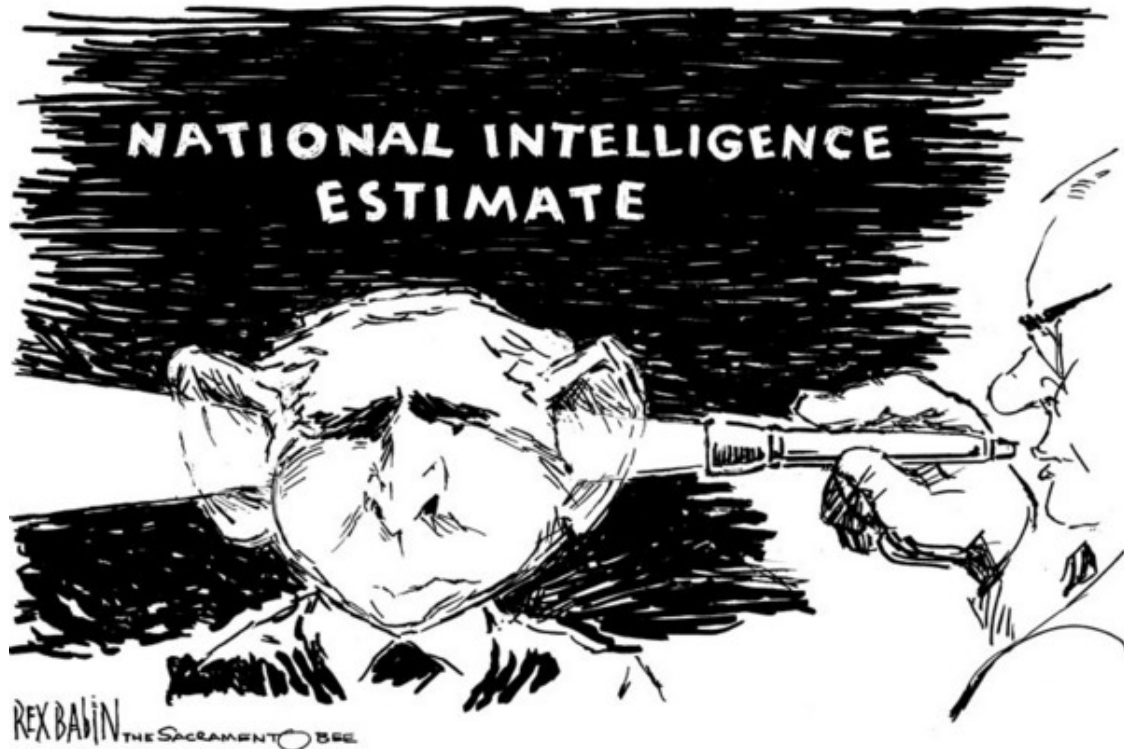


GI SPECIAL 5L15:



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

Another Big Surprise: “Iraq Troop Surge Doesn’t Curb Hunger For Troop Withdrawals”

12.21.07 Wall St. Journal

IRAQ TROOP SURGE doesn’t curb hunger for troop withdrawals.

Proportion saying increase in U.S. forces is “helping the situation” rises to 37% from 33% last month and 24% in April.

Yet the number saying victory remains possible drops to 37% from 40% in November.

The result: 57% say “the most responsible” U.S. course is pulling most troops out by beginning of 2009. Some 46% say violence in Iraq represents “Iraqis fighting each other in a civil war,” outpacing the 24% citing “Iraqis and foreign terrorists” fighting Americans.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed, 10 More Wounded By Bomber In Kanaan

Dec 20, 2007 (AP)

A bomber blew himself up outside a meeting of Iraqis working U.S. forces in Kanaan, northeast of Baghdad on Thursday. The U.S. military said one soldier was killed and 10 were wounded.

Fort Carson GI Killed Weeks Before Return



December 15, 2007 By Kim Nguyen, The Gazette

Spc. Brynn Naylor was planning to take a snowboarding trip after his return from Iraq. The sport was one of his hobbies.

"You can't blame a guy for that when he's been in the desert for 15 months," said Naylor's stepfather, Robert McGuire.

The trip to the slopes will never be. Naylor, who had just turned 21 this month, was killed Thursday after his unit came under small-arms fire in Baghdad, Iraq, according to the U.S. Defense Department. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. It was his first deployment in Iraq, according to Fort Carson.

Naylor was scheduled to be back at Fort Carson on Dec. 27, McGuire said.

Once he was home, he was going to spend time with his mother, D'Ann McGuire, of Shallowater, Texas, and his father, Ross Naylor, of Roswell, N.M.

Brynn Naylor was born in Roswell but grew up in Texas, Robert McGuire said. When Naylor turned 16, he moved back to Roswell and stayed with his father. There, he excelled in tennis and was offered scholarships, said Bernarr Treat, a family friend.

"In a quiet reserved way, he made up his mind to enlist," Treat said. "I just think that it was one of those things he wanted to do, to serve his country."

While in Iraq, Naylor tried to talk to his family as much as he could. McGuire said the family sometimes wouldn't hear from him for a week or two because he was on a mission. But other times they would be in contact with him daily.

"They would chat with him for a bit," McGuire said. "Made it feel that he wasn't so far away."

Naylor is the 226th Fort Carson soldier killed in Iraq since the U.S. invasion in March 2003.

Here Comes The Happy Talk: Only 28 IED Attacks A Day Against Occupation Forces In Northern Iraq

[He might have mentioned that early summer is peak IED season, but why spoil the bullshit happy talk. T]

December 20, 2007 Associated Press

Army Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, the top U.S. commander in northern Iraq, said that the number of roadside bombings against coalition and Iraqi troops in the area had decreased between 40 and 50 percent since the summer.

He said there were 849 such attacks in November as compared to 1,698 in June.

British Armor Burns Near Basra



December 21, 2007. A roadside bomb exploded next to a British military armoured vehicle east of Basra International Airport, where British forces in Iraq are based, but there were no casualties from the blast, a British military official said. REUTERS/Atef Hassan [Thanks to JM]

**ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT;
COME HOME NOW**



Nov. 16, 2007: US soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division search a school in al-Awsat, south of Baghdad. (AFP/Patrick Baz)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier With Local Ties Killed In Afghanistan

12/15/07 By Andrew Dys, The Herald

It came after 9 p.m. Wednesday. Dianne Massey opened her Fort Mill front door to an Army beret. She screamed “No, not Josh!”

But it was.

Her son, Cpl. Joshua Blaney, 25, had been killed in eastern Afghanistan earlier that day. A bomb blew up the vehicle he was riding in, Army officials confirmed Friday. Blaney was in the lead truck in a convoy.

Massey learned her son was dead as she stood a few feet from his Purple Heart and Army Commendation Medal. Blaney somehow had previously survived, though with leg shrapnel and scars, a convoy bomb in Iraq on an earlier tour. He was in the lead truck that day, too.

“I immediately remembered his fifth birthday party, the GI Joe cake,” Massey said Friday. “He would pitch a tent and play Army with his uncle who was in the Special Forces. They would eat MREs (Meals Ready to Eat.) There was the time at Wal-Mart. He was 8, or 9. We walked out, and he had this bulge in his pocket. I asked him, 'Josh, what's in the pocket?' Out comes the GI Joe. I marched him right inside and made him give it back.”

Blaney is the sixth military member with York or Chester county ties to die in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Paul Neff II, Pat Leach, Kenneth James Butler, Logan Tinsley and Zandra Worthy-Walker also were killed in action.

A paratrooper with the 1st Battalion, 503rd Airborne, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Blaney was based at Forward Operating Base Curry in Afghanistan, said Maj. Nathan Banks, an Army spokesman. Another soldier, Michael Gabel of Louisiana, died when the vehicle ran over the bomb, Banks said.

Blaney grew up in Matthews, N.C., and graduated from Butler High School in 2002. After enlisting, he lived the past five-plus years in Italy at Camp Ederle when not

deployed. He was five months into his second tour in Afghanistan after the Iraq deployment and had recently signed re-enlistment papers for two more years.

“He told me he would make a career out of it,” Massey said.

Blaney was part of the paratrooper drop into northern Iraq in 2003 that was the first of its kind for the Army since Vietnam, his mother said. Since Blaney's death, e-mails have poured in to family members from his fellow soldiers in Afghanistan, calling him a top-notch paratrooper and friend.

Other e-mails described him as compassionate to his fellow soldiers and a mentor to younger men.

“A leader,” said his sister, Carley.

Blaney was divorced and had no children. He's Massey's middle child. He joined the Army after his mother and stepfather, Air Force veteran Eric Massey of Fort Mill, urged Blaney to try college. The Masseys then pushed the Air Force.

“He told me the Army would give him the discipline he needed, the focus he needed to figure out what he wanted to do with his life,” Massey said.

Eric Massey said his stepson was usually quiet about duty when in Fort Mill on leave.

“There would be 20 people in the living room, he would sneak into the kitchen,” Eric Massey said. “He did his job, and he did it well.”

Blaney's sister said her brother was a humble, gracious guy who rarely talked about what he had seen or done in the wars.

Dianne Massey's sister, Amy, whose husband is that Special Forces uncle that Blaney played “Army” with all the time, said, “Josh went in the Army a boy, and he came out a man.”

Massey didn't press her son to give up details of war. She did agree to give interviews to television when he came home on leave for Christmas a couple of years ago.

“The worst he ever talked about was one time in Iraq when this Iraqi set himself on fire and he had to watch the skin burn right off him,” she said. “What he had to do in battle, he never said.”

Joshua Blaney also loved a good time, too, his family said. He was just a shade under 6 feet tall, a solid 200 pounds.

“All muscle,” said his sister.

He would down a cold beer like most three-time deployed soldiers down a cold beer after what they've seen and done in wartime, his mother said.

"I handled his accounts, and one time I saw this bill for \$600, and he told me his buddies had run up a tab they couldn't pay," Massey said. "So, he just paid it himself. That's the kind of guy he was."

He had a Romanian girlfriend in Italy, one of the reasons he re-enlisted, his mother said.

"A true ladies man," his sister said.

Blaney's father, Charley Blaney, and two stepsiblings live in Matthews, Massey said. Funeral arrangements have to wait until her son's body gets home, she said.

Blaney's grandfather, Sid Belk, is an 84-year-old World War II Army Air Corps veteran.

"Thirty-three missions over Germany," Belk said of his own service. "I know what my grandson was doing. He was a fine soldier. Brave. I am proud of him."

“The First Where Insurgents Used Rockets At Such Close Range In An Attack”

12.22.07 The Canadian Press

KABUL, Afghanistan - A rocket landed in a crowd near Kabul's police headquarters Saturday, and a truck full of rockets exploded nearby moments later.

A rocket that was fired - apparently by remote control - toward the police station wounded two police.

Defence Ministry spokesman Gen. Mohammad Zahir Azimi said the truck contained five 107 mm rockets that had been rigged explode, but only two detonated.

He also said the attacker smuggled the rocket launcher and rockets into the city by hiding them under a pile of hay.

The attack appeared to be the first where insurgents used rockets at such close range in an attack.

Resistance Ambushes Military Fuel Convoy; Fifteen Guards Killed

DECEMBER 18, 2007 Al Jazeera

Fifteen Afghan guards working for a private US security company have been killed in western Afghanistan, according to the governor of Farah province.

The men working with USPI (US Protection and Investigations) were guarding a convoy of fuel tankers driving to a military base in Helmand province on Tuesday.

Governor Muhaidin Baluch said that the Taliban carried out the ambush and at least five other workers were wounded.

A number of guards were believed to be missing after the attack on the main highway that runs from the southern city of Kandahar to the city of Herat in the west.

The Taliban said they had abducted 12 security guards, and two of their own fighters had been killed.

One fuel tanker was reportedly set on fire and a USPI vehicle was taken.

Thousands of people work for Texas-based USPI in Afghanistan.

Check Out What The Idiot Report Calls “A Welcome Calm”

December 21, 2007 Mark Dodd, News Limited [Excerpts]

The snowfalls have brought a welcome calm to the strategic valley, once part of the ancient Silk Road trade route.

Winter has bought valuable time for the 400-strong Australian reconstruction taskforce based in Oruzgan as they settle in for Christmas.

Travelling through the Chora Valley is a high-risk operation.

Our convoy of armoured vehicles assembles in the dead of night outside the wire of Camp Holland. There are to be no lights. Drivers wear night-vision goggles, as do the gunners manning the 7.62mm Mag 58s on top of our Bushmaster Infantry Mobility Vehicle. The 35km journey from Camp Holland to Chora takes eight gruelling hours.

The convoy avoids areas regarded as likely spots hiding the Taliban's weapon of choice: deadly roadside bombs called IEDs, improvised explosive devices.

Unfortunately, the locals do not enjoy a similar level of protection. Two days after our convoy passes, six Afghan civilians are killed on the same route when their vehicle is blown up by a Taliban IED.

An unmanned drone accompanies us for most of the journey, its high-resolution infra-red camera scanning the night for any sign of insurgent activity. The drivers often leave the

dirt road and make their own path before clearing the maze of gullies and emerging on to a trackless desert wasteland. It is hard going on the vehicles and harder on the drivers.

“Hey boss, you got a half-empty water bottle?” asks Zac, our driver. “You want to go (to the toilet)?” the vehicle commander, Lieutenant Brent Hughes, replies. “Nope, it’s for that stay-awake stuff,” Zac answers.

In the early hours of the morning our vehicle grinds to a halt, wheels churning in loose sand as it lurches sideways. A firm voice comes over the intercom. “Go forward, go forward.” Zac guns the engine and the 15-tonne Bushmaster slowly levels out.

Just before dawn breaks, our convoy arrives at the White Fort, the name given to the main Dutch forward base at Chora.

Inside the compound there is a disabled Dutch Bushmaster, the victim of a recent roadside bomb. The front wheel assembly has been blasted off but it is in remarkably good condition due to its mine-resistant underbelly.

A 300-strong Australian special forces task group is based at Camp Russell, a camp within Camp Holland.

Their covert, long-range patrols and surveillance operations involve targeted assassination of Taliban leaders and the destruction of suspected insurgent bomb-making factories.

While there is no doubting the quality of construction of the rammed-mud forts designed to withstand direct fire from recoilless rifles, mortars and shoulder-fired rockets, the capabilities of the Afghan security forces are less certain.

Afghan police, especially police auxiliaries, are not highly regarded. Many Australian troops believe police and Taliban acted in concert in laying the IED that killed 41-year-old Australian trooper David “Poppy” Pearce, serving with the reconstruction taskforce.

The sole Afghan police occupant at the Sangar checkpoint says he has not been paid in two months. He is armed with an AK47 assault rifle but has only one magazine, hardly enough to fend off the Taliban.

Before leaving Sangar to join a Dutch convoy returning to Camp Holland, troops direct mortar fire at a nearby peak to deter Taliban spies observing our convoy. Four 81mm bombs are fired from across the valley straddling the upper slope of a razor-like ridge.

“That should stop any Taliban from walking up in the mountains,” muses one Digger. **[Sure. In your dreams.]**

Fifteen minutes later we depart.

Afghan Corruption And Thieving Shutter Collaborator Police Station; Stupid Officer Caught Lying To Reporter About It

December 20, 2007 Allison Lampert, CanWest News Service [Excerpts]

ZHARI DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- A plan to run the first independent Afghan police station in Kandahar province was sacked this week, just days after the officers were caught robbing villagers, CanWest News Service has learned.

Canadian soldiers were transferred Wednesday to mentor Afghan officers at a recently constructed station near Howz-E-Madad, even though the initial plan was to allow the police force to run the station alone, two high-ranking Canadian officers said.

The Afghan National Police was supposed to be manning the station with support from Afghan National Army and Canadian soldiers located at a nearby outpost, the officers, who spoke on condition of anonymity said.

But after less than a week, the police officers began robbing and harassing residents in the area, prompting the Canadian Forces to quietly transfer soldiers there to provide supervision, they said.

Capt. Sylvain Chalifour, a spokesperson for the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, insisted that the transfer of the Canadian officers to support the Afghan police was a question of availability. The officers were free to train the Afghan police, so a commander decided to move them.

The allegation of Afghan police officers stealing from residents “was a rumour, but there's no proof at all,” Chalifour said.

The Canadian Forces, eager to build a stronger presence on terrain won during battles with insurgents, has set up a total of seven police stations in Kandahar's Zhari and Panjwai districts.

Six of the stations are manned by Canadian soldiers and military police officers through a mentoring program.

This newest station was set up with only Afghan police officers because it was located near the outpost with Afghan and Canadian soldiers.

TROOP NEWS

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



U.S. Army Spc. Jeff Walton in the emergency room at Ibn Sina Hospital in the Green Zone in Baghdad Dec. 15, 2007. He was on patrol in the Karradah area of central Baghdad when his convoy was hit by a roadside bomb. He injured his arm but is expected to recover. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

Comment Unnecessary



Bush presents the Purple Heart medal to U.S. Army Sgt. John Wayne Cornell of Lansing, Michigan, during a visit to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington December 20, 2007. REUTERS/White House photo by Joyce N. Boghosian/Handout

Tonight!



**New Jersey Iraq Veterans Against The
War:
Holiday Party And Chapter Fund Raiser**

WHERE:

**Maplewood Memorial Post #10120 (AKA "Here's to the
Arts")**

**97 Baker Street
Maplewood, NJ 07040
973-762-6336**

TIME:

7P-10P

COST:

FIVE DOLLARS + cash bar

Entertainment: A live band

Please spread the word!!

From: New Jersey Veterans For Peace & New York City Iraq Veterans Against The War
Sent: December 22, 2007
Subject: IVAW Holiday Party

For more information contact: Margaret Stevens at (401) 439-3773

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE SERVICE?

Forward GI Special 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, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

12.20.07 (Reuters) & 12.21.07 By HAMID AHMED, Associated Press

A British armored personnel carrier was hit by a suspected roadside bomb, a spokesman for the British said. Capt. Finn Aldrich, a spokesman for the British military, said there were no casualties and no injuries. AP Television News video showed the vehicle ablaze with thick, black smoke billowing from it as British troops secured the site.

A bomber killed four policemen today when he blew up his car outside a police station. The bomber targeted Rasheed police station in the town of Yusufiya, south of Baghdad.

A bomber exploded a belt packed with explosives at a recruiting station for neighborhood patrols in Diyala province on Thursday, killing 13 volunteers and wounding 10, police said. The attack that took place in Kanaan, 20 km (12 miles) southeast of Baquba, the province's capital north of Baghdad.

Guerrillas killed two members of an U.S.-allied force and a policeman late on Thursday when they attacked a joint patrol of police and members of a militia in the city of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

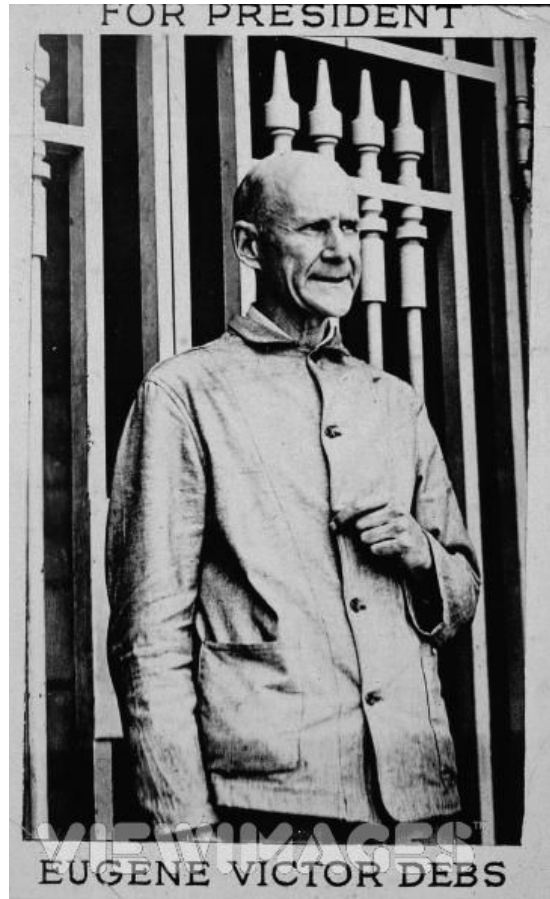
**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**

**“When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, “No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country.”
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

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**

***June 16, 1918:
The Most Powerful Speech
Against Imperial War In
American History: [Part 3]***
**“Turn Your Back On The Corrupt
Republican Party And The Still
More Corrupt Democratic Party”**
**“I Have Never Heard Anyone Tell Of
Any Difference Between These
Corrupt Capitalist Parties. Do You
Know Of Any? I Certainly Do Not”**



cache.viewimages.com

[To good to cut, and much too long to run in one GI Special. It frightened the government so badly they threw Debs in prison, where he ran for President, and received 2 million votes in 1920, still in prison.

[In the first part of his speech he attacked German Imperial militarism. Next, he moved on to condemn the war for Empire being waged against Germany by the Imperial government in Washington DC. The Wilson government found that part of the speech intolerable and ordered his arrest. T

Via Carl Bunin Peace History December 10-16

Delivered: June 16, 1918

First Published: 1918

Source: The Call

Online Version: E.V. Debs Internet Archive, 2001

Transcribed/HTML Markup: John Metz for the Illinois Socialist Party Debs Archive & David Walters for the Marxists Internet Archive Debs Archive

The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose — especially their lives.

They have always taught and trained you to believe it to be your patriotic duty to go to war and to have yourselves slaughtered at their command.

But in all the history of the world you, the people, have never had a voice in declaring war, and strange as it certainly appears, no war by any nation in any age has ever been declared by the people.

And here let me emphasize the fact—and it cannot be repeated too often — that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace.

It is the ruling class that invariably does both.

They alone declare war and they alone make peace.

Yours not to reason why;

Yours but to do and die.

That is their motto and we object on the part of the awakening workers of this nation.

If war is right let it be declared by the people.

You who have your lives to lose, you certainly above all others have the right to decide the momentous issue of war or peace.

Rose Pastor Stokes! And when I mention her name I take off my hat. Here we have another heroic and inspiring comrade. She had her millions of dollars at command. Did her wealth restrain her an instant? On the contrary her supreme devotion to the cause outweighed all considerations of a financial or social nature.

She went out boldly to plead the cause of the working class and they rewarded her high courage with a ten years' sentence to the penitentiary.

Think of it! Ten years! What atrocious crime had she committed? What frightful things had she said? Let me answer candidly. She said nothing more than I have said here this afternoon. I want to admit —

I want to admit without reservation that if Rose Pastor Stokes is guilty of crime, so am I. If she is guilty for the brave part she has taken in this testing time of human souls I would not be cowardly enough to plead my innocence. And if she ought to be sent to the penitentiary for ten years, so ought I without a doubt.

What did Rose Pastor Stokes say? Why, she said that a government could not at the same time serve both the profiteers and the victims of the profiteers. Is it not true? Certainly it is and no one can successfully dispute it.

Roosevelt said a thousand times more in the very same paper, the Kansas City Star. Roosevelt said vauntingly the other day that he would be heard if he went to jail. He knows very well that he is taking no risk of going to jail. He is shrewdly laying his wires for the Republican nomination in 1920 and he is an adept in making the appeal of the demagogue.

He would do anything to discredit the Wilson administration that he may give himself and his party all credit.

That is the only rivalry there is between the two old capitalist parties—the Republican Party and the Democratic Party — the political twins of the master class.

They are not going to have any friction between them this fall. They are all patriots in this campaign, and they are going to combine to prevent the election of any disloyal Socialist.

I have never heard anyone tell of any difference between these corrupt capitalist parties. Do you know of any? I certainly do not. The situation is that one is in and the other trying to break in, and that is substantially the only difference between them.

Rose Pastor Stokes never uttered a word she did not have a legal, constitutional right to utter.

But her message to the people, the message that stirred their thoughts and opened their eyes — that must be suppressed; her voice must be silenced. And so she was promptly subjected to a mock trial and sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years.

Her conviction was a foregone conclusion. The trial of a Socialist in a capitalist court is at best a farcical affair. What ghost of a chance had she in a court with a packed jury and a corporation tool on the bench? Not the least in the world. And so she goes to the penitentiary for ten years if they carry out their brutal and disgraceful program. For my part I do not think they will. In fact I feel sure they will not.

If the war were over tomorrow the prison doors would open to our people. They simply mean to silence the voice of protest during the war.

What a compliment it is to the Socialist movement to be thus persecuted for the sake of the truth!

The truth alone will make the people free.

And for this reason the truth must not be permitted to reach the people.

The truth has always been dangerous to the rule of the rogue, the exploiter, the robber. So the truth must be ruthlessly suppressed. That is why they are trying to destroy the

Socialist movement; and every time they strike a blow they add a thousand new voices to the hosts proclaiming that socialism is the hope of humanity and has come to emancipate the people from their final form of servitude.

How good this sip of cool water from the hand of a comrade! It is as refreshing as if it were out on the desert waste. And how good it is to look into your glowing faces this afternoon! You are really good looking to me, I assure you. And I am glad there are so many of you.

Your tribe has increased amazingly since first I came here. You used to be so few and far between. A few years ago when you struck a town the first thing you had to do was to see if you could locate a Socialist; and you were pretty lucky if you struck the trail of one before you left town. If he happened to be the only one and he is still living, he is now regarded as a pioneer and pathfinder; he holds a place of honor in your esteem, and he has lodgment in the hearts of all who have come after him. It is far different now. You can hardly throw a stone in the dark without hitting a Socialist. They are everywhere in increasing numbers; and what marvelous changes are taking place in the people!

Some years ago I was to speak at Warren in this state. It happened to be at the time that President McKinley was assassinated. In common with all others I deplored that tragic event. There is not a Socialist who would have been guilty of that crime. We do not attack individuals. We do not seek to avenge ourselves upon those opposed to our faith. We have no fight with individuals as such. We are capable of pitying those who hate us. We do not hate them; we know better; we would freely give them a cup of water if they needed it.

There is no room in our hearts for hate, except for the system, the social system in which it is possible for one man to amass a stupendous fortune doing nothing, while millions of others suffer and struggle and agonize and die for the bare necessities of existence.

President McKinley, as I have said, had been assassinated. I was first to speak at Portsmouth, having been booked there some time before the assassination.

Promptly the Christian ministers of Portsmouth met in special session and passed a resolution declaring that "Debs, more than any other person, was responsible for the assassination of our beloved President."

It was due to the doctrine that Debs was preaching that this crime was committed, according to these patriotic parsons, and so this pious gentry, the followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, concluded that I must not be permitted to enter the city. And they had the mayor issue an order to that effect.

I went there soon after, however. I was to speak at Warren, where President McKinley's double-cousin was postmaster. I went there and registered. I was soon afterward invited to leave the hotel. I was exceedingly undesirable that day. I was served with notice that the hall would not be opened and that I would not be permitted to speak. I sent back word to the mayor by the only Socialist left in town — and he only remained because they did not know he was there — I sent word to the mayor that I would speak in Warren that night, according to schedule, or I would leave there in a box for the return turn trip.

The Grand Army of the Republic called a special meeting and then marched to the hall in full uniform and occupied the front seats in order to silence me if my

speech did not suit them. I went to the hall, however, found it open, and made my speech. There was no interruption.

I told the audience frankly who was responsible for the President's assassination. I said: "As long as there is misery caused by robbery at the bottom there will be assassination at the top." I showed them, evidently to their satisfaction, that it was their own capitalist system that was responsible; the system that had impoverished and brutalized the ancestors of the poor witless boy who had murdered the President. Yes, I made my speech that night and it was well received but when I left there I was still an "undesirable citizen."

Some years later I returned to Warren. It seemed that the whole population was out for the occasion. I was received with open arms. I was no longer a demagogue; no longer a fanatic or an undesirable citizen. I had become exceedingly respectable simply because the Socialists had increased in numbers and socialism had grown in influence and power.

If ever I become entirely respectable I shall be quite sure that I have outlived myself.

It is the minorities who have made the history of this world. It is the few who have had the courage to take their places at the front; who have been true enough to themselves to speak the truth that was in them; who have dared oppose the established order of things; who have espoused the cause of the suffering, struggling poor; who have upheld without regard to personal consequences the cause of freedom and righteousness.

It is they, the heroic, self-sacrificing few who have made the history of the race and who have paved the way from barbarism to civilization. The many prefer to remain upon the popular side. They lack the courage and vision to join a despised minority that stands for a principle; they have not the moral fiber that withstands, endures and finally conquers. They are to be pitied and not treated with contempt for they cannot help their cowardice. But, thank God, in every age and in every nation there have been the brave and self-reliant few, and they have been sufficient to their historic task; and we, who are here today, are under infinite obligations to them because they suffered, they sacrificed, they went to jail, they had their bones broken upon the wheel, they were burned at the stake and their ashes scattered to the winds by the hands of hate and revenge in their struggle to leave the world better for us than they found it for themselves.

We are under eternal obligations to them because of what they did and what they suffered for us and the only way we can discharge that obligation is by doing the best we can for those who are to come after us. And this is the high purpose of every Socialist on earth.

Everywhere they are animated by the same lofty principles; everywhere they have the same noble ideals; everywhere they are clasping hands across national boundary lines; everywhere they are calling one another Comrade, the blessed word that springs from the heart of unity and bursts into blossom upon the lips. Each passing day they are getting into closer touch all along the battle line, waging the holy war of the working class of the world against the ruling and exploiting class of the world. They make many

mistakes and they profit by them all. They encounter numerous defeats, and grow stronger through them all. They never take a backward step.

The heart of the international Socialist never beats a retreat.

They are pressing forward, here, there and everywhere, in all the zones that girdle the globe. Everywhere these awakening workers, these class-conscious proletarians, these hardy sons and daughters of honest toil are proclaiming the glad tidings of the coming emancipation, everywhere their hearts are attuned to the most sacred cause that ever challenged men and women to action in all the history of the world.

Everywhere they are moving toward democracy and the dawn; marching toward the sunrise, their faces all aglow with the light of the coming day. These are the Socialists, the most zealous and enthusiastic crusaders the world has ever known. They are making history that will light up the horizon of coming generations, for their mission is the emancipation of the human race.

They have been reviled; they have been ridiculed, persecuted, imprisoned and have suffered death, but they have been sufficient to themselves and their cause, and their final triumph is but a question of time.

Do you wish to hasten the day of victory? Join the Socialist Party! Don't wait for the morrow. Join now! Enroll your name without fear and take your place where you belong.

You cannot do your duty by proxy. You have got to do it yourself and do it squarely and then as you look yourself in the face you will have no occasion to blush. You will know what it is to be a real man or woman. You will lose nothing; you will gain everything. Not only will you lose nothing but you will find something of infinite value, and that something will be yourself. And that is your supreme need — to find yourself — to really know yourself and your purpose in life.

You need at this time especially to know that you are fit for something better than slavery and cannon fodder.

You need to know that you were not created to work and produce and impoverish yourself to enrich an idle exploiter. You need to know that you have a mind to improve, a soul to develop, and a manhood to sustain.

You need to know that it is your duty to rise above the animal plane of existence. You need to know that it is for you to know something about literature and science and art. You need to know that you are verging on the edge of a great new world.

You need to get in touch with your comrades and fellow workers and to become conscious of your interests, your powers and your possibilities as a class. You need to know that you belong to the great majority of mankind. You need to know that as long as you are ignorant, as long as you are indifferent, as long as you are apathetic, unorganized and content, you will remain exactly where you are. You will be exploited; you will be degraded, and you will have to beg for a job.

You will get just enough for your slavish toil to keep you in working order, and you will be looked down upon with scorn and contempt by the very parasites that live and luxuriate out of your sweat and unpaid labor.

If you would be respected you have got to begin by respecting yourself. Stand up squarely and look yourself in the face and see a man! Do not allow yourself to fall into the predicament of the poor fellow who, after he had heard a Socialist speech concluded that he too ought to be a Socialist. The argument he had heard was unanswerable. "Yes," he said to himself, "all the speaker said was true and I certainly ought to join the party." But after a while he allowed his ardor to cool and he soberly concluded that by joining the party he might anger his boss and lose his job. He then concluded: "I can't take the chance."

That night he slept alone. There was something on his conscience and it resulted in a dreadful dream. Men always have such dreams when they betray themselves. A Socialist is free to go to bed with a clear conscience. He goes to sleep with his manhood and he awakens and walks forth in the morning with his self-respect. He is unafraid and he can look the whole world in the face, without a tremor and without a blush. But this poor weakling who lacked the courage to do the bidding of his reason and conscience was haunted by a startling dream and at midnight he awoke in terror, bounded from his bed and exclaimed: "My God, there is nobody in this room." He was absolutely right. There was nobody in that room.

How would you like to sleep in a room that had nobody in it? It is an awful thing to be nobody. That is certainly a state of mind to get out of, the sooner the better.

There is a great deal of hope for Baker, Ruthenberg and Wagenknecht who are in jail for their convictions; but for the fellow that is nobody there is no pardoning power. He is "in" for life. Anybody can be nobody; but it takes a man to be somebody.

To turn your back on the corrupt Republican Party and the still more corrupt Democratic Party — the gold-dust lackeys of the ruling class counts for still more after you have stepped out of those popular and corrupt capitalist parties to join a minority party that has an ideal, that stands for a principle, and fights for a cause.

This will be the most important change you have ever made and the time will come when you will thank me for having made the suggestion. It was the day of days for me. I remember it well. It was like passing from midnight darkness to the noontide light of day. It came almost like a flash and found me ready. It must have been in such a flash that great, seething, throbbing Russia, prepared by centuries of slavery and tears and martyrdom, was transformed from a dark continent to a land of living light.

There is something splendid, something sustaining and inspiring in the prompting of the heart to be true to yourself and to the best you know, especially in a crucial hour of your life. You are in the crucible today, my Socialist comrades! You are going to be tried by fire, to what extent no one knows. If you are weak-fibered and fainthearted you will be lost to the Socialist movement. We will have to bid you goodbye. You are not the stuff of which revolutions are made.

We are sorry for you unless you chance to be an "intellectual." The "intellectuals," many of them, are already gone. No loss on our side nor gain on the other.

I am always amused in the discussion of the “intellectual” phase of this question. It is the same old standard under which the rank and file are judged. What would become of the sheep if they had no shepherd to lead them out of the wilderness into the land of milk and honey?

Oh, yes, “I am your shepherd and ye are my mutton.”

They would have us believe that if we had no “intellectuals” we would have no movement.

They would have our party, the rank and file, controlled by the “intellectual” bosses as the Republican and Democratic parties are controlled.

These capitalist parties are managed by “intellectual” leaders and the rank and file are sheep that follow the bellwether to the shambles.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A Iraqi citizen sits among scattered clothes after foreign occupation soldiers from U.S. Blackfoot Company, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, search her personal belongings during a home invasion on the outskirts of Muqadiyah, Diyala province, Dec. 14, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

Iraqi citizens have no right to resist home invasions by occupation soldiers from the USA. If they do, they may be arrested, wounded, or killed.

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there. [But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

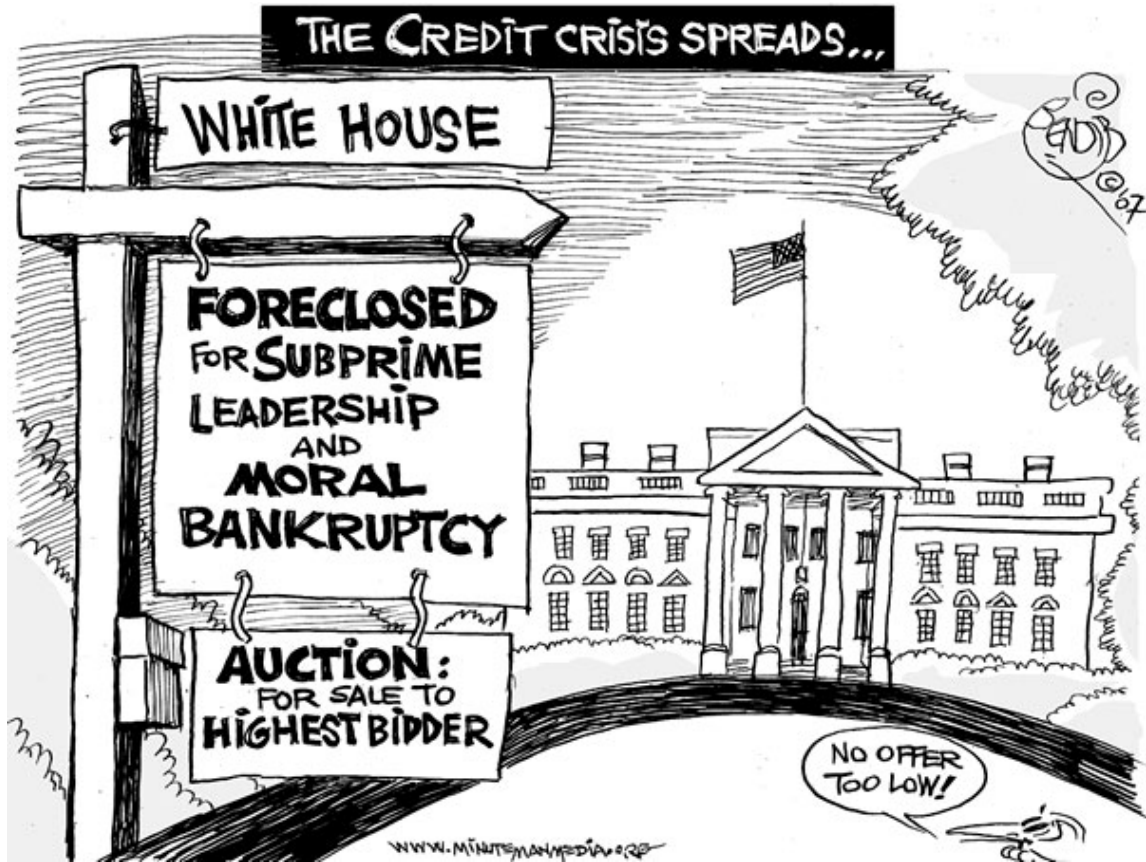
"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



Fury In New Orleans As Politicians Approve Destruction Of More Public Housing:

“Get Out From Behind Those Curtains And Tell Us Why You Want To Demolish Our Homes”

“Outside, Dozens Of Locked-Out People Tried To Force Their Way Through Iron

Gates And Clashed With Police, Who Used Pepper Spray And Stun Guns On Them”

December 21, 2007 By Jenny Jarvie, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

NEW ORLEANS — After protesters skirmished with police inside and outside New Orleans City Hall on Thursday, the City Council voted unanimously to approve a federal plan to demolish a vast swath of public housing.

The fate of the 4,500 public housing units has become a flash point as this city struggles to piece itself back together after Hurricane Katrina damaged more than 134,000 homes, many of them in poor, mostly black neighborhoods.

Tents line the Interstate 10 underpass and a homeless camp has settled outside City Hall.

Even before New Orleans' seven City Council members took their seats for the public meeting, protesters were booing and pumping their fists.

“Why y'all standing behind the curtains?” a woman called out to council members who waited at the back of the council chambers for protesters to calm down. “This ain't no stage show! Get out from behind those curtains and tell us why you want to demolish our homes.”

Protesters, who complained that many residents had been locked out of the packed public meeting, fought with police almost immediately.

City Council members -- some sipping water, others leafing through file folders -- looked on impassively as a man was tasered, handcuffed and dragged from the council chambers.

Outside, dozens of locked-out people tried to force their way through iron gates and clashed with police, who used pepper spray and stun guns on them.

One woman was taken away on a stretcher after being sprayed.

Inside, once it began, the meeting was orderly -- with a SWAT team standing between the City Council and the residents, lawyers, developers, preachers, rappers and sociologists who had come to voice their opinions on the city's public housing.

The six-hour proceeding was briefly disrupted when what appeared to be rainwater began to drip from the ceiling.

“We're having problems with water coming in,” said Arnie Fielkow, president of the council, when those in attendance complained that City Council members were paying insufficient attention to residents opposed to the demolition.

“Tear the building down!” shouted one unsympathetic activist. “Yeah, get HUD to fix it,” another chipped in.

Rags were used to sop up the growing puddle of water around clerk Peggy Lewis' black patent leather shoes.

The razing of public housing projects, part of a broader nationwide move away from public housing and toward mixed-income projects, has been particularly contentious in New Orleans.

Activists and preservationists have sharply criticized the government's proposal to raze the city's biggest public housing complexes when low-income housing is in short supply.

With rents up 45% and more than 3,000 former public housing residents scattered across the country, they say officials should quickly renovate and reopen the sturdy, mostly 1940s-era brick buildings, some of which were barely damaged by Katrina.

Many talk of a conspiracy to purge the city of its poorest residents, pointing out the government will not replace all of the 4,500 public housing units it plans to demolish.

“The question remains: Who's in the mix?” said Torin Sanders, pastor of the Sixth Baptist Church, near the old St. Thomas housing project, which was razed before Katrina to make way for a mixed-use project.

“I saw church members with bags packed walking around the city for somewhere to live.”

The Housing Authority of New Orleans, which has been under federal control since 2002, had planned to begin demolition last Saturday, but former tenants and activists sued the federal government to delay further demolition, arguing that the authority had acted without City Council permits.

A judge ruled in their favor. The hearing Thursday was in response to that ruling -- and the council issued the permits.

In the last few weeks, the campaign against demolition of the housing projects gained momentum and national attention.

MORE:

Why We Oppose Demolition Of Public Housing Apartments At The B.W. Cooper (Calliope) Public Housing Development

Because New Orleans Needs Public and All Affordable Housing!

The homeless population has doubled in New Orleans since the hurricane, from some 6,000 to 12,000 people — even though the City's population is less than half of what it was before the storm!

Rents have doubled and tripled since the storm.

A big reason for this horrible situation is because HANO and the Bush administration--and the rich behind them--have closed thousands of Public Housing Apartments--including at BW Cooper.

When hurricane Katrina hit there were over 1300 apartments at Cooper, and over 1000 were occupied, but now only some 200 are open. We could house over 1,000 families by fixing up all of Cooper. We can't afford to lose anymore Public Housing—at Cooper or any other development.

Because the B.W. Copper “redevelopment” planned by wealthy developers will drastically reduce the number Public Housing apartments

According to numbers released by HANO and the developers, the number of ACC units (Public Housing units—where families pay 30% of their income for Rent and Utilities) will be reduced from 1550 to 154 apartments!!

The loss of B.W. Cooper would mean a net loss of 1396 affordable, Public Housing units.

Not even the current number of public Housing Residents will be able to live in the 'redeveloped Cooper. This demolition is not making things better, but worse for people that need affordable housing.

Because the apartments scheduled for demolition are livable!

After the hurricane HANO said all the now closed developments--including Cooper—were 'devastated' and beyond repair. Despite this claim, HANO has opened — after much pressure—over 200 apartments at Cooper, and they are in fine shape. HANO now has plans to open 100 apartments at Lafitte.

In fact, even some of the apartments now being demolished had maintenance staff recently living there.

Activists that occupied Cooper apartments now being demolished found that with only with a little cleaning that could be lived in comfortably. If HANO can open many apartments why can't they open those now planned for demolition?

We say because they have an agenda to drive poor people from the city. We can't go along with that!

Because we have to do the right thing

We are in a struggle for the city.

The rich people that run this city and country want to drive Public Housing and other poor people from the city. We can't allow this to happen.

Stopping the demolition of B.W. Cooper is central to that struggle. Join Us!

C3/Hands Off Iberville
504-520-9521

Troops Invited:

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

***While Wounded Troops Wait
Months For Disability Benefits, No
Cash Shortage For The Rich:
Wall St. Handing Out \$30 Billion In
Bonuses;
“Lloyd Blankfein Reportedly Is In Line
For A Bonus Of Up To \$70 Million”***

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

Dec. 21, 2007 AP

Four of the biggest U.S. investment banks — Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley, Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. and Bear Stearns Cos. — will pay out about \$49.6 billion in compensation this year.

Of that, bonuses are traditionally estimated to represent 60 percent, or almost \$30 billion.

Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein reportedly is in line for a bonus of up to \$70 million this year, as the nation's largest investment bank has largely navigated past any mortgage-related losses. Lehman Brothers' CEO Richard Fuld was granted a \$35 million stock bonus for 2007, up 4 percent from last year.

The bankers in the best position this year are at Goldman Sachs.

The nation's largest investment bank said Tuesday it was able to chalk up another record-breaking year with higher investment banking fees and smart bets on mortgage-backed bonds. It beat fourth-quarter projections.

In response, compensation at Goldman rose 20 percent to \$20.1 billion. That means roughly \$12 billion has been set aside for bonuses.

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/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

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