelli told Amanpour. "It affects everything. It affects the divorce rate. It affects substance abuse."

Chiarelli also says posttraumatic stress and traumatic brain injury impact those who have served in war, particularly when it goes undiagnosed. "We just don't know that much about the brain," Chiarelli told Amanpour. "We automatically assume so many times that a person that's in a blast has a concussion. Many times, they don't have a concussion. Instead, they have posttraumatic stress."

Returning service members face another challenge: the economy. Unemployment for young veterans is twenty percent, double the national average. That makes the transition back from war even more difficult.

<http://abcnews.go.com/ThisWeek/coming-home-homeless-homeless-veterans/story?id=12478952&page=1>

related story:

Veterans of Recent Wars Confront Grim Employment Landscape

Michael A. Fletcher, The Washington Post

The Washington Post reports: "Unemployment rates for combat veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been higher than the overall rate since at least 2005."

The 2 million veterans of the long-running wars in Iraq and Afghanistan return home to the worst labor market in generations.

While their nonmilitary contemporaries were launching careers during the nearly 10 years the nation has been at war, troops were repeatedly deployed to desolate war zones. And on their return to civilian life, these veterans are forced to find their way in a bleak economy where the skills they learned at war have little value.

Some experts say the grim employment landscape confronting veterans challenges the veracity of one of the central recruiting promises of the nation's all-volunteer force: that serving in the military will make them more marketable in civilian life.

"If you are in there four years and deployed twice, what kind of skills have you learned other than counterinsurgency?" said Lawrence J. Korb, an assistant secretary of defense for manpower under President Ronald Reagan who is now a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress.

The unemployment rate for Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans was 10 percent in November, compared with 9.1 percent for non-veterans, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. Unemployment rates for combat veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been higher than the overall rate since at least 2005, according to the bureau.

More than one in five recent combat veterans claim service-related disabilities, including post-traumatic stress disorder. That has left veterans burdened with a complicated legacy: Although the public admires their service, it also sees combat veterans as especially prone to mental illness, substance abuse and violence.

Some analysts say that stigma is one reason that veterans often earn less than comparable workers - a gap that lingers long after they leave active duty.

"A lot of people when they look at Afghanistan and Iraq vets, the first thing they think is post-traumatic stress," said Janssen, adding that he suffers no fallout from his time in Iraq. "Is he normal? Can he sleep at night? Is he reliable? I think that's what employers think."

Artis ruefully recalled that during one job interview, the hiring manager turned to a colleague and, pointing at Artis, said: "Guess what he used to do? He used to shoot people."

<http://www.readersupportednews.org/off-site-news-section/52-52/4429-veterans-of-recent-wars-confront-grim-employment-landscape>

further reading, available for download:

http://www1.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SurveysAndStudies/Employment_History_080324.pdf

antiwar radio:

Losing Faith in the Civic Religion

Frank Dorrel on what he's learned about foreign policy

interviewed by Angela Keaton

December 25, 2010

Frank Dorrel, publisher and distributor of the antiwar comic book *Addicted to War*, discusses how he turned to antiwar activism after serving in the US Air Force during Vietnam; his film "What I've Learned About U.S. Foreign Policy: The War Against The Third World;" how activist education helps Americans wake up to the destructive nature of their government; and why many Americans self-identify through a "civic religion" of indoctrinated nationalism.

[MP3 here](#). (19:23)

Frank Dorrel publishes & distributes *Addicted to War*, *Why The U.S. Can't Kick Militarism* by Joel Andreas. This anti-war comic book is a history of U.S. militarism and has become one of the most popular books in the Peace Movement. It is being used in hundreds of high schools and colleges all over the country.

He put together the 2-hour film titled "What I've Learned About U.S. Foreign Policy: The War Against The Third World," which has been seen by as many as 2 million people since 2000.

Dorrel is a US Air Force veteran and member of Veterans For Peace, both local and national chapters.

<http://antiwar.com/radio/2010/12/25/frank-dorrel/>

Cable reveals US was behind airstrike that killed 21 children and 14 women in Yemen

By Eric W. Dolan
December 2nd, 2010

A diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks shows that the US military covered up the killing of dozens of civilians during a cruise missile strike in south Yemen in December 2009.

The secret cable from January 2010 corroborated images released earlier this year by Amnesty International, implicating the US in the use of cluster bombs. The cable was sent by Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh to US General David Petraeus, saying his government would "continue saying the bombs are ours, not yours."

Read it Raw: WikiLeaks.org domain taken down, DNS host cites 'mass attacks'

According to the cable, this prompted Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Rashad al-Alimi "to joke that he had just 'lied' by telling Parliament that the bombs in Arhab, Abyan, and Shebwa were American-made but deployed by the ROYG [Republic of Yemen Government]."

"The cable appears to confirm Amnesty International's finding that the Abyan strike was carried out by the US military, not Yemeni government forces," Philip Luther, a Deputy Director for Amnesty International, said.

On December 17, 2009, an alleged al-Qaeda training camp in Abyan was hit by a cruise missile, killing 41 local residents, including 14 women, 21 children, and 14 alleged al-Qaeda members.

Amnesty International is calling on the US to investigate.

"There must be an immediate investigation into the dozens of deaths of local residents in the Abyan air strike, including into the extent of US involvement," Luther said. "Those responsible for unlawful killings must be brought to justice."

<http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2010/12/cable-reveals-airstrike-killed-21-children-yemen/>

Afghans Fume as Petraeus Ramps Up Air War

--under Gen David Petraeus, Afghan anger over air strikes is soaring

A new poll from the Washington Post, ABC News and the BBC finds that 73 percent of Afghans say that U.S. air strikes are "unacceptable." That's an increase from the last survey, which found 66 percent opposition to the U.S. air war last December.

Back then, restrictions from General Stanley McChrystal, then the commander of the war, had all but stopped the air war entirely — and two-thirds of Afghans still disapproved of it. So NATO might have a statistical warning sign, now that its planes recently tallied 2,600 attack sorties between June and October, a 50 percent increase over the same period in 2009. In October 2010 alone, as Danger Room

was the first to report, the U.S. launched more than 1,000 air strikes. That carries a risk of reviving the public anger over the air war that led McChrystal to tamp down the strikes in the first place.

NATO's own statistics from October show a bump in civilians killed or wounded by coalition forces compared to those killed this time last year — even while insurgents wound or kill many more Afghans.

The new statistics indicate that Petraeus will continue to have a hard sell to Afghans if he keeps waging such an intense war. It's not just the air strikes.

Afghans don't see a lot of effort from NATO to protect them. A 39 percent plurality say NATO's gotten worse at preventing civilian casualties, with only 30 percent saying international troops have gotten better. If there's a bright spot there, it's that 43 percent said last year that the coalition's population-protection efforts had declined. And since recent studies have confirmed that civilian casualties lead to the creation of new adversaries, the new poll represents troubling signs for a war plan still predicated on keeping Afghans out of harm's way

<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2010/12/afghans-fume-as-petraeus-ramps-up-air-war/>

file under: Do airmen do any good?

Civilian Casualties Create New Enemies, Study Confirms

--air attacks have been provoking deep hostility toward the U.S. and the Kabul government

By Spencer Ackerman

July 6, 2010

Yes, we needed economists to tell us this. A new working paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research finds “strong evidence for a revenge effect” when examining the relationship between civilian casualties caused by the U.S.-led military coalition in Afghanistan and radicalization after such incidents occur. The paper even estimates of how many insurgent attacks to expect after each civilian death. Those findings, however intuitive, might resolve an internal military debate about the counter-productivity of civilian casualties — and possibly fuel calls for withdrawal.

“When ISAF units kill civilians,” the research team finds, referring to the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan, “this increases the number of willing combatants, leading to an increase in insurgent attacks.” According to their model, every innocent civilian killed by ISAF predicts an “additional 0.03 attacks per 1,000 population in the next 6-week period.” In a district of 83,000 people, then, the average of two civilian casualties killed in ISAF-initiated military action leads to six additional insurgent attacks in the following six weeks.

The team doesn't examine the effect of CIA drone strikes in neighboring Pakistan, the subject of fierce debate concerning both the level of civilian deaths the strikes generate and their radicalizing effect.

A team of four economists — Stanford's Luke N. Condra and Joseph H. Felter, the London School of Economics' Radha K. Iyengar, and Princeton's Jacob N. Shapiro — used the International Security Assistance Force's own civilian-casualty data to reach their conclusions, breaking it down by district to examine further violence in the area in which civilians died. They examined the effect of over 4000

civilian deaths from January 2009 to March 2010 by looking at the sometimes-lagging indications of reprisal attacks in the same areas. To be clear, the team's research is inferential, creating a statistical model to examine spikes in violence following civilian-casualty incidents, rather than interviewing insurgents as to their specific motivations.

But in their study, the researchers found that there's a greater spike in violence after ISAF-caused civilian deaths than after insurgent-caused ones. "An incident which results in 10 civilian casualties will generate about 1 additional IED attack in the following 2 months," the researchers write. "The effect for insurgents is much weaker and not jointly significant."

The researchers found that ISAF-caused civilian casualties correlate with long-term radicalization in Afghanistan. Plotting reprisal incidents of violence in areas where civilians died at coalition hands, the data showed that "that the Coalition effect is enduring, peaking 16 weeks after the event. This confirms the intuition that civilian casualties by ISAF forces predict greater violence through a long-run effect." That's consistent with intuitions that civilian casualties "are affecting future violence through increased recruitment into insurgent groups."

<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2010/07/civilian-casualties-create-new-enemies-study-confirms/>

file under: an increasingly aerial occupation

US, Pakistan Underreport Civilian Deaths in Drone War

Report Shows Major Civilian Toll

by Jason Ditz, December 09, 2010

Of those killed in US drone strikes against North Waziristan (Pakistan), how many are civilians? It is a question without an answer, but a new report by a Pakistani NGO suggests that the answer is "most of them."

The report revealed that among the 84 people killed in November's US drone strikes the vast majority were local tribesmen with no apparent militant ties. Even among the apparent militants killed, there were no high profile killings reported.

This stands in stark contrast to the media coverage of the attacks, which usually begins and ends with a statement by unnamed Pakistani officials terming everyone killed a "suspected terrorist." The suspicion, however, seems based exclusively on the fact that they got hit with a drone, and the group claims that the US and Pakistan are deliberately trying to keep reports of civilian deaths out of the public eye.

The US killed some 700 civilians in the drone strikes in 2009, and the limited evidence suggests that they haven't gotten any more accurate in 2010, meaning the toll is likely at least as high.

<http://news.antiwar.com/2010/12/09/report-shows-major-civilian-toll-in-us-drone-war-in-pakistan/>

more coverage:

Why would distance from the crime scene ameliorate a war crime?

By Hiroaki Sato
Oct 31 2010

The Sept. 27 New York Times article on a "drastic" expansion of drone deployment did not mention it, but the carnage resulting from bombings and missile attacks by the drones necessarily include a large number of people who have nothing to do with anything except that they happen to be in the wrong place, be it Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iraq, in each of which the U.S. does as it pleases.

In 2007, for example, a drone missile struck a wedding party in Afghanistan, killing 30 people. In August this year, a drone missile that hit a house of "suspected militants" in Pakistan also destroyed a neighboring house, killing 20 people.

These aerial weapons of destruction are so "cruel as to be beyond the pale of human tolerance," Lord Bingham, one of Britain's most senior judges, said last year. Yet, Hillary Clinton denied that the use of drone attacks was an act of terrorism when she visited Pakistan last fall and a female TV anchor put that question to her. Would the U.S. secretary of state offer the same denial if similar assaults occurred in Chappaqua, N.Y., where she lives?

When it comes to the slaughtering of human beings, the question is this: Why make a distinction between the killings on the ground and the killings from the air? Why let the users of aerial means, be it a manned bomber, a missile or a drone manipulated thousands of miles away, go scot-free?

For a war crime to have any meaning, no distinction should be made between the means of killing.

byline: Hiroaki Sato is a translator and essayist who is at work on a biography of Yukio Mishima.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/member/member.html?mode=getarticle&file=eo20101031hs.html>

New guidelines help increase organ donation among troops declared brain dead

By Seth Robbins, *Stars and Stripes*
December 5, 2010



Michele Barnett grieves over her son, Army Sgt. Jeremy Barnett, during a press conference at a family home in Hartville, Ohio, on Feb. 27, 2007. Jeremy Barnett died at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany on Feb. 24, 2007, of wounds he sustained in Iraq. His heart was donated to a 51-year-old woman in Europe, saving her life. photo credit: Lew Stamp/Akron Beacon Journal

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Michele Barnett gripped her son's hand and placed her head against his chest. Keeping him alive were a series of machines that pushed air into his lungs, fed him fluids and kept his heart beating.

A critical care nurse, Barnett knew her son's prognosis when she first saw the machines: His brain was dead. Jeremy Barnett, a 27-year-old Army sergeant, had been on patrol in Ad Dujayl, Iraq, when a land mine detonated.

Michele Barnett had not left Jeremy's bedside since arriving at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, even taking it upon herself to bathe him. But after 15 hours, doctors were preparing in a nearby operating room to harvest her son's organs, including his heart.

Placing her head against his breast, she listened — one last time — to its thump.

"I didn't know if I could ever find that person who received his heart," she said. "And there was a thought that maybe I could hear it beat again."

Jeremy Barnett died on Feb. 24, 2007, but his heart saved the life of a 51-year-old woman living in Europe. Michele Barnett would never know the woman's name or the country she lived in.

"It's a very hard thing to lose your child like this. I still think about him every day," she said. "But it's a comfort to know that part of him is still alive, and what better part than his heart?"

<http://www.stripes.com/new-guidelines-help-increase-organ-donation-among-troops-declared-brain-dead-1.127672>

US Involvement in Iraq

A Lot of Blood for Little Oil

By Cordula Meyer

12/06/2010

[Despite the lobbying to go to war by the "Big Three" oil companies] the Iraq war provided few advantages for the US oil industry. The diplomatic cables show that, in most cases, it was competitors to the Americans who often did better in the country. Only one US company truly profited: Halliburton.

During the first bidding rounds, the oil bosses were still laughing. When Iraqi Oil Minister Hussein al-Shahristani issued the first drilling contracts for foreign multinational companies at Baghdad's al-Rashid Hotel on June 30, 2009, he made clear that there would not be any sharing of profits, but rather a fixed price paid for each barrel of oil drilled.

But when the minister announced what his government actually wanted to pay, there was "stunned silence." Two dollars per barrel -- and nothing more. In addition, the companies would have to replace the Iraqis' ramshackle oil drills with new equipment.

In the end, bidder consortiums led by France's Total and China's CNPC secured contracts. Other companies awarded contracts were from Malaysia, Vietnam, Angola, Norway, Britain and Russia. Outside of the formal bidding process, only two US oil giants managed to secure contracts for other oil fields -- Exxon and Occidental.

A lot of blood was spilled, but very little oil flowed for the US. With production of 2.5 million barrels of crude oil daily, production in Iraq has returned to close to its prewar levels. Forecasts now suggest it will take 20 years before that production is doubled or tripled, however. The US spent more than \$700 billion on Iraq, but now Iraq's oil profits are going to other countries.

For almost five years, US diplomats have urged the Iraqis to finally pass a national oil and gas law. The main aim of the law was to stipulate a just sharing of oil revenues in the northern part of the country with the Kurds and to offer a level of investment security to firms doing business in Iraq. More than 50 diplomatic cables cover the wrestling over the law -- but al-Shahristani continued to hold the US at bay.

Even directly after the invasion, the US troops didn't pay close attention to the issue of oil. Plunderers began dismantling the facilities that, despite everything, still represented 90 percent of state revenues. Again and again, US diplomats living in the country that has the world's fourth-largest oil reserves complained that there was hardly any gasoline available. People had to wait for hours at gas stations, and gasoline even had to be imported from other countries.

Diplomats complained in 2007 of a "wild west atmosphere" that prevailed at the refinery in Baiji near Tikrit. "In practice the sprawling facility is jointly controlled by a number of official and unofficial actors," it reads. There was apparently a fuel smuggling epidemic.

In addition, the Iraqi oil infrastructure was collapsing across the board. Around 80 percent of oil exports run through two underwater pipelines to the port at Basra. They were built in 1975 and were only expected to have a lifespan of 20 years. In order to prevent oil from escaping into the ocean, only a quarter of the foreseen amount can still be pumped through the pipes.

The US did spend more than \$100 million to at least halfway renovate a terminal at Basra. But a second one is in terrible condition, the diplomats wrote. And workers in the oil industry are paid so badly that they often have to fish in the port during their working hours.

At the very least, most foreign oil firms are hiring US engineers [to develop Iraqi oil fields]. Engineers, for example, from Halliburton -- the same Texas company that was very closely connected with the old

Bush government. Vice President Dick Cheney had once served as Halliburton's CEO.

Halliburton's chief in Iraq was pleased when he spoke before US diplomats last December, almost as if he could hardly believe his own words. "It is really Halliburton [to whom] all the oil majors are turning," he is quoted as saying, "to extract, process, and deliver the oil."

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,732984,00.html>

facts & figures

The U.S. has spent more than \$700 billion on Iraq, since occupying the country in 2003. Two US oil giants managed to secure contracts for Iraqi oil fields -- Exxon and Occidental. The war profits of the Big Three, namely ExxonMobil, Shell and BP, over the five years of the Iraq War amounts to about \$80 billion. All are the subject of consumer boycotts, organized by "consumers for peace."

For MORE INFORMATION go to: <http://consumersforpeace.org/index.php?filename=boycott-big-three.html>

The top petroleum suppliers to the PENTAGON, in FY 2009 (latest figures available) were:

BP \$2.201 Billion
Shell \$1.893 Billion
Int. Oil Trading Co. \$1.179 Billion

(Source: Defense Energy Support Center)

Consumers Guide to Gasoline

More Harmful Avoid When Possible	Less Harmful Relatively Speaking
ExxonMobil Shell BP Chevron Valero ConocoPhillips Getty/Lukoil Marathon Tesoro Fina	Citgo Sunoco Hess Flying J Murphy Gulf Sinclair Irving Keystone/Kwik Fil/Red Apple Giant Mustang Cenex

source: <http://consumersforpeace.org/index.php?filename=consumers-guide.html>

Iraq, Kuwait dust may carry dangerous elements

By Kelly Kennedy - Staff writer, *Marine Corps Times*

Dec 8, 2010

Researchers studying dust in Iraq and Kuwait say tiny particles of potentially hazardous material could be causing a host of problems in humans, from respiratory ailments to heart disease to neurological conditions.

After taking samples, scientists found fungi, bacteria and heavy metals — including uranium — that could all cause long-term health effects.

“You can see the dust,” said Dale Griffin, an environmental public health microbiologist with the U.S. Geologic Survey. “It’s what we can’t see that will get you.”

Just as troubling [as bacteria, fungi or viruses], according to the paper, was the presence of 37 elements — including 15 bioactive metals, including uranium, known to cause serious, long-term health effects in humans.

Microbiologists Dale Griffin of the U.S. Geologic Survey and Capt. Mark Lyles of the Naval War College analyzed dust samples taken in Iraq and Kuwait in 2004 and found a wide range of heavy metals at rates in excess of World Health Organization maximum safe exposure guidelines. Some don’t even have maximum exposure guidelines because they are not expected to be present in airborne dust.

A recent Military Times analysis of military health data from 2001 to 2009 showed the rate of respiratory issues among active-duty troops rose by 32 percent; cardiovascular disease rose 30 percent; pregnancy and birth complications were up 47 percent; and neurological conditions, such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson’s disease, were up nearly 200 percent.

The National Research Council of the National Academies released a report this year that said the Defense Department’s Enhanced Particulate Matter Surveillance Program needs to be reworked, and that the military lacked sufficient data to properly study the health effects of particulate matter exposure. That report came in the wake of two other military studies — one that looked at various health concerns, and another that looked specifically at heart and respiratory issues. Neither had found any connection to exposure to particulate matter. But the National Academies report stated that “a large body of epidemiologic research has shown associations between short- and long-term exposures to particulate matter and a broad array of respiratory and cardiovascular effects in the general population and in susceptible people.”

The tiniest particles — up to 1,000 of which can sit on the head of a pin — embed deeply in the lungs along with whatever matter they carry. Griffin said he worries that the combination of bacteria, fungi and metal found in Iraq and Afghanistan can further complicate the health risks to U.S. combat troops. Noting the rise in respiratory and heart problems over the past decade, Griffin said, “If you look at the [civilian] population, you don’t see these numbers.”

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/2010/12/military-heavy-metals-dust-kuwait-iraq-120710w/>

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U.S. Medic Jailed For Firing on Unarmed

Afghans

By REUTERS

December 1, 2010

TACOMA, Washington (Reuters) - A U.S. Army medic was sentenced to nine months in prison on Wednesday after pleading guilty to shooting at unarmed Afghan farmers and agreeing to testify against other soldiers accused of terrorizing civilians.

Five of the 12 soldiers are accused of premeditated murder in the most serious prosecution of alleged atrocities by U.S. military personnel since the war began in late 2001.

In the first court-martial in the case, Staff Sergeant Robert Stevens, 25, admitted opening fire on two Afghan men for no apparent reason, saying he and other soldiers were acting on orders from a squad leader during a patrol in March.

"I performed those actions and I did it," he said when asked by the presiding officer why he pleaded guilty to charges that carried a maximum penalty of nearly 20 years in prison.

The charge of aggravated assault with a dangerous weapon was the most serious of four offenses to which Stevens, an Army veteran of 7-1/2 years, pleaded guilty at Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Tacoma, Washington.

The case began as an investigation into hashish use by members of what was then known as the 5th Stryker Brigade but grew into a probe of what prosecutors have described as an infantry unit run amok.

A potentially explosive aspect is the existence of dozens of grisly photos that four of the defendants are accused of having taken of war dead, some of them showing U.S. soldiers posing with the corpses.

The images, so far sealed from public view, have drawn comparisons with pictures of Iraqi prisoners taken by U.S. military personnel at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2004.

Stevens, though not regarded as one of the leading figures in the case, was court-martialled first because he waived his rights to a preliminary proceeding.

As part of the deal, military prosecutors said they would grant Stevens immunity from further charges in exchange for his testimony against the 11 other soldiers.

"It's the right thing to do and I'm going to do it," he said at the hearing.

Stevens will serve his nine months at a military brig on his home base. He will be demoted to E-1 private, the lowest rank in the Army, and forfeit his pay while in prison but will be allowed to stay in the military.

(Writing by Steve Gorman in Los Angeles; Editing by Greg McCune and John O'Callaghan)

[http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/12/01/world/international-uk-soldiers-crimes.html?
_r=1&ref=world](http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/12/01/world/international-uk-soldiers-crimes.html?_r=1&ref=world)

Justices Hear Case on Denial of Help to Veteran

By Adam Liptak, NYTimes
December 6, 2010

WASHINGTON — Justice Stephen G. Breyer wanted to know whether it was possible that Congress intended to deny help to veterans who missed filing deadlines because of the very disabilities for which they sought help.

“You have someone who served his country and was wounded and has post-traumatic stress syndrome or schizophrenia,” Justice Breyer said at a Supreme Court argument Monday. “Who in Congress would have likely thought such a thing?”

But the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit last year ruled that Congress had indeed meant to bar the courthouse door to David L. Henderson, who served on the front lines in the Korean War and was discharged after receiving a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. That disability, his lawyers said, caused him to bungle a deadline.

The appeals court said its ruling was required by a 2007 decision of the Supreme Court that said deadlines for filing appeals must be applied strictly.

The appeals court’s ruling in the Henderson case, according to a dissent from three of its judges, created “a Kafkaesque adjudicatory process in which those veterans who are most deserving of service-connected benefits will frequently be those least likely to obtain them.”

Mr. Henderson, who died while his Supreme Court case was pending, had sought additional government help for his condition in 2001. He was turned down in 2004. A federal law gave him 120 days to appeal that determination to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, but it took him 135 days.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/07/us/07scotus.html?_r=1&ref=us

follow up: threat of sexual violence in the military

More sex assaults reported at military academies

AP, Dec 15, 2010

DENVER — Sexual assault reports at the three U.S. military academies rose 64 percent in the 2009-10 academic year, but many more victims probably didn't come forward, the Defense Department said Wednesday.

A total of 41 sexual assaults involving students were reported to authorities at West Point, the Naval Academy and the Air Force Academy in 2009-10, the department said in its annual report on sexual harassment and violence.

In the previous academic year, 25 were reported.

Military sexual abuse 'staggering'

Al Jazeera examines the often hidden world of rape and abuse in the US military.

by Dahr Jamail

23 Dec 2010

Every year, rape increases at an alarming rate within American military institutions – and even males are victims of the cycle.

In fact, due to raw demographics, one can roughly surmise that most victims of sexual abuse in the military are male.

Regardless of gender, reports of victims of military sexual assault have been increasing. In 2007, there were 2,200 reports of rape in the military, whilst in 2009 saw an increase up to 3,230 reports of sexual assault.

Many of the victims suffer from Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and are shamed into silence, with numerous cases not even reported.

Kira Mountjoy-Pepka of Pack Parachute, a non-profit organisation which assists sexually abused veterans, explains that the military system favours the perpetrator.

She cites the Feres Doctrine (Feres v. United States, 340 US 135 [1950]) that made it impossible for the survivor to sue the investigators since it, "essentially prohibits people from suing the military and/or petitioning any non-military legal authority for interdiction without the military's prior and explicit agreement and consent."

"If you're a victim and you report this crime and the military mishandles the investigation, you can't sue them," she explains, "I feel if this were taken up by Congress as an issue it would be exposed that the military is operating against the Constitution by denying victims their first amendment rights."

According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the rate of sexual assault on women in the military is twice that in the civilian population. A Government Accountability Office report concluded that most victims stay silent because of "the belief that nothing would be done; fear of ostracism, harassment, or ridicule and concern that peers would gossip."

While a civilian rape victim is ensured confidential advice from his or her doctors, lawyers and advocates, the only access a military rape survivor has is to a chaplain.

Compared with a 40 per cent arrest rate for sex crimes among civilians, only eight per cent of investigated cases in the military lead to prosecution.

After Congress mandated it do so in 2006, the Pentagon started a comprehensive programme to track incidents. That year, there were 2,974 reported cases of rape and sexual assault in the military. Of these, only 292 cases resulted in trials, and those netted only 181 prosecutions of perpetrators.

Nearly half the cases are dismissed for lack of adequate proof or due to the death of the victim.

The victim, on the other hand, risks ending his or her career when they file charges.

Timeline

1995: *Archives of Family Medicine* revealed that 90 per cent of women veterans from the 1991 US attack on Iraq and from earlier wars had been sexually harassed.

2003: American Journal of Industrial Medicine surveyed women veterans from Vietnam to the 1991 Iraq attack and found that 30 percent of them had been raped.

2004: According to a study published by the *Journal of Military Medicine*, of veterans from Vietnam and all wars since, 71 per cent of women soldiers have been sexually assaulted or raped while serving.

2007: The Miles Foundation, a private nonprofit organisation that provides support to victims of sexual assault in the military, received 976 reports of sexual assault in the Central Command Area of Responsibility, which includes Iraq and Afghanistan.

Christine Hansen, executive director of the foundation, said at the time that there was a steady upward trend in the number of reported cases of sexual assault, of 10 to 15 per cent each quarter.

2008: The Pentagon reported nearly 3,000 cases of women assaulted sexually in Fiscal Year 2008, an increase of 9 percent from 2007. For women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, the increase was 25 percent.

2009: The annual report on sexual assaults states, "In FY 09, there were a total of 3,230 reports of sexual assault involving military Service members as either victims or subjects, representing an 11% increase from FY 08."

2009: Admission by the Pentagon that approximately 80 per cent of rapes are never reported - making it the most under-documented crime in the military.

source: <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/2010/12/20101223113859171112.html>

more coverage: <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2010/12/2010122182546344551.html>

Bradley Manning's Detention: UN Probing Whether Case Counts As Torture

--Private first class in U.S. military being held without trial for more than 7 months straight, in solitary confinement

by Marcus Baram, for Huffington Post
Posted: 12-22-10

NEW YORK -- The United Nations is probing a complaint that Bradley Manning, the detained Army

private suspected of giving classified documents to WikiLeaks has been mistreated in custody. And WikiLeaks chief Julian Assange called Manning "a political prisoner" during an interview on MSNBC.

As The Huffington Post reported last week, Manning's supporters went public with their concerns about the harsh conditions of his imprisonment aboard a floating brig in Quantico, Va. -- he has no access to exercise or even a pillow and bedsheets during his 23 hours of solitary confinement a day -- after their complaints to the military over several months went unheeded.

According to the Associated Press, the U.N. office for torture issues in Geneva said it received a complaint from one of Manning's supporters alleging conditions at the brig amount to torture.

Recently, Manning's lawyer, David Coombs, posted a blog detailing the conditions of Manning's detention. The lawyer also expressed frustration with the harsh conditions, describing multiple attempts to improve them and indicating that he is prepared to file a motion under Article 13 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, which bans illegal pretrial punishment.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/12/22/un-probing-bradley-manning-detention_n_800461.html

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Okinawans try to vote US base out

By Daniel Leussink

NAHA, Japan - In Sunday's tense gubernatorial race, Okinawans for a fourth time in a row voted for a conservative candidate instead of a progressive one. Hirokazu Nakaima received 38,000 votes more than his main rival, hard-liner Yoichi Iha, and won a second four-year term as governor. Both men vowed to seek to move the Futenma marine base outside the prefecture. But Iha opposed the Japan-US Security Treaty, while Nakaima supported it.

In 2006, the 71-year-old Nakaima said he "did not completely oppose" the construction of Futenma's replacement facility in line with the relocation accord. But his views changed matching popular sentiment and he called for moving it outside the prefecture.

"The base relocation accord was struck without consultations with us and we have not been provided with convincing explanations," Nakaima said after his election victory. "There is no place in Okinawa to move Futenma to."

Under Japanese law, the Okinawan governor has the right to approve - or not - pending construction plans for the replacement facility. The victory of a governor opposed to the accord gave Japan's national government a powerful bargaining stick in negotiations with the US to indefinitely delay its construction.

Newspaper polls showed that a large majority of islanders opposed the construction of the replacement facility. Last April, 90,000 Okinawans gathered in a small village in the heart of the island and demonstrated peacefully against the plans.

"It is in the nature of Okinawans to help each other in everything they do, so violent conflict could be avoided until now," says Naoya Iju, associate director of the Military Base Affairs Division in the prefectural government. "But if the tension rises further, the danger exists that violent riots might occur."

Just like Minshuto, the ruling party, the prefectural government in Okinawa would like to see a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), an important Cold War treaty in which Japan and the US laid down a framework of rules and regulations and financial support for US bases and servicemen in Japan.

Minshuto promised to lessen that burden by relocating the US marine base Futenma from a densely populated part of central Okinawa to outside the prefecture. But in May it did a 180-degree turn, broke its election pledge, signed off on the relocation accord with the US and decided on moving Futenma to a less-densely populated part of northern Okinawa.

In the Security Treaty, the US promised to defend Japan in case it comes under attack from a third-party nation state. Japan also hides under the US nuclear umbrella, a powerful deterrent within East Asia's fragile security situation.

Okinawa makes up 0.6% of Japan's territory but hosts 75% of US military bases. Okinawans have complained for decades about the unfair and unequal footprint left by US forces on the tiny southern prefecture. It extends beyond sexual assault, hit-and-runs and low-flying noise-producing fighter jets. The US military forces control 40% of Okinawan airspace and 29 ports.

Futenma's 8,000 marines and 9,000 dependants could move to Guam.

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Japan/LL02Dh01.html>

more coverage: http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101217/wl_asia_afp/japanusmilitarypoliticsokinawa

No safe haven for displaced Iraqis

Serene Assir, The Electronic Intifada, 7 December 2010

More than seven years after the United States and United Kingdom-led invasion of Iraq, millions of displaced Iraqis have nowhere to go.

For the overwhelming majority of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), displacement is not a one-off trauma. Rather, it is a continuous state of flight for most uprooted Iraqis, who the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates to number 1,785,212 refugees and 1,552,003 IDPs (both figures as of January 2010).

Among the Iraqis who were forced to flee their homes is a widow and mother of two, Umm Haitham, who spoke to The Electronic Intifada on condition that her real name not be revealed. "We don't know where to go. We have nowhere to go," Umm Haitham said, as her voice trembled over the phone.

Umm Haitham and her two children, both in their twenties, have moved three times in the past two years. To begin with, because of unbearable levels of violence they left their home in Baghdad and fled to Amman, hoping to find greater security in neighboring Jordan. "The explosions were daily, and we

were living in fear," Umm Haitham added. "But here in Jordan, neither my children nor I have the right to work. So after we'd used up all our savings, we decided to risk everything and return to Baghdad."

When they did so, Umm Haitham and her family did not return to their original home. Thousands of Iraqi homes were occupied either by families who have themselves suffered displacement and sought shelter in temporarily abandoned buildings, or by any one of the numerous militias that have emerged ever since the invasion. Instead, Umm Haitham's family stayed at the homes of various relatives for short periods at a time, becoming de facto IDPs.

Their story testifies to the fact that, in real life, the statuses of "refugee" and "IDP" are by no means static, while it also shows just how desperate the situation of Iraqi refugees and IDPs is. Once in Baghdad, they suffered twofold: Umm Haitham said the family was burdened both by poverty and constant fear that they could be killed any minute, adding that "the explosions were constant," referring to the US and its allies' bombings and the violence of the militias as well as the death squads that have emerged since the invasion and are working in collusion with the occupation. Umm Haitham's family lost hope and returned to Amman once again, this time knowing full well how hard life would be for them there, but they hoped to at least find safety from the violence that the occupation brought to their home country.

Now, back in Jordan, they do not live under fear of death like in Iraq. Barring this difference, Umm Haitham's family situation is still miserable. She and her children are hardly able to make ends meet, despite the fact that her elder daughter is a qualified lawyer and her son has just completed his higher education studies at a private university, putting the family further into debt which they cannot repay. Were they able to work legally in Jordan, they would probably be better off. But Jordan and Syria, which combined host the vast majority of Iraqi refugees, suffer from severe unemployment and other socioeconomic problems of their own.

"We don't know what to do," Umm Haitham said, unable to hold back her tears. "We have asked UNHCR to help resettle us to a country where we can work and live safely, but there seems to be no hope for us."

read the complete story: <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11660.shtml>

epitaph, for this edition of "Truth in Recruiting."

“Bombing a country at the same time you are offering it aid is as morally repulsive as beating up a kid in an alley and stopping to ask for a kiss.”

~Norman Mailer, d.2007

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masthead

Tulsa Peace Fellowship

In order to support the peace movement in Eastern Oklahoma, you can donate direct to TPF.
Please make out your check or money order to the "Tulsa Peace Fellowship" and mail it to :

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship
c/o UU Church of the Restoration,
1314 N. Greenwood Ave, Tulsa Oklahoma 74106-4854

Contributions to TPF are not tax deductible at this time.

Queremos Paz.

Also consider "clicking for peace" and "shopping for peace". TPF earns money when you use GoodSearch to search the web and GoodShop to shop online. Support our cause when you search or shop online! Download the new GoodSearch/GoodShop toolbar at <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/tulsa-peace-fellowship>

who we are:

***The Tulsa Peace Fellowship** is the activist wing of the peace movement in Eastern Oklahoma. TPF offers citizens and community groups tools and resources to participate personally in our democracy, to help shape federal budget and policy priorities, and to promote peace, social and economic justice, and human rights. TPF is a registered non-profit organization and a non-partisan civic-sector organization, loosely affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration, north side of Tulsa.*

"Waging Peace One Person at a Time".

Through its counter-recruitment task force, TPF is a member of the **National Network in Opposition to the Militarization of Youth (NNOMY)** representing some 188 counter-recruitment groups in cities and towns across the country. On the web: http://www.nnomy.org/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=216&Itemid=91

Tulsa Peace Fellowship is open to Progressives, Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, Greens, etc. If you have not already done so, please join our **social networking tool for TPF on Ning**. You can check out our new tool here: <http://tulsapeacefellowship.ning.com> Also still going strong: our announcement list on yahoo! tulsapeace@yahogroups.com (since 2002) Go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/> and search for "tulsa peace"

If you enjoyed this news digest and/or found this update useful, please consider making a donation of time, money, or effort to the Tulsa Peace Fellowship. Details on tax status available.

The next monthly anti-war demo in Tulsa is scheduled for
Saturday Jan 1st, 2011, 12noon to 2pm, with the theme: "U.S. Out of Afghanistan Now!"
Details online: <http://tulsapeacefellowship.ning.com>
or find us on Facebook

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Fellowship will be held
on Thursday, January 6th 2011, 6:15 PM – 7:30 PM @ the UU Church of the Restoration, in Tulsa, just north of downtown

--including members from other local non-partisan groups such as the Tulsa University chapter of Amnesty International, ImpeachOK1.org, TulsaTruth.org, the Center for Racial Justice in Tulsa, the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance, Pax Christi, and the Quakers

Come join us! Especially parents, guardians, and students in the Tulsa Public Schools system who are interested in countering the presence of military recruiters on school grounds.

An archive of TPF counter-recruitment updates and other related TPF material is available to members online:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tulsapeace/>

You must sign in to yahoo! groups to see the archived "message history"

TPF messages have been archived online since 2002

TPF was founded some 30 years ago.

Current membership online: 696 subscribers

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further information

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THE 10 REASONS NOT TO JOIN THE MILITARY

Ten excellent reasons not to join the military:

- a.. You May Be Killed, Even By Mistake
- b.. You May Kill Others Who Do Not Deserve to Die
- c.. You May Be Injured
- d.. You May Not Receive Proper Medical Care
- e.. You May Suffer Long-term Health Problems
- f.. You May Be Lied To
- g.. You May Face Discrimination
- h.. You May Be Asked to Do Things Against Your Beliefs
- i.. You May Find It Difficult to Leave the Military
- j.. You Have Other Choices, including the Choice to Learn a Marketable Skill

for more info:

<http://www.10reasonsbook.com/medcare.htm>

Strength Through Peace: Out of Iraq & Afghanistan

Accountability: Indict & Imprison Bush & Cheney for War Crimes

JROTC: Out of Our Schools !

Schools as Military-Free Zones

Alternatives to War: Department of Peace & cabinet-level Secretary of Peace