

**GI SPECIAL 6J23:**

**Traitors At Work, As  
Usual:  
Bush & Odierno Launch Ground  
Attack On Syria:  
Nine Syrians Killed Near Iraqi  
Border, Fourteen Wounded:  
“The Targets Reportedly Were  
Construction Workers And Were  
Civilians, Including Five People From  
One Family, Local Residents Reported”**

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

10/26/08 by Tzvi Ben Gedalyahu (IsraelINN.com)

Two to four United States helicopters attacked Syria, near the Iraqi border, Sunday evening, killing at least nine people. The site was near the target Israel bombed last year.

Foreign media reported that residents in the village of Al-Sukkariya, approximately 300 miles northeast of Damascus and about 10 miles inside Syrian territory and near the main border crossing from Syria into Iraq.

Syrian government news agencies confirmed the attack, and a private Syrian television channel reported that nine men died and 14 were wounded.

**Two of the helicopters reportedly landed in the village, where eight American soldiers jumped out and carried out the operation. The soldiers quickly returned to the helicopters, and all of the craft left the scene.**

It was the first time the U.S. has attacked on Syrian land.

The targets reportedly were construction workers and were civilians, including five people from one family, local residents reported to news agencies.

**LIAR  
MURDERER  
DOMESTIC ENEMY  
UNFIT FOR COMMAND  
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE  
THIS IS THE ENEMY:  
BRING THE WAR HOME NOW!**



(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

**AND THIS IS THE POWER-MAD,  
PUBLICITY-HUNGRY SHOWBOATING  
POLITICIAN IN DIRECT COMMAND:  
[2012 Odierno For President Committees  
Forming Nov. 5, Near You]**



Odious Odierno, Commanding General of Multi-National Force - Iraq (MNF-I). (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

---

## IRAQ WAR REPORTS

### **Slain Schofield Soldier Was New Father**



Army Pfc. Christopher A. McCraw of Columbia, Miss., died Tuesday in Baghdad when he encountered small-arms fire while on patrol. He was assigned to Schofield Barracks in July 2007. AP photo / McCraw Family

Oct 17, 2008 By Gregg K. Kakesako, Star Bulletin

The 23-year-old Schofield Barracks private killed Tuesday in a firefight while on patrol in Baghdad was planning to marry the mother of his infant son when he returned from Iraq next spring.

Pfc. Christopher A. McCraw, 23, of Columbia, Miss., was wounded when his patrol encountered small-arms fire in Nasar Wa Salam, the Pentagon reported yesterday.

"The whole family is pretty much in shock," the soldier's uncle Jerry McCraw told the Associated Press. "It's about the worst thing you can have is a military chaplain and (a sergeant) show up at your house."

"He was a good kid. He was there doing his duty for us," McCraw said. "He was always a happy kid, a bursting-with-energy-type kid, I guess what you would call a perfect soldier."

A message Christopher McCraw wrote on his MySpace.com page said, "For man hath no greater love than he that would lay down his own life for his friends."

On his Facebook.com page, McCraw is pictured with his girlfriend, Brianna, and his infant son, Isaac, in May.

McCraw's brother also served in Iraq and came home two years ago with post-traumatic stress disorder, their uncle said. McCraw was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team. He is also survived by his parents, Avon and Cathy McCraw.

**He was the 11th member of the 25th Infantry Division's Stryker brigade to die in Iraq since the unit was sent there in November on a 15-month combat tour.**

The 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and 4,000 soldiers are just north of Baghdad. McCraw was stationed at Camp Liberty outside of Baghdad.

McCraw joined the Army in February 2007 and was assigned to Schofield Barracks in July 2007.

This is the 2nd Brigade's second Iraqi tour. Thirteen 25th Division soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team were killed during its first Iraqi deployment in 2004-2005.

**Since the U.S. invaded Iraq five years ago, 89 soldiers, four sailors, 83 Marines, two Air Force personnel and one civilian with Hawaii ties have been killed there.**

---

**“A Withdrawal Could Show Iraqis  
‘What Life Would Be Like’ Without  
U.S. Troops”  
[“Don’t Get Your Hopes Up”]**

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: don't get your hopes up.]

Oct 25, 2008 By Charles Levinson - USA Today [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD: When the clock strikes midnight Dec. 31, the U.S. military's days of operating freely in Iraq will come to an abrupt end — regardless of whether a new long-term security agreement is in place, current and former military officials say.

The U.S. military will face restrictions that could make it extremely difficult for troops to operate effectively if the security agreement, which is being negotiated between the U.S. and Iraqi governments, passes in its current draft form, the officials say.

If Iraq's leaders take a hard line and fail to pass the agreement before Jan. 1 — a possibility that has appeared more likely in recent days — U.S. military operations could come to a halt as soldiers retreat to bases, ground their aircraft and stop supporting Iraqi forces.

**Without a legal framework allowing U.S. soldiers to operate in Iraq, the U.S. military would be operating illegally in the country, exposing it to charges of violating international law and potentially creating a public relations nightmare for the U.S. in the court of world opinion.**

Col. Pete Mansoor, Petraeus' former executive officer who retired in August, said a withdrawal could show Iraqis "what life would be like" without U.S. troops.

**"We are banking on the goodwill of the Iraqi government to make exceptions to the agreement if conditions deteriorate," says Mansoor, who is a professor of military history at Ohio State University.**

**"But what if the government is causing the deterioration?"**

Under the agreement, the U.S. would need Iraqi court orders to make arrests.

**U.S. forces target three to four dozen Iraqis each day, according to Mansoor, so Iraq's understaffed and underdeveloped court system could be unable to process warrants in time.**

**Detainees would have to be turned over to Iraqi custody within 24 hours, limiting the time U.S. authorities would have to interrogate them.**

**Troops Invited:**

**Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057**

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE  
REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK  
LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT A PACK  
OF TRAITORS IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE  
That is not a good enough reason.**



A U.S. soldier during patrol in Baquba, in Diyala province, northeast of Baghdad, October 22, 2008. (Goran Tomasevic/Reuters)

## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER**

**Telling the truth - about the occupations 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 to Imperial wars 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/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

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



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. soldiers search a house during an armed home invasion patrol in a village near Baquba in Diyala province, some 65 km (40 miles) northeast of Baghdad October 23, 2008. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

**[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?]**

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.

**"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.”**

One of the squadron’s great successes over the past year, says Lt. Col. Kolenda, has been weaning less-committed local boys away from the hard-liners through jobs, schooling and support for the elders.

**He says the young men of Mirdish village, for instance, joined the insurgency because a couple of years ago American troops kicked down some doors and searched some homes.**

-- Michael M. Phillips, Wall St. Journal, 7.18.08



[images.google.com]

**English soldiers search an American settler’s house (1770’s)**

**Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:**

**In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom. Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.**

## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Local Soldier Killed In Afghanistan**



Oct 16, 2008 WJHG

A Crestview family is mourning the loss of their beloved soldier.

Corporal Preston Medley from Baker was killed Tuesday in Afghanistan during an early morning mission. His family and friends say Preston was a special person and will be missed by many.

Twenty-three-year-old paratrooper Corporal Preston Medley lived by his promise to serve, honor and protect our country. He died defending it.

Preston's father says he remembers when his son took that oath.

Raybon Medley, Preston's father, said, "Instead of a young man, he looked like a man, you know, just so proud to serve his country."

Tuesday afternoon Medley's loved ones received the devastating news that he would not return home the vehicle medley was riding-in, struck a road-side bomb, and the family's worst nightmare came true. "It's just so much harder to hear that he just got blown up in a vehicle instead of fighting face to face, fair. That's what hurts so bad. He didn't have a chance."

Friends and family say Preston beamed with pride when he talked about his wife, his one-year-old daughter, Raylynn, and his unborn son due in December.

His sister remembers his contagious smile and says Medley enjoyed teasing the people closest to him. Long-time friends say Preston's untimely death has left a void in the world that no one can ever replace.

Derek Elmore, Preston's friend, said, "He's absolutely irreplaceable. I'll never get over it."

In July, before Medley deployed for his 15-month tour in Afghanistan, he wrote a message addressed to his entire family and friends. He declared his love for his wife and children and pledged to give his all while at war. "I am so hurt to be leaving, but this is what I joined for and I am going to make as big of a difference over there so my family will not have to live in fear."

"We're so proud of him. We'll always remember him as a fun, happy, just outgoing person that tried to do everything he could to make things better."

Corporal Medley will be buried next to his mother in Pyron Chapel Cemetery in Baker. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

---

## **Two Occupation War Profiteers Killed "In What Had Been Regarded As A**

# Relatively Secure Part Of The Capital”

October 26, 2008 By Laura King, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Kabul, Afghanistan -- Security for Westerners in Afghanistan took a sharp turn for the worse Saturday when an Afghan security guard working for the international shipping firm DHL shot dead the company's top two executives in the country before killing himself, authorities said.

The early-morning attack, which killed a Briton and a South African, was as symbolic as it was bloody.

And it took place in a prosperous district in the heart of the city even as Western military officials are trying to calm fears that Islamic militants are tightening a noose around the capital.

It also raised the possibility that insurgents might be seeking to strike at Western interests by infiltrating international organizations' private security services.

Police and witnesses said Saturday's attack unfolded when the guard opened fire with an automatic rifle as an SUV carrying DHL's country director and his deputy pulled up in front of the company's headquarters downtown.

The office, which is across the street from the Iranian Embassy and not far from the headquarters of Afghanistan's intelligence service, is in what had been regarded as a relatively secure part of the capital.

---

## TROOP NEWS

**Air Force Brigadier General  
Overseeing Guantanamo Tribunals  
In The Shitter:  
Accused Of Improperly Influencing  
Prosecutions;**

# “A Preliminary Inquiry Found Sufficient Grounds To Move Forward”

**Scott Silliman, a Duke University law professor and 25-year veteran of the Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps, said the case is extremely significant, in that only a handful of U.S. military investigations in recent years have focused on a general -- especially one at the heart of the tribunals that have been a centerpiece of the Bush administration's global war on terrorism.**

October 25 2008 By Josh Meyer, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Washington: A Pentagon official overseeing the Guantanamo war crimes tribunals is the subject of two investigations into his conduct, including one wide-ranging ethics examination into whether he abused his power and improperly influenced the prosecutions of enemy combatants.

**An internal Air Force investigation into the activities of Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Hartmann appears to be the more significant of the two probes because it was launched only after a preliminary inquiry found sufficient grounds to move forward, military officials said.**

The Air Force is reviewing allegations that Hartmann bullied prosecutors, logistics officials and others at Guantanamo -- resulting in cases going to trial that were not ready and the prosecution of at least one individual on charges that were unwarranted -- and assertions that he advocated using coerced evidence despite prosecutors' objections.

It also is looking into allegations that Hartmann made intentionally misleading statements, both in public and during the Guantanamo tribunal proceedings, in an effort to downplay the direct role that he played in the overall prosecution effort and in several cases, according to interviews with military lawyers.

A second investigation, being conducted by the Department of Defense's Office of the Inspector General, was sparked by the complaints of at least two military officials about Hartmann's allegedly abusive and retaliatory behavior toward them within the Office of Military Commissions. That office oversees the prosecutors and defense lawyers in the terrorism trials taking place at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The investigations will further undermine the credibility of the tribunals just as some of the most high-profile cases -- including the trial of five men alleged to have helped plot Sept. 11 -- are getting underway, according to some military defense lawyers at Guantanamo, former prosecutors who have quit in protest and human rights officials.

The investigations will “cast doubt on all of the decisions that have been taken under his tenure,” said Hina Shamsi, a staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union and an officially designated trial observer at Guantanamo.

Hartmann, 63, was the legal advisor to the administrator of the tribunals until last month, when he was given the newly created position of director of operations, planning and development for military commissions.

The chief counsel to Connecticut-based MXenergy Holdings Inc. and an Air Force reservist with experience as a military prosecutor, he was called up for active duty in July 2007 specifically for the Guantanamo post.

Hartmann's dual legal role at Guantanamo was controversial from the beginning.

He was responsible for providing legal advice to the war crimes administrator, known as the convening authority, who must make impartial rulings on issues raised by both the prosecution and defense. Hartmann was also responsible for supervising the prosecution of enemy combatants, but not personally intervening in the work of the prosecutors.

Hartmann has steadfastly denied any wrongdoing, testifying in several Guantanamo cases that he acted aggressively but not improperly.

**But three Guantanamo judges since May have barred Hartmann from serving as legal advisor in their cases, after supporting at least a portion of defense claims that he exerted "unlawful influence."**

Air Force Col. Morris D. Davis, who resigned as chief Guantanamo prosecutor in October 2007 after frequent clashes with Hartmann, said that "full, fair and open trials were not possible under the system," and that it had become deeply politicized under the hard-charging general.

Davis and a military defense lawyer told The Times that they have been interviewed at length by the probe's chief investigator, Air Force Brig. Gen. Steven J. Lepper, about a wide range of issues involving Hartmann's conduct.

In his interview, Davis said, he told Lepper that Hartmann "grossly exceeded his role as a neutral and independent and impartial legal advisor."

**At least three other prosecutors quit the tribunals in recent years, claiming improper political meddling and other inappropriate behavior by Hartmann and others that they believe stacked the deck against defendants there.**

One of them said he too was contacted by Lepper as part of the investigation. He spoke only on the condition of anonymity, citing the ongoing investigation. He said he believes Hartmann "was hammering on other prosecutors to move faster on cases, in one instance demanding that three or more cases a month be initiated" even if they were not ready.

Lepper, a widely regarded staff judge advocate at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, was tapped for the investigation after one military defense lawyer brought detailed complaints about Hartmann to Lt. Gen. Jack L. Rives in July.

Rives, the judge advocate general for the Air Force, referred the matter to his advisory committee on professional responsibility, which launched a preliminary inquiry and

reported that a full investigation was warranted, according to Lt. Col. Alan Liu, chief of the JAG Corps' professional responsibility division.

Liu said that there is no timeline and that the probe is likely to involve numerous interviews, given Hartmann's central role in the tribunals.

He said that if Hartmann was found to have acted improperly, he would face administrative sanctions that could include removal of his judge advocate general certification. Other military lawyers familiar with the probe said that Rives could transfer Hartmann away from the Guantanamo cases or even ask for his retirement.

Air Force Maj. David J.R. Frakt, a defense lawyer for Guantanamo detainee Mohammed Jawad, said he came forward with allegations about Hartmann because military regulations require one lawyer to report another if there is "a substantial question as to that lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer."

"I do believe that Brig. Gen. Hartmann has acted in a manner that raises substantial questions as to his honesty, professionalism and fitness as a lawyer," Frakt said, "and I believe his conduct has been prejudicial to the fair administration of justice in the military commissions."

**Scott Silliman, a Duke University law professor and 25-year veteran of the Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps, said the case is extremely significant, in that only a handful of U.S. military investigations in recent years have focused on a general -- especially one at the heart of the tribunals that have been a centerpiece of the Bush administration's global war on terrorism.**

**"If there is a finding that Hartmann exceeded his role," Silliman said, "I think every defense lawyer is going to walk in and move for some kind of relief in their case, and say it was not handled properly and move for the charges to be dismissed or refiled based on Hartmann's activities."**

---

**Rats In Command Risked Other  
Troops Lives By Knowingly  
Sending Medically Unfit Troops  
Back For More Combat In Iraq:  
"I Wasn't Mentally Safe. I Was A  
Liability. I Could Have Got Someone  
Hurt," Cataldi Said:**

# **“It’s Really Not A Good Idea To Put People In A Battle Situation Where The Side Effects Of The Medications They’re Taking Could Be Suicide -- When They’re Carrying Weapons”**

Cataldi said he went to see a military psychiatrist who brushed aside his concerns. “I tell them, ‘I’m having nightmares. I feel like I’m having out-of-body experiences. I feel like I’m watching myself in a movie. I’m losing memory, coordination.’ This whole time he said, ‘You’re not feeling that way.’ Exact words: ‘No, you’re not.’”

Oct. 23, 2008 By BOB WOODRUFF, JAMES HILL and JAIME HENNESSEY, ABC News [Excerpts]

Two weeks before his second deployment to Iraq last September, Army Specialist Michael DeVlieger broke down.

“At first, I thought it was something that everybody experienced,” DeVlieger told ABC’s Bob Woodruff, “and just through time and perseverance I guess it would pass.” It didn’t pass.

After an 11-day hospitalization, DeVlieger was given a diagnosis of major depressive disorder, three psychiatric prescriptions -- and deployment orders.

**“Eighteen hours after he got out of the hospital, he deployed to Iraq,” DeVlieger’s wife, Christine DeVlieger, recalled.**

**He left for Iraq despite Pentagon policy requiring that service members establish three months of “stability without significant symptoms” before deploying.**

“I was a ticking time bomb,” Michael DeVlieger said.

The Army’s chief psychiatrist, Dr. Elspeth Ritchie, agrees with the Rand Corp.’s estimate that 300,000 service members have demonstrated post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. Some are returning to the battlefield, although the Army is not keeping track of how many.

**While Ritchie said she was unfamiliar with the details of DeVlieger’s case, she added that if it were true, it “clearly violates our policy.”**

Twelve percent of soldiers in Iraq and 17 percent of those in Afghanistan reported taking antidepressants, anxiety medications or sleep medications in the Army’s most recent mental health survey.

The use of psychiatric drugs on the battlefield has not been scientifically studied, and some say the practice carries risks.

“The black box on the label talks about side effects like suicide, poor judgment,” retired Army psychologist Bart Billings warned.

“It’s really not a good idea to put people in a battle situation where the side effects of the medications they’re taking could be suicide -- when they’re carrying weapons.”

**As a psychiatrist in Kuwait during the first Gulf War, Ragan saw a vastly different military opinion of psychiatric medications. “Clearly, in 1990, if someone was on antidepressant medication, we sent them back to the United States.”**

Former Marine Cpl. Michael Cataldi, an Iraq war veteran, remembers the dark days that followed his first deployment.

“I was taking anti-psychotics, narcotics for pain and drinking at least 30 beers a night,” he said.

He came home to Camp Pendleton, Calif., haunted by the horrors of war, including a helicopter crash that killed 30 fellow Marines.

“I saw a Marine Corps sergeant who had the majority of the top of his head missing, and he had the look of a scream on his face,” Cataldi recounted. “And that stuck with me, and it still sticks with me.”

Cataldi said he went to see a military psychiatrist who brushed aside his concerns. “I tell them, ‘I’m having nightmares. I feel like I’m having out-of-body experiences. I feel like I’m watching myself in a movie. I’m losing memory, coordination.’ This whole time he said, ‘You’re not feeling that way.’ Exact words: ‘No, you’re not.’”

**Cataldi was prescribed several psychiatric medications and deployed to Iraq for a second tour of duty.**

**Cataldi’s wife, Monica Cataldi, believes the decision was wrong. “In my opinion, anybody who has to be on medication just to function, just to do their job, shouldn’t go to Iraq.”**

**A month into his second tour in Iraq, Cataldi said he ran out of his psychiatric medication.**

“I went cold turkey on a narcotic in a combat zone,” Cataldi said. “I woke up lying in the dirt in the middle of the night. I don’t remember how I got there, with my rifle buried next to me.”

“I wasn’t mentally safe. I was a liability. I could have got someone hurt,” Cataldi said.

---

**NOT ANOTHER DAY**

## NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The casket of Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Slebodnik, who was killed in Afghanistan, at Arlington National Cemetery, Oct. 8, 2008. Slebodnik also served in Operation Desert Storm, and five tours in the current war in Iraq. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

---

## Screwing GIs Is Not New Policy: Wrongful Conviction Settled 64 Years Later



Samuel Snow

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in, with the headline.]

October 24, 2008 By Mike Schneider, Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. -- It took six decades, but the family of a wrongly convicted World War II veteran is finally getting his back pay with interest.

Samuel Snow's widow, Margaret, and son, Ray, received a check for \$27,580 on Thursday, 64 years after Snow was wrongly convicted of participating in a riot that led to his imprisonment for more than a year.



Snow died last July at age 83 only hours after receiving an honorable discharge and an Army apology during a ceremony in Seattle. Snow always said that he had nothing to do with the riot in August 1944.

Ray Snow compared his father with the Biblical hero Job -- an upright man who was punished for no good reason.

A good, upright man who was struck down ... yet he held on," Ray Snow, 56, a schoolteacher, said after his family received the check. "He held on to the belief that this could be done."

Snow was among 43 black soldiers who were court-martialed for participating in a 1944 riot at Fort Lawton in Seattle that led to the lynching of an Italian prisoner of war.

**Those found guilty of rioting, 28 in all, were sentenced to as much as 25 years in prison. It was one of the largest courts martial of World War II.**

**A year ago, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records set aside Snow's conviction, noting that prosecutors had withheld important evidence and that the defendants were denied access to their attorneys.**

**The board also ruled that four soldiers who petitioned the board, including Snow, should be given honorable discharges and compensated.**

**Not long afterward, Snow received a check for \$725 -- the amount the Army said he would have been paid between the time he was convicted and the time he was released from prison about 15 months later.**

**It was not adjusted for inflation and failed to include 64 years' worth of interest.**

Earlier this year, U.S. Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., and U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., filed legislation to award interest on the back pay owed Snow and any other soldier who has a conviction overturned by courts or the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. It was passed as part of the Defense Authorization Bill.

"This is an American tragedy, along with an American success story," said Nelson, who presented the check to Snow's family.

---

## **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**

**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**

## **Iraq Veterans Against The War: Winter Soldier Portland, Oregon, October 18, 2008**



**Camilo Mejia, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**“Today’s society is not experiencing the horror that our military intervention of Iraq is causing to both Iraqis and to servicemembers and their families.**

**“Hiding the gruesome reality of the occupation of Iraq is not meant to respect the dignity of the fallen, as our government would have us believe. It is meant to minimize the emotional impact of the occupation so that the United States, as a nation, does not take ownership of the crimes the government commits in its name, with its money, and with the blood of its sons and daughters.”**

**Camilo Mejia**

**National Guard Sgt.  
Combat Infantry Iraq  
First soldier to refuse  
to go back to Iraq.  
Spent one year in  
military prison.**

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](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net)) T)

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?**

**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 wars, 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. Phone: 917.677.8057**

# **United States Ranked 36th In The World For Press Freedom “The US Is Tied With Bosnia And Herzegovina”**

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]

10/22/08 Danny Shea, HuffingtonPost [Excerpt]

“The United States is ranked 36th in the world in terms of press freedom, up from 48th last year, according to a report released Wednesday by Reporters Sans Frontieres.

The US is tied with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, South Africa, Spain, and Taiwan in the 36th spot.

Iceland, Luxembourg, and Norway are tied for first. Iran, China, Vietnam, Cuba, and North Korea are all featured among the ten lowest-ranked countries.

According to the survey, the index 'measures the state of press freedom in the world. It reflects the degree of freedom that journalists and news organizations enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by the authorities to respect and ensure respect for this freedom.'

---

## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**One Uncle Tom Backs Another:  
“Change Colin Powell Can Believe In  
Is Exactly The Kind Of Change We  
Should Fear”**

**“Get Ready For A Better, Smarter, More  
Competent U.S. Imperialism”**



**Powell is a man whose “don’t ask, don’t tell” method of whitewashing the My Lai massacre in Vietnam earned him the attention (and promotions) of his chain of command and his political superiors.**

October 21, 2008 BY Pham Binh, Prisonerofstarvation.blogspot.com

The news that Gen. Colin Powell, a card-carrying Republican and Bush's former Secretary of State has endorsed Obama is dominating the news, and rightly so. He is the latest and greatest example of Republican rats jumping ship as their party heads toward the bottom of the electoral ocean.

In endorsing "the One" (Oprah) or "that one" (McCain), Powell joins the ranks of Trotskyist-turned-neocon Christopher Hitchens and Christopher Buckley, son of William F. Buckley who founded the National Review and is the Godfather of neoconservative "thinking."

In his statement, Powell cited McCain's disgusting race-baiting, insinuations that Obama is a "secret Muslim" with links to terrorists, and his decision selection of Governor Know-Nothin'-and-Care-Less-Dawgawnit Palin.

Powell elaborated on his thinking in comments made during a press conference after his appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press":

*We have two wars. We have economic problems. We have health problems. We have education problems. We have infrastructure problems. We have problems around the world with our allies. So those are the problems the American people wanted to hear about, not about Mr. Ayers, not about who's a Muslim or who's not a Muslim. Those kinds of images going out on Al-Jazeera are killing us around the world.*

Powell's endorsement of Obama is not about "change we can believe in." It's about change that a Bush's left-hand man can live with.

He believes Obama at the helm can right the ship of American imperialism; he thinks that the ultra-partisan, nasty, dishonest, and racist politicking of the McCain campaign is "killing" the interests of the American empire around the world; he is worried that a McCain-Palin White House would vacillate from one ideologically-driven policy to another in wild, unpredictable, and counter-productive ways; and lastly, he is worried that a Supreme Court that marches in lockstep with the now-discredited Republican orthodoxy is dangerous for social stability.

**Powell is a man whose "don't ask, don't tell" method of whitewashing the My Lai massacre in Vietnam earned him the attention (and promotions) of his chain of command and his political superiors.**

**He played a key role in handing U.S. imperialism its first major military victory after Vietnam in the first Gulf War and codified its lessons in the "Powell Doctrine."**

**He spent his (undeserved) credibility with selling lies to the public about Iraq to justify a war for oil and empire.**

The above facts should give any pro-Obama progressive pause. If this lying, murderous SOB can endorse Obama, what kind of change will Obama actually bring?

**In whose interests will he govern?**

**Does anyone think Powell would endorse a candidate who would fight for universal health care, debt relief for working-people and homeowners, or an end to the war in Iraq?**

Make no mistake. In January, 2009 Washington will change. A black man will sit on the throne of an empire founded on slavery and genocide; the Democratic Party will enjoy a majority in both houses of Congress, and perhaps even a filibuster-proof super-majority; and the expectations of the rabble will be run high.

**Get ready for a better, smarter, more competent U.S. imperialism.**

**Get ready for a more thoughtful, more intelligent, and prudent president who will work night and day to protect Corporate America from its self-inflicted bankruptcy and ruin.**

**Get ready for a man who will come up with some great bullshit excuses about why what we want can't be done, whether that's pulling all the troops out of Iraq or winning universal health care, while Wall Street gets \$700 billion of free taxpayer money thanks to a bill whose passage Obama personally ensured.**

**Change Colin Powell can believe in is exactly the kind of change we should fear.**

---

## **Anti-War Protester Tries To Arrest Karl Rove For Treason**

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: Class war, almost successful.]

Oct. 22, 2008 AP

SAN FRANCISCO - An anti-war protester confronted former Bush administration aide Karl Rove while he spoke at a San Francisco mortgage bankers' meeting.

A statement by the group Code Pink identified the woman as 58-year-old Janine Boneparth, who tried to handcuff Rove in what she called a citizen's arrest for "treason."

While Rove, who was speaking Tuesday at the Mortgage Bankers Association's annual convention, elbowed Boneparth away as she was escorted off the stage, no one was injured and no arrests were made, The New York Times reported.

---

**CLASS WAR REPORTS**

**Exciting News Of Fresh Disasters:  
Impending Failure Of “Credit  
Derivative Product Companies”  
Using “Constant-Proportion Debt  
Obligations” [Whatever The Fuck  
They Are] To “Wreak Havoc On The  
Marketplace”  
[As If There Wasn’t “Havoc” Already?]**



OCTOBER 21, 2008 By NEIL SHAH, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

LONDON -- A recent rash of bank failures is wreaking havoc on a large but little-known corner of the credit markets, in a development that could mean more write-downs for banks and higher borrowing costs for companies everywhere.

Even as some lending markets begin to recover from last month's demise of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc., the securities firm's default -- together with those of other U.S. and European banks -- is causing new dislocations in the multitrillion-dollar market for complex investments known as synthetic collateralized debt obligations.

That could mean trouble for banks, hedge funds and insurance firms around the world, which used synthetic CDOs as a way to invest in diversified portfolios of companies without actually buying those companies' bonds.

Many synthetic CDOs contain a heavy dose of exposure to financial companies, including Lehman, U.S. thrift Washington Mutual Inc. and recently nationalized Icelandic banks Glitnir Bank hf, Kaupthing Bank hf and Landsbanki Islands hf.

As a result, the users of synthetic CDOs are facing a wave of credit-rating downgrades and outright losses, which are coming to light gradually as ratings firms pore over hundreds of individual synthetic-CDO deals.

In one early sign of the potential impact, Belgian bank KBC last week announced a €1.6 billion (\$2.15 billion) write-down on its €9 billion synthetic-CDO portfolio after Moody's Investors Service downgraded some of the deals it held.

Meanwhile, hedge funds and other investors are heading for the exits amid worries about how bad the losses and downgrades will be, causing the market value of synthetic CDOs to slide.

Dealers are offering about 50 cents on the dollar or less for some pieces of synthetic CDOs that used to be rated triple-A, according to one trader. That is down from about 60 cents on the dollar only three weeks ago.

"We've seen some hedge funds trying to get out of positions, and that's rattling credit markets," said Laurent Gueunier, head of structured corporate credit at AXA Investment Managers in Paris.

As opposed to regular CDOs, which contain actual bonds, synthetic CDOs provide income to investors by selling insurance against debt defaults, typically on a pool of a hundred or so companies or individual bonds. Given the size of the market, synthetic CDOs can have a large impact:

**By various estimates, they have sold insurance on the equivalent of between \$1.25 trillion and \$6 trillion in bonds.**

When investors attempt to get out of synthetic CDOs, they push up the cost of default insurance. That, in turn, raises the cost of borrowing for companies, which use the cost of default insurance as a guide when deciding what interest rate they must pay on new bonds.

As of Monday, the average cost of \$10 million in default insurance on highly rated North American companies stood at \$191,000 annually, up from \$128,500 at the end of September, according to the Markit CDX index. For European companies, the cost has risen to €144,000 from €121,000 to insure €10 million in debt, according to the Markit iTraxx index.



Ratings firms Standard & Poor's and Moody's have already downgraded several synthetic-CDO deals containing or related to Lehman, Washington Mutual and U.S. mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The problems with synthetic CDOs stem in part from the way they were made.

In many cases, the banks that created the CDOs stuffed them with companies, such as Lehman and Iceland's Glitnir, that paid the highest possible return for their top-notch credit ratings. That made the CDOs more attractive, but also riskier, because they contained companies that the market perceived as more likely to get into trouble.

Perhaps the weakest link in the market are specialized funds, known as "constant-proportion debt obligations," that work much like synthetic CDOs but with one important difference:

They use borrowed money, or leverage, to boost the returns they can provide for investors, a strategy that also magnifies losses.

**CPDOs, for example, typically borrowed about \$15 for every dollar their investors put in.**

**They also contain safety triggers that force them to get out of their investments if their losses reach a certain level.**

**Analysts estimate that most CPDOs reach those triggers when the cost of default insurance hits about the level where it is now.**

Three CPDO funds launched in 2006 by Dutch bank ABN Amro Holding NV have already been forced to liquidate after credit insurance costs spiked and they were downgraded by S&P.

**Other specialized funds, known as "credit derivative product companies," borrow as much as \$80 for every dollar invested, according to a recent report from Citigroup Inc.**

One prominent such fund -- Theta Corp., a \$10 billion fund run by London-based firm Gordian Knot -- had its credit rating slashed to Aa2 from AAA by Moody's earlier this month. Two other funds, Primus Financial Products and Athilon Capital Corp., have also had downgrades in recent weeks.

**If those funds are forced to exit from their investments, it "could wreak havoc on the marketplace," Citigroup analysts wrote in the report.**

---

**Capitalism At Work:**

# The Deadly Cost Of For-Profit Health Care:

## “The U.S. Recently Placed 29th In Infant Mortality, Out Of 37 Industrial Nations”

## “The U.S. Is 38th (Out Of 195) In Overall Life Expectancy”



U.S. RANKS 28<sup>th</sup> IN INFANT MORTALITY RATES AMONG INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS

October 23, 2008 By Rick Greenblatt, San Diego; Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

IF ANY more evidence is needed that the U.S. health care system is failing, consider this: The U.S. recently placed 29th in infant mortality, out of 37 industrial nations surveyed in a study released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The U.S. is behind Singapore (number one), Canada (number 24), Cuba (number 27), and tied with Poland and Slovakia.

Although absolute infant mortality rates have been declining, the U.S. has been falling behind relative to other countries for over 40 years. In 1960, it ranked 12th in the world, and in 1990, it ranked 23rd, according to the CDC report.

The CDC also notes that infant mortality among non-Hispanic Black women is 2.4 times higher than it is among non-Hispanic white women.

If non-Hispanic Black women were ranked as a nation of their own, they would come out next-to-last on the international list, only somewhat better than Romania.

Don't look for good news at the other end of the life cycle either. The U.S. is 38th (out of 195) in overall life expectancy according to the UN, in a virtual tie with Cuba, and behind the leader, Japan, by 4.4 years overall.

In order to attain these rather mediocre outcomes, the profit-based U.S. health care system requires an estimated 16 percent of the gross domestic product, (or about 20 percent of each household's budget), twice as much as countries like France, Germany or Canada, where overall health outcomes are superior to those in the U.S. Fifteen percent of the U.S. population, or about 45 million people, are without any medical coverage, and that figure is growing.

Much of the U.S. health care budget is wasted on non-productive advertising and administrative costs.

**According to a 2003 article in the New England Journal of Medicine, administration was estimated to consume 31 percent of U.S. health care expenditures.**

**This amounts to almost \$295 billion each year, or about \$1,000 per capita, about twice the per capita administrative costs in Canada.**

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

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

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

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

**GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .  
The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:  
<http://williamsbowles.info/gispecial/2008/index.html>;  
[http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/);  
<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>



GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: [www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml) for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

---

**If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.**