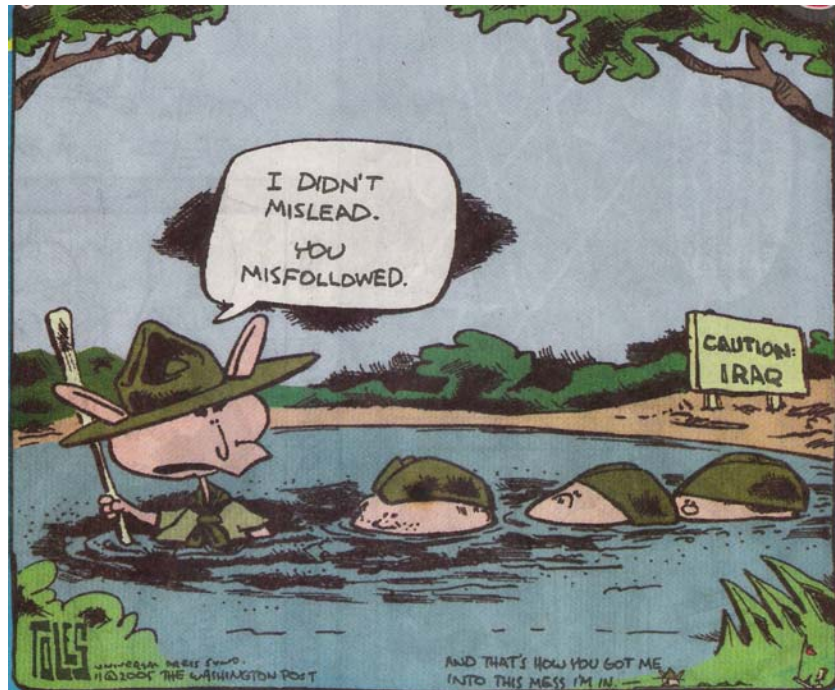


GI SPECIAL 3D54:



A Dishonorable Coward At Work: Commanding Officer Threatens Military Moms

The information received via the phone call, was to inform the families that the base did not condone the site, nor the Army, and that it was not to be used; the gist was, families were not allowed to use the site, or they could get into "trouble". Some members reported their soldier calling from Iraq, telling them to be careful about using the site as the Army was monitoring it.

The Department of Defense, called families in the middle of the night to notify them to not use the web site. Most of the families were near tears, thinking they were getting "THE" call telling them their child or loved one had been killed or injured.

12.20.05 By Bob Fertik, Democrats.com

Letter from a Military "Mom":

I am sending this letter to you in hope of finding a source to hear my concerns. It is something that has bothered me since the occurrence, and I know it is not something that should have happened, and I worry for my family's safety as I step out to speak about this.

During my son's deployment to Iraq, February 2004-February 2005: I created a small group website on MSN, for families and friends of our soldiers deployed unit. It was a membership only site, and we were a tight group of mostly "Moms", from all over the United States, just trying to make it through each day. The support and help we gave one another is a singular experience of grace, I will never forget.

During the first few months of our site, the Army decided to call every single family on the site, informing them, that the site was not to be used by any of the families.

The Department of Defense, called families in the middle of the night to notify them to not use the web site. Most of the families were near tears, thinking they were getting "THE" call telling them their child or loved one had been killed or injured.

The information received via the phone call, was to inform the families that the base did not condone the site, nor the Army, and that it was not to be used; the gist was, families were not allowed to use the site, or they could get into "trouble". Some members reported their soldier calling from Iraq, telling them to be careful about using the site as the Army was monitoring it.

As Web Mistress of the site I needed to respond and qualify this information, as well as to educate this commanding officer as to the rights and liberties of a private web site, which I did.

I was told I would have to let a commanding officer on the site to monitor the messages; I did allow this, but I also informed the officer that this was a courtesy, as there is no such law, or right of the military to monitor, shut down or exclude our web site.

I believe we received this order, and treatment for a couple of reasons.

Occasionally we would voice our concerns publicly over what our government was failing to do to help our soldiers, or we would share or argue political opinion as well.

The second reason may be; the armed services all have a group of their own family type support (FRG); as we were not local to the base our soldiers deployed from, the site was a means to provide that support, as best as we could.

The support group at our base, tried to force the site to be given over to them, which I refused.

At this time I was told, I might want to be careful, as the government was monitoring the site as well.

Soldiers in our unit, while in Iraq, were telling their parents to stay off of the site, or to be very careful of what they wrote.

This came from a rear detachment officer in charge, and members on the site.

I reminded the Army I am a private citizen, not on base, with a private site making no claims to have any affiliation with any branch of service, but clearly stating we were families and friends of our unit in support of one another.

We were treated to power by intimidation. It isn't hard to make that work, when you have someone's child in a war zone.

We were a group of 77 families from all over the country, at the time of the call. Every single family was phoned and told not to use the site; and I believe some 150 other families were phoned as well, as it was an official order from a commanding officer.

I have waited to speak of this situation, until my son was home safe and sound and also after his transfer to another base. Yes, I was afraid of repercussions that could have harmed him, one way or another. I called my local senators office, 4 months ago, following up every 10 days to 2 weeks, and still have no answers or support.

I admit I am not comfortable writing this, as required to, as I am still concerned for my son and the other soldiers and families involved on the site.

We didn't endanger them by means of displaying their photos with their names, giving up information about their location and actions. We were very careful to not breach Intel protocol, learning Ops protocol, as well as respecting and complying with it.

We simply were at times, vocal about our displeasure with our president and government for how our military was being treated, or how the presidential election was being handled. There a literally hundreds of military family, private support groups on the Internet.

I truly believe we were singled out because of my refusal to hand the site over to the local F.R.G., as well as outspoken political beliefs.

It's simply amazing that my son and others risk their lives for "Freedom" in Iraq, when his own mothers civil liberties are threatened and families are intimidated into silence, by the very same Army he is serving.

I am hoping after reading this you may direct me as to where I can at least have this concern heard. Basically, are the following common practice, and legal?

The Armed services can order families from communicating in a private forum?

The Armed services can threaten private citizens first amendment rights?

I want to make sure this is not happening to other service member's families.

We live in a hell everyday during the deployment of our loved ones; we don't need the added bullying or stripping away our means of helping one another. Any idea, or direction you can point me in would be greatly appreciated.

Also, this problem can be corroborated by other families if need be.

Why did it take so long for me to step forward?

Originally I contacted my Senators office, with no reply for six months, and have also spoken with the A.C.L.U. (with little hope of action due to the length of time that has passed) but until now was not willing to come forward in a public way.

It took until September for my son to be safely stationed at another base, and other family's service members to either be out of the service all together or be transferred as well.

We were afraid for their safety, our own, our relationships with them and their future in the service, all of these things could have been affected, and we couldn't chance one more problem or pressure being added to the already heavy load the families and soldiers live with.

The intimidation worked.

Is this just something silly I should let go?

It doesn't seem trivial to me, but I am learning unless it happens to someone personally, no one seems to care.

Thank you, for your time
Robin Vaughan

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Four U.S. Troops Killed: Run Over By Truck Near Fallujah

Dec. 24 (Xinhuanet)

Four U.S. soldiers were killed when their vehicle was run over by an Iraqi truck outside Iraq's western flashpoint city of Fallujah early on Saturday, a police source told Xinhua.

"An Iraqi truck ran over a US Humvee parking near a checkpoint at the southern entrance of Fallujah, killing four U.S. soldiers aboard," the source said on condition of anonymity.

It was not clear whether the Iraqi truck driver premeditatedly hit the US Humvee, the source added.

Pentagon Now Says Two U.S. Troops Killed Thursday In Baghdad

23/12/2005 AFP

Two U.S. soldiers died Thursday in a bomb attack on a US patrol in the capital. Only one dead was initially reported in Thursday's incident.

TWO MORE BAGHDAD SOLDIERS KILLED BY IED

December 23, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-12-28C

BAGHDAD, Iraq: Two Task Force Baghdad Soldiers were killed when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Baghdad Dec. 23.

Dayton Grad Badly Wounded In Fallujah

December 22, 2005 By DAVID BATES Of the News-Register

The Christmas gift that David and Kathy Ray will enjoy most this year is one that won't be under the tree - the life of their son, David Jr.

Lance Cpl. David T. Ray, serving in Iraq with a Marine Corps weapons company, was shot in the neck last weekend near the insurgent hotbed of Fallujah. His parents were notified Monday by phone.

Their 20-year-old son, a 2004 Dayton High grad, had been critically wounded. But he had survived. And by Wednesday morning, he was speaking again. "It was so wonderful to talk to my son," his mother said. "He sounds wonderful. He sounds great."

Ray has spent a lot of time on the phone in recent days, mostly talking with the people handling her son's care. By all accounts, she said, the fact that he survived is extraordinary in itself.

David's squad, part of the 7th Marines' 2nd Battalion, is stationed outside Fallujah. It takes turns with other units in conducting patrols. He and some of his comrades had been ordered to clean their weapons. They were perched atop their vehicle doing so when they were hit with a flurry of small arms fire.

Within an hour, Ray was being treated the hospital at Ballad Air Base in Iraq. He's since been transferred to a military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. He's scheduled for transfer Friday to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

The bullet damaged a crucial artery, bruised the left side of his brain, fractured his skull at the base and damaged a vertebra in his neck. "The doctors said it's amazing that he's still alive, considering what happened to him, his father said.

Kathy Ray spent a few minutes with her son on the phone earlier this week, but he was groggy from a round of surgery. She could only make out two words, "alive" and "lucky." "Right now, his biggest problem is boredom," she said with a laugh, elated over his rapid rebound. "I'm just giddy."

David Ray grew up in Yamhill County, living in McMinnville, Willamina and Dayton by turns. He participated in track at Dayton High.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



A Marine in Karabilah November 14, 2005. REUTERS/Cpl. Neill A. Sevelius/USMC/Handout

British Convoy Attacked In Central Basra

Dec 23, 2005 CBC

A roadside bomb targetted a British army convoy near a patrol station in central Basra, police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

So Much For That Sovereignty Bullshit: British Government Removes Tribal Leader

12.23.05 London Daily Telegraph

The British had a feudal chief removed from the region in an effort to calm the violent region before some 3,000 British troops deploy there next year.

TROOP NEWS

72% Of Americans Reject Pentagon Propaganda In Iraq

12.23.05 USA Today

A survey finds that most Americans think it was wrong for the Pentagon to pay Iraqi newspapers to publish news about U.S. efforts in Iraq. 72% are against paying to plant stories.

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL 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 war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

Rumsfeld Illustrates Troop Reduction Hand-Job Technique



In the heavily fortified Green Zone in Baghdad Dec. 23, 2005 Rumsfeld announced that as the product of a \$22 billion contract with Halliburton, he has taken delivery of and mastered a new technique, using hypnotic gestures, which will delude Americans into believing that U.S. troop strength in Iraq is being reduced.

Although last fall there were 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, and the number was increased to 160,000 for the December elections, Rumsfeld said he is confident “all kids of silly chumps will piss their pants with glee” over his promise to reduce troop strength by 7,000, leaving 153,000 U.S. troops there as the new year beings.

“Shit, we’ve done this a dozen times before, and every time the suckers fall for it,” he said.

“Our best move is that bullshit about how we’re not going to send additional troops I never planned to send anyway. Then we call it a reduction.” (AP Photo/Wathiq Khuzaie, Pool)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation 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 - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or 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/>

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



Mary Robert Williams Aug. 6, 2005, in Columbus, Ohio as the casket of their son, Cpl. Andre Williams, who was killed on July 28 in Iraq, is brought to the cemetery. Williams was a member of Lima Company 3rd Battalion based in Columbus. (AP Photo/Kiichiro Sato)

How War-Profiteers Cashed In On Anthrax: How The Politicians And The Pentagon Helped Them: What Are Some Dead Troops When Millions Are At Stake?

BioPort's approach to veterans is similar: It sends substitutes to speak for it, often without disclosing that those sources were paid by the company. Those surrogates disregard evidence of deaths or severe health problems from the vaccine, and they provide testimony to government regulators and the public.

Meanwhile, the veterans who think that they've been harmed by the vaccine live on disability payments or suffer in silence. No government grants support research into their questions about the shot.

[Thanks to LC Wolf for posting.]

Dec. 09, 2005 BY BOB EVANS, Daily Press (Newport News, Va.)

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.

In a two-year span, the nation's only licensed anthrax vaccine maker went from pleading poverty to announcing \$100 million in acquisitions, including other pharmaceutical companies and a new manufacturing plant near Washington, D.C.

It's a pattern that's worked well for BioPort Corp.: Tell the Pentagon or Congress that it doesn't have the money to keep going, negotiate a new deal, then count the extra cash rolling in.

During the past seven years, it's transformed an initial investment of less than \$4.5 million into an international biotech firm, with contracts worth more than \$450 million. During that time, the company has capitalized on its monopoly over the vaccine and on fears that opposing armies and terrorists will unleash tiny anthrax spores somewhere.

BioPort is an example of how a sole-source government contract can become a gold mine - especially if you spend wisely on the right lobbyists and public relations professionals.

BioPort counts a former Cabinet member and assistant secretary of health and human services among those it pays to gain favor with government agencies.

"You always pay a higher price when you're stuck with a sole-source," says Philip Coyle, a former assistant secretary of defense for procurement. "The government has nowhere else to go if it wants what you have to sell."

He says Pentagon officials talked about taking over the anthrax vaccine plant and operations - especially after the government held the license for the vaccine as collateral for a series of loans and payments that kept the company afloat.

"What I never heard in those discussions was why nothing ever came of it," he says.

The Pentagon isn't telling that story, and neither is BioPort.

Troops and veterans who've been asked to put BioPort's products in their bodies often point to the company's problems getting a clean bill of health for its manufacturing plant, as well as to the company's ability to always get its way with government officials. They wonder whether BioPort's connections, not its scientific and medical prowess, are behind the company's success.

BioPort is a privately held company that doesn't make its stock available for public sale. As a result, most aspects of its finances and management aren't open to public scrutiny.

The company declined to provide its officers for interviews with the Daily Press. Six weeks after receiving a list of detailed questions - and promising answers - it

sent a box containing two books and some news releases. None of the questions was answered.

BioPort's approach to veterans is similar: It sends substitutes to speak for it, often without disclosing that those sources were paid by the company. Those surrogates disregard evidence of deaths or severe health problems from the vaccine, and they provide testimony to government regulators and the public.

Meanwhile, the veterans who think that they've been harmed by the vaccine live on disability payments or suffer in silence.

No government grants support research into their questions about the shot.

Until 1998, the nation's only manufacturing plant for anthrax vaccine was owned and operated by the state of Michigan. The state agency that ran the plant was losing money, so the state put the operation and its license for making the anthrax vaccine up for bid.

Fuad El-Hibri, a 40-year-old German businessman with a Yale University management degree, formed a team of investors to buy the business, which included a \$100 million contract with the Pentagon.

His bid faced a problem, though: He and his father, Ibrahim El-Hibri, a wealthy international financier from Lebanon, dominated ownership of the company, which they named BioPort.

Both were considered friendly to the United States. Father and son had directed a company involved in Britain's anthrax vaccine program and they had worldwide interests in cell phone networks and other ventures.

But the U.S. government was not keen on letting a foreign-owned company control its anthrax vaccine. The only other bidder was also based overseas.

So Fuad El-Hibri played a trump card: A family friend, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. William Crowe, was made a director.

Crowe put no money into BioPort but got about 10 percent of the stock, government records show. El-Hibri says Crowe immediately advised him to apply for U.S. citizenship.

Crowe's advice was good, El-Hibri said. But Crowe's connections were better: He was the military's top officer during the Reagan administration, then endorsed Bill Clinton for president in 1992. Clinton made him U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom, and while serving there, Crowe was close to the El-Hibri family, congressional testimony shows.

At that point, BioPort had all the leverage over the Pentagon that it needed - if the military wanted to continue its year-old program of inoculating every service member against anthrax.

Even though the Pentagon gave Michigan more than \$20 million for new equipment and repairs and \$100 million in guaranteed contracts the previous decade, the plant had several problems. It was shut for renovations in March 1998, six months before BioPort bought all operations and licenses in a \$25 million package of cash, loans and promises of future payments.

Food and Drug Administration inspections found repeated problems before and after BioPort took over. BioPort brought in more, and better-paid, consultants and employees to fix things up - even though its minor partners included managers who had run the plant that provided millions of doses of vaccine to U.S. troops, congressional records show.

As part of the sale, BioPort assumed the right to sell about \$7.9 million of vaccines already made and promised to the U.S. military. Within weeks, it signed a new contract with the Pentagon providing for \$45.1 million more, including \$16 million in immediate cash for plant renovations.

The deal required the government to pay for vaccine even if the drugs weren't licensed for use.

That wasn't enough for BioPort: Nine months later, in June 1999, it was still struggling to get FDA approval of its manufacturing plant. The company said it was running out of money and needed more help.

Pentagon auditors looked at BioPort's books and concluded that millions of dollars were unaccounted for. BioPort didn't even know the cost of making a dose of vaccine, the auditors reported.

It was clear that \$1 million had been spent to renovate and furnish offices, as well as \$1.28 million more on bonuses for "senior management."

One unnamed former manager got \$10,000 a month for as much as 40 months - whether he worked or not, records show.

And \$1 million more had been spent on items unrelated to anthrax production, the auditors said.

They concluded that BioPort's request for extra money didn't meet legal requirements.

But Pentagon contract officers, citing "the interests of national security," overruled them and approved a \$24.1 million bailout in September 1999.

The contract addition that they blessed paid all the company's debts and provided a 144 percent increase in payment for each anthrax vaccine dose, from \$4.36 to \$10.64.

It was \$2 million less than BioPort sought. Pentagon officers wrote that by chopping the amount, they didn't have to notify Congress about the new deal.

Congress found out anyway, but did nothing to stop the deal.

Hearings were held, including one by Sen. John Warner, R-Va., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. His session involved only BioPort officials and others who supported the bailout.

A second hearing involving critics of the company and the renegotiated contract was promised but never held.

More aggressive questioning took place in the House of Representatives. It was determined that El-Hibri and his partners had invested only \$4.5 million of their own money, in cash and loan guarantees.

All that money and the cash the Pentagon had chipped in was gone, spent on renovations, consultants' fees and physical improvements, congressional investigators found.

Further, the original \$25 million deal with Michigan had become \$14.45 million.

"The message seems clear: If a company wants to make millions without providing a product or service, enter into a sole-source contract with the Department of Defense to produce vaccines," Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., said in a written statement. "BioPort appears to have the government over a barrel."

Louis J. Rodrigues of the Government Accountability Office - a congressional oversight agency that's frequently criticized BioPort and the Pentagon's management of the vaccine program - told Congress that it "had no option" but to pay up if it wanted anthrax vaccine.

The Pentagon contractors who made the original deal with BioPort should have known there was no way that the company could stay in business, Rodrigues said.

"We did nothing to force BioPort's hand and make them come up with a cost-control system," he said.

Or, he added, a realistic business model.

Pentagon officials promised Congress that they'd do a better job - in part by assigning government employees to oversee the company's bookkeeping and quality-control systems.

BioPort struggled for more than three years to get licensing for its plant and product. Meanwhile, batches of vaccine were made and the Pentagon paid for each - including money for storage of unusable vaccine.

Vaccine made before the plant renovation kept going into the arms of thousands of troops. Dozens of them came to Congress, complaining that the drug made them permanently ill, giving them headaches, joint pain, loss of memory and more severe symptoms.

By 2000, even the Pentagon had lost patience and told BioPort to stop making vaccine until the plant regained its license. But the military agreed to keep making payments anyway, to keep the company afloat.

Those payments meant that BioPort's owners didn't have to borrow money elsewhere and didn't have to risk their personal finances, a congressional auditor testified in 2000.

By January 2002 - when federal drug regulators finally agreed that the plant and company could resume licensed operations - the Pentagon had paid BioPort \$126 million for drugs that were stored and unlicensed, congressional records show. It also paid \$33.5 million during that time for vaccine given to 525,000 troops.

The months before the licensing approval were tumultuous for the company and the nation.

In August 2001, Congress and the Pentagon publicly said they were considering giving up on BioPort and its failures in getting operations up to snuff.

Meanwhile, BioPort brought in more business partners and consultants from established vaccine companies and government contractors to figure out how to regain its license.

Then came Sept. 11, 2001, followed the next month by deadly anthrax-laden letters to members of Congress and others in Washington, D.C.; Connecticut; and Florida.

Instead of asking questions about the vaccine's safety, many members of Congress began asking why more doses weren't available.

Tommy Thompson, then secretary of health and human services and the Bush administration official responsible for vaccine and drug licensing, was caught between a Congress that wanted action and critics who feared political pressure would hasten licensure.

"I can assure you nobody is pressuring FDA to approve this," he said in October 2001.

Three months later, BioPort had its license back.

A few months after that, it was back to pleading poverty.

This time, BioPort was after a bigger prize: a contract to supply millions of doses of anthrax vaccine for use by civilians, postal workers, police, firefighters and others who might encounter domestic terrorism.

A \$1 billion contract was being waved in front of vaccine and pharmaceutical makers, the largest in government history.

BioPort responded as it had in the past.

In a series of interviews, company officials said their business was "at risk" and in financial jeopardy if the government did not quickly give it the contract for a domestic vaccine stockpile - or a new Pentagon deal.

If BioPort was on the ropes financially, its biggest stockholders didn't seem to feel it.

During the same week the president of BioPort pronounced it "at risk," the chairman of the board and biggest stockholders - El-Hibri and his wife, Nancy - were in the news because neighbors were complaining about their plans to build an 88-acre commercial equestrian and polo center near their home in Gaithersburg, Md., near Washington, D.C.

The El-Hibris had never moved to Michigan to oversee the daily struggle over licensing at the vaccine plant there.

Washington, D.C., was the focus of much of BioPort's attention anyway.

In 2002, records show, the company increased spending for lobbyists in Congress, from \$30,000 to \$110,000. The amount doubled the following year.

BioPort also hired Ruder Finn and Fleishman-Hillard, high-powered public relations firms staffed by many former government officials.

BioPort, still the nation's only licensed anthrax vaccine manufacturer, began sponsoring "public education seminars" and studies to build support for a bigger government stockpile of the drug.

On the first anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, six doctors, scientists and former military officers - described as a "panel of bioterrorism experts" by BioPort - announced the need for preparedness. Their primary recommendation was to not rely on a new anthrax vaccine but to purchase millions of doses of BioPort's product.

BioPort paid several of the people on that panel to review and endorse the report, including former military officers who only a year before told Congress how safe and effective the company's vaccine was.

They included Marine Maj. Gen. Randy West and Lt. Gen. Ronald Blanck, a former Army surgeon general.

West said he was paid \$5,000 for reviewing the report, which was written by either BioPort or its public relations agent - not the experts on the panel.

Even though the ghost writing wasn't known at the time, a critic from the conservative Cato Institute publicly dismissed the panel's work as "just BioPort trying to make some money."

After that, the company's efforts became less obvious.

Muhiuddm Haider, an unpaid member of the panel and a professor in the school of public health at George Washington University, started operating a Web site for BioPort in support of the anthrax vaccine.

BioPort's name doesn't appear anywhere on the site, but the company supplies all the money to operate it, \$40,000 a year, Haider said.

The Web site says it's sponsored by the Partnership for Anthrax Vaccination Education, or P.A.V.E., a group of medical organizations that includes the prestigious American Medical Association.

Earlier this year, Haider and P.A.V.E. petitioned the FDA to license the anthrax vaccine for use against inhaled spores of the bacteria.

The ties to BioPort were not disclosed then, either.

P.A.V.E.'s Web site and the organization's publications extol the need for vaccine and say the vaccine is safe.

They mention none of the side effects, even the minor ones that the Pentagon acknowledges are suffered by a third or more of those who get the shots.

"I am not marketing for BioPort," Haider says. "I am marketing for public safety."

P.A.V.E.'s public safety efforts began with a series of forums. Featured speakers were West, officials from BioPort, Haider and others connected to BioPort.

People who question the effectiveness and safety of the vaccine aren't on the agenda for those forums.

A frequent speaker is Jerome Hauer, former assistant secretary of health and human services for emergency preparedness. He was a leading proponent of stockpiling anthrax vaccine for civilian use while he was on the government payroll.

In his first few appearances at P.A.V.E. events, Hauer's connections to BioPort weren't disclosed. He'd become a paid consultant.

Later, he took over a new bioterrorism institute at Haider's university.

He was named to BioPort's board of directors in June and has been lobbying for the company's products.

As BioPort's board expanded, so did its business.

By September 2003, the Pentagon was paying \$22 a dose - more than double the price negotiated in the 1999 bailout.

Cash was coming in fast. The company could make a million more doses a year than the military demanded, El-Hibri told TWST, a Web site that runs verbatim interviews with business leaders.

"We are debt-free and profitable," he said.

BioPort was now a subsidiary of Emergent BioSolutions, led by El-Hibri and his business partners.

By the end of 2003, Emergent announced the purchase of a Maryland drug maker for more than \$3 million and signed a new contract with the Pentagon, worth from \$29.7 million to \$245 million, depending on the doses sold.

The following year, it began building a second, \$95 million, anthrax vaccine plant in Frederick, Md.

In January of this year, Emergent signed a deal with the British government to work cooperatively on toxoid and botulism vaccines, including a pledge to spend at least \$2 million during the next two years. Purchase of a British company working on five vaccines, including an oral anthrax vaccine, followed weeks later.

But BioPort and its parent still hadn't landed the big prize: supplying anthrax vaccine for the U.S. domestic stockpile.

BioPort and other companies received seed money to research a new-generation anthrax vaccine. But when the \$1 billion contract was awarded in November 2004, it went to VaxGen Inc., a California company without a licensed product and in trouble for misreporting financial results to Wall Street.

VaxGen's vaccine isn't ready for use yet and is in early trials, years away from licensing. Government grants finance at least 11 other efforts to provide alternatives to BioPort's vaccine, aiming for a safer, more effective product.

When BioPort couldn't win in the lab, it doubled its efforts in Congress and other branches of government, adding more and better lobbyists.

It had hired Louis Sullivan, secretary of health and human services under President George H.W. Bush - the current president's father. But higher-powered help was needed.

McKenna Long & Aldridge, a powerful Washington, D.C., law and lobbying firm also known as "MLA," was hired Jan. 1 of this year, U.S. Senate lobbying records show.

Within six months, it reported \$140,000 in lobbying fees and helped bring BioPort a \$122.7 million contract to supply 5 million doses of the vaccine to the Department of Health and Human Services, the second-largest award under BioShield, the federal law that created a domestic stockpile of antiterror vaccines.

The lobbyist's news release was headlined, "MLA Helps Client Secure BioShield Contract for AVA Anthrax Vaccine."

MLA had supplied several lawyers, including one who'd helped write the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and two who'd been tapped by Congress for help in creating the BioShield law.

But they couldn't do it alone.

Four days before the big contract award, BioPort added lobbyist John Hishta to the team. A few weeks later, he filed a U.S. Senate lobbyist report saying BioPort had paid him \$30,000 for "procuring a government contract for anthrax vaccine."

Hishta was executive director of the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee during its successful 2002 election campaign. The committee is the main strategy and fund-raising organization for Republican candidates in the House of Representatives.

Hishta also managed a re-election campaign for Virginia Sen. John Warner. Warner is an important ally of the Pentagon in the anthrax vaccination program.

BioPort is still delivering those 5 million doses for the BioShield contract.

But the company didn't wait to resume its well-practiced, well-rewarded strategy for success: threatening to stop vaccine production, then reaping a new contract.

On July 14, BioPort President Robert Kramer told Congress that if the government didn't promise to buy even more vaccine for the domestic stockpile, the company might have to stop producing anthrax vaccine altogether.

"We'll have to make a very simple business decision," he testified.

Whether it was the renewed threat - or just coincidence - BioPort once again got the desired result.

Last month, Health and Human Services posted a notice that it would enter private negotiations with BioPort to supply an additional 5 million doses of anthrax vaccine for the domestic stockpile.

The price to taxpayers hasn't been determined yet.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“No To America”

Hundreds Of Thousand March To Protest Crooked Iraqi Elections



In Baghdad Dec. 23, 2005 several hundred thousand people rallied after noon prayers, with banners denouncing last week's elections. Large demonstrations broke out across the country Friday. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

[Thanks to JM and PB, who sent this in.]

Dec. 23, 2005 The Associated Press & Aljazeera & By Mariam Karouny, Reuters

BAGHDAD, Iraq; Large demonstrations broke out across the country Friday to denounce parliamentary elections that protesters called rigged in favor of the main religious [collaborator] coalition.

They marched through Baghdad after Friday prayers, chanting "No to America" and calling for a re-vote.

Several hundred thousand people demonstrated after noon prayers in southern Baghdad Friday, many carrying banners decrying last week's elections. Many Iraqis outside the [collaborator] coalition allege that the elections were unfair to secular groups.

"We refuse the cheating and forgery in the elections," one banner read.

During Friday prayers at Baghdad's Umm al-Qura mosque, the headquarters of the Association of Muslim Scholars, a major clerical group, Sheik Mahmoud al-Sumaidai told followers they were "living a conspiracy built on lies and forgery."

“You have to be ready during these hard times and combat forgeries and lies for the sake of Islam,” he said.

On Friday, more than 2,000 people demonstrated in Mosul, where some accused Iran of having a hand in election fraud. About 1,000 people demonstrated in Tikrit.

***“There Were Too Many To
Count”***
**Resistance Attack In Force On
Collaborator Troops:
250 Desertions;
“They Said, ‘The Hell With This’”**

Dec. 23, 2005 AlJazeera & The Associated Press & CBC & By Deepa Babington,
Reuters

Resistance troops Friday attacked an Iraqi army base in the city of Adhaim, in Diyala province, killing ten soldiers and wounding 20, an Iraqi army officer said on condition he not be identified for fear of reprisal.

The fortified compound lies north of the town on the main road to Kirkuk.

As mortars slammed into the main army base in Adhaim at dawn, where some U.S. troops are also stationed, resistance fighters launched their attack on an outlying post some 10 km (six miles) to the north.

Police said the attackers opened fire on the checkpoint with heavy machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades.

Then, when reinforcements came to help, the attackers turned on them, as well.

The Adhaim attack was the latest in a series of large, frontal assaults over more than a year that betray the force of numbers and the military training of the guerrillas.

The attack happened about 70 kilometres north of Baghdad on the main road between the capital and the northern city of Kirkuk.

“There were too many to count,” said Akid, a 20-year-old soldier from Diwanayah being treated for gunshot wounds to both thighs. “They tried to kill everybody.”

Akid, who would only give his first name for fear of reprisal, said his battalion of about 600 men had already suffered over 250 desertions after a Dec. 3 ambush in Adhaim killed 19 Iraqi soldiers.

“They gave up,” he said. “They said, ‘The hell with this.’”

There was no account of casualties among the resistance troops.

Happy Iraqi Citizens Thank U.S. For Liberating Them



Iraqi Shiites demand the release of Ahmed al-Shaibany, an aide to Muqtada al-Sadr, in Al-Sadr city, east of Baghdad, Dec. 23, 2005. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

British-Held Iraqi Prisoners Of War Organize Protests

12/24/2005 Agence France Presse & Deutsche Presse-Agentur

LONDON - Detainees held by the British army in Iraq have been involved in disturbances over being held without charge or trial, Saturday's Guardian newspaper said, quoting officials in the Gulf.

The prisoners' families said the captives had been beaten and attacked by vicious dogs while they were praying and that attempts by relatives to visit them had been thwarted, the Guardian reported them as saying.

The protests, including hunger strikes, were said to have happened over the last week at the Shaiba detention facility near the southern city of Basra.

<p style="text-align: center;">OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Assorted Resistance Action

Dec 23 (KUNA) & By AA zaman.com & 24 Dec 2005 Reuters & Evening Echo

Insurgents tried to assassinate an investigative judge on the Iraqi Special Tribunal that is investigating Saddam Hussein and members of his regime, a spokesman for the court said today.

Iraqi Inquiry Judge Munir Haddad and two of his assistants survived an assassination bid on Friday in Ghazaliya in western Baghdad.

An Iraqi police source, who requested anonymity, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that unknown gunmen showered with bullets a car that Judge Haddad and his assistants were riding.

The police reported witnesses as saying that a number of Iraqi soldiers, who happened to be at the site, attacked the gunmen and spared the judge's life, while the attackers managed to escape.

Sources noted that the car of the judge was severely damaged.

A colonel attacked in the west of Baghdad was wounded and taken to the hospital.

Six Sudanese, including a diplomat, were kidnapped in Baghdad on Friday after attending Muslim prayers, the Sudanese Foreign Ministry said.

The diplomat was the embassy's second secretary, Foreign Ministry spokesman Jamal Ibrahim said.

HILLA - Saboteurs blew up an oil pipeline on the outskirts of Hilla, fires are still raging. Police said a makeshift bomb was used in the attack.

BAGHDAD - Two people were killed, including an aide to the Ministry of Justice, when gunmen opened fire on their car in the centre of Baghdad, police said.

BAGHDAD - Three Ministry of Health employees were shot dead when insurgents opened fire on their car, police said.

FALLUJA - A Lt. colonel in the Iraqi army was shot dead when insurgents broke into his house and opened fire, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“I Won't Be Supporting Any
Candidate For National Office That
Does Not Want To Bring Home The
Troops Now”**

**[We'll see how many people roll over and betray again in 2006, always, of course,
for the most progressive of reasons. T]**

Dec 21, 2005 Joshua Frank, Online Journal Contributing Writer

Despite the laundry list of Democratic failures, Pelosi and others will be threatening us all to "vote Dem or die" in the upcoming elections. It will be a replay of the 2004 presidential charade where antiwar folks were told to vote for John Kerry or suffer the consequences of another four years of Bush. Kerry didn't offer an alternative, but the antiwar movement backed him regardless and we lost.

The Democrats hope 2006 will be the same. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Sen. Hillary Clinton and others will be expecting the antiwar movement's support even though their party has not taken a position on the war. They'll expect us to vote for them without conceding to any of our demands.

**So I hope you'll take the antiwar pledge with me. I won't be supporting any
candidate for national office that does not want to bring home the troops now.**

I would rather abstain from voting than vote for a continued occupation of Iraq.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Facts Are Stubborn Things

12/23/05 Iraq Body Count

Who did the killing?

US-led forces killed 37% of civilian victims.

Anti-occupation forces/insurgents killed 9% of civilian victims.

Post-invasion criminal violence accounted for 36% of all deaths.

What was the most lethal weaponry?

Over half (53%) of all civilian deaths involved explosive devices.

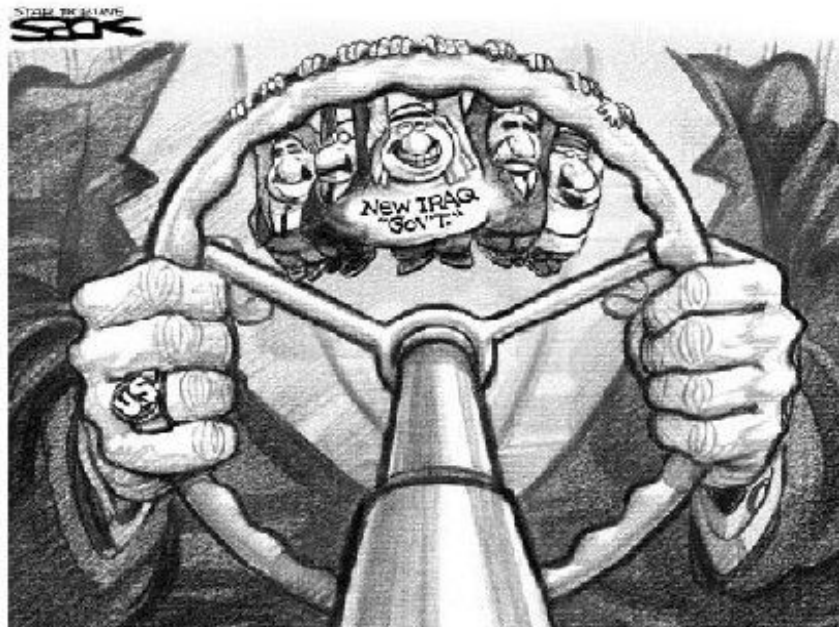
Air strikes caused most (64%) of the explosives deaths.

Who provided the information?

Mortuary officials and medics were the most frequently cited witnesses.

Three press agencies provided over one third of the reports used.

Iraqi journalists are increasingly central to the reporting work.



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

The Traitor Bush Building A Dictatorship

The result is that the president's wartime powers, with its armies, battles, victories, and congressional declarations, now extend to the rhetorical "War on Terror": a war with no fronts, no boundaries, no opposing army, and, most ominously, no knowable "victory."

December 20, 2005 Bruce Schneier, Star Tribune [Excerpts]

President Bush secretly authorized the National Security Agency to engage in domestic spying, wiretapping thousands of Americans and bypassing the legal procedures regulating this activity.

This is about the Fourth Amendment protections against illegal search. This is about circumventing a teeny tiny check by the judicial branch, placed there by the legislative branch, placed there 27 years ago -- on the last occasion that the executive branch abused its power so broadly.

The result is that the president's wartime powers, with its armies, battles, victories, and congressional declarations, now extend to the rhetorical "War on Terror": a war with no fronts, no boundaries, no opposing army, and, most ominously, no knowable "victory."

Investigations, arrests and trials are not tools of war. But according to the Yoo memo, the president can define war however he chooses, and remain "at war" for as long as he chooses.

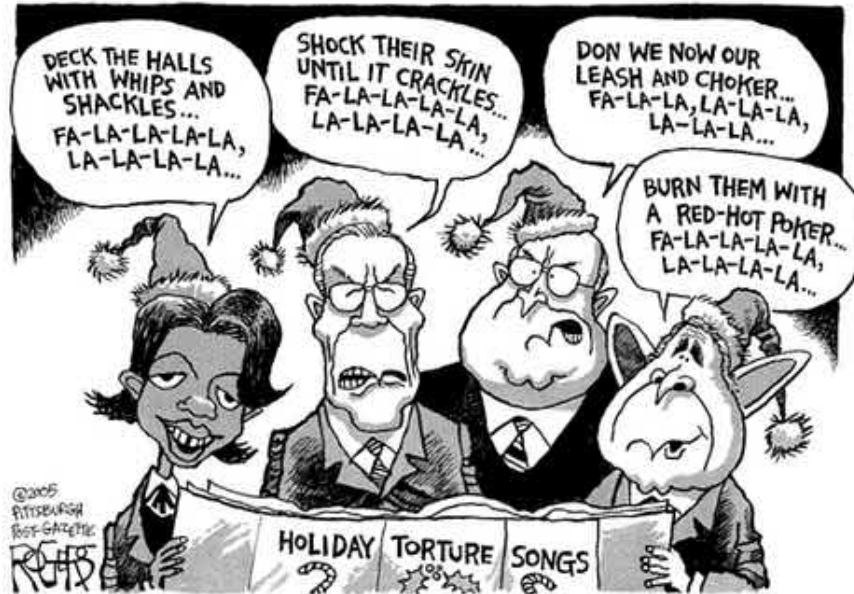
This is indefinite dictatorial power.

And I don't use that term lightly; the very definition of a dictatorship is a system that puts a ruler above the law.

In the weeks after 9/11, while America and the world were grieving, Bush built a legal rationale for a dictatorship.

Then he immediately started using it to avoid the law.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.



Imperial Vermin Foaming At The Mouth: U.S. Senators & Representatives Demand Exclusion Of Hamas From Palestinian Elections

From: M
To: GI Special
Sent: December 21, 2005

This [news article below] makes me grind my teeth.

The Republicans [and Democrats] kill the idea of Democracy for Palestine in the happy belief they are modern God's. Palestinians, who were civilized when the European ancestors of these new Gods were savages, are treated like ignorant children who must be taught how to please their saviours.

[The news report makes it clear the Democrats agree. Let's not pretend they're any different when it comes to Imperial arrogance.]

I notice they don't mention the real, murdering, terrorists called the IDF. True saviours would force the blood dripping IDF to lay down their weapons. That is the only way Palestine can achieve Democracy and independence.

The IDF is busy murdering as many Hamas leaders as it can, before the Palestinian elections, and these lunatic Republicans [and Democrats] want Hamas to disarm and be as defenceless as the birds in a turkey shoot.

These Republicans [and Democrats] are supporting terrorism and murder because it serves their ends to prevent an independent Palestinian.

Israel, the only atomic power in the Middle East, would make a formidable enemy so, if necessary, the rest of the region will be destroyed in order to please the ZioNazis.

[Israel is the tail, not the dog. Although this letter does not go that far, the people who argue that Israel dictates U.S. policy in the Middle East, or anywhere else, must really have a deep and abiding love for the Imperial class that runs the USA. They are so committed to letting them evade responsibility, as if they're just poor little victims of mean old Israel. "Hey, mass murder isn't our fault, Israel made us do it."

[For over 55 years, Israel has been the attack dog serving U.S. policy interests. Occasionally there are strains on the relationship, as with any attack dog straining at the leash, taking some bites without permission, and occasionally even snapping at the master, but arguing that Israel dictates U.S. foreign policy is divorced from reality, a great service to Bush & Co. and their Democratic Party counterparts, and a disgusting betrayal of Palestinians fighting for their liberation. T]

It is necessary for America to assert it's own Democracy before its leaders destroy the rest of the world. [Yes.]

21 Dec 2005 Reuters

WASHINGTON, Dec 21 (Reuters) - Seventy U.S. senators on Wednesday called on President George W. Bush to make it clear to Palestinian leaders that Hamas and other groups that the United States wants terrorist organizations to disarm or be banned from upcoming Palestinian elections.

The Senate letter follows a resolution passed overwhelmingly last week by the House of Representatives that also urged the exclusion of Hamas from the Jan. 25 parliamentary ballot.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Facts Are Stubborn Things

12.16.05 Wall St. Journal

Wall Street Journal/NBC News Poll:

By 59% to 30%, Americans prefer a candidate who'd cut the deficit by canceling tax cuts over one who'd cut social spending.

Two-thirds don't want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

Some 64% back capital punishment for murder, down from 70% in 2003 and 76% in 1991.

Rumsfeld's negative mark hits 42%, up from 37% in July.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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The following have also posted issues; there may be others:

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www.williambowles.info/gispecial, http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/,
<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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