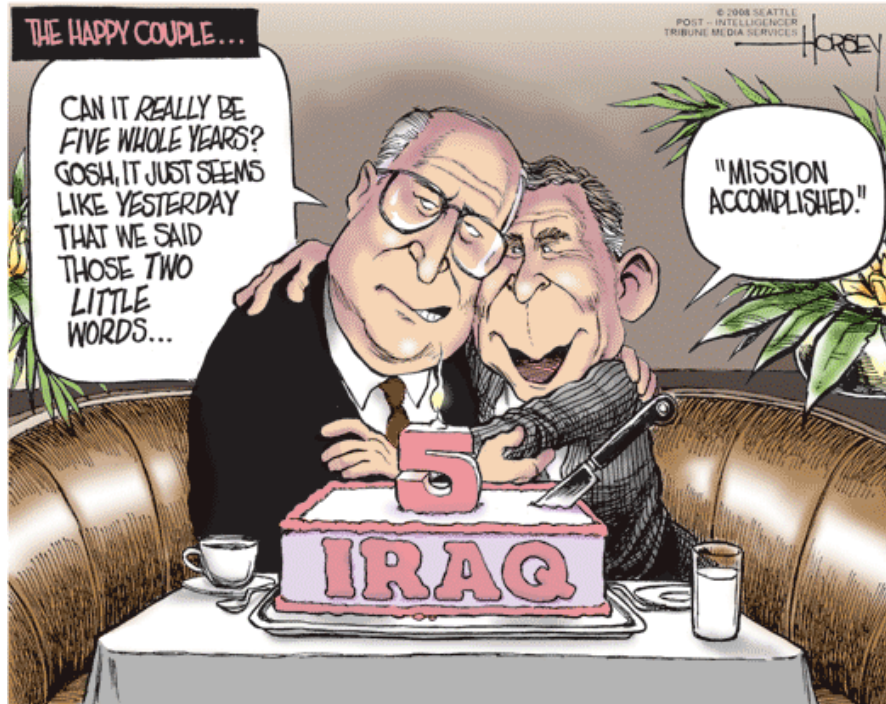


GI SPECIAL 6/18:



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

South Korea To Withdraw All Remaining Troops From Iraq

September 19, 2008 By HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

South Korea will completely withdraw its remaining troops from Iraq by December, ending five years of military deployment.

Since 2003, South Korea has stationed troops in Iraq at the request of the United States, its key ally.

Troops levels once reached 3,600, but Seoul gradually has pulled out soldiers amid opposition to the deployment at home.

About 520 South Korean army engineers and medics are now stationed in Iraq, and 130 other support personnel - mostly airmen - are in Kuwait.

Defense Ministry spokesman Won Tae-jae told reporters Friday that all 650 soldiers will return home by the end of this year.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

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



U.S. Army soldier from Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment after bomb technicians destroyed a cave in the Hamrin mountains near Qara Tappah, about 75 miles northeast of Baghdad in Diyala province, July 22, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Pines Soldier Killed In Afghanistan



Private Michael Dinterman

September 13, 2008 By Candice Evans, Staff Writer; The Daily Times

SALISBURY -- While on foot patrol in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan, Pvt. Michael R. Dinterman, 18, was killed by enemy fire Sept. 6.

A Littlestown, Pa., native, Dinterman lived in Ocean Pines with his cousin, Jesse Branson, for nearly two years before entering the armed forces.

"He was always trying to do the right thing," said Kelly Rogers, manager at the Green Turtle in West Ocean City, who worked alongside Dinterman last year. "I think he left to join (the Army) to better his life."

On Sunday, friends, family, and the general public are invited to attend a viewing from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Kenworthy Funeral Home Inc. in Hanover, Pa. A service to "celebrate and honor the fallen hero" will be held Monday at 10 a.m. at the funeral home. Burial will be held in Fort Indiantown Gap National Cemetery in Annville, Pa., with full military honors.

The U.S. Department of Defense reported Thursday that at least 519 members of the U.S. military had died in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001. The military reports that 370 of them were killed by hostile action.

Dinterman, who enlisted in the Army in January, was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Ft. Hood, Texas.

Born Nov. 7, 1989, in Baltimore, Dinterman was the son and stepson of Lora L. Martin and Michael A. Martin of Littlestown, and Richard L. Dinterman and Misty Stonesifer of Littlestown.

He is survived by one brother, Christopher J. Martin and two sisters, Amanda N. Dinterman and Michelle L. Fowble.

A 2006 graduate of Bowling Brook Preparatory School in Carroll County, Md., Dinterman was a member of the football team and enjoyed all types of sports including baseball and basketball.

Family members said he especially enjoyed going to the beach.

“(Dinterman) had a really great sense of humor,” said Rogers, who described the soldier as an outgoing person, Friday. “Everybody in the kitchen, all the staff, enjoyed working with him.”

Contributions in honor of Dinterman may be made to the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, One Intrepid Square, West 46th St. and 12th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036.

Weidman Soldier Buried At Arlington Next Week

September 08, 2008 by The Associated Press

WEIDMAN -- The widow of a U.S. soldier from Michigan killed in Afghanistan says U.S. Army honor guards will bury him next week at Arlington National Cemetery.

Army Sgt. 1st Class Gregory A. Rodriguez, 35, died Tuesday of wounds suffered in Ana Kalay, Afghanistan, when his mounted patrol came under small-arms fire. He was a native of Weidman in Isabella County.

“I asked Greg if anything ever happened to him where he'd prefer to be buried,” his wife Laura Rodriguez said, “and he told me Arlington, as he wanted to be among the best and the brave.”

Rodriguez, an avid Detroit Red Wings fan, graduated from Mount Pleasant High School in 1991 and joined the Army Reserve about three years later. He liked the military life and became an active duty soldier in 1996, his wife said.

Survivors include Laura, their three young children and his mother, Virginia Richardson of Lake Isabella.

The family now lives at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, site of the military's working-dog programs. Rodriguez was assigned to the K-9 unit of the 527th Military Police Company, 709th Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Brigade, Ansbach, Germany.

His dog Jacko survived the ambush. Laura Rodriguez said she hoped the dog could come live with the family. “He was Greg's best companion for the past couple of years,” she said.

Senior CIA Officers Targeted By Islamabad Blast



The Marriot Hotel burns in Islamabad. (Reuters)

20th September, 2008 Malaysia Sun

Islamabad, Sept 20: Several senior officers of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) who are reported to be currently visiting Islamabad were the target of the blast at the Marriott Hotel which took place here tonight.

Well placed sources said that Marriott Hotel is usual hotel choice of the US officials and it seems that militants tipped off that certain high level US intelligence officers were currently staying at the hotel.

While no confirmation was available but Pakistan sources said it was clear that the explosion was aimed at specific targets based on a tip off.

At least twenty people were killed, and scores others seriously injured, when an explosives laden truck rammed into Marriott Hotel here today.

TROOP NEWS

Army Faked Photos Of KIA

AP Associated Press

PHOTO ELIMINATION



** EDITORS PLEASE ELIMINATE TXRH1 OF SEPT 18, 2008. THE CONTENT OF THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN DIGITALLY ALTERED AND DOES NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT THE SCENE. NO OTHER VERSION OF THE PHOTO IS AVAILABLE
** This undated photo released by the U.S. Army at Fort Stewart, Ga. shows Staff Sgt. Darris Dawson of Pensacola, Fla., who died Sept. 14, 2008 in Tunnis Iraq, in non-hostile action. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infar Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, : Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

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

19 Sep 2008 By Megan McGinley, Columbia Journalism Review

The Associated Press retracted two government-issued photographs last night after a photographer in Texas alerted the agency that the photos in question appeared to be doctored.

Bob Owen, chief photographer of the San Antonio Express-News, notified the AP that the photos of two deceased soldiers, who died in Iraq on Sept. 14, were nearly identical. Upon examining the photos, Owens noticed that everything except for the soldier's face, name, and rank was the same. The most glaring similarity, Owen told CJR, was that the camouflage patterns of the two uniforms were "perfectly identical."

After inspecting the photographs, the AP confirmed that the images were, indeed, Photoshopped, and issued eliminations on the two photos.

The elimination reads:

"The content of this image has been digitally altered and does not accurately reflect the scene. No other version of the photo is available."

The photos were released by the U.S. Army at Fort Stewart in Georgia. Officials at the base could not be reached for comment.

“I’d like to think that the media holds itself pretty accountable and we try really hard to keep high standards,” Owen said. “Obviously the army, and the government, doesn’t see anything wrong with that (photo altering) at all.”

DoD Traitors Find Clever New Way To Cheat Troops Out Of Disability Benefits:

Defying Congress, They Break The Law:

“Every PTSD Case He’s Seen Since The 2008 Defense Authorization Act Was Enacted Has Not Followed VA’s Rules”

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn’t care less. To repeat for the 3,529th time, there is no enemy in Iraq. Iraqis and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started this war of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn’t tell the truth: this war was about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback is overdue. T]

September 22, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

After last year’s Walter Reed scandal led to charges of inequity in the military’s disability ratings system, lawmakers thought they fixed the problem with a simple edict: Do it as the Department of Veterans Affairs does.

But veterans’ groups and lawyers say the Army, with by far the most combat-disabled troops, is finding ways around the new requirement in cases of post-traumatic stress disorder.

And several advocates say they have heard from sources within the Pentagon that a policy is being drafted under which all the services could do the same.

Last year, research showed that VA typically assigns veterans higher ratings for their injuries than the military, especially for mental health issues. In the 2008 Defense Authorization Act, Congress ordered the Pentagon to use the VA Schedule for Rating

Disabilities (VASRD) — without adding any of its own additional rules that would lead to lower ratings.

The law says the services can deviate from the VASRD only if the result is higher ratings for injured or ill service members.

VASRD Section 4.129 states: “When a mental disorder that develops in the service as a result of a highly stressful event is severe enough to bring about the veteran’s release from active military service, the rating agency shall assign an evaluation of not less than 50 percent and schedule an examination within the six-month period following the veteran’s discharge to determine whether a change in evaluation is warranted.”

Instead, according to Army documents, several soldiers with mental health issues have been found unfit for service, rated 10 percent disabled, and booted out immediately.

Ron Smith, an attorney with Finnegan, a worldwide law firm, said lawyers at his firm are looking at several recent PTSD rulings in which service members were immediately separated with disability ratings of less than 50 percent, all decided by a military Physical Evaluation Board after the 2008 Defense Authorization Act became law Jan. 28.

He said his firm is looking to use those examples in federal claims court to show the military is flouting the law.

Former Staff Sgt. Frank Adams, 50, was a military policeman stationed in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1985, when the post exchange was bombed, injuring about 30 people. Adams said the scene was chaos, with fires and broken glass and victims bleeding and screaming.

A few months later, he became jumpy, didn’t like to be in crowds, and began abusing alcohol.

He later served in the 1991 Persian Gulf War guarding prisoners, many of whom had bad injuries.

“Quite a few died before they could get the attention they needed,” he said. “I would go off by myself and just cry.”

When he returned home, he said his symptoms got worse. He left the military and began work as a computer programmer, but said he had problems with authority, couldn’t focus, couldn’t stand having people behind him.

Still, after the attacks of Sept. 11, he joined the Army Reserve. But while training to deploy to Iraq this past February, he had a severe reaction in a combat lifesaver course when actors portrayed injured victims.

He spent five days in a psychiatric ward during which he was diagnosed with PTSD and sent before a Physical Evaluation Board at Fort Lewis, Wash. He was found unfit, rated 10 percent disabled and discharged in July.

He hired Jason Perry, a former military lawyer who is now in civilian practice, to help him. Perry said the paramount issue in Adams' case is whether the Army "applied the law."

When Perry asked for an explanation on Adams' ruling, Physical Evaluation Board president Col. John O'Sullivan wrote: "Section 4.129 does not apply to cases in the military in which the (board) is able to properly rate the soldier (in accordance with) section 4.130 when an appropriate psychiatric examination has been accomplished."

Section 4.130 lays out the long-term rating schedule for mental disorders.

Perry said Army adjudicators are ignoring 4.129 and leaping straight to 4.130 — bypassing the six-month temporary disability period and follow-up aspects.

He said every PTSD case he's seen since the 2008 Defense Authorization Act was enacted has not followed VA's rules.

MORE:

“The Latest In A String Of Unconscionable Decisions Coming From The Office Of Pentagon Personnel Chief David Chu” “The Same Executive Who Sought To Cut Combat Pay For Troops In The War Zones”

September 22, 2008 Editorial, Army Times [Excerpts]

In January, Congress ordered the Pentagon to drop its disability ratings rules and strictly follow the VA's criteria in assigning ratings to injured and wounded service members.

In March, the Army said it would comply. All the other services were to follow suit.

The change in law was among the most significant changes to emerge in the wake of 2007's Walter Reed scandal. Veterans' groups hailed the change, having complained for years that the military had shortchanged wounded combat veterans on their disability ratings and compensation.

But seven months later, the Army still isn't living up to its promise, at least not when it comes to assessing troops suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

The VA ratings schedule says PTSD sufferers should receive a minimum 50-percent disability rating from the rating agency and then be reassessed within six months to determine if the initial evaluation should be changed for the longer term.

But a number of soldiers suffering from PTSD have been given disability ratings of just 10 percent, and then separated from service without the required follow-up assessment.

Worse, the Pentagon seems to be gearing up for a broader policy change that would take this approach to PTSD across all the armed services, according to veterans' advocates.

This should hardly come as a surprise — it is just the latest in a string of unconscionable decisions coming from the office of Pentagon personnel chief David Chu.

This is the same executive who sought to cut combat pay for troops in the war zones and once proposed shunting off the Defense Department's obligations for military retirees onto the VA. Over the past three years, he has advocated doubling and tripling some of the health care fees paid by many military retirees.

And just a few weeks ago, Chu narrowed the definition of "combat related" to reduce the number of disabled troops who might benefit under another provision of the 2008 Defense Authorization Act, which says some disabled troops do not have to return any severance pay they receive from the military before they can draw disability payments from VA.

Chu's definition of combat related is significantly narrower than the one already in use to determine eligibility for a separate program for disabled retirees called Combat Related Special Compensation.



Iraq Veterans Meet With Chu To Express Dissatisfaction. [Images.google.com]

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. Phone: 917.677.8057

Air Force Sergeant Kills Officer

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

September 16, 2008 Midnapore, India (PTI)

Allegedly fed up with getting posted at the same spot for a long period of time, an Air Force staff on Tuesday shot dead his senior officer inside the Kalaikunda Air Base in West Midnapore district, police said.

Sergeant D S Rajput reportedly shot dead Junior Warrant Officer B C Mishra with his service revolver in the afternoon when the latter was on a round of inspection.

Rajput told the police that Mishra continued to give him posting at the same spot inside the air base for a long time, despite protests by him.

He would be produced before the court on Wednesday.

**“Simple Advice For Those Getting
Ready To Retire”**

**“Keep All Their Records No Matter
How Unnecessary They May Think
They Are”**

**“Document Every Injury They Have
Received In The Military Since No One
Will Believe That They Could Have Been**

Injured In Some Of The Most Dangerous Work In The World”

I have some simple advice for those getting ready to retire.

They should keep all their records no matter how unnecessary they may think they are, and start the process early because they will have to fight for every day they have served, and document every injury they have received in the military since no one will believe that they could have been injured in some of the most dangerous work in the world.

I love the Army and would have a hard time saying anything negative about the institution, but there are always things that need to be fixed, and the Army retirement program is one of these programs.

I would ask the senior leaders to conduct a full review of the retirement process starting with a detailed review of all institutions that are required to have a retirement program.

The inspector general can ask people in the process now what type of service they are receiving and how the process can be managed better.

The service can develop a one-stop retirement system that has National Guard, Reserve and active duty talking the same language and tracking the same data to ensure accuracy.

The Army can start publishing every year an individual account of what the soldier is vested currently and what he can expect to receive after 20 years and beyond. The document would be similar to what Social Security is required to put out to people every year on their current entitlements.

The Army needs to have timely answers and streamline the process so soldiers do not wait months to be told their retirement is approved or disapproved. At a minimum, a soldier should have orders in hand nine months before leaving.

Finally, we need strong leadership that ensures they manage people and not numbers. Every soldier treated poorly is a lost opportunity that will impact future recruitment.

Lt. Col. Craig A. Triscari
Vicenza, Italy

“A Program Intended To Help U.S. Military Veterans Secure Housing Has Helped Only One Franklin

County Vet Since Money To Fund The Program Was Issued Nearly Five Months Ago”

“Veterans Are Looking For The Right Information, And They’re Tired Of Being Sent All Over The Place”

“The Reason? V.A. Red Tape, Says Poppe”

“These are men and women who won’t be able to work. And if you can’t work, you’re going to lose your housing. At the current rate of approval, you’re going to be on the street before you get your pension. They may have made it back, but the quality of their life is nothing they’re deserving of.”

[Thanks to Comrade Tribune, Vietnam Veterans, who sent this in.]

September 4, 2008 By Steph Greigor, The Other Paper [Columbus, Ohio] [Excerpts]

Barbara Poppe isn’t happy with the Department of Veteran Affairs these days. The executive director of the Community Shelter Board is ticked off that a program intended to help U.S. military veterans secure housing has helped only one Franklin County vet since money to fund the program was issued nearly five months ago.

The reason? VA red tape, says Poppe.

“We have eligible veterans waiting, but they can’t get enrolled because of the problems at the VA,” Poppe said.

The federal government seeded the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program in Franklin County with \$195,000 on May 29: enough to provide 35 military households with vouchers, according to Dennis Guest, executive director of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority. But the VA did nothing with the vouchers, Guest said, until just three weeks ago, when CMHA received four referrals.

One of those secured housing.

Poppe said the effort to get vets off the streets is on hold until the VA hires a counselor to oversee the process.

Bureaucracy and red tape at the VA office is an issue Poppe says impacts Columbus streets every day, leaving more and more former American military personnel stranded after serving their country and returning home.

Poppe said that of the more than 750 veterans who seek help annually from the shelter board, about half have no income at all and those who do average about \$365 a month.

“The challenge that we see is, even when they become aware of what veteran services are available to them, the access to the service is very difficult,” she said.

For the 125,000 veterans in Central Ohio that need services—and the expected influx of soldiers returning from Iraq—the obstacle course agencies expect veterans to run through for help is problematic.

If a veteran needs assistance with compensation and pension, the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission—a county organization created by state legislation—is the place to go.

If a veteran needs help with mental health issues, marriage counseling or healthcare, they need to call the Columbus Vet Center, a local VA office on Spruce Street.

For housing vouchers, the other VA office at the Wylie clinic on Taylor Ave. is the place to go.

And, when veterans return to the U.S. initially, they’re told to utilize the Ohio Cares program.

All of them claim to have one-stop shopping, making references for the service they can’t provide. But most often it simply leaves veterans confused.

“Veterans are looking for the right information,” said Rick Isbell, a Gulf War veteran and the current veteran’s affairs coordinator for the city of Columbus. “And they’re tired of being sent all over the place.”

Isbell knows a thing or two about being mired in the VA benefits process. As a member of the U.S. Air Force, he saw the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall and flew top-secret missions over Iraq and Afghanistan during the Persian Gulf War taking photos of targets for fellow pilots.

Isbell served his country for six years with the expectation that the United States would take care of him upon his return. But instead, his homecoming ranked among the greatest fights of his life.

“When I returned after the Persian Gulf War, I wasn’t feeling too well. I started seeing a little blood after I went to the restroom. But then it became pure blood,” he said. “They sent me to four or five different places and no one knew what was wrong with me. So they put me on steroids to stop the bleeding. But every time they’d bring me down to 25 mg, I started to bleed again.”

Isbell learned his symptoms were shared by many and the condition was ultimately referred to as Gulf War Syndrome. It’s a sickness that many — including Isbell — believe was the result of exposure to biological or chemical weaponry in the Persian Gulf.

“They finally removed my large intestine,” he said. “At that point, I wasn’t fit for duty any longer and I had to get out. I couldn’t work for a year.”

So he turned to what he thought was the organization that could help him — the VA. But instead of open arms, he found a closed door that he spent the next several years fighting to open.

“They said they cut out the problem,” he said. “They’ll turn you down the first time to see if you just quit. But I just kept fighting. That’s all you can do.”

A trip Washington, D.C. ultimately got Isbell the benefits he was seeking, but he said most vets won’t pursue their cases as vigorously as he did.

The national wait-time average for claims and benefits is discouraging — approximately 174 days, or nearly six months, according to the VA. The delays and runaround often lead to frustration, particularly when the vet is disabled or sick, said Isbell.

“It seems like there’s so many detours and red tape — and when you’re sick, you just don’t feel like doing it,” he said.

According to Doug Lay, director of the Franklin County Veteran Services Commission, every Central Ohio claim ends up in Cleveland, where the initial approval or denial can take about 30 days to two years depending on the complexity of the case and the information submitted. If the vet failed to provide supporting documentation for his or her claim, the paperwork goes back and forth, adding time to the process.

“After the vet has filed that claim and they come back with a determination — they accept it or they don’t accept it, and they appeal the decision,” said Lay. “There is a bureaucracy there. Some of it is red tape, some of it is federal law that just slows down the process. By the same token, while they’re waiting on the VA, we can intercede with short-term financial assistance.”

Lay said an increasing number of veterans suffer from memory lapses and are being diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries.

“It makes it very hard for them to secure work if they can’t remember their name during an interview process,” he said. “In some instances, the veteran may need some vocational rehabilitation training. He may be missing a limb. He may have combat stress, or PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) or all of those things.”

“These are men and women who won’t be able to work. And if you can’t work, you’re going to lose your housing. At the current rate of approval, you’re going to be on the street before you get your pension. They may have made it back, but the quality of their life is nothing they’re deserving of.”

Lay said a vet who comes in with the proper documentation can receive up to \$2,000 in emergency funds if he needs it. The key, he said, is the paperwork.

“We’ll say, ‘Let me see your discharge papers. Are you married? Do you have a marriage license?’ If they have kids, do you have birth certificates? We need income and

expenses for last 30 days, maybe bank statements and account numbers if we're paying a bill," he said. "If they provide us with that information, our staff is able to provide immediate assistance."

"In a lot of cases we can call the recorder's office and have information faxed to us," he said. "So we can overcome some of the obstacles."

But in Poppe's experience, there's still much work to be done.

"The more difficulties the person has, the less likely they're going to successfully navigate the process.

"Which means the most vulnerable veterans are the least likely to be successful, even though they need the services the most," said Poppe. "I think with the VA, it needs to be much more responsive to the healthcare and mental health of its returning vets—it needs to be held accountable for addressing the mental health of those vets.

"And they really need to make the pension processing faster — vets need to receive it right away and not years from now."

Welcome To The Occupied USA

"Natalie Walters Is Now Facing Prosecution That Could Put Her In Prison For Six Months"

"She Poured A Cup Of Diet Coke On A Counter In A Veteran's Administration Cafeteria"

She Was Protesting "Price Gouging Directed At Visitors And Patients"

[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veteran, for picking up this one.]

VA bureaucrats used surveillance cameras to monitor her movements in the hospital and then, in what was possibly a criminal act, and certainly an unethical one, accessed the medical records of her father to demand that he be in touch with his daughter and pressure her to turn herself in over the spat.

September 20, 2008 By Scott Horton, Harpers

The Bush Justice Department continuously tells us it is beleaguered, under-resourced, and having a hard time battling crime. But sometimes its enthusiasm for a prosecution is just effervescent.

The latest episode showing the Justice Department's more than curious notions of justice can be found this week in the pages of the Idaho Statesman.

Natalie Walters is now facing prosecution that could put her in prison for six months.

Her crime?

She poured a cup of Diet Coke on a counter in a Veteran's Administration cafeteria.

The 39-year-old North Idaho resident periodically drives her father, a disabled Vietnam veteran, to Boise's VA Medical Center for doctor visits. She brings her own mug and fills it with soda in the hospital's cafeteria.

The cafeteria does not have a posted price for refills and typically the cashier charges her \$1 or \$1.50, Walters said.

But on Aug 20, when Walters filled her mug with Diet Coke, the clerk charged \$3.80. "I told her that cannot be right and asked to talk to the manager," Walters said. The manager told Walters the price is correct. Walters decided she didn't want to pay that much and offered to return the soda, she said.

But the manager told her there was no way to accept the returned soda, so Walters had to pay.

Walters refused, and she said she was angry by this point, and she poured the soda onto the counter. The manager banned Walters from the cafeteria. Walters left but remained in the hospital for a couple of hours waiting for her father to finish his appointments. No one came to talk to her, so she assumed the soda ordeal was over.

Evidently not.

VA bureaucrats used surveillance cameras to monitor her movements in the hospital and then, in what was possibly a criminal act, and certainly an unethical one, accessed the medical records of her father to demand that he be in touch with his daughter and pressure her to turn herself in over the spat.

The VA turned the matter over to Idaho U.S. attorney, Thomas E. Moss, who prides himself on having been picked as an adviser to Alberto Gonzales.

Moss literally decided to make a federal case of it by bringing a prosecution.

Remember, this is the same Bush Justice Department which has advised Congress that it "lacks the resources" to investigate or prosecute more than 30 rape cases involving contractors in Iraq, and which recently decided that senior Republican appointees caught in a massive corruption, cocaine and illicit sex scandal at the Interior Department weren't worth going after.

The Justice Department knows, however, just where its priorities lie.

And that \$3.80 cup of Diet Coke?

A former Coca-Cola bottling executive told me that the cost to a vendor in syrup and carbonated water of a Diet Coke dispensed in an 8-ounce container would be approximately 8 cents (\$0.08).

The profit margin that the VA was seeking on the sale was therefore staggering—price gouging directed at visitors and patients at a Veteran’s facility. (I didn’t factor in the ice, but still.)

It’s good to know the Justice Department’s priorities, but unfortunate that justice is not one of them.

**OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION
ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!**

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action; U.S. Occupation Supply Convoy Attacked In Mosul

Sept. 20 (Xinhua) & Reuters & Sept. 21 (Xinhua) & (Reuters)

A roadside bomb detonated overnight near a convoy of trucks, carrying fuel and supplies for the U.S. army, while traveling in the al-Arabi neighborhood in northern Mosul, setting a fuel tanker ablaze and wounding its driver, he said.

An Iraqi policeman was killed in Mosul, the capital of Nineveh province, a provincial police source said on Saturday. The policeman was killed in skirmishes erupted on Saturday morning between his unit and an armed group in the al-Farouq Street in central Mosul, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Earlier, an Iraqi soldier was wounded when unknown gunmen showered with bullets his checkpoint in the al-Karaamah neighborhood in eastern Mosul, the source said.

A car bomber killed two off-duty policemen and one off-duty soldier in Tal Afar.

Guerrillas shot dead a senior officer in the Iraqi Interior Ministry in western Baghdad on Sunday morning. “Brigadier Adel Abbas was killed with his driver by unknown armed

men while leaving his house in the Adil neighborhood,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Major Ammar, another ministry officer, was seriously wounded when insurgents showered his car with bullets in Baghdad al-Jadida district, or New Baghdad, the source said.

A truck bomb killed two policemen and wounded 40 others in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded three Iraqi soldiers, when it targeted their patrol in Waziriya district, northern Baghdad, police said.

Three policemen, were wounded when a roadside bomb detonated near a police patrol in Zaafaraniya district, southeastern Baghdad, police said.

One policeman was wounded by a roadside bomb in al-Maghreb street, northern Baghdad, police said.

Armed attackers killed an off-duty policeman on Saturday in Kut, 150 km (95 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

**“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.**

**"The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!"
-- Camille Desmoulins**

Cops Vs Protesters At The RNC



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: September 18, 2008
Subject: Cops vs. Protesters at the RNC

Cops vs. Protesters at the RNC

The police react to the crowd, just after they took a man down. Everything was done in a military manner. Fear is the number one weapon the police use. Shock and Awe against its own people. The main stream media obviously portrays the dissenting protesters as the bad guys, and the cops as the good guys. " You are with us, or you are against us." The police worked well with the main stream media who were filming the marches.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran**

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

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

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

“Figured They Wouldn't Shoot Me Now, Too Much Paper Work” Mississippi 1950: AN OTHER STORY

[This article is from Max Watts, in Australia, who began helping GIs resisting the Vietnam War in the 1960's, and has never stopped helping soldiers opposed to Imperial wars. T]

Sept. 20, 2008 By Max Watts.

It was October 1950. I was riding Little Putt, my Servicycle, northwards from New Orleans. I came to a Mississippi town called Laurel. I'd read about Laurel.

A black man had been tried there, accused of raping a white woman. Condemned to death. I didn't know much more, but was curious.

I stopped, had coffee, - it was pretty poor coffee - asked around. Some of the locals, Whites, soon told me that there had been no rape, but - worse - miscegenation. Interracial sex. That black Niggra, Willie McGee, had been sleeping with a, the, that, white woman, for four years.

When he wanted to break it off, leave, she cried “rape”. McGee had been condemned to death, but not yet executed.

Me, I am, was, a journo. It sounded like an interesting story. Soon learned that most of local Negroes (we didn't yet say: Blacks) were scared. Didn't really want to talk to me, about the case. “You come, you ask, you leave, we stay here, with the shit. No thanks!” But some people did. Talk. I heard the facts. Definitely a story ! Wrote up my notes. Got onto Little Putt, started North.

Didn't get far.

Before I reached the town line two squad cars overtook me. Easily. The servicycle's top speed was 35 miles an hour, 55 km/h.

Screeched to a halt, one before, one behind me. 4 cops in uniform jumped out, waving their pistols at me. Yelling: "You ran through a red light!"

I realised this wasn't it, in fact later realised that there had been no traffic lite at all, red nor green, on that road. The cops were off their heads, foaming at the, their, mouth(s). "Fucking Nigger-lover". I was scared. "You're under arrest..." Now what?

They made me drive back into town, between the two squad cars, I wondered if they'd run over me, "a traffic accident" ... They still had their pistols out. Or: shot trying to escape?

In the town center, a jail, they pushed me inside. I was rather glad. Figured they wouldn't shoot me now, too much paper work. Locked me up.. The servicycle, good horse, stayed outside. With its California license plate, my swag, some papers and books, my machette, rolled into my sleeping bag, on the back carrier.

After a long while, maybe eight hours, a man in suit, and tie, showed up. The Laurel District Attorney. He, they, had opened my stuff. Wallet. Were looking at it.

They'd found my press card, from "Challenge". Perhaps fortunately it didn't explain that Challenge was the British Young Communist League's Paper. But in any case they had also found a pamphlet by Joseph Stalin, about linguistics. Abstruse. (Stalin thought, or wrote, that language was not class based. Or racial. I don't think he'd spoken to many Mississippi Negroes).

The District Attorney, an intellectual, wanted to know what I wanted. "To write about that Willie McGee case."

Why? Why was I, a Californian, stirring their Niggras up?

They got along fine with them, until foreigners (British ? Californians? Unclear!) came causing trouble.

I, now somewhat uppitty, said it wasn't me, we, who caused "Jim Crow". Segregation.

The DA said he'd put me in a cell with Willie McGee. I said that would be fine, I'd get an interview, a good story. That didn't happen.

With his Liberal Face, the DA said: in a while, maybe a thousand years, we will have got over segregation, Jim Crow.

Told me to leave, and not come back.

I said "fine by me" and did. Ooofff.

When I got to New York I ran, with my story, to the Daily Worker. Some lawyers. Poured it out, thought I had a scoop. Alas, it wasn't so. I was told, almost pityingly, that everyone in the Willie McGee defense had long known there had been no rape, just sex, inter-racial. A nono. The defense hadn't even used that line. "It would just have got him lynched, right away."

It was a time of defeat, retreat.

I was harassed by the army, the FBI, justice Department. I left.

Heard no more from Laurel, except, recently, that they had killed Willie McGee. In 1951. And that Bella Abzug, then a pregnant civil rights attorney, trying to save his life, had had a bad time there. Thinking back, I guess I had been lucky.

28 years later, in 1979, Erka and I drove thru Laurel, again.

It was 2 am and we'd been driving, almost non-stop, for days. We stopped, had a coffee. In a road-side diner. It was integrated. Half the slumped down diners were Black. It had not taken a thousand, only (less than) 28 years. To abolish Jim Crow in road-side diners.

The coffee had not improved.

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/)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE
The Commander-In-Chief-At Work**



Bush during a White House dinner Sept. 20, 2008, (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Venezuelan Capitalists Support Rat Chavez As He Attacks Working Class Income Gains: “Mr. Chávez Is Venting His Frustration At Workers Who Don't Follow His Line” “What You're Doing Is Degeneracy” He Says

September 10, 2008 By DARCY CROWE, Wall St. Journal

CARACAS, Venezuela -- During one of his recent Sunday television shows, President Hugo Chávez picked out one of the program's cameramen and accused him of being a

counter-revolutionary, which in the president's socialist-inspired [translation: lying Stalinist-inspired] lexicon amounts to committing high treason.

The president's beef: Cameramen at the state television channel receive eight times their regular wage on Sunday, thanks to their union contract.

Mr. Chávez complained that greedy unions were endangering the channel's financial health.

The president's own policy spurred the growth of powerful unions. Now the policy appears to have spiraled out of control [translation: workers are getting better pay].

State-owned companies, including some recently nationalized by Mr. Chavez, are groaning under the pressure of union demands [translation: the bosses are whining about being pressured to pay good wages to the workers, not as good as the bosses get themselves, to be sure].

“There's no equilibrium between management and the unions. I'm afraid they now have all the power,” said Eduardo Gómez, head of Conindustria, a business group that usually opposes the president.

But even Mr. Chávez is finding the unions a nettlesome presence at times.

They march to their own drummers, and have taken action not only against private industry but also against state companies.

At Sidor [steel manufacturing], labor protests have persisted even after the government took control of the company, with some workers making demands the government says it can't meet.

Operations at the steel mill have been disrupted because of the disputes, which involve outsourced workers who want to join the company's payroll.

“Do they want to bankrupt the company?” Mr. Chávez asked recently, referring to Sidor.

“Some unions just don't understand.”

His response has been to try to centralize the unions mushrooming throughout the country under an umbrella organization close to the government.

The man for this task is Labor Minister Roberto Hernández, a veteran communist [translation: fake communist] leader. “The working class cannot play its decisive role in the revolution if it's not united under the same flag,” Mr. Hernández said recently, addressing striking workers at the GM plant.

[So, the rat Chavez and the rat Hernandez, despite their despicable, lying fake-socialist bullshit, are planning to destroy the real workers' unions by stuffing them into a government controlled structure that will be nothing but a top-down dictatorship designed to keep workers obedient to the rich class who control Venezuela, and keep their wages down.]

In the meantime, Mr. Chávez is venting his frustration at workers who don't follow his line.

“What you're doing is degeneracy,” Mr. Chávez snapped at the cameraman on his television show.

Addressing the audience, Mr. Chávez went on, “If we try to negotiate with them, they get mad and make threats.”

MORE:

Oh No, Say It Ain't So: “Socialist” [Tell Me Another] Venezuelan Government Had \$300 Million Invested With Lehman Brothers, Inc. Collapse Of Socialist Investment Bank On Socialist Wall St. Trashes Socialist Investment By Socialist Chavez Regime

SEPTEMBER 19, 2008 By DARCY CROWE, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

CARACAS, Venezuela -- The Venezuelan government, which this week mocked Lehman Brothers Inc.'s woes as a sign of capitalism's imminent demise, could become a victim of the investment bank's failure.

The government of Hugo Chávez holds about \$300 million in debt instruments that Lehman had agreed to cash, according to three analysts who calculated the holdings separately.

With Lehman in trouble, Venezuela will have a hard time selling the debt.

“The government will likely have to assume a steep loss,” said Alejandro Grisanti, a senior economist with Barclay's Capital. How much will depend on what Lehman ends up paying out to creditors as a result of the bankruptcy proceedings.

Government officials weren't available to comment. Finance Minister Ali Rodriguez said Tuesday the government was reviewing any impact that Lehman's demise could have on Venezuela's finances.

Mr. Chávez has focused less on the domestic financial risks than on the political symbolism associated with the U.S. bank's collapse. "Lehman, rest in peace," he said in a television appearance this week, in which he said the investment bank should have paid more attention to its own problems instead of releasing chastising analyst reports on Venezuela.

The investment bank structured more than \$1 billion in notes, according to estimates by Jose Guerra, a former Venezuelan central bank research director.

The Finance Ministry could hold the notes to maturity instead of unwinding them in the hope the underlying bonds recover in value.

But there is a high risk that they depreciate further.

The fund in which the notes are held, Fonden, finances many of the projects that Mr. Chávez touts as part of his socialist "Bolivarian Revolution."

RECEIVED

Yes And No

From: BG
To: GI Special
Sent: September 21, 2008

Do you really think people are going to understand that long, complicated article about "the general law of capital accumulation" in the last GI Special?

REPLY: Depends. Civilians maybe not. Troops most likely will.

Facing death in a bullshit war or two tends to sharpen the mind, and troops tend to have much above average intelligence to begin with. And also tend not to get lost in the oceans of meaningless, useless bullshit that passes for political commentary around the anti-war movement.

T

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The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.
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