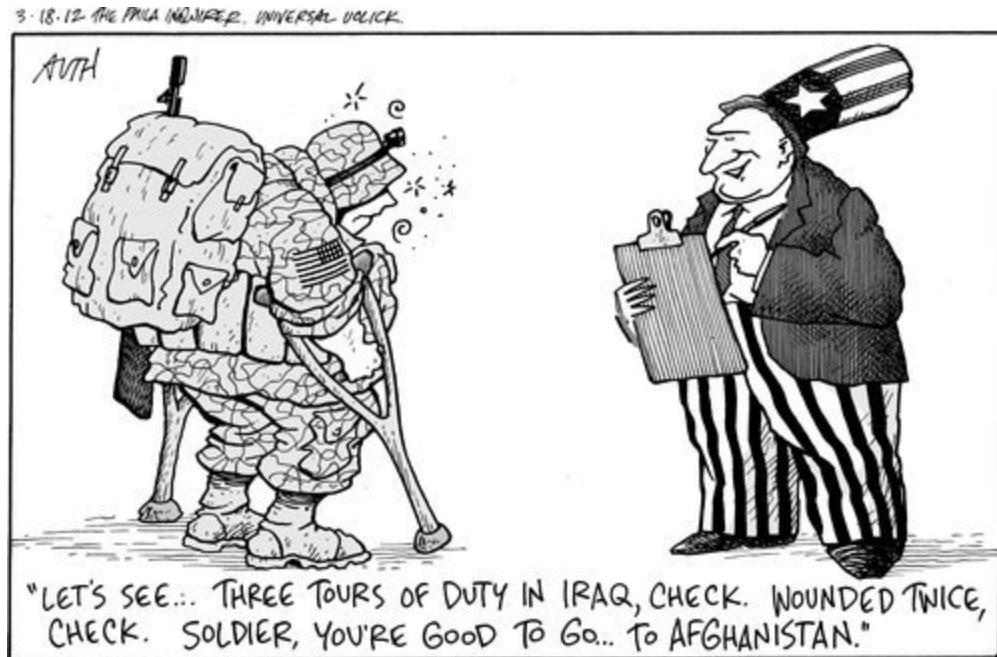


Military Resistance 10C13



“IEDs Are Taking A Frightening Toll In Afghanistan, Often Leaving The Genitals Shredded Or Missing”

“Those Who Cannot Regain Their Sexual Function Or Drive Are Given Little Understanding Or Aid”

“Mark And Heather Litynski, Did Not Feel Supported After Mark Was Wounded”

“She Couldn't Get Anyone At Walter Reed To Listen”

Defense Department officials repeatedly refused, over a period of several months, to respond to The Huffington Post's questions about the limits on compensation or gaps in care for those with genital wounds.

Finally, Pentagon spokeswoman Cynthia Smith said in a statement that the department is "working to provide" reproductive services "to severely injured service members without additional costs to them."

Smith was unable to provide details.

03/21/2012 David Wood, Huffingtonpost.com [Excerpts]

Before they went off to fight in Afghanistan, the guys of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines talked quietly about their deepest fear.

Not dying. Not losing a leg or an arm.

It was having their genitals ripped off, burned away or crushed in the fiery blast of an improvised explosive device.

This was no idle concern to young men bursting with testosterone.

The makeshift bombs known as IEDs are taking a frightening toll in Afghanistan, the blasts shearing off arms and legs, ripping through soft flesh, crushing organs and bone, and driving dirt, rocks and filth deep into torn flesh -- often leaving the genitals shredded or missing.

Some guys said they'd rather be dead.

Mark Litynski, a 23-year-old rifleman with Lima Company, knew the odds. He'd been married to Heather for almost a year, and children were in the future they planned together.

I ought to freeze my sperm so we could still have kids if something happened, he thought.

The idea nagged at him. But in the rush of last-minute training before they packed their sea bags and weapons and then took a few days of boisterous leave, he kept putting it off. Where do you go to freeze your sperm, anyway? Who would you even ask?

By the time they loaded on the buses at Camp Pendleton, it was too late. Should have done it, Mark thought as they boarded the plane in September 2010.

Weeks later, Mark was on a combat patrol in Sangin, southern Afghanistan, walking behind an engineer sweeping for IEDs, marking their path with yellow spraypaint. IED

detectors aren't foolproof. There came a bright flash and searing heat, then the upward blast ripped off both of Mark's legs and most of his left arm, slashing into his remaining arm, shattering his pelvis and driving a rock and other debris up into his abdominal cavity.

Amid the bloody carnage, all the skin was ripped from his penis and his testicles were gone.

Days later, after trauma surgeons in Germany finished trimming and suturing his stumps and temporarily closing his abdominal wounds, he managed to say a few words to Heather on the phone.

"I'm so sorry," he croaked.

"I love you," she told him, blinking back tears. "We will pull through this together, as a team."

“Those Who Cannot Regain Their Sexual Function Or Drive Are Given Little Understanding Or Aid, They Say”

The decade of U.S. combat in Afghanistan has left Afghans and Americans with a seemingly endless series of woes. But among the most devastating are the blast wounds that have left more than 16,000 young Americans severely wounded.

Several hundred have suffered genital injuries in addition to amputations and burns, leaving them unable to father children and struggling to engage in something resembling the sex they used to have, often without the aid of what many view as the primary symbol of their manhood.

"Who's going to want to be with me now?" wondered Marine Staff Sgt. Glen Silva, 39, after an IED blast shattered his leg, ripped open his lower torso and severed most of his penis.

It was a legitimate concern. Silva's girlfriend stayed with him at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., through many of his 42 surgeries. But one day he was wheeled back to his room to find she had gone, leaving a nine-word handwritten note: "I can't take this any more. I'm outta here."

Silva, the Litynskis and others agreed to share the painful and intimate details of their ordeals in order to spotlight what they feel is a life-altering but often hidden wound, one that is frequently given inadequate attention and care within the military health care system.

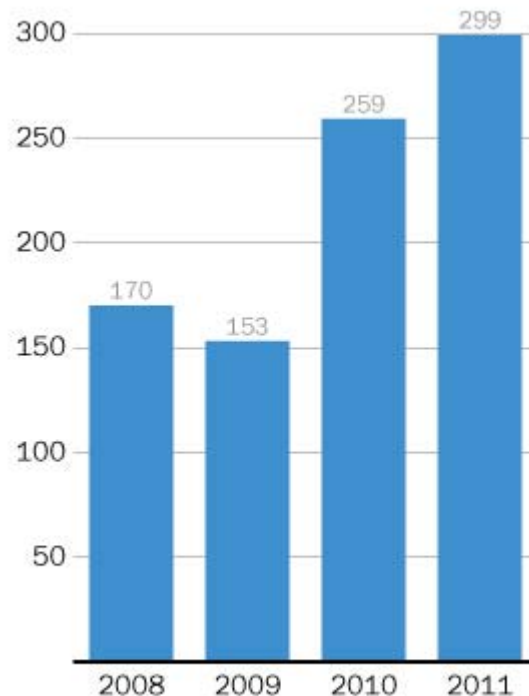
Those who cannot regain their sexual function or drive are given little understanding or aid, they say.

In Mark and Heather's case, it took the intervention of The Huffington Post to get them an appointment with Walter Reed's specialist in sexual dysfunction.

"They weren't prepared for this," Silva said of the Walter Reed staff.

Since 2005, more than 1,500 soldiers and Marines have been carried off the battlefield with genital wounds. But since late 2009, when President Barack Obama ordered a "surge" of 30,000 combat troops into Afghanistan and approved a new tactic of increased foot patrols, the pace of genital injuries has accelerated.

In the year before the surge, 170 combat troops suffered genital wounds, mostly from IED blasts. In 2010, according to Pentagon data, that number leapt to 259.



Source: US ARMY OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL

Last year, the Defense Department counted 299 cases of genital wounds that James Jezior, a urologist who does genital repair surgery at Walter Reed, characterizes as "devastating."

"I remember lying on my side, dust everywhere, and I looked down and saw my arms were split open and squirting blood and I had just two bloody stumps above my knees," said Marine 1st Lt. James Byler, 26, who was blown up a few weeks before Mark Litynski.

"My first coherent words to my Marines were, 'Hey! check my nuts!'" His genitals were severely damaged, but intact.

"It's the male instinct, the first thing you care about," Byler said. "In past wars, guys didn't live if they got injured as badly as me, but we've gotten so good at the medevac process now that guys who are catastrophically wounded are surviving. Now you have all these further complications -- like, you know, what's going to happen with my genital wounds?"

Military surgeons and specialists acknowledge that they often don't know the answer, because, until recently, they had little or no exposure to such injuries.

In past wars, most casualties were head and chest wounds caused by shrapnel from mortars and artillery or from bullets. Walter Reed, the nation's premier military hospital, attracts some of the best talent in military medicine.

But doctors there say their only relevant experience with sexual dysfunction had long been with older prostate cancer patients, who obviously have vastly different medical and psychological needs than young men with severe battle injuries.

During the past decade, IED blasts have become the primary cause of U.S. battle casualties, killing or wounding 34,360 American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the most recent Pentagon data.

One reason for the increasing incidence is that modern body armor protects the chest but leaves the lower torso exposed to the upward blast of buried bombs, a vulnerability that insurgents have exploited.

"I Ain't Going To No Sex-Change Doctor"

Many victims end up at Walter Reed, where surgeons are able to repair some damage to the penis. Jezior uses tissue he cuts from inside the patient's cheek or lip to rebuild the urethra, which carries urine through the penis from the bladder. Oral tissue is used because it is hairless and used to being wet, Jezior explained, and is rolled into a tube to replace the damaged urethra. He grafts skin from the patient's thigh or groin to rebuild the outer layer of the penis.

But for guys like Staff Sgt. Silva whose penises have been partly or totally destroyed, options are few.

Expertise within the military on penis replacement, or phalloplasty, is so limited that some Walter Reed patients have been referred to civilian surgeons who specialize in sex-change operations.

It's an option not well received in the ranks.

"I ain't going to no sex-change doctor," Silva growled. Besides, he had seen photos of the penises they had made with surgical flaps from patients' forearms. "I could do better with Silly Putty," he snorted.

But there is hope that doctors may soon be able to regrow a penis from the smooth muscle and endothelial cells of patients like Silva. Advances in regenerative medicine have surged during the past decade. At the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine, a team led by Anthony Atala reported last year that they had regenerated the penises of 12 New Zealand white rabbits.

Still, even if surgeons can physically rebuild genitals, making them work effectively and pleasurable is vastly more challenging. Achieving erection, orgasm and ejaculation

involves a complex interplay of sensory nerves, muscles and blood-vessel functions, any or all of which may have been damaged by an IED blast.

"Even if you can regenerate tissue, it doesn't mean you can make that tissue function exactly the way it did before -- mostly because of nerve function," said Robert Dean, an andrologist who is Walter Reed's lone specialist in sexual dysfunction.

Much is unknown about the secondary effects of a powerful blast on human organs. Apart from the obvious physical damage, the concussive blast wave seems to affect sexual function in ways that are not clear. Byler, for instance, suffered little visible physical damage to his genitals, but his testosterone levels and sperm count dropped alarmingly after he was injured.

He and many other genital-wound patients are given replacement doses of testosterone. Low testosterone levels can depress sex drive and decrease energy levels, but the treatment often requires precise dosages and a lengthy process of trial and error. And often, its effects are masked, as many patients are also taking a cocktail of other drugs for pain and anxiety or to control swelling and fight infection.

It's a situation that breeds intense frustration.

Genital-wound patients are anxious to know what their sexual future looks like. But doctors at Walter Reed often are unable to reassure them that their sexual functions will ever return in whole, in part or at all. It can take a year, even two, for answers to begin to emerge, Jezior said.

Even then, he said, "We absolutely do not know how well their reactions will be with what they have remaining, how functional they will be. It takes a lot of time to heal, a lot of recovery, every part of the body has to heal before your erections become what will be their end-state."

Some patients, he added, "will not get back to a functional state."

“Mark And Heather Litynski, However, Did Not Feel Supported After Mark Was Wounded”

"You hear a lot of, 'This is the best we can do, but the fact of the matter is, we have never seen this type of injury before, so we (doctors) really don't know what to tell you,'" said Byler, speaking of his experience as an amputee and genital-injury patient at Walter Reed.

Byler said he never even saw a urologist until four or five months after he was wounded.

"There's a lot of things they can do for limbs that are lost, like my legs -- but no one really addresses the genitalia," he said. "You need someone to come look at the damage and give you an honest assessment of what they think it's gonna be. Because otherwise you're left wondering, who's going to want me? Who's going to want to be with me?"

Doctors at Walter Reed acknowledge having long failed to recognize that while young men may accept the loss of a limb, even the loss of several limbs, they are often far more devastated by damage to their genitals.

"There certainly was a disconnect," said Jezior. "It was an eye-opener for us that there is a grieving when it comes to significant injury to the genitalia that needs to be dealt with."

Still, he insisted that the care provided to genital wound patients at Walter Reed is "pretty incredible, with a lot of support."

Mark and Heather Litynski, however, did not feel supported after Mark was wounded.

Their experience was bitter, frustrating and far from the future they had imagined.

They grew up two miles apart in the Minneapolis suburb of New Hope. When Mark shipped out to Afghanistan in September 2010, Heather went home to wait for his return.

She was holding down a temporary job at Starbucks in November when two Marines arrived, accompanied by her mother and sister. Mark was alive, they told her, but in critical condition with "severe lower torso injuries." They handed her a terse medical report describing his wounds. When she read "bilateral (both legs) above-knee amputations," Heather collapsed to the ground in shock.

It was far worse than she had feared. But he was alive.

"When I found out, I started crying, but very quickly I got over it because you're just so glad they're alive and doing well," Heather said.

Two days passed, an agony of waiting, before doctors could talk to Heather about the extent of Mark's injuries. There were a lot of other things to worry about -- the potential for deadly infection, of possible brain damage, the trauma of losing two legs and his arm. But one thing the doctors said hit home: "We saved his penis!"

"Saved his penis! Got something!" Heather recalled with a chuckle.

Mark has also accepted his wound, just as he has gotten used to his wheelchair, his prosthetic legs and mechanical arm. "When I found out about it (his testicle loss) I was kind of ... you know, 'Should have done the sperm-freeze thing,'" he said. "But ... we're making it through. It's not the end of the world."

Of course, it wasn't as simple as that.

As surgeons at Walter Reed were working to repair Mark's abdominal wounds and shape his leg and arm stumps, they also began reconstructive work on his penis. They prescribed doses of Viagra or Cialis to see if he could get an erection. A duty nurse administered the first dose while Mark had a full-length catheter inserted in his penis. His erection was painful.

But stimulation is necessary and common early therapy for genital-wound patients, said Dean, the hospital's sexual-dysfunction specialist. "Even though they are not really close

to wanting to use it, because they have physical therapy to go through and pain issues, we start rehab therapy to see what effect that has, because we don't want the (penile) tissues to atrophy," he said.

Severely wounded patients like Mark typically spend a few months in intensive care at Walter Reed. Once Mark got a set of prosthetic arms and learned to walk on his new prosthetic legs, he joined other wounded patients on fishing trips, even a snowboarding in Vail, Colo., just over a year after his injury.

“She Couldn't Get Anyone At Walter Reed To Listen”

Things weren't easy, though. "He was very affectionate before, he used to always have his arm around me, hold my hand, just come by and kiss my head," said Heather. "That's how he was." But as his physical wounds healed, the couple's sense of intimacy did not return. Nor did Mark's sex drive. He was lethargic. He had "zero" desire, she said.

Mark was taking testosterone to replace the hormone normally produced by his testicles.

Heather suspected the dosage was wrong, but she couldn't get anyone at Walter Reed to listen.

"Every time we'd go to the doctor, it was always kind of awkward and embarrassing," she said. "I'd have to bring it up and ask them -- they never asked us. I was always given a vague answer -- 'Oh, well, he's still on some medications that can decrease the libido ...' And I'm thinking having sex once every couple of months with your spouse is more than a little 'decrease' in libido."

Heather started wondering if Mark was suffering from traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress, but she felt there was no one who had answers or even seemed to care.

The frustration inevitably strained their marriage. Out of guilt, Mark began fiddling around with his testosterone patches, trying to adjust the dosage, desperately hoping to find a way to help.

"All of our complaints to his primary care doctors, his urologist -- nothing got us anywhere," Heather said. Then, as a result of an interview with The Huffington Post, they made contact with Dean.

In a January interview, Dean had enthusiastically described his work with genital-wound patients and their spouses.

A few weeks later, I mentioned Dean and his work to Mark and Heather, and was astonished to learn that they had never heard of him, despite having lived in his hospital for 15 months.

Before they heard about Dean, Heather said, "I was never referred to any doctor that could really help us."

Within days, they met with Dean, who ran some tests and ordered a change in Mark's testosterone therapy. He expects dramatic improvement.

But the Litynskis' disappointments haven't ended.

Couples like Mark and Heather, who want the option of natural childbirth, can turn to in vitro fertilization, using donor sperm. But the process is expensive, well beyond the means of typical enlisted soldiers and Marines. At Walter Reed, the cost of a single in vitro procedure runs from \$4,800 to \$7,000, and success may require many attempts.

Yet the military's medical insurance program, Tricare, specifically excludes coverage for the procedure, even in cases where the husband's reproductive organs have been destroyed in combat.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has added to the frustration.

Through its insurance program, the VA pays up to \$100,000 to the severely wounded to compensate for loss of income and to help finance cars adapted for their use and other new needs.

Late last year, the VA also agreed to pay up to \$50,000 for damage to or loss of genitals in combat, but its \$100,000 lifetime cap on such compensation does not account for veterans who have been wounded as catastrophically as Mark Litynski.

Along with many others severely wounded in combat, Mark has been awarded the full \$100,000 for the loss of both legs.

Because of the cap, however, he will not receive the additional \$50,000 for his genital wounds -- money that could help pay for fertility treatment or adoption.

Defense Department officials repeatedly refused, over a period of several months, to respond to The Huffington Post's questions about the limits on compensation or gaps in care for those with genital wounds.

Finally, Pentagon spokeswoman Cynthia Smith said in a statement that the department is "working to provide" reproductive services "to severely injured service members without additional costs to them."

Smith was unable to provide details.

Heather Litynski said she has not been contacted by anyone in the Defense Department offering to help pay for fertility procedures.

Considering that Mark volunteered to serve his country and was severely injured in that duty, "it seems like it should be up to the government" to compensate them, Heather said, for not being able to have their own children together.

"It just doesn't seem right," added Heather, a registered nurse who typically has a sunny disposition and a quick smile.

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 email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two British Soldiers Killed By Afghan Soldier In Lashkar Gar City

26/03/2012 The Huffington Post UK

An Afghan soldier shot two British soldiers in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, Defence Secretary Philip Hammond confirmed on Monday.

"Details of the incident are still emerging but it appears that a member of the Afghan National Army opened fire at the entrance gate to the British headquarters in Lashkar Gar city, killing the two British service personnel.

"The assailant was killed by return fire."

According to the BBC the governor of Helmand said the shooting followed a "verbal clash" between Afghan and Nato soldiers, while the Taliban claimed responsibility for the shooting.

Spokesman for Task Force Helmand Major Ian Lawrence said: "Sadly, I must report that a Royal Marine and a soldier from the Adjutant General's Corps were shot and killed by an Afghan National Army soldier at the main entrance to Lashkar Gah main operating base.

In a statement issued by the MoD, Brigadier General Sherin Shah, of the Afghan National Army said: "Today's incident which involved armed conflict by one of the ANA members of the Fourth Kandak of 3-215 Brigade was a tragic event.

U.S. Soldier Killed By Afghan Policeman

March 26, 2012 Star

Kabul, Afghanistan:

An U.S. soldier was shot dead by an "alleged member" of the Afghan police in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, the NATO-led force said in a statement.

It was the second so-called "green on blue" killing of the day in the insurgency-wracked country, after two British soldiers were shot dead in the southern province of Helmand, and brought the total for the year so far to 16.

The soldier member was shot by "an alleged member of the Afghan local police (ALP) as the security force approached an ALP checkpoint," the International Security Assistance Force statement said.

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

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

Australian Occupation Worker Injured In Afghan Attack

March 26, 2012 ABC

An Australian civilian working with the AusAID program has been seriously hurt in an attack in southern Afghanistan.

The man is currently receiving medical treatment in Kandahar, and his condition is listed as serious but stable.

The man was an AusAID adviser deployed through the Australian Civilian Corps, a statement from Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr's office said.

He was working in Uruzgan Province with local communities on development activities.

His next of kin have been advised and are receiving support from the Australian Government.

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

MILITARY NEWS

Military Scrambles To Limit Malaria Drug Just After Afghanistan Massacre

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

03/25/2012 By Mark Benjamin, The Huffington Post

WASHINGTON -- Nine days after a U.S. soldier allegedly massacred 17 civilians in Afghanistan, a top-level Pentagon health official ordered a widespread, emergency review of the military's use of a notorious anti-malaria drug called mefloquine.

Mefloquine, also called Lariam, has severe psychiatric side effects. Problems include psychotic behavior, paranoia and hallucinations. The drug has been implicated in numerous suicides and homicides, including deaths in the U.S. military. For years the military has used the weekly pill to help prevent malaria among deployed troops.

The U.S. Army nearly dropped use of mefloquine entirely in 2009 because of the dangers, now only using it in limited circumstances, including sometimes in Afghanistan. The 2009 order from the Army said soldiers who have suffered a traumatic brain injury should not be given the drug.

The soldier accused of grisly Afghanistan murders on March 17 of men, women and children, Staff Sgt. Robert Bales, suffered a traumatic brain injury in Iraq in 2010 during his third combat tour. According to New York Times reporting, repeated combat tours also increase the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Bales' wife, Karilyn Bales, broke her silence in an interview Sunday with NBC's Matt Lauer, airing on Monday's Today show. "It is unbelievable to me. I have no idea what happened, but he would not -- he loves children. He would not do that," she said in excerpts released Sunday.

On March 20, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Jonathan Woodson ordered a new, urgent review to make sure that troops were not getting the drug inappropriately. The task order from Woodson, obtained by The Huffington Post, orders an immediate "review of mefloquine prescribing practices" to be completed by the following Monday, six days after the order was issued.

"Some deployed service members may be prescribed mefloquine for malaria prophylaxis without appropriate documentation in their medical records and without proper screening for contraindications," the order says. It notes that this review must include troops at "deployed locations."

Army and Pentagon officials would not say whether Bales took the drug, citing privacy rules. When asked if Woodson's mefloquine review was a response to the massacre, the military in Afghanistan referred the question to the Army. Army officials said they were "unaware" of the review. After being shown the task order via email, they stopped responding. The Secretary of Defense Office referred questions to the Army -- and then back to medical officials in the secretary's office. Those officials have not responded.

But the sudden violence and apparent cognitive problems related to the crime Bales is accused of mirrors other gruesome cases.

A former Army psychiatrist who was the top advocate for mental health at the Office of the Army Surgeon General recently voiced concern about Bales' possible mefloquine exposure. "One obvious question to consider is whether he was on mefloquine (Lariam), an anti-malarial medication," Elspeth Cameron Ritchie wrote this week in TIME's "Battleland" blog, noting that the drug is still used in Afghanistan.

"This medication has been increasingly associated with neuropsychiatric side effects, including depression, psychosis, and suicidal ideation."

In 2004 in the United Press International, this reporter and reporter Dan Olmsted chronicled use of the drug by six elite Army Special Forces soldiers who took mefloquine then committed suicide. (Suicide is relatively infrequent among Special Forces soldiers).

"You're ready to take that plunge into hurting someone or hurting and killing yourself, and it comes on unbelievably quickly," said one Special Forces soldier diagnosed with permanent brain damage from Lariam. "It's just a sudden thought, it's the right thing to do. You'll get a mental picture, and it's in full color."

Also that year, the UPI report showed how mefloquine use was a factor in half of the suicides among troops in Iraq in 2003 -- and how suicides dropped by 50 percent after the Army stopped handing out the drug.

In a case that echoes the Bales' case, that year the Army dropped charges against Staff Sgt. Georg-Andreas Pogany. Pogany had been the first soldier since Vietnam charged with cowardice. Like Bales, Pogany faced a possible death sentence. The Army dropped the charges after doctors determined that Pogany suffered from Lariam toxicity, which affected his behavior in Iraq.

In 2002, three elite soldiers, who took mefloquine in Afghanistan, returned to murder their wives and then commit suicide. Friends and neighbors described the soldiers' behavior after taking the drug as incoherent, strange and angry.

Maj. Gary Kolb, spokesman for the Army's Special Operations Command, was skeptical when asked at the time if mefloquine could have played a role in the tragedies at Fort Bragg. "I think you are heading down the wrong road. That is just my personal opinion."

Bales' attorney, John Henry Browne, has said his client has apparent mental health issues and is suffering with memory loss, among other things. A call to his office was not immediately returned.

First GI Cafe In Germany Opens Its Doors

From: ivaw.germany@gmx.net
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: March 26, 2012
Subject: First GI Cafe In Germany Opens Its Doors

March 25, 2012 by Helen Jaccard and Gerry Condon, Kaiserslautern, Germany

U.S. soldiers in Germany now have a GI coffeehouse. The Clearing Barrel Bar and Café opened Saturday, March 24, in Kaiserslautern, Germany, home to Ramstein Air Base and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, among a constellation of U.S. bases, with 50,000 U.S. military and civilian personnel living in the area.

The grand opening was a big success, with over 60 people in attendance. Well-wishers enjoyed good food and drink, and marveled at the large beautifully remodeled space, with couches, tables, chairs, a bar and barstools, his and hers bathrooms, and a full kitchen.

Beautifully printed posters from the “War Is Trauma” art exhibit were displayed on spacious white walls. “War Is Trauma,” a collaboration between Just Seeds, an art collective from Brooklyn, New York, and Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), is about “Operation Recovery”, a campaign to stop the deployment of traumatized troops and to focus public attention towards Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury and Military Sexual Trauma.

Neighbors, friends, and activists convened from far and near, including Germans and U.S. citizens living in Germany. Nathan Peld, an IVAW member, arrived after a long train ride from Vienna, Austria, where he is working with the United Nation’s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Young German women and men mixed easily with Vietnam-era friends. Political discussions were lively and interesting. Live music was provided by two young men, one German and one American, who sang and played guitars and were joined by guests in a sing-along.

Chris Capps-Schubert, an Iraq veteran and war resister, and his German wife Meike, an organizer-extraordinaire and member of Military Families Speak Out, have been working very hard for the past two years to make their dream of opening a GI coffeehouse in Germany a reality. Their efforts have been supported by the Military Counseling Network, Connection-EV, the Center on Conscience and War, the German Mennonite Peace Committee, members of IVAW and Veterans For Peace, and many other German and American friends and activists.

Meike and Chris are both counselors with the Military Counseling Network, the European branch of the GI Rights Hotline. Chris has been a member of IVAW for several years and went on a speaking tour around Germany to gain support for The Clearing Barrel project. Chris and Meike and other counselors will be available to help soldiers who are

seeking to be discharged from the military, facing other difficulties with the military, or seeking help dealing with military trauma.

Meike said, "Having this space available allows us to bring together in one place what we do personally, socially, culturally, and politically. I am very grateful for all of the help and support that we have received from the peace community and we hope that they will continue to support us."

Helen Jaccard and Gerry Condon representing Veterans For Peace spoke of the importance of supporting alleged Wikileaks whistleblower Bradley Manning, and GI resisters like André Shepherd, an Iraq veteran who refused to redeploy to Iraq and is seeking political asylum in Germany. Dave Blalock, a Vietnam-era GI organizer who lives in Heidelberg, Germany, said "This is the beginning of resistance."

GI coffeehouses were a mainstay of GI resistance in the Vietnam era, providing safe, alternative spaces for soldiers to socialize, learn about their rights in the military, receive counseling, engage one another in political discussions, and organize themselves to resist illegal wars and occupations. The coffeehouse movement grew throughout the 60s and 70s.

Today's veterans have revived the coffeehouse tradition in order to build community and resistance. There are two successful GI coffeehouses in the U.S., Coffee Strong just outside the gates of Joint Base Lewis McCord in Washington State, and Under the Hood at Fort Hood, Texas.

You can find out more about The Clearing Barrel on their Facebook page, GI Café Germany, and on their website, www.GICafeGermany.com.

Donations are still very much needed, so it's not too late to contribute to this important new resource for our GIs in Germany.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether in Afghanistan or at 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 and economic injustice, 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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

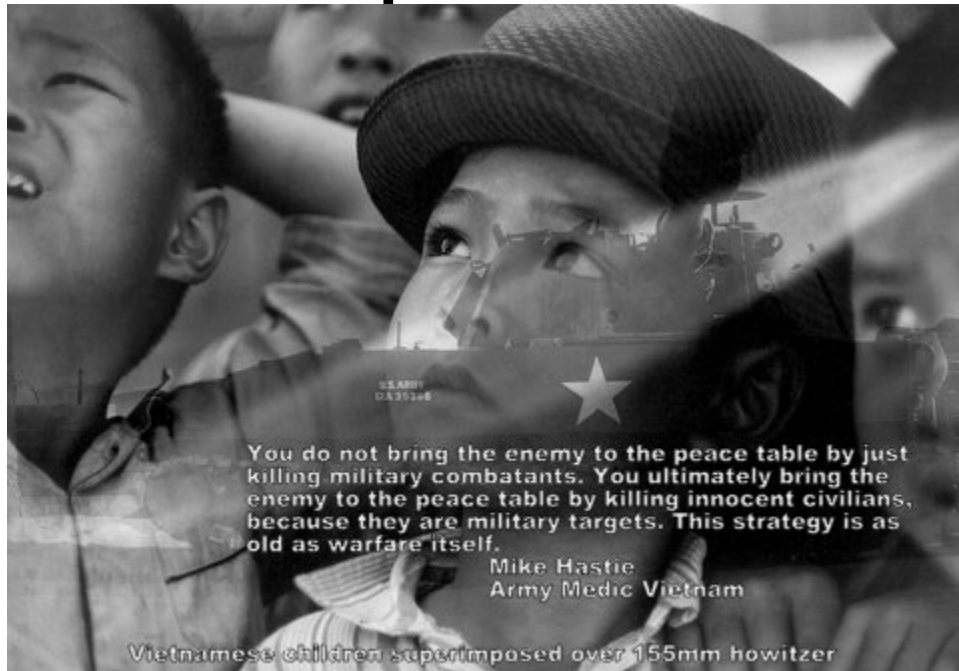
“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

The past year – every single day of it – has had its consequences. In the obscure depths of society, an imperceptible molecular process has been occurring irreversibly, like the flow of time, a process of accumulating discontent, bitterness, and revolutionary energy.

-- Leon Trotsky, “Up To The Ninth Of January”

Lying Is The Most Powerful Weapon In War



From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: March 25, 2012
Subject: Lying Is The Most Powerful Weapon In War

Lying Is The Most Powerful Weapon In War

**A blindfolded man throws a dart at a large map of Vietnam, and where it lands a war crime was committed by the U.S. Government.
When American history is buried,
the war crime is repeated.
And repeated.
And repeated.
And repeated.
Whenever the truth threatens one's belief system,
there is a strong tendency to deny its reality.
When young soldiers come back from war,
they carry with them a rucksack of secrets.
As the years go by, these secrets turn into betrayal.**

**Betrayal is the lethal drug that kills more soldiers when they come home, than were killed on the battlefield.
Betrayal is a form of political incest,**

**soldiers used for the profits of the fatherland.
I did not serve in Vietnam for the cause of freedom,
I served Big Business in America for the cause of war
profiteering.
This truth is what ultimately destroys the veteran.
I see this agony in the faces of American veterans
every time I am at a VA hospital.**

**Support The Troops,
is the great lie that has great silence.
Duped,
for the glory of Wall Street.**

**Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
March 25, 2012**

**When you discover the truth through the
door of betrayal, and become a global
citizen, it is as if you acquired a quantum
leap in intelligence. The world you once
lived in is no longer your primary residence.
Mike Hastie
Vietnam veteran**

**Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam
1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at:
hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)**

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head.
The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a
so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen
of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

Obamaville's

[From GI SPECIAL 7D2: 4.4.09]

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: March 29, 2009
Subject: Obamaville's

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

Obamaville's

**Soldiers are fighting for the Obamaville's
in Phoenix, Seattle, Portland, Nashville,
Fresno, St. Petersburg and other towns
on the outskirts in tents after their homes
were foreclosed, no running water,
electricity, plumbing, like you humping
the desert, back home where the shacks are built
of old wood, scrap metal, cardboard
like the Iraqis live when their home
is blown up to bricks and dust
into an Obamaville while we have empty houses
that people can Not live in and you,
our brave Soldiers will be coming home
to homelessness and Billionaires, Millionaires
who have robbed Americans but they
already have money but they want power
like Hitler's, Mussolini's, Pinochet's, Franco's
Stalin's so high in the sky that they
think they are gods and as long as they have
Blackwaters and American Soldiers to prop
them up, this will be how it will be
cities bombed by AIG's, furniture
and personal belongings kicked out
of their homes
by the Bank Of America because
the bailed out Banks, Insurance and Mortgage
Companies have taken over the Treasury
and the Federal Reserve but Congress
can Not stop them as they gang rape
the American Dream
like a giant dark Enron whose Shareholders
are the Taxpayers brought on
by decades of De-regulations that
allowed these Bail-looter to cook the books
with weasel language to make money
out of air because the Democrats
tired of running for office with just
Union money and Special interests
deleted the rest of FDR's regulations
and took the Bailouters big money
to compete on election day
and they won but with strings
so Obama says hey, how many Billions do**

you need because a Revolution just
took place as the Bail-looters just say hey,
do you want a world money meltdown,
pension money gone, more Workers
with lost jobs, GM and Companies
going down as Congress and Obama
fight over Mexican Workers, Bailout bonuses
but say No, because their deal
with the Bail-Looter's Mafia
comes with a gun pointed at their heads
as the government folds it's hand
and says you Win as another Obamaville
family pitches their tent
while the Rich Bankers Bail Out Rich Bankers
using the Taxpayer Credit Card
forming Megamonsters with Trillions
of paper money by secret weasel language
that Americans can Not understand
created that way on purpose
to keep the people Slaves
that aids the Bailouters
as Obama blows up houses
in Afghanistan and Pakistan
producing more Obamavilles
and enemies
along the way.

**“Murder Is Murder Whether
Committed By The Villain
Skulking In The Dark Or By
Uniformed Men Stepping To The
Strains Of Martial Music”
The Story Of The Removal Of The
Cherokees In 1838-1839;
“The Most Brutal Order In The
History Of American Warfare”**

Written In 1890 By A Private Who Served During The Cherokee Removal: Birthday Story Of Private John G. Burnett, Captain Abraham McClellan's Company, 2nd Regiment, 2nd Brigade, Mounted Infantry, Cherokee Indian Removal, 1838-39.

[Posted by The Cherokee Cultural Society of Houston]

Men working in the fields were arrested and driven to the stockades. Women were dragged from their homes by soldiers whose language they could not understand. Children were often separated from their parents and driven into the stockades with the sky for a blanket and the earth for a pillow. And often the old and infirm were prodded with bayonets to hasten them to the stockades.

Children:

This is my birthday, December 11, 1890,

I am eighty years old today.

I was born at Kings Iron Works in Sullivan County, Tennessee, December the 11th, 1810.

I grew into manhood fishing in Beaver Creek and roaming through the forest hunting the deer and the wild boar and the timber wolf. Often spending weeks at a time in the solitary wilderness with no companions but my rifle, hunting knife, and a small hatchet that I carried in my belt in all of my wilderness wanderings.

On these long hunting trips I met and became acquainted with many of the Cherokee Indians, hunting with them by day and sleeping around their camp fires by night.

I learned to speak their language, and they taught me the arts of trailing and building traps and snares.

On one of my long hunts in the fall of 1829, I found a young Cherokee who had been shot by a roving band of hunters and who had eluded his pursuers and concealed himself under a shelving rock.

Weak from loss of blood, the poor creature was unable to walk and almost famished for water. I carried him to a spring, bathed and bandaged the bullet wound, and built a shelter out of bark peeled from a dead chestnut tree. I nursed and protected him feeding him on chestnuts and toasted deer meat.

When he was able to travel I accompanied him to the home of his people and remained so long that I was given up for lost. By this time I had become an expert rifleman and fairly good archer and a good trapper and spent most of my time in the forest in quest of game.

“The Execution Of The Most Brutal Order In The History Of American Warfare”

The removal of Cherokee Indians from their life long homes in the year of 1838 found me a young man in the prime of life and a Private soldier in the American Army.

Being acquainted with many of the Indians and able to fluently speak their language, I was sent as interpreter into the Smoky Mountain Country in May, 1838, and witnessed the execution of the most brutal order in the History of American Warfare.

I saw the helpless Cherokees arrested and dragged from their homes, and driven at the bayonet point into the stockades.

And in the chill of a drizzling rain on an October morning I saw them loaded like cattle or sheep into six hundred and forty-five wagons and started toward the west.

One can never forget the sadness and solemnity of that morning.

Chief John Ross led in prayer and when the bugle sounded and the wagons started rolling many of the children rose to their feet and waved their little hands good-by to their mountain homes, knowing they were leaving them forever.

Many of these helpless people did not have blankets and many of them had been driven from home barefooted.

On the morning of November the 17th we encountered a terrific sleet and snow storm with freezing temperatures and from that day until we reached the end of the fateful journey on March the 26th, 1839, the sufferings of the Cherokees were awful.

“The Trail Of The Exiles Was A Trail Of Death”

The trail of the exiles was a trail of death.

They had to sleep in the wagons and on the ground without fire.

And I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die in one night of pneumonia due to ill treatment, cold, and exposure.

Among this number was the beautiful Christian wife of Chief John Ross. This noble hearted woman died a martyr to childhood, giving her only blanket for the protection of a sick child. She rode thinly clad through a blinding sleet and snow storm, developed pneumonia and died in the still hours of a bleak winter night, with her head resting on Lieutenant Greggs saddle blanket.

I made the long journey to the west with the Cherokees and did all that a Private soldier could do to alleviate their sufferings. When on guard duty at night I have many times walked my beat in my blouse in order that some sick child might have the warmth of my overcoat.

I was on guard duty the night Mrs. Ross died. When relieved at midnight I did not retire, but remained around the wagon out of sympathy for Chief Ross, and at daylight was detailed by Captain McClellan to assist in the burial like the other unfortunates who died on the way.

Her unconfined body was buried in a shallow grave by the roadside far from her native home, and the sorrowing Cavalcade moved on.

Being a young man, I mingled freely with the young women and girls. I have spent many pleasant hours with them when I was supposed to be under my blanket, and they have many times sung their mountain songs for me, this being all that they could do to repay my kindness. And with all my association with Indian girls from October 1829 to March 26th 1839, I did not meet one who was a moral prostitute. They are kind and tender hearted and many of them are beautiful.

The only trouble that I had with anybody on the entire journey to the west was a brutal teamster by the name of Ben McDonal, who was using his whip on an old feeble Cherokee to hasten him into the wagon.

The sight of that old and nearly blind creature quivering under the lashes of a bull whip was too much for me. I attempted to stop McDonal and it ended in a personal encounter. He lashed me across the face, the wire tip on his whip cutting a bad gash in my cheek. The little hatchet that I had carried in my hunting days was in my belt and McDonal was carried unconscious from the scene.

I was placed under guard but Ensign Henry Bullock and Private Elkanah Millard had both witnessed the encounter. They gave Captain McClellan the facts and I was never brought to trial.

Years later I met 2nd Lieutenant Riley and Ensign Bullock at Bristol at John Roberson's show, and Bullock jokingly reminded me that there was a case still pending against me before a court martial and wanted to know how much longer I was going to have the trial put off?

McDonal finally recovered, and in the year 1851, was running a boat out of Memphis, Tennessee.

“Four-Thousand Silent Graves Reaching From The Foothills Of The Smoky Mountains To What Is Known As Indian Territory In The West”

The long painful journey to the west ended March 26th, 1839, with four-thousand silent graves reaching from the foothills of the Smoky Mountains to what is known as Indian territory in the West.

And covetousness on the part of the white race was the cause of all that the Cherokees had to suffer.

Ever since Ferdinand DeSoto made his journey through the Indian country in the year 1540, there had been a tradition of a rich gold mine somewhere in the Smoky Mountain Country, and I think the tradition was true. At a festival at Echota on Christmas night 1829, I danced and played with Indian girls who were wearing ornaments around their neck that looked like gold.

In the year 1828, a little Indian boy living on Ward creek had sold a gold nugget to a white trader, and that nugget sealed the doom of the Cherokees.

In a short time the country was overrun with armed brigands claiming to be government agents, who paid no attention to the rights of the Indians who were the legal possessors of the country.

Crimes were committed that were a disgrace to civilization. Men were shot in cold blood, lands were confiscated. Homes were burned and the inhabitants driven out by the gold-hungry brigands.

Chief Junaluska was personally acquainted with President Andrew Jackson. Junaluska had taken 500 of the flower of his Cherokee scouts and helped Jackson to win the battle of the Horse Shoe, leaving 33 of them dead on the field.

And in that battle Junaluska had drove his tomahawk through the skull of a Creek warrior, when the Creek had Jackson at his mercy.

Chief John Ross sent Junaluska as an envoy to plead with President Jackson for protection for his people, but Jackson's manner was cold and indifferent toward the rugged son of the forest who had saved his life.

He met Junaluska, heard his plea but curtly said, "Sir, your audience is ended. There is nothing I can do for you."

The doom of the Cherokee was sealed.

“Some Women Were Preparing The Little Body For Burial. All Were Arrested And Driven Out Leaving The Child In The Cabin“

Washington, D.C., had decreed that they must be driven West and their lands given to the white man, and in May 1838, an army of 4000 regulars, and 3000 volunteer soldiers under command of General Winfield Scott, marched into the Indian country and wrote the blackest chapter on the pages of American history.

Men working in the fields were arrested and driven to the stockades. Women were dragged from their homes by soldiers whose language they could not understand. Children were often separated from their parents and driven into the stockades with the sky for a blanket and the earth for a pillow. And often the old and infirm were prodded with bayonets to hasten them to the stockades.

In one home death had come during the night. A little sad-faced child had died and was lying on a bear skin couch and some women were preparing the little body for burial. All were arrested and driven out leaving the child in the cabin. I don't know who buried the body.

In another home was a frail mother, apparently a widow and three small children, one just a baby. When told that she must go, the mother gathered the children at her feet, prayed a humble prayer in her native tongue, patted the old family dog on the head, told the faithful creature good-by, with a baby strapped on her back and leading a child with each hand started on her exile.

But the task was too great for that frail mother. A stroke of heart failure relieved her sufferings. She sunk and died with her baby on her back, and her other two children clinging to her hands.

Chief Junaluska who had saved President Jackson's life at the battle of Horse Shoe witnessed this scene, the tears gushing down his cheeks and lifting his cap he turned his face toward the heavens and said, "Oh my God, if I had known at the battle of the Horse Shoe what I know now, American history would have been differently written."

At this time, 1890, we are too near the removal of the Cherokees for our young people to fully understand the enormity of the crime that was committed against a helpless race.

“The Facts Are Being Concealed From The Young People Of Today”

Truth is, the facts are being concealed from the young people of today.

School children of today do not know that we are living on lands that were taken from a helpless race at the bayonet point to satisfy the white man's greed.

Future generations will read and condemn the act and I do hope posterity will remember that private soldiers like myself, and like the four Cherokees who were forced by General Scott to shoot an Indian Chief and his children, had to execute the orders of our superiors. We had no choice in the matter.

Twenty-five years after the removal it was my privilege to meet a large company of the Cherokees in uniform of the Confederate Army under command of Colonel Thomas.

They were encamped at Zollicoffer and I went to see them. Most of them were just boys at the time of the removal but they instantly recognized me as "the soldier that was good to us". Being able to talk to them in their native language I had an enjoyable day with them.

From them I learned that Chief John Ross was still ruler in the nation in 1863. And I wonder if he is still living? He was a noble-hearted fellow and suffered a lot for his race.

At one time, he was arrested and thrown into a dirty jail in an effort to break his spirit, but he remained true to his people and led them in prayer when they started on their exile.

And his Christian wife sacrificed her life for a little girl who had pneumonia.

The Anglo-Saxon race would build a towering monument to perpetuate her noble act in giving her only blanket for comfort of a sick child. Incidentally the child recovered, but Mrs. Ross is sleeping in a unmarked grave far from her native Smoky Mountain home.

When Scott invaded the Indian country some of the Cherokees fled to caves and dens in the mountains and were never captured and they are there today.

I have long intended going there and trying to find them but I have put off going from year to year and now I am too feeble to ride that far.

The fleeing years have come and gone and old age has overtaken me.

I can truthfully say that neither my rifle nor my knife were stained with Cherokee blood.

I can truthfully say that I did my best for them when they certainly did need a friend. Twenty-five years after the removal I still lived in their memory as "the soldier that was good to us".

However, murder is murder whether committed by the villain skulking in the dark or by uniformed men stepping to the strains of martial music.

Murder is murder, and somebody must answer.

Somebody must explain the streams of blood that flowed in the Indian country in the summer of 1838.

Somebody must explain the 4000 silent graves that mark the trail of the Cherokees to their exile.

I wish I could forget it all, but the picture of 645 wagons lumbering over the frozen ground with their cargo of suffering humanity still lingers in my memory.

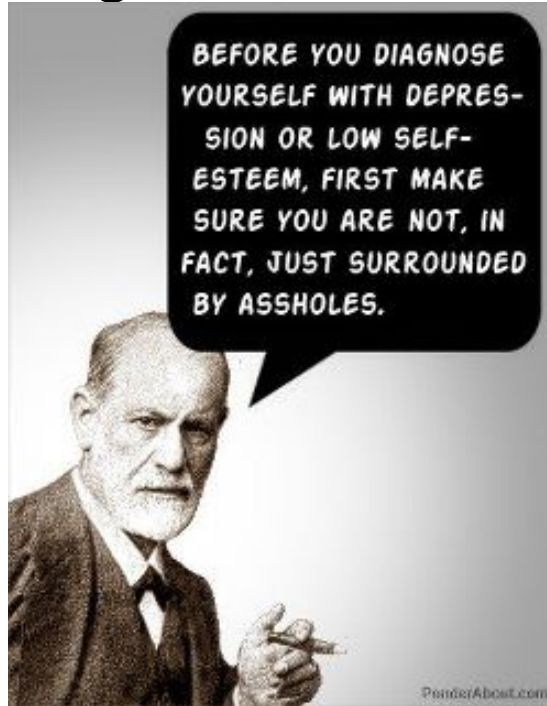
Let the historian of a future day tell the sad story with its sighs, its tears and dying groans.

Let the great Judge of all the earth weigh our actions and reward us according to our work.

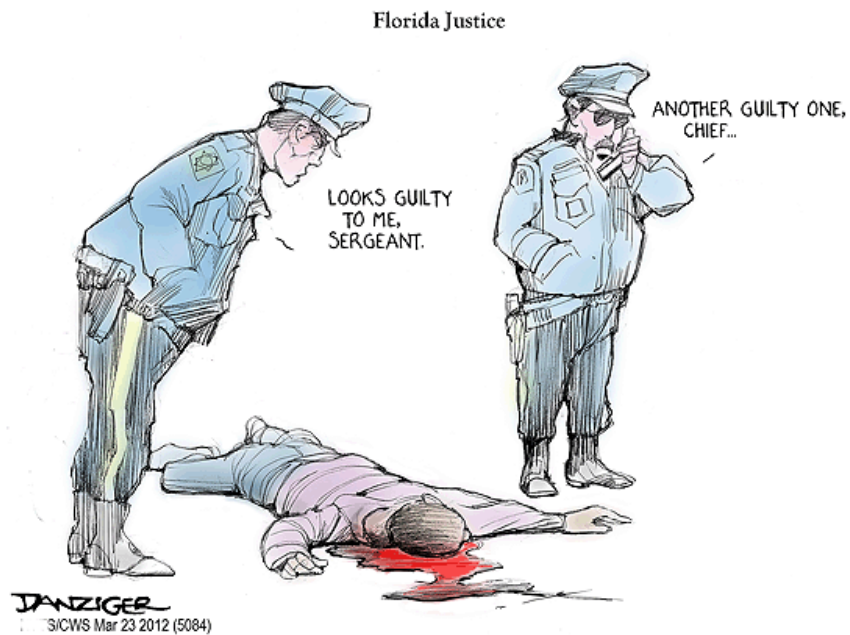
Children - Thus ends my promised birthday story.

This December the 11th 1890.

Dr. Sigmund Freud Says



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



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BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



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Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website
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The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/military-resistance-archives/>; news@uruknet.info;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

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