

Redstone Rocket

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Out with old, in with new contract

Former labor pact lasted two decades

By SKIP VAUGHN

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Maj. Gen. Robert L. Moore commanded the then-Missile Command the last time this happened.

A new contract has been signed between the Aviation and Missile Command and AFGE Local 1858 to cover bargaining unit members of the command. It combines the two former contracts – professional and non-professional – into one contract. The previous Professional Contract was dated July 1, 1983; and the old Non-Professional Contract began June 19, 1981.

Maj. Gen. Larry Dodgen, commander of AMCOM and Redstone Arsenal, and

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Photo by Skip Vaughn

ALL SMILES— Maj. Gen. Larry Dodgen, commander of AMCOM and Redstone, joins Jim Brothers of AFGE Local 1858, seated on his right, in signing the new labor agreement as members of the negotiating teams look on.

'Resolute Strike' uncovers evidence on ambush

U.S. task force operation conducted in Afghanistan

By Spec. JIM WAGNER

Army News Service

SANGIN, Afghanistan — A task force led by 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment garnered information and equipment related to an ambush that left two U.S. servicemembers dead and one seriously injured.

The mission of Operation Resolute Strike — conducted April 8-9 in the affluent southern Afghanistan city of Sangin by 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers, Special Forces operators and criminal investigation task force members — was two-fold: to gain intelligence and the perpetrators of the March 29 ambush, and to deny sanctuary and remove weapons and ammunition used by anti-coalition forces.

Lt. Col. Richard Clarke, task force 3-504th PIR commander, said the operation was a success on both counts.

"We're gathering a significant amount of information about this ambush that may help lead others to find the perpetrators/attackers," Clarke said after the first day of the operation. "What we've done so far is recover a significant amount of small arms, mortar rounds, mortar tubes and anti-tank mines. Most importantly, we recovered bomb-making materials, to include some old C-4, and explosive devices that could have been used against coalition forces later."

At the end of the operation, a large cache of AK-47s, RPG launchers and other small arms weapons were taken by U.S. forces. Also, more than 240 pounds of ammunition used with mortars, RPGs and small arms were seized and destroyed by 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company members.

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Army photo

INVESTIGATORS— Criminal Investigation Task Force members escort an Afghan aboard a CH-47 "Chinook" April 9 for questioning back at Kandahar during Operation Resolute Strike.

Survey says

Traveling abroad amid syndrome

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Post profile



Deputy moves up to project manager

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Hail and farewell



Retired engineer had kinetic career

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Just for kids



Sixth-grade students design top web page

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Win or lose



Here's extra incentive for fitness activities

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Contract

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Jim Brothers, AFGE Local 1858 president, signed the new contract April 7. It culminated three years of negotiations between AMCOM management and union teams.

"We put a lot of hard work into it," Walter Pickett, of the management negotiating team, said. "We're glad we finally finished it."

"It means that we're embarking on a new journey," Brothers said. "This is a better contract than the old one, I think. The old one was a good document; it lasted 20-odd years."

The new agreement includes an optional schedule of four 10-hour workdays. The first-line supervisor may approve participation of no more than one-third of the employees in the work unit.

Brothers, an engineer at Space and Missile Defense Command, has served as the union's president for more than 10 years. He decided to become a candidate for a professional vice president position at SMDC rather than running for re-election this time. The union election was held April 14.

Renegotiation of the former contracts began May 23, 2000 and culminated March 26. The new contract will apply to all bargaining unit members in the Aviation and Missile Command (stationed at Redstone Arsenal/Huntsville, Moffett Field, Calif., Melvin Price Support Center, and all AMCOM logistics assistance representatives), Program Executive Office for Tactical Missiles, Redstone Technical Test Center, Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Project Office, Tactical Operations Centers/Air and Missile Defense Command and Control Systems Project Office.

Either party can request to renegotiate in three years. If neither side asks to renegotiate, the contract will stay in effect on a year-to-year basis.

The management negotiating team included Charlie Barnes, Emily Vandiver Dickson, Marty Martin, Willie Fitzpatrick, Brooks Woerner and Walter Pickett. The union negotiating team included Bill Clemons, Vicki Fuller, Don Eiermann, Henry Earl Smith, Ruth Easley, Valerie Harris, Shirley Keel and Abner Merriweather.

U.S. forces remind Afghans of continued presence

Strike

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When the convoy moving outside of Sangin was ambushed March 29, the equipment used by the three U.S. casualties was left behind in the rush to Medivac them to safety. One of the key goals of Operation Resolute Strike was to get that equipment back.

"It looks like we've recovered one weapon and we're in the process of recovering additional materials from the ambush against coalition forces," Clarke said.

Capt. Del Monroy, battalion intelligence officer, said the overwhelming show of force used in the operation was critical to the mission's success.

While 82nd paratroopers established a containment area around the city and special forces operators swept the city for suspects and intelligence, close air support aircraft buzzed overhead as another reminder of American power. Air Force A-10s and F-16s, Marine Corps Harriers

and Army Apache helicopters were ever-present throughout the course of the operation. During the night, a steady barrage of illumination mortars was fired to remind local residents the U.S. was still in town.

"The influence that we were able to bring here had a lot to do with the success here," Monroy said. "I didn't think we would get any of the U.S. equipment back."

The show of force was enough to convince a government official from the Helmond province — of which Sangin is a member — to bring forth several witnesses and people who had picked up the U.S. equipment after the ambush.

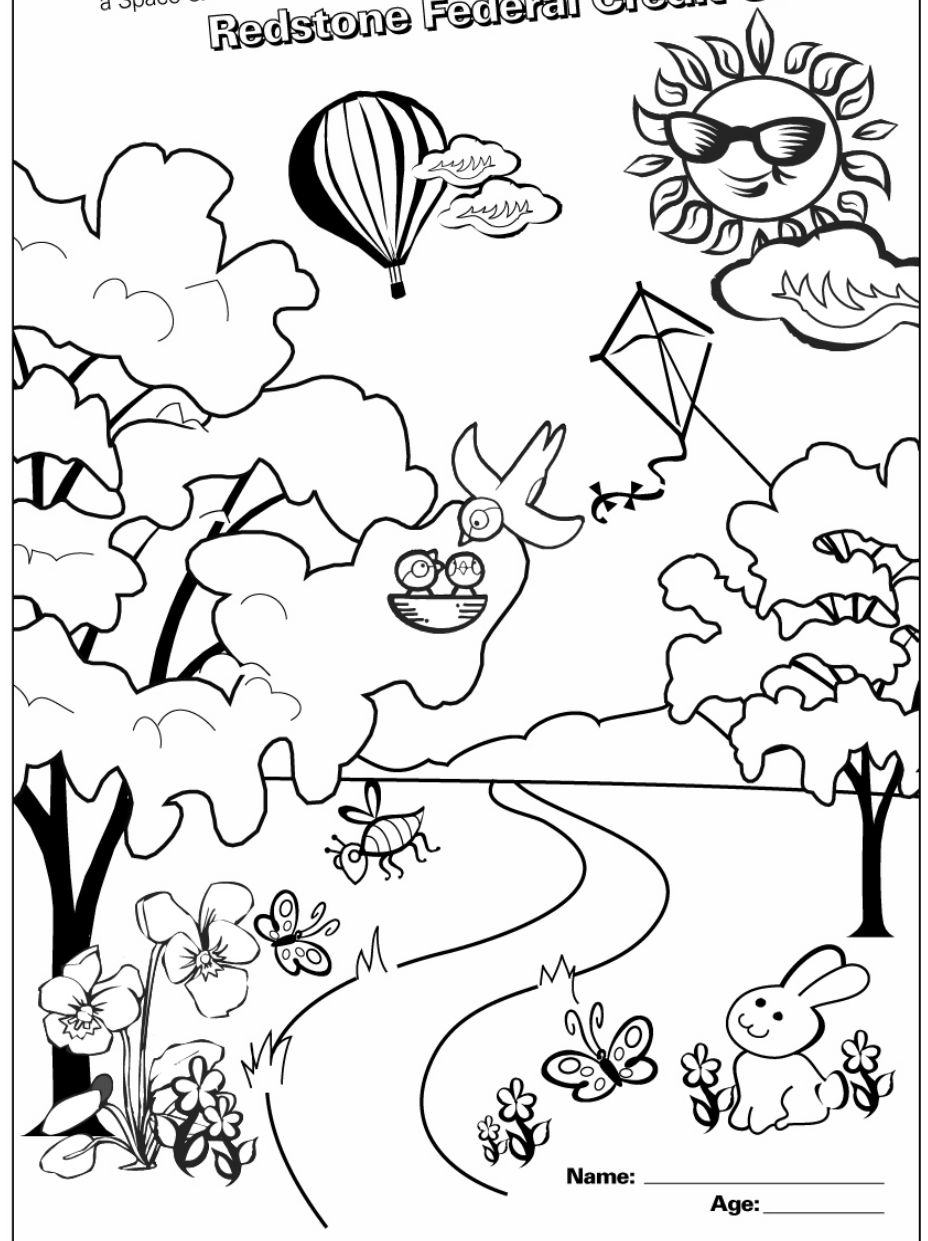
Qualified personnel and members of the criminal investigation task force questioned more than 50 local residents who might have had knowledge of the ambush. Out of that crop, four were flown to a Kandahar Air Field field collection point for further questioning.

Editor's note: Spec. Jim Wagner is a member of the 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

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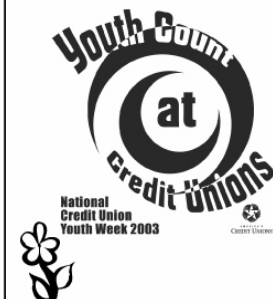
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