

Military Resistance 8B4



Signs Of The Times

If you think there isn't a wave of Down With The Empire politics sweeping through the Army, you are completely out of touch with reality.

But let Army Times be your guide.

Army Times, to stay in the game, and attract readers, never walks too far against the wind. Once upon a time, it was cheerleading the Iraq invasion, and until recently cheerleading the Empire in general.

My my how times have changed, and Army Times has changed.

Not exactly Bolshevik, but now there's a common vocabulary and coy hints.

Seeing this in Army Times is only slightly less shocking than finding out General Odierno has a boyfriend.

Check it out:

T

Army Times Wants You To Know You Can Refer To Capitalists As “Capitalists”

February 1, 2010 Army Times, [Excerpt from a film review of “Extraordinary Measures”]

But he has no money for clinical trials. (He wryly notes that the budget for his entire department is smaller than the salary of the school’s football coach.) John abandons his job with a plan to use his marketing skills to raise money to push forward with the research.

He first persuades Stonehill to leave the school and strike out on his own with funding from some weasely venture capitalists.

#2

Army Times Wants You To “Watch 5,000 Years Of Middle East Imperialism Unfold”

February 1, 2010 Army Times

Web surfer

Watch 5,000 years of Middle East imperialism unfold in 90 seconds in one of the many maps at www.maps ofwar.com.

There might be no faster way to get a sense of the history in play in this important part of the world. The site has loads of other animated maps illuminating the history of governments, religion and, of course, war.

#3

Army Times Wants You To Know That Bands Opposing The War Are Cool:

“New Generation Of Musicians Shows Support For Military, But Retains Anti-War Tradition”

“Most Modern Bands Are Just As Belligerently Pro-Peace As Their Forefathers”

“Even The New Breed Of Troop-Friendly Punk Still Rages At The Machines That Send Men And Women Into War”

“It is ridiculous to have someone say, ‘I don’t agree with this war. I think we should pull out’ and then be, like, ‘So, what you’re saying is that you hate my brother in the Army?’” McIlrath says.

“It’s this kind of rhetoric that is designed to silence people, which is very un-American in itself.”

February 1, 2010 By Matt Schild, Army Times

Punk rock used to be so nice, reliable and predictable.

For decades, its almost religious suspicion of the military-industrial complex was one of a handful of notions upon which its followers could agree.

Now, after 30 years — the last nine with overseas military action — the genre’s latest generation of movers and shakers are abandoning the traditional black-and-white opposition to all things military to fine-tune their criticism.

You’ll still be hard-pressed to find a gang of three-chord warriors who’ll be scheduling a tour stop at the Pentagon, but punk’s icy relationship with service members has thawed considerably in the past decade.

Grizzled veterans such as Henry Rollins and The Vandals broke with expectations to perform in Iraq and Afghanistan for troops. Top-tier acts like Rancid, The Dropkick Murphys and Bouncing Souls have penned songs in tribute to today’s men and women at war.

Even Rise Against, who caused a stir this fall after refusing to headline a show that would be played on a stage sponsored by Army recruiters, provided the USO with stacks of tickets to hand out to service members on its tour this summer.

After decades of confusing the two, punk is starting to grapple with the subtle distinction between opposing the war and opposing the veteran.

“With the old issues of punk rock, I’d like to believe that it was never about the soldiers; it was always about the government,” explains Dropkick Murphys bagpiper Scruffy Wallace, who served with the infantry in the Canadian military.

“That’s what the punk legends have always stood on, saying how much the government can fuck themselves.”

That’s a sea change in punk bands’ position on military service. British acts with their roots in punk’s 1977 heyday, like The Clash, spared soldiers little sympathy. America’s early adopters — such as the Dead Kennedys — echoed those sentiments.

In fact, most modern bands are just as belligerently pro-peace as their forefathers. They’re just learning to distinguish policy from those whose job it is to carry out orders.

“I think it’s an important distinction to make,” Rise Against frontman Tim McIlrath says, “because what it does is ... empower people to not be afraid to speak their mind about the war and what’s going on while still being able to support their brother or their sister or their mother or their father who is a proud member of the armed forces.”

For many acts, they know what it’s like to have a family that served. McIlrath’s father fought in Vietnam; his grandfather is also a vet. Rancid singer/guitarist Tim Armstrong’s brother retired from a career with the Army, and punk-folkie Tim Barry came from a line that included veterans of Vietnam, Korea and World War II.

“To betray the soldiers is betraying my family,” Barry says. “To not look at each person as an individual who made those decisions on their own or at the encouragement of their community or as a response to something tragic that happened, such as 9/11, would be to skew the reality of the situation.”

Exposure to the troops eroded some of the antipathy toward the military for New Jersey’s Bouncing Souls. A European tour brought the act to Schweinfurt, Germany, where the band played to soldiers on the verge of shipping to Iraq in the early stages of the war.

“I just couldn’t wrap my head around why anyone would do it or want to go there,” singer Greg Attonito says in reflection. “Then I met those guys and I could understand.” The Dropkick Murphys took a similar angle on “Last Letter Home,” a tune inspired by fan Marine Sgt. Andrew Farrar and his final communication with his family, sent a couple weeks before he was scheduled to return to the States.

The song was especially poignant for Wallace, a combat veteran himself.

“I know how hard it is coming back from combat, just trying to adapt to being in civilian life again,” he says.

Even the new breed of troop-friendly punk still rages at the machines that send men and women into war.

“Activists and punk rockers haven’t changed their tactics since Vietnam,” Barry says. “Let’s be realistic about this: There’s very little validity in walking around with a sign on a stick with a peace symbol. Everybody has to acclimate and adjust to new situations.”

“It is ridiculous to have someone say, ‘I don’t agree with this war. I think we should pull out’ and then be, like, ‘So, what you’re saying is that you hate my brother in the Army?’” McIlrath says.

“It’s this kind of rhetoric that is designed to silence people, which is very un-American in itself.”

ACTION REPORTS

“Thanks For Being Here” [Outreach To New York Army National Guard]

From: RM
To: Military Resistance
Date: 8 Feb 2010
Subject: 2/6/10 New York National Guard Armory Outreach Report

Rain, sleet nor snow will not stop the Military Resistance group!

On Saturday, February 6th, 2010 five members of Military Resistance braved the harsh cold despite all threats of a major snow storm and headed to a National Guard Armory to distribute the latest issue of Traveling Solider [<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>], Sir! No! Sir! and Querido Camilo.

This seemed to resonate with some of the troops. One individual walked past member AB and said “Thanks for being here”.

It was noted by Military Resistance members that there was a lighter troop turn out during this outreach then others. LP indicated that it might be because the previous training was so close to this one.

We distributed 60 literature packets, 40 copies of Sir! No Sir! and 15 copies of Querido Camilo, cookies and brownies. One soldier asked “how often does it come out”, referring to Traveling Soldier, while another turned down a copy of Sir! No! Sir! and said he had “already seen it”. Overall the troops were very polite and expressed thankfulness for us being out there.

MORE:

ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTE WELL:

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

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

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

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

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

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**

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> **And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)**

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Wounded By Missile Attack “Last Week”

February 07th, David Mance, Reporter; KAPP

YAKIMA -- A local soldier injured during his last week in Iraq, is glad to be back home in Yakima.

Private Nick Cooley walked through the airport gates to find family and friends waiting. They were worried sick after hearing a missile went off near him, hitting him with shrapnel.

He'll be awarded the Purple Heart.

Cooley says the missile came out of nowhere. His family was relieved when he was finally able to call home.

“I was walking down to the motor pool and I got hit by a rocket, it just came on to our base and landed in front of me,” says Cooley.

“It was very nice to hear from him and to hear that he sounded better than what we anticipated what he would sound,” says his mother Jayne Cooley.

Cooley says he'll get the Purple Heart when the Army finishes all the paperwork. He's looking forward to being with his family, and eating home cooking.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Soldiers From 1 SCOTS Killed Near Sangin

8 Feb 10 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that two soldiers from The Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (1 SCOTS), part of the 3 RIFLES Battle Group, were killed in Afghanistan yesterday, Sunday 7 February 2010.

The soldiers died as a result of an explosion near Sangin, in Helmand province, yesterday evening.

“When They Storm A Village The Foreign Troops Never Care About Civilian Casualties At All”

“And At The End Of The Day They Report The Deaths Of Women And Children As The Deaths Of Taliban”

2/5/10 by Jon Boone in Kabul, The Guardian (U.K.) [Excerpts]

Ten of thousands of Afghan civilians are abandoning an area of central Helmland where UK and US forces are set to launch one of the biggest operations of the year.

US generals have unusually made no secret of their plan for a major onslaught against the town close to Helmand's besieged provincial capital, Lashkar Gah

But a Marjah resident, an elder reached by phone, who was not prepared to give his name, said he had evacuated his family a week ago because he feared “the worst attack ever”.

“Always when they storm a village the foreign troops never care about civilian casualties at all. And at the end of the day they report the deaths of women and children as the deaths of Taliban,” he said.

**BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
POINTLESS WAR:
ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army soldier on patrol in Kandilak, a village in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 21, 2010. The soldiers from Task Force Lethal regularly exchange fire with Taliban militants who operate in the hillsides of the Pech valley. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)



As the military base takes impacts from Taliban positions as they fire recoilless artillery rounds and machine gun fire into the base, a soldier with a U.S. Army mortar team runs to his firing position, where his team returned fire with a series of 120mm mortar rounds, at Combat Outpost Michigan, in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 21, 2010. The soldiers from the 2-12 Infantry, Task Force Lethal at COP Michigan regularly receive small and large-arms fire from Taliban militants who operate in the hillsides overlooking the base. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)



U.S. Army soldiers of the 2-12 Infantry on patrol in Sundray, a village in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 22, 2010. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)



A U.S. Army Medic of the 2-12 Infantry during a patrol in the Pech Valley, Kunar province, northeastern Afghanistan, Jan. 23, 2010. The soldiers of Task Force Lethal regularly exchange fire with Taliban militants who operate in the hillsides of the Pech Valley. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The body of U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Daniel Angus after leaving MacDill Air Force Base, Feb. 4, 2010 in Tampa, Fla. Angus was killed last week in combat while serving in Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Chris O'Meara)

Report Says 8 Americans Died In Vain Defending Worthless Afghan Outpost: “There Were Inadequate Measures Taken By The Chain Of Command” “The Report, Called An AR 15-6, Suggests Sanctions On Higher-Ranking Officers”

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: “How many aren't worthless, how many don't have a defined mission, how many have died?”]

Feb. 05, 2010 By JOHN WALCOTT AND JONATHAN S. LANDAY, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

A U.S. military investigation into a battle last October in eastern Afghanistan that cost eight American soldiers their lives has concluded that the small outpost was worthless, the troops there didn't understand their mission, and intelligence and air support were tied up elsewhere in the province.

According to an unclassified executive summary of the report that was released to McClatchy Newspapers and other news organizations Friday, “There were inadequate measures taken by the chain of command, resulting in an attractive target for enemy fighters.”

A statement accompanying the summary said that the report, called an AR 15-6, suggests sanctions on higher-ranking officers and “also recommended administrative actions for some members of the chain of command to improve command oversight.”

The investigation found that the soldiers of Bravo Troop, 3rd Squadron of the 61st Cavalry Regiment from Fort Carson, Colo., “repelled an enemy force of 300 anti-Afghan forces (AAF) fighters, preserving their combat outpost and killing approximately 150 of the enemy fighters. U.S. forces sustained eight killed in action and 22 wounded, all but three of whom returned to duty after the attack. The soldiers distinguished themselves with conspicuous gallantry, courage and bravery under the heavy enemy fire that surrounded them.”

The report also says, however, that Combat Outpost Keating was located “deep in a bowl in Nuristan province, surrounded by high ground,” with limited protection from one observation post.

By mid-2009, the report says, “there was no tactical or strategic value to holding the ground occupied by COP Keating,” which had been established to support a provincial political and economic reconstruction effort that never materialized.

As a result, the report says, “the chain of command decided to close the remote outpost as soon as it could.”

The closure was delayed, however, when the manpower and equipment needed to shut the base - as well as aerial drones and other reconnaissance equipment - were diverted to support a military operation in Barg-e-Matal, a village elsewhere in Nuristan where U.S. forces held off surrounding insurgents for months.

Col. (Ret'd) Says: “It Was Not ‘We The People’ Who Caused The Colossal Failure In Senior Military Leadership Resulting In Becoming Engaged In A Never-Ending Struggle All Over The Middle East”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
February 1, 2010

The nonsense of the last sentence in the “Bigger Army necessary” editorial (Jan. 18) truly sums up the ass-backward thinking taking place throughout the whole piece and the military-industrial complex.

To write as the Army Times does that “The troops need a ... bigger Army” clearly is a case of having the cart before the horse.

Who in their right mind thinks that way? Besides those sucking up to the powers that be in order to curry favor and position, that is. Shame on the Army Times.

Furthermore, to add, as the same sentence does, that the nation also needs a bigger army is begging the point that it was their fault that the Army allowed itself to be used and abused by those with a dubious agenda.

It was not “We the People” who caused the colossal failure in senior military leadership resulting in becoming engaged in a never-ending struggle all over the Middle East.

That is crazy talk.

Col. Joseph C. Kopacz (ret.)

Louisville, Ky.

SHORTEN DEPLOYMENTS: “Divorce, Infidelity And Suicide Were Present During Both My Tours”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
February 1, 2010

Anyone who has heard Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey speak, or read his interviews, is aware of his long-held desire to increase dwell time for soldiers.

My question has always been, why not decrease the duration of deployment? If the Army wants to set a dwell ratio of 1-to-2 or 1-to-3, why don't our leaders examine the possibility of that ratio representing six months gone and a year back, or six months gone and a year and a half back, instead of one year gone and two years back?

There was a time when six-month deployments were the norm.

I spent six months deployed to both Kosovo and Afghanistan and witnessed all the same problems soldiers have today when away from home.

Divorce, infidelity and suicide were present during both my tours.

When I deployed to Iraq for 12 months, these problems seemed to multiply. Not just in terms of severity for each affected soldier, but for the sheer number of soldiers having them.

Reducing the toll on families subjected to multiple deployments is an admirable and righteous goal, but is increasing the dwell time the only way to ease that burden?

A deployment of any length will require certain sacrifices, but why has there been no discussion of reducing the number of sacrifices required in one tour?

Staff Sgt. Derrick Marble
Fort Hood, Texas

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

Army Moves To Strip Jailed Anti-War Soldier Spc Marc A Hall Of Legal Defense Team: Command To Send Him From U.S.A. To Iraq “Within A Few Days” For Court Martial



Spc. Marc Hall

February 3, 2010, By the Friends and Family of Spc. Marc Hall, Courage to Resist & Feb 5, 2010 IVAW

Today, Fort Stewart, Georgia officials confirmed that the Army will attempt to separate Spc Marc A Hall from both his civilian legal team and his established military defender Capt. Anthony Schiavetti by sending him to Iraq “within a few days” to face court martial.

Marc has been sitting in Liberty County jail near Fort Stewart, GA since December 11, 2009 because he wrote a song called, “Stop Loss” about the practice of involuntarily extending military members' contract.

The Army declared that, “The jurisdiction transfer ensures a full and fair trial for both Spc. Hall and the United States.” Nothing could be farther from the truth, at least for Spc. Hall.

“It is our belief that the Army would violate its own regulations by deploying Marc and it would certainly violate his right to due process by making it far more difficult to get witnesses.

"It appears the Army doesn't believe it can get a conviction in a fair and public trial. We will do whatever we can to insure he remain in the United States," explains attorney David Gespass of Birmingham, Alabama.

An Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) member, Hall served 14 months in Iraq. He was scheduled to end his military contract on Feb. 27 but received a stop loss order that he would have to stay on active-duty to re-deploy to Iraq with his unit.

Spc. Marc Hall produced and distributed an angry hip-hop song in July 2009 when he discovered that he would not be allowed to leave active duty due to the Army's "stop-loss" policy. Spc. Hall continued to serve with his unit for the next four months undergoing command and mental health counseling as requested. "I explained to (my first sergeant) that the hardcore rap song was a free expression of how people feel about the Army and its stop-loss policy. I explained that the song was neither a physical threat nor any threat whatsoever. I told him it was just hip-hop," explained Spc. Hall.

When Spc. Hall continued to express strong objections to redeploying to Iraq, his unit used the hip-hop song as a pretext to incarcerate Spc. Hall on Dec. 12, 2010. The command likely believed Spc. Hall would refuse to deploy anyway creating discomfort among other soldiers.

Spc. Hall was charged Dec. 17, 2009, with five specifications in violation of Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Conduct, two of those for wrongfully communicating a threat based on song lyrics. Article 134 is the vague rule that outlaws anything "to the prejudice of good order and discipline."

Brenda McElveen, Spc. Hall's mother notes, "Marc served his tour of duty to Iraq honorably. To his dismay, he was told that he would be deployed again. When Marc voiced his concerns over this matter, his concerns fell on deaf ears. To let his frustration be known, Marc wrote and released the song. Marc is not now nor has he ever been violent."

On Feb. 1, 2010 Spc. Hall underscored his non-violent outlook by formally applying for discharge from the Army as a conscientious objector. The Army's attempts to now deploy him violate AR 600-8-105 (Military Orders) and the Army's Conscientious Objector regulations among other errors.

"The Army seeks to disappear Marc and the politically charged issues involved here, including: the unfair stop-loss policy, the boundary of free speech and art by soldiers, and the continuing Iraq occupation.

"The actual charges are overblown if not frivolous, so I'm not surprised the Army wants to avoid having a public trial," explained Jeff Paterson of Courage to Resist (couragetoresist.org), an organization working in collaboration with Iraq Veterans Against the War (ivaw.org) to support Spc. Hall. Supporters have created stoplossmusic.org to support Spc. Hall and pay for his legal defense.

Ft. Stewart Public Affairs Chief Kevin Larson, (912) 435-9879, announced today that he will no longer provide information regarding Spc. Hall. Media should instead contact Iraq-stationed LTC Eric Bloom via email only at eric.bloom@mnd-b.army.mil. This e-

mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it. This alone underscores the lack of a fair and public trial available to Spc. Hall in Iraq.

The Army continues to implement its stop-loss policy despite President Obama's promise to end the unfair practice that involuntarily extends the active duty service term of many soldiers. According to the Pentagon 120,000 soldiers have been affected by stop-loss since 2001 and 13,000 are currently serving under stop-loss orders.

Based at Fort Stewart, Hall said the song was a “free expression of how people feel about the Army and its stop-loss policy” not a threat. “My first sergeant said he actually liked the song and that he did not take it as a threat,” Hall added.

A South Carolina native, Hall wanted to leave the military to spend more time with his wife and child.

Hall's song: <http://marcwatercus.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/stoploss.mp3>

7,000 Americans -- About Three-Quarters Of Its Population -- Say That What The U.S. Military Did On Vieques Has Made Them Sick Medical Expert Says “Vieques, In My Experience Of Studying Toxic Substances, Is Probably One Of The Most Highly Contaminated Sites In The World”



Hermogenes Marrero, as a young U.S. Marine, was stationed on the island of Vieques nearly 40 years ago.

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Is there anything new under the sun?"]

February 1, 2010 By Abbie Boudreau and Scott Bronstein, CNN Special Investigations Unit

Vieques, Puerto Rico: -- Nearly 40 years ago, Hermogenes Marrero was a teenage U.S. Marine, stationed as a security guard on the tiny American island of Vieques, off the coast of Puerto Rico.

Marrero says he's been sick ever since. At age 57, the former Marine sergeant is nearly blind, needs an oxygen tank, has Lou Gehrig's disease and crippling back problems, and sometimes needs a wheelchair.

"I'd go out to the firing range, and sometimes I'd start bleeding automatically from my nose," he said in an interview to air on Monday night's "Campbell Brown."

"I said, 'My God, why am I bleeding?' So then I'd leave the range, and it stops. I come back, and maybe I'm vomiting now. I used to get diarrhea, pains in my stomach all the time. Headaches -- I mean, tremendous headaches. My vision, I used to get blurry."

The decorated former Marine is now the star witness in a multibillion-dollar lawsuit by more than 7,000 residents of this Caribbean island -- about three-quarters of its population -- who say that what the U.S. military did on Vieques has made them sick.

For nearly six decades, beginning right after World War II, Vieques was one of the Navy's largest firing ranges and weapons testing sites.

"Inside the base, you could feel the ground -- the ground moving," Marrero said. "You can hear the concussions. You could feel it. If you're on the range, you could feel it in your chest. That's the concussion from the explosion. It would rain, actually rain, bombs. And this would go on seven days a week."

After years of controversy and protest, the Navy left Vieques in 2003. Today, much of the base is demolished, and what's left is largely overgrown. But the lawsuit remains, and island residents want help and compensation for numerous illnesses they say they suffer.

"The people need the truth to understand what is happening to their bodies," said John Eaves Jr., the Mississippi attorney who represents the islanders in the lawsuit.

Because he no longer lives on Vieques, Marrero is not one of the plaintiffs but has given sworn testimony in the case. He said the weapons used on the island included napalm; depleted uranium, a heavy metal used in armor-piercing ammunition; and Agent Orange, the defoliant used on the Vietnamese jungles that was later linked to cancer and other illnesses in veterans.

"We used to store it in the hazardous material area," Marrero said. It was used in Vieques as a defoliant for the fence line.

The military has never acknowledged a link between Marrero's ailments and his time at Vieques, so he receives few disability or medical benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Neither the Navy nor the Justice Department, which is handling the government's defense, would discuss the islanders' lawsuit with CNN.

But Eaves said his clients don't believe that the military has fully disclosed the extent of the contamination on Vieques: "Like uranium was denied, then they admitted it."

Dr. John Wargo, a Yale professor who studies the effects of toxic exposures on human health, says he believes that people on the island are sick because of the Navy's bombing range.

"Vieques, in my experience of studying toxic substances, is probably one of the most highly contaminated sites in the world," he said.

"This results from the longevity of the chemical release, the bombs, the artillery shells, chemical weapons, biological weapons, fuels, diesel fuels, jet fuels, flame retardants. These have all been released on the island, some at great intensity."

Wargo is the author of a new book, "Green Intelligence," on how environments and toxic exposure affect human health. He is also expected to testify as an expert witness in the islanders' lawsuit.

He said the chemicals released by the munitions dropped on Vieques can be dangerous to human health and may well have sickened residents or veterans who served on the island. "In my own mind, I think the islanders experienced higher levels of exposure to these substances than would be experienced in any other environment," Wargo said. "In my own belief, I think the illnesses are related to these exposures."

The effects of those chemicals could include cancer, damage to the nervous, immune and reproductive systems or birth defects, he said.

"This doesn't prove that the exposures caused those specific illnesses," Wargo added. "But it's a pretty convincing story from my perspective."

Since the Navy left the island, munitions it left behind "continue to leak, particularly from the east end of the island," Wargo said.

"My concerns are now predominantly what's happening in the coastal waters, which provide habitat for an array of fish, many species of which are often consumed by the population on the island," he said.

Scientists from the University of Georgia have documented the extent of the numerous unexploded ordinance and bombs that continue to litter the former bomb site and the surrounding waters. The leftover bombs continue to corrode, leaching dangerously high levels of carcinogens, according to researcher James Porter, associate dean of the university's Odum School of Ecology.

The Environmental Protection Agency designated parts of Vieques a Superfund toxic site in 2005, requiring the Navy to begin cleaning up its former bombing range. The service identified many thousands of unexploded munitions and set about blowing them up. But the cleanup effort has further outraged some islanders, who fear that more toxic chemicals will be released.

The U.S. government's response to their lawsuit is to invoke sovereign immunity, arguing that residents have no right to sue it.

The government also disputes that the Navy's activities on Vieques made islanders ill, citing a 2003 study by scientists from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that found no link.

That study, however, has been harshly criticized by numerous scientists, and the CDC is embarking on a new effort to determine whether residents may have been sickened by the contamination from the Navy range.

Asked whether his duty on the island made him sick, Marrero responds, "Of course it did."

"This is American territory. The people that live here are American," he said. "You hurt someone, you have to take care of that person. And the government's just not doing anything about it."

OCCUPATION HAITI

Haiti - Still Starving 23 Days Later



"Looter" arrested for possession of a bag of powdered milk, Port-au-Prince, January 15. (Photo: Carolyn Cole / Los Angeles Times)

February 5, 2010 by Bill Quigley, CommonDreams.org.

You can walk down many of the streets of Port au Prince and see absolutely no evidence that the world community has helped Haiti.

Twenty-three days after the earthquake jolted Haiti and killed over 200,000 people, as many as a million people have still not received any international food assistance.

On February 4, the UN World Food Program reported they had given at least some food, mostly 55 pound bags of rice, to over a million people. The UN acknowledges that it still needs to reach another one million people. The 55 pounds of rice are expected to provide a two week food ration for a family. Beans and cooking oil are scheduled to come later.

The Associated Press reported that people in Haiti at small protests were holding up banners reading "Help us, we're starving." Over a million people are displaced. About 10,000 families are in tents, the rest are living under sheets, blankets and tarps.

One of the people living under a sheet is a brand new mother with her one-day-old baby. The New York Times reports that Rosalie Antoine, 33, and her one day old baby were living in a neighbor's yard with puppies and chickens under a sheet in the Bel-Air neighborhood of Port au Prince.

Haiti and the United Nations estimate 250,000 children under the age of 7 are living in temporary housing. Most need vaccinations.

Flavia Cherry, of the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, this week witnessed a pregnant double amputee give birth on the ground in one of the tent camps without any medical assistance at all. "This poor mother had nothing, no milk, no clothing for the baby, nothing!"

Even people who can afford to purchase food are having a difficult time. A 55-pound bag of rice costs 40 percent more today than it did before the earthquake. Dr. Louise Ivers, a Partners in Health physician in Port au Prince, reports a 25 kg (55 pounds) bag of rice that sold for \$30 US dollars (1,207 Haitian Gourdes) before the quake, now costs \$42 US dollars (1,690 Haitian Gourdes).

The World Food Program reports prices are still rising and people outside the earthquake zone are having difficulty meeting their basic food needs.

Twenty-three days after the quake.

Medical Flights Paperwork Delays Killing Haitian Children:

“New U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services Criteria For Transporting Haitian Quake Victims Is So Strict That Hardly Anybody Qualifies”

“The Child That Died Of A Pulmonary Embolism Tuesday Would Have Survived Had She Been Evacuated, He Said”

05 February 2010 BY FRANCES ROBLES, Miami Herald [Excerpts]

PORT-AU-PRINCE -- One child died and the condition of critically ill children from Haiti's earthquake worsened amid stricter rules over medical flights to Miami hospitals and others in the United States, doctors and patients say.

While they await permission to fly her out, doctors manually pumped oxygen for day-old Guirland Fleurant, born at the University of Miami airport field hospital by cesarean section Thursday night. Until she was transferred to a Haiti hospital with an incubator late Friday, she was being kept warm with instant military meals.

Whitney Constant, 15, got gangrene three days after being told she would be heading to Miami for medical care.

On Friday, she lost the lower half of one leg and the foot on the other.

Another 14-year-old, whose name frenzied doctors can't recall, died on Tuesday.

“They want paperwork. We don't have paperwork,” said Miami Children's Hospital Dr. William Muinos, who is running the pediatric unit of the field hospital built in Port-au-Prince to treat quake victims. “They don't have passports. They don't have IDs. They don't have homes. They don't have anything.”

The issue of transporting patients from quake-ravaged Haiti exploded last week, when medical flights were temporarily suspended after Gov. Charlie Crist sent a letter to U.S. officials questioning who would pay for mounting bills at Florida hospitals. The Obama administration ultimately agreed to pay for the children's care.

But doctors in Haiti say that the new U.S. Department of Health and Human Services criteria for transporting Haitian quake victims is so strict that hardly anybody qualifies.

A person would have to be facing imminent death within 48 hours from injuries directly relating to the 7.0-magnitude quake that killed up to 200,000 people.

"Now, no pilot will take these patients without papers," said Dr. Shayan Vyas of Miami Children's Hospital.

Vyas said he arrived in Miami last week with child patients and faced an onslaught of questions from the Border Patrol. He said questions included: Where are the papers? Who are this child's parents? How do you know these people who say they are the child's parents are who they say they are?

Anticipating problems, Vyas typed up a birth certificate for baby Guirland -- on the hospital computer. "Last week I told them, 'You can ask me questions later,'" he said. "Now you cannot find a pilot or an airport who will take them."

Puzzled parents keep asking when their children will leave the country.

"We don't know what the holdup is. Our daughter is only getting worse here," said Josilin Constant, whose daughter Whitney had a double amputation days after being told she'd get to leave for Florida.

She was trapped in the rubble of her home for five days. Her 11-year-old brother and 23-year-old aunt died.

Although her two legs were broken and wounded, she could move.

"She did not look that bad," Constant said. "Then she got a fever. They didn't realize until today that it was coming from her leg."

On Tuesday, Constant said, doctors told her she was approved for a medical flight. On Friday, she lost her leg and foot.

The child that died of a pulmonary embolism Tuesday would have survived had she been evacuated, he said.

"She was told she would leave," Dr. Muinos said. "Within 24 hours, that promise was denied."

Site director Elizabeth Greig acknowledged that although efforts to fly baby Guirland out of Haiti are moving fast, paperwork for other children has not been submitted. They did not qualify for military flights, she said, and there is no way to get paperwork for the others.

"The Department of Health and Human Services lifted the embargo on flights but made the criteria so strict that you can't get anybody in," Greig said. "There just aren't injuries like that anymore."

Since the flights resumed, Greig said she has moved just nine patients -- six of whom were backlogged from during the five-day suspension.

Joanna Benedict Pierre Louis is still waiting to leave. The quake ripped the skin, muscles and tendons off her leg. She has to be completely sedated every time her dressing is changed.

“We were told that our child has to be in the United States because her wounds are so deep,” said her mother, Evelyn Antoine. “Everything seemed to be ready. At the last minute, the government said no.”

Her father Sony Pierre Louis said some parents are ready to take their kids home. “From the moment we got here, they said she would leave the next day,” he said. “I just do not think my child is going to make it here. She is not getting proper care.”

Dr. Muinos looked at Joanna's gaping wound and her hand-scrawled chart. “These are not optimal conditions,” he said. “This is a dirty, grassy hospital. It is not the Johns Hopkins ICU.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**MRS. NEFF FIGURING OUT HOW TO GET AROUND
THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S PIDDLING 3 BILLION
DOLLAR INCREASE FOR EDUCATION BY TAPPING INTO
THE 708 BILLION DOLLAR MILITARY BUDGET.**



"We can keep the upgraded computers and the new reading lab if, every few days, I kill at least one of you."

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Would someone please remind me what it is we are fighting for?"]

**The Traitor Obama Approves
“Targeted Killings” Of U.S.
Citizens Without Trial:
Director Of National Intelligence
Dennis Blair Says U.S. Government
“May, With Executive Approval,
Deliberately Target And Kill U.S.
Citizens Who Are Suspected Of
Being Involved In Terrorism”
“They Kill Somebody And Don't Need To
Offer Any Justification”**

Ben Wizner, staff attorney with the ACLU National Security Project, said, “It is alarming to hear that the Obama administration is asserting that the president can authorise the assassination of Americans abroad, even if they are far from any battlefield and may have never taken up arms against the U.S., but have only been deemed to constitute an unspecified 'threat.'”

February 5, 2010 by William Fisher, Inter Press Service

NEW YORK - Civil liberties advocates and legal authorities struck back Friday at what they describe as the “deliberate targeted killing of U.S. citizens far away from any active hostilities, as long as the executive branch determines unilaterally that they meet a secret definition of who the enemy is.”

In an admission that took the intelligence community and its critics by surprise, Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair acknowledged in a congressional hearing Wednesday that the U.S. may, with executive approval, deliberately target and kill U.S. citizens who are suspected of being involved in terrorism.

The American Civil Liberties Union is among those expressing serious concern about the lack of public information about the policy and the potential for abuse of unchecked executive power.

Attorney George Brent Mickum, who has defended a number of Guantanamo Bay detainees, told IPS, “I guess my sense is that it's just more fear mongering. They kill somebody and don't need to offer any justification.”

“We have killed thousands of innocent civilians while attempting to target alleged operatives. And let us not forget how frequently our intelligence has been wrong about alleged operatives,” Mickum noted.

He added, “My clients Bisher al Rawi, Jamil el-Banna, Martin Mubanga, abu Zubaydah, and Shaker Aamer all are alleged to have been operatives based on intel. In every case that intel was incorrect.

“I don't have any expectation that our intel with respect to alleged American operatives is likely to be any better.”

Another constitutional scholar, Professor Francis A. Boyle of the University of Illinois Law School, told IPS that “this extrajudicial execution of human beings” violates both international human rights law and the fifth amendment of the U.S. constitution.

“The U.S. government has now established a 'death list' for U.S. citizens abroad akin to those established by Latin American dictatorships during their so-called dirty wars,” he said.

The human rights advocacy community was equally forceful in its pushback. Daphne Eviatar, an attorney with Human Rights First, told IPS, “The short answer is that combatants can be targeted and civilians cannot under international law. Their citizenship isn't relevant.

“But just being a 'suspected terrorist' doesn't necessarily mean they're a combatant.”

She added, “The key question, and where there may be serious disagreement, is whether the person targeted is 'directly participating in hostilities'. If not, and they're targeted, it's a war crime.”

Chip Pitts, president of the Bill of Rights Defence Committee, told IPS, “As with its embrace of the Bush approach to indefinite detention, the Obama administration's even greater reliance on targeted extra-judicial killing - including of U.S. citizens - is a tragic legal, moral, and practical mistake.”

“Even for those who accept the legitimacy of the death penalty, this further undermines the rule of law that is our best weapon in the fight against true terrorists, while completely subverting due process and constitutional rights of U.S. citizens,” he said.

Ben Wizner, staff attorney with the ACLU National Security Project, said, “It is alarming to hear that the Obama administration is asserting that the president can authorise the assassination of Americans abroad, even if they are far from any battlefield and may have never taken up arms against the U.S., but have only been deemed to constitute an unspecified 'threat.’”

Testifying before the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee, Blair said, “We take direct action against terrorists in the intelligence community.”

He said U.S. counterterrorism officials may try to kill U.S. citizens embroiled in extremist groups overseas with “specific permission” from higher up.

In response to questions from the panel's top Republican, Rep. Pete Hoekstra of Michigan, Blair said, if “we think that direct action will involve killing an American, we get specific permission to do that.”

Blair's remarks followed a Washington Post article reporting that U.S. President Barack Obama had embraced his predecessor's policy of authorising the killing of U.S. citizens involved in terrorist activities overseas.

The Post reported that “After the Sep. 11, 2001, attacks, Bush gave the CIA, and later the military, authority to kill U.S. citizens abroad if strong evidence existed that an American was involved in organizing or carrying out terrorist actions against the United States or U.S. interests, military and intelligence officials said. The evidence has to meet a certain, defined threshold. The person, for example, has to pose 'a continuing and imminent threat' to U.S. persons and interests.”

The Obama administration appears to have adopted exactly the same policy as its predecessor.

The Post, citing anonymous U.S. officials, said the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Joint Special Operations Command have three U.S. citizens on their lists of specific people targeted for killing or capture.

Blair said he was offering such unusually detailed information in public because “I just don't want other Americans who are watching to think that we are careless.”

Blair didn't specifically articulate the standards he used, saying only that “We don't target people for free speech. We target them for taking action that threatens Americans.”

The Washington Post story, by Pulitzer Prize-winner Dana Priest, revealed that, “In November 2002, a CIA missile strike killed six al Qaeda operatives driving through the desert. The target was Abu Ali al-Harithi, organiser of the 2000 attack on the USS Cole. Killed with him was a U.S. citizen, Kamal Derwish, who the CIA knew was in the car.”

The article says, “Word that the CIA had purposefully killed Derwish drew attention to the unconventional nature of the new conflict and to the secret legal deliberations over whether killing a U.S. citizen was legal and ethical.”

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

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

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

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

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