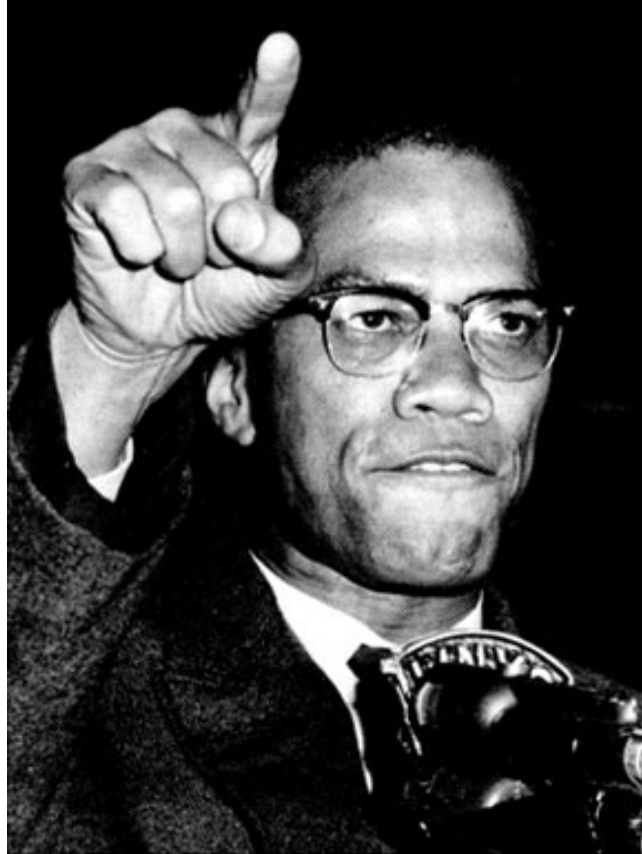


GI SPECIAL 6K8:



“You’ve been hoodwinked. You’ve been had. You’ve been took. You’ve been led astray, led amok. You’ve been bamboozled.”

**“The Democratic And
Republican Party
Republicrat National
Plantation Remains
Intact”**

“The Favorite Choice Of Wall Street, The Military Elite, And The Corporate Media (I.E. Barack Obama) Is To Be Installed As The First Colored President Of The U.S. Empire”

“The Avaricious Corporate Blood Suckers Of Wall Street And The U.S. Military Elite Are Still Very Much In Charge”

“Prepare For An Obama / Biden Smoke And Mirrors Show”

When all is said and done the “election” in the United States of America on November 4, 2008, will have fundamentally “changed” absolutely nothing except a different name and pigmentation in the White House.

Nov. 7, 2008 By Larry Pinkney, BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board, Black Commentator Issue 298

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board Member, Larry Pinkney, is a veteran of the Black Panther Party, the former Minister of Interior of the Republic of New Africa, a former political prisoner and the only American to have successfully self-authored his civil/political rights case to the United Nations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

As the polls closed in state after state throughout the United States, on November 4, 2008, it became crystal clear that the favorite choice of Wall Street, the military elite, and the corporate media (i.e. Barack Obama) is to be installed as the first colored President of the U.S. Empire.

Thanks to the overwhelming support of Obama by the corporate media, this came as absolutely no surprise.

The everyday people of the United States, caught up in the deadly strangulation and suffocation game of the Democratic and Republican Parties (i.e. the Republicrats), are once again the big losers.

The Democratic and Republican Party Republicrat national plantation remains intact; a genuine people's democracy remains but an illusion.

As I wrote in The Black Commentator column of October 30, 2008, titled, An Obama Presidency: More of the Same-Only Worse, "Assuming that the corporate Wall Street elite and its concomitant opinion-forming, omission, and misinformation machinery of the U.S. corporate media successfully installs their favorite choice – Democratic Party Republicrat Barack Obama - as the first President of color of the U.S. Empire, the majority of in the United States are in for a rude awakening in the form of increased economic austerity, internal political repression, deepened racial disharmony, external U.S. military adventurism, and an endless stream of misleading disinformation from the corporate government..."

While assorted pontificating pundits and commentators spew forth their endless and irrelevant platitudes of nothingness regarding the installment of Barack Obama as the next President of the U.S. Empire, our task is to seriously prepare for the intensified coming economic, political, and social conflicts which will surely be ushered in by the Obama / Biden regime.

Our youth will increasingly continue to be imprisoned and/or murdered by trigger happy policing.

More and more people will lose both their jobs and their homes.

U.S. military adventurism abroad will in fact continue and increase.

True universal / single-payer health care will remain a myth, and the greed of the corporate elite will abound unabated.

In a word, Black, Brown, Red, Yellow, and White peoples will continue to be used, abused, and emaciated.

When all is said and done the "election" in the United States of America on November 4, 2008, will have fundamentally "changed" absolutely nothing except a different name and pigmentation in the White House.

The avaricious corporate blood suckers of Wall Street and the U.S. military elite are still very much in charge.

Prepare for an Obama / Biden smoke and mirrors show.

MORE:

**“Empires Don’t Elect Presidents
They Select Emperors”
“If Barack Obama Were A Car, We
Would Bring This Fraud Back To
Those Who Sold It To Us”
“Obama Will Escalate The Massive
Crimes Against Humanity The U.S. And
NATO Have Already Been Committing In
Afghanistan For The Past Seven Years”**



PRNewsFoto: CBH Communications

November 10, 2008 The Cat's Dream [Excerpts]

Idolatry and hope.

Since the dawn of the time, we humans create gods to explain what we can't through reason and repose in them our hopes.

The imperial cult in ancient Rome was essentially a propaganda tool focused on leaders, a cult of personality. After the emperor's death, the apotheosis of the emperor would strengthen this cult.

Fast-forward two thousands years and we are assisting to the apotheosis of Barack Obama, even before he sits on the imperial throne; miracles of our Global Village's propaganda.

There is no doubt that a black man at the White House has a huge impact full of historical, political and emotional meanings.

The same would be true of course if Colin Powell or Condoleezza Rice had been elected.

But as someone wrote, "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons" - not the White House.

Barack Obama is young, handsome, charming and above all, he's cool; the perfect qualities for the modern cult of personality.

We shall never forget however, empires don't elect presidents they select emperors.

Corporate America - with its money and influence - has selected Barack Obama as next emperor of the US global empire.

The Obama Campaign got more than \$ 660 millions and money is generally accepted as a medium of exchange.

The corporate media have been joined by most of the progressive media in the celebrations of the new cult.

Conservative and liberal intellectuals have been echoed by most of the progressive voices in a depressing, terrifying show of uniformity and banality.

If before the elections it was "the lesser of two evils", now that the elections are over it would have been sensible and honest to focus on the second term of that slogan, "evil".

But those progressive intellectuals who promoted that slogan seem to have forgotten their own words (and their responsibility) and now are just pontificating about the "historic victory".

I have a dream.

Barack Obama will escalate the massive crimes against humanity the US and the NATO have already been committing in Afghanistan for the past seven years.

Pakistan will precipitate in complete chaos and possibly invaded.

The Palestinians will finally mourn the death of their dream. Just wars and humanitarian interventions will flourish with Human Rights Watch giving all the assistance needed...

“Under an Obama presidency those non Blacks who stand in opposition to Barack Obama’s de facto pro Wall Street backers and their blood-sucking policies will be branded as racists and traitors, while those Blacks who oppose Obama’s policies will be ignored and/or branded as fringe radicals and traitors,” wrote a few days ago BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board Member, Larry Pinkney

[Pinkney continues: “Thus, the horrors of the U.S. Empire will continue unabated, and in many respects, under Barack Obama, actually worsen. The blame for the deteriorating economy and continued war will of course quickly be laid by the Obama / Biden regime and the Democratic Party Republicrats on the previous Bush / Cheney regime, despite the fact that it was the complicity of the Democratic Party itself with the Bush / Cheney Republican Republicrat regime that facilitated the despicable policies and practices of the Bush / Cheney regime.

[“The fact is that the Democratic and Republican Parties are de facto Republicrats with the objective of exploiting the majority of people and maintaining U.S. Empire abroad.” BlackCommentator.com; October 30, 2008, Issue 297]

Surfing some progressive, alternative websites these days, it would seem that Martin Luther King Jr. or William Edward Burghardt Du Bois or Malcolm X has become the new US president. Someone even drew parallels with the election of Nelson Mandela as president of South Africa.

The Obama mania is a collective madness induced by Corporate America, which was able to exploit our honest thirst for change, peace and social justice.

Optimism is a warm feeling but can make us blind.

P.S. A few days ago Barack Obama apologised to Nancy Reagan:

“President-elect Barack Obama called Nancy Reagan today to apologize for the careless and off-handed remark he made during today’s press conference. The President-elect expressed his admiration and affection for Mrs Reagan that so many Americans share and they had a warm conversation.” [8 November 2008 BBC]

What a sweet picture, as American as apple pie.

Maybe someone among the many Obama’s Boys & Girls could remind Barack - as they call him - that more than a million Iraqis have been slaughtered by the US war machine and that country completely annihilated.

Maybe he could find the time to apologize to the survivors and provide some justice and reparation...

After all, he’s been the candidate against the war, right?

Wrong!

(From: What Do They Have to Do to Lose Your Vote?, The Trail of Broken Promises, By MATT GONZALEZ:)

And he has vowed to keep soldiers in Iraq to fight counterterrorism. John Podesta, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton who now leads the Center for American Progress, estimated this would take a 60,000 troop presence to achieve.

Moreover Obama “will not ‘rule out’ using private security companies like Blackwater Worldwide in Iraq” according to Democracy Now! correspondent Jeremy Scahill. And Obama did not plan on signing on to legislation that seeks to ban the use of such forces by the U.S. government by January 2009, according to one of his senior foreign policy advisors. (Democracy Now! 2/28/08).

(This is one promise Obama unfortunately has kept, refusing to sign onto the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont).

In an interview with Amy Goodman, Sen. Obama stated his intention of leaving 140,000 private contractors in Iraq because “we don’t have the troops to replace them.”

Even concerning a possible timetable to withdraw troops from Iraq, Obama has diminished his promises.

He now is committing only to “reducing the number of combat troops within 16 months,” presumably to “bolster efforts in Afghanistan so that we can capture and kill bin Laden and crush al Qaeda.” (Obama/McCain debate, 9/26/08).

If Barack Obama were a car, we would bring this fraud back to those who sold it to us.

MORE:

An Open Letter From GI Special To President Elect Obama --- Not!

Yeah, that’s right. No letter here. None. Zip. Zero.

Because the new Emperor doesn’t give a big dead horse’s dick what anybody has to say that isn’t a Very Important/Very Wealthy/Very Powerful person, and thinking otherwise is either a symptom of delusional fantasy, or an exercise in absurd grandiosity.

Besides, why add to the clutter?

There have already been a flood of Open Letters To Obama about how he should do this, or that, or the other thing, written and shipped out anywhere and everywhere by the assorted organizations that campaigned to elect the incoming master of Imperial War. As if he gives a shit.

As if anybody with real power in the new regime is paying the slightest bit of attention to all their pretentious gaseous diffusion. Their usefulness is over. His staff will shuck and jive them off.

Can you imagine Frederick Douglas writing An Open Letter To Jefferson Davis, President, Confederate States Of America? Or Tom Paine writing An Open Letter To King George III? Or maybe Malcolm X writing An Open Letter To The Knights Of The Ku Klux Klan?

They knew better.

They knew which side they were on, who the enemy was, and never forgot it.

Each and every politician for killing more U.S. troops in Iraq or Afghanistan is the enemy.

Unless you favor killing more U.S. troops, more Iraqis, and more Afghans, that is.

Not another dollar.

Not another day.

Not another life.

Nothing less, ever.

What else are we here for?

T

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Three U.S. Troops Seriously Wounded By Mullayah House Bomb

November 11, 2008 By Heath Druzin, Stars and Stripes

BAQOUBA, Iraq — Three soldiers were seriously injured when a booby-trapped house exploded Sunday in Diyala province, military officials said.

All were flown to Balad for treatment and were listed in stable condition Monday.

The soldiers were on patrol in the town of Mullayah northeast of Baghdad when a house they were entering blew up. Names of the soldiers, who are part of the 1st Stryker

Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, are being withheld pending notification of their families.

“Everybody knows each other here, so it’s been a tough day,” said 1st Lt. Jeff Chase, who is part of the unit.

Monday’s bombing was the second tragic event of the brigade’s Iraq tour, which began late September. Two soldiers were killed Oct. 16 when rockets slammed into Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Baqouba.

**GUESS WHO’S WORRIED
GUESS WHO ISN’T
GUESS WHY
ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers patrol Baqouba, in Diyala province, October 29, 2008. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

**Mosul:
“If I Knew Of Any Insurgents In Our
Neighborhood, I Wouldn’t Tell You. We
Need To Stay Safe”**

11.11.08 By DENIS D. GRAY, Associated Press Writer

It's not a pretty sight: Sagging skeletons of two- and three-story buildings under a threatening gray sky. Abandoned shops with corrugated iron fronts riddled by bullet holes. And amid the garbage heaps and pools of fetid rainwater, a roadside bomb set to explode.

Five years after the U.S.-led invasion and following a significant drop in violence nationwide over the past year, the battle for Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, still waxes and wanes.

"This is our hottest area," says Sgt. 1st Class Ron Corella, a decorated combat veteran in this war-scarred quarter of the ancient city where moments before his troops spotted - and disarmed - that roadside bomb.

Lt. Col. Robert Molinari, executive officer of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, says Mosul "looks like Baghdad about 18 months ago" at the height of violence in the Iraqi capital.

In the city's version of the Baghdad surge, 22,000 U.S. forces and Iraqi troops and police have spread out in an operation called "Mother of Two Springs" - taken from an Arab nickname for Mosul - that began in May and went into a new phase Oct. 15.

Armored vehicles snake through mile-long lines of traffic, backed up behind checkpoints. Soldiers man sandbagged positions atop houses and mosques. Iraqi and U.S. troops stage patrols around the clock from some 40 makeshift bases in the city of 1.8 million people.

U.S. and Iraqi commanders cite some progress after months of struggling to root out insurgents in street-by-street battles.

Attacks, they say, are down to fewer than 70 a week, compared to about 130 before May.

The core of the insurgency is in the Ottoman Empire-era old town and nearby western Mosul - densely populated areas, interlaced by narrow alleys stacked with cheek-by-jowl houses and burrowed under with tunnels and caverns.

This is where Corella charged an insurgent machine-gunner to earn a Bronze Star for valor, and where six soldiers were wounded in a recent roadside blast.

After an attack, he says, the insurgents slip into alleys too narrow for military vehicles. Within this enclave of eight square miles (20 square kilometers) are Mosul's wholesale and retail markets, magnets for extortion, smuggling and business serving as cover for insurgents.

Last November, when the American regiment arrived, the city's western half was "entirely enemy territory," with other areas not much better, says Maj. John Oliver, operations officer of the regiment's 3rd Squadron.

U.S. and Iraqi forces then froze all commerce, secured the main arteries and fought their way into insurgent strongholds. A dramatic drop in attacks followed. But after midsummer, the violence began to pick up.

“Security was good, but reconstruction and political reconciliation did not happen, the money didn’t come from Baghdad,” says Oliver, of Fontana, Calif. “After two and a half months of people holding their breath and waiting, they said, ‘I’ve got to feed my family, so I’m going to take the money and start planting IEDs (roadside bombs) again.’”

How long the military surge will last here has not been announced.

Reflecting the Iraqi lack of faith in the authorities, Yasim tells a U.S. patrol: “If I knew of any insurgents in our neighborhood, I wouldn’t tell you. We need to stay safe.”

Iraqi commanders differ about how long it will take to pacify Mosul. Some say months, others years - depending on several variables.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Adraskan IED Kills Security Chief

11 November 2008 Quqnoos

A ROADSIDE bomb blast in the western province of Herat has killed four people, including the province’s security chief and the head of the attorney-general’s office.

Head of the province’s police force, Ghulam Sarwar Haidari, said the explosion happened at 2pm on Monday in the province’s Adraskan district.

Resistance Attacks Supply Convoy For Afghan Occupation Forces: Fighters Pose For Photos Beside Captured Humvees

November 11, 2008 Ibrahim Shinwari, Reuters

Pakistani Taliban militants captured 13 trucks without firing a shot as they passed through the Khyber Pass on Monday. They later posed for photographs in front of two Humvee military vehicles and some of the trucks.

The convoy was taking supplies to Western forces in Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass, a government official said on Tuesday.

Most supplies, including fuel, for U.S. and other Western forces battling a Taliban insurgency in landlocked Afghanistan are trucked through neighbouring Pakistan, which is also facing growing militant violence.

Officials said the trucks were carrying two Humvees and wheat but no weapons or ammunition. The militants released three of the 13 trucks and their drivers after unloading the wheat, Bangash said.

Officials said the militants who seized the trucks were loyal to Pakistani Taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud, who is based in the Waziristan region to the southwest of Khyber.

The militants posed for photographs with a banner over one of the Humvees proclaiming their membership of Mehsud's group.

About two dozen trucks and oil-tankers have been attacked in the past month.

Torkham, at the top of the Khyber Pass, is one of only two main crossing points on the Afghan-Pakistani border. The other is at the town of Chaman, to the southwest, from where a road runs to the southern Afghan city of Kandahar.

Many goods for Western forces in Afghanistan are shipped into the Pakistani port of Karachi and trucked through one of the two crossing points. **[And some days, not "trucked through."]**

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

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

German Government Refuses Troops For Southern Afghanistan: "The German Public Is Strongly Opposed To The Mission"

November 11, 2008 AFP

BERLIN - Germany's defence minister said Tuesday that Berlin would resist any US pressure to send troops to the strife-wracked south of Afghanistan, keeping its focus on the calmer north of the country.

"It remains the case that our task is to stabilise the north. And this will also be the case in future," Franz Josef Jung said in an interview on ARD public television.

Germany has about 3,300 soldiers in Afghanistan as part of a 50,000-strong NATO deployment helping the Afghan government assert its authority.

However, the German public is strongly opposed to the mission and the issue is set to be a hot topic of debate ahead of a general election next September.

In addition, many German observers suspect that U.S. president-elect Barack Obama will call on Berlin to beef up its military presence in Afghanistan.

In a speech to 200,000 people in Berlin in July, Obama said Europe must live up to its side of the bargain if it wanted stronger transatlantic ties, and pointedly asked for more help in the fight.

TROOP NEWS



"Damn fine road, men!"

By Bill Mauldin, Up Front, 1945 W.W. Norton & Co., New York
[Thanks to "Comrade Tribune," Vietnam Veteran, who sent this in.]

“We, Veterans Of The Global War On Terror, Have Chosen To Refuse Orders To Reactivate Into Military Service”

“By Refusing Activation, We Are Refusing To Participate In Wars That Serve The Purposes Of Furthering The Careers Of Politicians And High-Ranking Officers”

“We Believe That Veterans And Active-Duty GIs Are In A Key Position To Stop Illegal And Unjust War

“We Are Inspired By The Resistance Of Troops Who Stood Against The War In Vietnam”



[Thanks to a whole lot of people who sent this in.]

November 11, 2008 By Benjamin Lewis and Brandon Neely, AlterNet

Benjamin Lewis, former Marine Corps mortarman, Iraq veteran, IRR recall resister, peace activist

Brandon Neely, former U.S. Army Military police officer, Iraq veteran, IRR recall refuser

On this day, Veterans Day, we would like to express to the American public why we, veterans of the Global War on Terror, have chosen to refuse orders to reactivate into military service.

We are direct witnesses to the horrors of this war, having experienced its atrocities at their source, and we have decided that we can no longer carry out these illegal and immoral policies.

We believe that veterans and active-duty GIs are in a key position to stop illegal and unjust war, and we are inspired by the resistance of troops who stood against the war in Vietnam.

One of the preeminent reasons for the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was increasing dissent among the active-duty troops stationed abroad and at home. By the end of the war, there were entire units refusing to participate in combat, many going as far as outright mutiny.

The United States learned a lesson from the Vietnam War: that it is unlikely, except in the event of self-defense, that regular civilians will execute the life-threatening orders that are given to them by military authority. The solution of policy makers was to create an all-volunteer force that negated the need for a draft. This translates into a mercenary force composed of America's disadvantaged: a sector of the U.S. demographic that is particularly susceptible to military recruitment for lack of other options and finding themselves with deployment orders again and again.

To compensate for huge pitfalls in recruitment since the invasion of Iraq, the military has resorted to recalling former service members.

This policy is known as "involuntary activation" and utilizes deactivated service members who still have time on their contracts in the Individual Ready Reserves (IRR) to fill shortcomings in specific job specialties.

The abuse and misuse of this policy has escalated under the current administration to such a degree that it can now only be viewed as a "backdoor draft" that targets the same disadvantaged individuals the military sought out for enlistment, namely because they are better at not questioning orders.

However, we have now begun to question these orders.

We are veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and members of the IRR who have refused or will refuse any activation orders that would lead to us serving an unjust and imperial U.S. foreign policy.

It is a prevailing notion that this refusal is unpatriotic, but we consider our actions the only choice.

Not only did the U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan do great harm to the people of those countries, but it undermined the ostensible goal with which the wars were begun: Instead of stopping terrorism, it has proliferated terrorism, an expectation that was predicted well before the war started.

By refusing activation, we are refusing to participate in wars that serve the purposes of furthering the careers of politicians and high-ranking officers.

We openly support other IRR members who follow in these footsteps.

The military is a force that rules through fear of retribution for disobeying its will.

In reality, more than a third of IRRs simply refuse to report to duty.

Most of the rest report out of fear that the military will change their discharge status or prosecute them for desertion, but up to this point, prosecution has been rare.

Members of the IRR are not under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), and thus far, the military has had a practice of not prosecuting them with criminal charges unless they report in some form or function to activate.

Very few willingly volunteer for activation.

There can be no promise that President-Elect Barack Obama will stop the stressful and unfair techniques of back-to-back deployments, “stop-loss” or the “backdoor draft” that are damaging the psychology of veterans in irreparable ways.

Nor that he will stop encouraging global violence by unlawful uses of force.

It is in this vein that we turn to organizations like Courage to Resist, Iraq Veterans Against the War and many other large-scale and grassroots organizations to solicit change in a largely unrepresentative democracy, and to allow the voices of the people to ring through the halls of the Capital.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

[VETERANS DAY: #1]

Trickle Down War

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: November 11, 2008
Subject: Trickle Down War by Dennis

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

Trickle Down War

**The intravenous drip drops
into the Soldier's arm
like the Soldiers wounded
and dying
in Iraq and Afghanistan
slow aggravating deaths
four thousand one hundred
and ninety two
while the collapse
of the American Empire
one Soldier killed here
two Soldiers killed there
drip drop
slide another clip into
your gun so everybody
comes home alive but
the nurse feels his wrist
trying to find a pulse
but there is none and he
is all alone beyond his last
breath and then she pulls**

the IV out so it no longer
has to drip and the number
silently is four thousand
one hundred and ninety
three
always going up into
an airplane leaving Iraq
or Afghanistan
landing gear down into
the USA few skips
upon the concrete home
again as the TV News says
another Michigan man
died today drip as he returns
home on Veteran's Day drop
the Stores all have Veteran's
Day Sales no payments until
two thousand and eleven
because it's all about
the money in depression
days as the intravenous drips
in another Soldier's arm
on Veteran's Day.

[VETERANS DAY: #2]

**“Men From Both Sides Of No-Man's-
Land Wearily Climbed Out Of Their
Rat-Infested Trenches To Stare In
Bewilderment At Their Enemies Who
Looked, And Felt, Exactly As They
Did”**

From: Clancy Sigal
To: GI Special
Sent: November 10, 2008

VETERANS DAY by Clancy Sigel

Veterans' Day was called Armistice Day when I was a boy.

It honored the end of shooting in the First World War – precisely at the 11th minute of the 11th hour on November 11th, 1918. It was a day for mixed emotions...of pride, sadness and some bitterness.

Because so many men were blown to bits in the muddy trenches of the western front, there's no reliable count of casualties. Of the sixty million men mobilized, over half were killed, wounded, missing or taken prisoner. The world had never seen slaughter on this scale.

But I was in love with the idea of heroic combat. I made a wooden rifle out of an orange crate and stuck a toy rubber knife on the end as a bayonet. Battles like Meuse-Argonne and Passchendaele, that were butchering grounds for a whole generation of young men, were sacred names to me.

And always, at 11 minutes past eleven o' clock in the morning on November 11th, I stood at attention. Everything in Chicago seemed to stop dead. Policemen halted traffic and saluted. Streetcars screeched to a sudden stop. Pedestrians froze with hands over their hearts. Across the street from my house, the bells at St Agatha's church tolled mournfully, and for the next two minutes, all was silence in the city, as if the earth stood still.

In the 1930s, my Chicago neighborhood was full of World War One veterans. A few had amputated limbs. Some were still shellshocked and needed help in crossing the street.

One afternoon I poked my nose into the back room of the barbershop next door where my dad was playing pinochle with some pals. Some of them like Mr Ginsburg the barber, Manny the bookie and Mr Rosen the drug store owner had been 'doughboys' – American soldiers. But Mr Klein, the tailor, was German. Before he came to America, he'd been one of the Kaiser's spike-helmeted soldiers. And Mr Stuponsky, who strolled the neighborhood twirling a goldknobbed cane, had been an Austrian cavalry officer, another enemy. My dad had been a conscientious objector, and was denied United States citizenship for that reason.

Yet here they were, all playing cards around the same table, joking and wisecracking. How could this be?

That pinochle game upset my view of the moral universe. After all, Mr Klein might have been a sniper aiming at Manny the bookie from the German lines. And I could easily imagine Mr. Stuponsky waving his sabre while charging American soldiers at the Second Battle of the Marne.

Many years, and a few more wars later, I'm a veteran myself. It's easier for me to understand that men who've been in combat...even on opposite sides ...have a special bond.

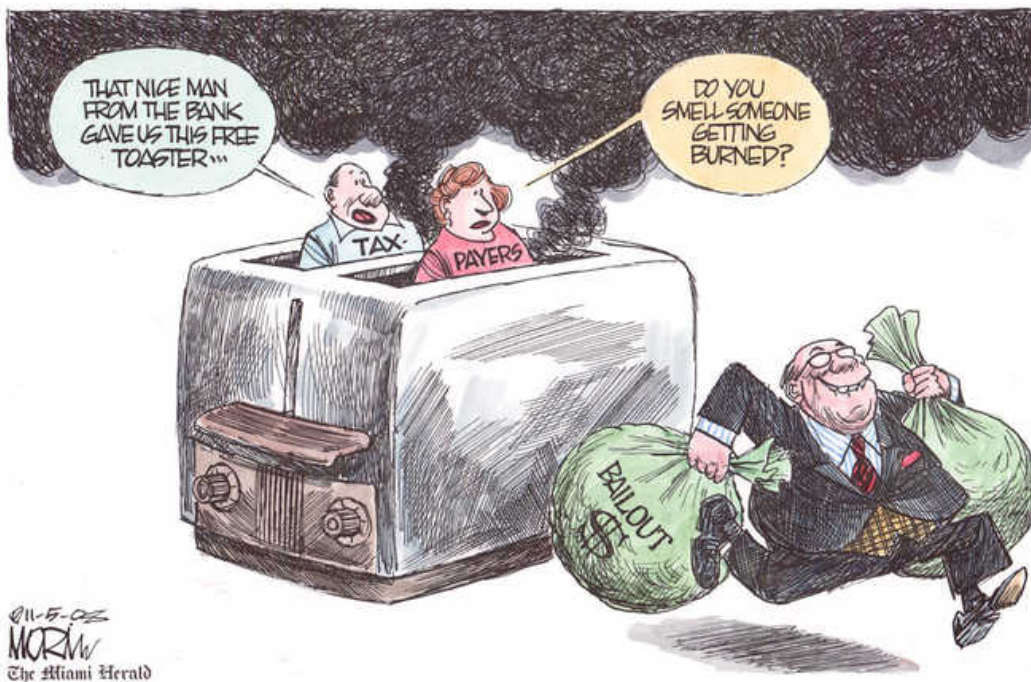
So on this Veterans Day, I think even further back than that pinochle game in the barber shop.

Back, to the cold bright November day, when the big cannons and Gatling guns fell eerily silent, and dazed men from both sides of no-man's-land wearily climbed out of their rat-infested trenches to stare in bewilderment at their enemies who looked, and felt, exactly as they did.

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: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**Obama Campaign Proudly Quoted
Neo-Con Leader Praising Him:**

“If That’s Obama’s Idea Of Change We Can Believe In, I Believe We Just Rejected Johnny McDitto And Voted In Sam O’Same-O”

November 04, 2008 by Commander Jeff Huber, U.S. Navy (Retired),
Zenhuber.blogspot.com [Excerpts].

If you know neither your enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.
Sun Tzu

In an April 2007 Washington Post column, Robert Kagan wrote that, “Obama wants to increase defense spending. He wants to add 65,000 troops to the Army and recruit 27,000 more Marines. Why? To fight terrorism.”

[In case you disremember, Kagan invented the Iraq “surge” and sold the Bush regime on his little project.]

Kagan went on to directly quote Obama, writing, “He wants the American military to ‘stay on the offense, from Djibouti to Kandahar,’ and he believes that ‘the ability to put boots on the ground will be critical in eliminating the shadowy terrorist networks we now face.’

“He wants to ensure that we continue to have ‘the strongest, best-equipped military in the world.’”

“Obama never once says that military force should be used only as a last resort,” Kagan gloated.

“Rather, he insists that ‘no president should ever hesitate to use force -- unilaterally if necessary,’ not only ‘to protect ourselves . . . when we are attacked,’ but also to protect ‘our vital interests’ when they are ‘imminently threatened.’ That’s known as preemptive military action.”

“This is a left-liberal foreign policy?” Kagan taunted.

“Ask Noam Chomsky the next time you see him.”

Come election time, Obama might have stiff-armed jibes made by a leading neocon over a year and a half before, but he did just the opposite.

When the Republican National Committee ran a deceptive ad in the military-centric Norfolk, Virginia market accusing Obama of planning to cut defense spending by 25 percent, Obama shot back with an ad that quoted the 2007 Kagan article, bringing specific attention to Kagan’s observation that Obama wants to expand the military to “fight terrorism.”

If that's Obama's idea of change we can believe in, I believe we just rejected Johnny McDitto and voted in Sam O'Same-o.

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Police Torture On Trial:
“It Was Common Knowledge For
Years That Jon Burge Oversaw A
Torture Ring In Chicago Police
Stations”**

**“These Torture Confessions Were Used
To Secure Wrongful Convictions Of Men
Who Were Sentenced To Long Prison
Terms, Natural Life Without Parole And
Even Death--Like I Was”**



Stanley Howard

**We live in a society that looks the other way when scores of Black men are
tortured into giving false and coerced confessions, and the government and**

courts refuse to overturn their convictions once the truth is revealed. I can guarantee that if all of the torture victims were white, and the torturers were Black cops, the national media and public official would have never stopped working until justice prevailed.

November 11, 2008 By Stanley Howard [Military Project]; Socialist Worker

Stanley Howard is a former Illinois death row prisoner who was exonerated and pardoned by former Gov. George Ryan in 2003.

He was a victim of police torture carried out by Chicago police, and from behind bars, he formed the Death Row 10 with other victims of torture.

Though still imprisoned unjustly, Stanley works with the Campaign to End the Death Penalty and writes regularly for its newsletter, the New Abolitionist. You can write to him at: Stanley Howard N-71620, 2600 N. Brinton Ave., Dixon, IL 61021.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH! Former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge was finally indicted and arrested.

It's about time someone had the courage to stand up and take action against this racist maniac.

I should be happy about this historic event, but I'm not, because my happiness is overshadowed by much disappointment.

I'm disappointed that he wasn't charged with the more serious crimes of heinous battery, aggravated assault and battery, hate crimes, conspiracy and other related charges.

He is only charged with perjury and obstruction of justice "because the time to bring (torture-related charges) has long expired," according to U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald. "We will try to prove that Burge and other officers tortured suspects, and he lied about it in 2003 during sworn depositions."

Burge and officers working under him (all of whom are white) psychologically and physically tortured over 150 Black suspects for over a 20-year period to obtain false and coerced confessions.

These torture confessions were used to secure wrongful convictions of men who were sentenced to long prison terms, natural life without parole and even death--like I was.

Many of these men are still incarcerated.

I'm disappointed because county, state and federal officials had many opportunities to charge Burge, but choose to either look away or help to cover up his crimes.

He should have been charged in 1982 after Dr. John Raba, head of medical services at Cook County Jail, wrote to Police Superintendent Richard Brzeczek, informing him of accused cop killer Andrew Wilson's claims of being tortured by cops.

Wilson claimed that he received burns from being tied to a radiator, his face was swollen from being beaten and kicked, and he received electric shocks on many parts of his body from what he described as a "black box." Dr. Raba said that Wilson had injuries which supported these claims, and he requested an investigation.

Instead of investigating, however, Brzeczek sent a copy of Raba's letter to then-Cook County State's Attorney Richard M. Daley. Daley and his top subordinate, Richard Devine decided not to take action against Burge or even respond to Brzeczek's letter.

Realizing that top police brass and the state's attorney's office were not going to take action against him, Burge and his men continued torturing suspects with impunity.

So much so that over 55 men were tortured while Daley looked the other way and used the torture confessions to obtain convictions and death sentences.

I'M DISAPPOINTED because he should have been charged in April 1987 after Illinois' highest court threw out Wilson's conviction and death sentence. The court stated that Wilson received many injuries while in police custody, and therefore, the lower court should have thrown out his confession.

He should have been charged after my mother and a host of others testified before the city council in October 1989 and on Christmas Eve 1990, or after Amnesty International issued its first of many reports in January 1991 calling for a full investigation.

He should have been charged in 1991 after the Office of Professional Standards, the office assigned to investigate such abuses, found that from 1973 to 1985, there was a practice of systematic abuse of suspects by men under Burge, including "psychological techniques and planned torture, and that certain command personnel were aware of the abuse and encouraged it either by actively participating in it, or by failing to take any action to stop it."

Instead of taking action, Daley, who became the mayor of Chicago in 1989, city attorneys and police officials fought hard to suppress the report, though it was ordered released by a federal judge in February 1992.

After much publicity and public pressure, the city fired Burge in 1993 and admitted in open court that Burge had, in fact, "savagely and sadistically" tortured suspects.

The city had thrown Burge under the bus, and everyone, especially those of us who were on death row, was excited and hopeful of obtaining new trials without the torture confessions.

We believed it would have been impossible for the state to continue their diabolical assertions that the confessions were given voluntarily.

The scandal had grown so large that some of the most powerful officials in the city, county and state were involved in one way or another--looking the other way or covering it up.

I BEGAN organizing the torture victims who were sent to death row, and I named us the "Death Row 10."

With the help of our families, friends and the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, we began holding protests, rallies and demonstrations in front of police headquarters, the criminal court building, City Hall, the state's attorney's office and the State of Illinois building to draw attention to our collective demands for new trials without the confessions.

"It is now common knowledge that, in the early to mid-1980s, Jon Burge and many officers working under him regularly engaged in the physical abuse and torture of prisoners to extract confessions," said U.S. District Court Judge Milton Shadur.

"Both internal police accounts and numerous lawsuits and appeals brought by suspects alleging such abuse substantiate that those beatings and other means of torture occurred as an established practice, not just on an isolated basis."

By the time Judge Shadur made that statement in 1999, the number of torture victims had ballooned to over 150 suspects, and Richard Devine, now the Cook County State's Attorney--like Daley and all the other state's attorneys before him--used his position to unequivocally oppose relief for torture victims.

Here, we had a federal judge saying that U.S. citizens were tortured and some of them were on Illinois' death row--and no one did anything.

Even in January 2003, when then-Gov. George Ryan told the world about Burge and the torture scandal before pardoning four members of the Death Row 10, no one did anything. Instead of prosecuting Burge and those involved, Devine called the pardons "outrageous" and "unconscionable," and threatened to challenge them in court.

I cannot be happy about Burge's arrest when the county spent \$7 million on a special prosecutor that refused to charge him--a special prosecutor with strong political ties and connections to those involved in the scandal.

I cannot be happy about Burge's arrest when the special prosecutor, Attorney General Lisa Madigan, who was appointed to take Devine's place over the torture cases because of Devine's conflict of interest, has done nothing to give the torture victims relief since her 2002 appointment.

It was heartbreaking to hear public officials and the national media talk about the torture at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay, but not utter one word about the largest police torture scandal in U.S. history.

We live in a society that looks the other way when scores of Black men are tortured into giving false and coerced confessions, and the government and courts refuse to overturn their convictions once the truth is revealed.

I can guarantee that if all of the torture victims were white, and the torturers were Black cops, the national media and public official would have never stopped working until justice prevailed.

I agree with U.S. Attorney Fitzgerald--charging Burge with something is better than not charging him at all. Yeah, yeah, yeah!

Burge was arrested.

But over 20 torture victims remain incarcerated.

How can I be happy?

**NEED SOME TRUTH?
CHECK OUT 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/)

RECEIVED

“Drugging Soldiers”

From: Johanna Pettit
To: GI Special
Sent: November 11, 2008
Subject: Drugging Soldiers

The government is at one with the drug companies.

So, they pile the drugs on the soldiers.

They want the soldiers to blame themselves.

If they figured it all out they would do what the Iraq Vets are doing. Not good for the government.

Same with the money problems: it is our fault not that the interest rates are so high that you can't pay them back. It is a mess and I hope someone can solve it.

The truth will make you free even if it hurts going down.

It's the only way to go.



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