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

The Great Depression Bail Out

From: Dennis Serdel
 To: GI Special
 Sent: December 02, 2008
 Subject: The Great Depression Bail Out 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

The Great Depression Bail Out

Congress:

OK 4 Star Death General, please tell us exactly why you need another 163 Billion dollars for the War ?

4 Star Death Generals:

Well um, we are making progress...

Congress:

Excuse me General, if I remember the last time you needed Billions more and the time before that, you said you were making progress but you needed Billions more and on and on.

4 Star Death Generals:

OK Sir, that's true but..

Congress:

But What? We gave you Billions for your Surge and afterwards, you said our Soldiers could waltz though the streets of Baghdad singing Zip-A-Dee Doo Dah without their weapons so we won the War, does it take that many Billions more to fly them back home?

4 Star Death Generals:

OK Sir, but we didn't exactly win the War, many of the enemy went into hiding while some of the Surge Billions we paid different enemy groups not to shoot or IED us.

Congress:

Look Generals, we also think that you could of flown to Washington on a cheap airline instead of on an Air Force jet.

4 Star Death Generals:

Yes Sir, but then we would of had to pay for our baggage and martinis.

Congress:

Now listen hard Generals, before we give you any more Billions, you are going to have to show us your plan to win the War or we will let you go bankrupt.

4 Star Generals:

But Sir, if we go bankrupt, then we can't pay the Troops.

Congress:

Don't pull that on us again Generals, that's old propaganda that you have used before for years. The Troops will get paid but you incompetent Generals, Officers, DOD and Pentagon will go Bankrupt unless you come back with a plan to win the War.

4 Star Death Generals:

We understand Sir, but...

Congress:

But what? Do you seriously think that we are going to rubber stamp Billions for you like we do for the Banks and Mortgage Companies that do not have a plan ?

4 Star Death Generals:

Yes Sir, but we invaded without a plan, we are fighting without a plan and we have no idea or plans to win the War. After spending Trillions on the War, a few more Billions don't amount to nothing.

Congress:

Look, on the Home Front, businesses are going bankrupt, blue collar workers are being fired everyday. US Citizens are losing their homes, their cars and trucks, Credit Cards are not being paid, the Country is going bankrupt and even the mighty General Motors wants 25 Billion.

4 Star Death Generals:

I hope they are not blaming us.

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

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed By Mosul Car Bomb

Dec 4 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press Writers & Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

A car bomber killed two U.S. Two Multi-National Division - North Soldiers near a checkpoint in the northern city of Mosul, the U.S. military said.

U.S. General In Command Of Mosul Area Occupation Says Status Of Forces Agreement Don't Mean Jack Shit:

“It Won't Affect How We Do Business”

No Permission Needed From Iraqis To Keep The War Going; They Will Be “Notified” Of War Operations; “We'll Just Have To Polish The Diamond A Little Bit On That One”

November 30, 2008 WOLF BLITZER, CNN

Interview With Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling [Excerpts]

BLITZER: The Iraqi parliament approved a security agreement ending U.S. troop presence in Iraq by 2011. It also includes major changes in the way the U.S. military would operate in Iraq.

Major General Mark Hertling is the U.S. military commander of the Multinational Division in northern Iraq.

He's joining us from Tikrit right now.

General Hertling, thanks very much for coming in.

Not only are all U.S. troops supposed to be out of Iraq according to this agreement, the status of force agreement as it's called by the end of 2011, but by the end of next June, all U.S. combat forces out of all the cities and towns of Iraq, including Tikrit, the home town of Saddam Hussein where you are right now. Is this realistic?

What happens when U.S. forces leave these towns and cities?

HERTLING: Well, first of all, Wolf, the status of forces agreement was really a historic moment for Iraq.

It established Iraq as a sovereign nation and part of that is having U.S. forces here at the invitation of the Iraqi government to help them improve their security, further improve their security and stability.

In terms of us moving out of the cities, we're not in the city of Tikrit, rather.

We're outside of the city now and we're partnering with the Iraqi forces as we have been doing for the whole 15 months we've been here.

I've had conversations already with all of our Iraqi division commanders.

They understand what the SOFA is about and they understand that we'll continue to conduct combined operations with maybe some twists over the next several months and my replacement is talking to them about that right now, as well.

HERTLING: But I think we'll continue to conduct combined operations with the Iraqi army and there will be some changes, but it won't affect how we do business.

BLITZER: Are you saying that U.S. troops will continue to operate for example within Mosul in the northern part of Iraq. It has been a rather tense part of the country.

HERTLING: It has been a tense part of the country. We will continue to operate there with our Iraqi brothers, but there will be some additional requirements for us to coordinate operations with the government of Nineveh Province, where Mosul is. That's what the SOFA determines.

Wolf, we will be having to give much more information in terms about what we're doing. But, frankly, Wolf, we have been doing that for several months already. We have been practicing for the SOFA.

We have been preparing for it and I think what you see about 90 percent of our operations currently are with the Iraqi army or the Iraqi police, so, some of that notification is already being given.

We'll just have to polish the diamond a little bit on that one.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



A U.S. soldier stands guard near a crater at the site of bomb attacks at a police academy in eastern Baghdad December 1, 2008. (Thaier al-Sudani/Reuters)

U.S. MQ-1 Down At Balad AFB

Dec 4 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press Writers

An unmanned U.S. surveillance plane crashed on the runway at the Balad Air Base, 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Baghdad, according to a statement by the U.S. Air Force.

It said the MQ-1 Predator assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing crashed about 7:30 a.m. Thursday, but the extent of the damage was unknown.

**FIVE YEARS AND \$50 BILLION
LATER, U.S. TRAINED IRAQI
SOLDIERS IN ACTION
Care To Speculate About Which Side
They're On?**

December 2, 2008 By Gary Marx, Chicago Tribune correspondent

MUHALLADIYA, Iraq — At this dusty combat outpost 4 miles west of Mosul, Iraqi soldiers complain that they haven't been paid in four months, even though the nation's coffers are bulging with tens of billions of petro-dollars.

Stationed along a key highway used by insurgents, the soldiers live in old shipping containers without water or electricity. Their only furniture is a few mattresses flung on the floor.

"In the winter it's very cold, and in the summer it's boiling," said Ibrahim Hassan, 36, who shared a container with four other soldiers.

Short on everything from housing to Humvees to bullet-proof vests, their training suspect and their society racked with tensions, Iraq's security forces are being reborn in places like this, with massive American assistance to prepare them for the moment when U.S. troops are no longer on the ground.

The area around Mosul, a city of 1.8 million people that straddles the Tigris River, offers a good window into the Iraqi soldiers' preparedness and challenges.

A case in point could be seen a few miles west of Muhalladiya, where two Iraqi soldiers guarded a checkpoint that officials say insurgents use to move munitions and other supplies from Syria into Mosul.

The two soldiers checked vehicles leaving Mosul, opening trunks and peering into back seats, but waved through a truck and other vehicles heading into the city without an inspection.

"There could be 13 IEDs in that blue truck," said a frustrated U.S. Capt. Charles Reese, referring to a roadside bomb used by the insurgents.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

2 Danish Soldiers Killed In Gereshk

December 4, 2008 The Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark: Two soldiers have been killed in an attack in southern Afghanistan, the Danish army said Thursday

The Army Operational Command said a Danish-British patrol came under attack Thursday in the southern district of Gereshk.

One soldier was fatally wounded when his vehicle was hit by a bomb. The patrol came under fire shortly afterward.

The army says a second soldier was killed immediately by another explosion when Danish and British troops rushed to help their wounded colleague.

The wounded soldier died in a helicopter that was bringing him back to Denmark's Camp Bastion, Maj. Gen. Poul Kiaerskou, head of the Army Operational Command, said in a statement.

The attack came a day after Crown Prince Frederik ended an unannounced three-day visit to Danish troops in Helmand.

Resistance Action

Dec 1, 2008 (Reuters) & December 04, 2008 Associated Press & AFP

A bomb attack killed two police in Musa Qala bazaar of southern Helmand province on Monday, police said. Two policemen were wounded in the attack.

Guerrilla fighters on a motorbike shot dead a district chief in Ghazni town on Monday, a provincial spokesman said. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the incident.

Afghan officials say a bomber wearing a police uniform has blown himself up inside an intelligence building in eastern Afghanistan. Officials say two policemen were killed and nine wounded. A car parked next to the building exploded soon after the blast.

Two attacks against a counter narcotics office and the intelligence agency killed at least five people and wounded 10 others in eastern Afghanistan, an official said.

An attacker rammed his explosives-laden Toyota pick-up truck into the entrance of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in Khost city, the capital of Khost province, killing two agency employees and wounding three others," Tahir Khan Sabari, the deputy governor of Khost province said.

Separately, another bomber wearing an Afghan army uniform and carrying an AK-47 machine gun tried to get into the adjacent counter narcotics building but was stopped by police guards who shot at him, he said.

Police fired at him and explosives strapped to his body went off, killing three policemen and wounding four others.

Police were still looking for other militants who were also wearing army uniform and were reported to have entered the NDS offices right after the first suicide blast.

Notes From A Lost War:

**“They Knew We Were Coming”
“It’s The Same Language All The
Time: ‘There’s No Enemy Here’”
“Plans Of The Jalrez Operation Had
Somehow Leaked All The Way Down
To Local Bazaar Merchants A Day
Ahead Of The Battalion’s Approach”
U.S. Forces “Are Here Now But They
Will Be Gone Soon,” He Said. “The
Taliban Will Be Back”**

December 1, 2008 Jason Motlagh, Washington Times [Excerpts]

JALREZ VALLEY, Afghanistan — The engines rumbled awake at midnight.

Creeping out from a lonely hilltop outpost built of dirt-filled blast barriers and razor wire, a U.S. convoy of more than 40 armored vehicles turned onto Afghanistan’s Highway 1 in blackout mode, switching off lights to foil Taliban lookouts.

Their destination: the Jalrez Valley, an ambush-ready stretch of fruit orchards and rocky slopes that cuts through Wardak province, 25 miles southwest of Kabul. With deadly frequency, the Taliban and affiliated militant groups are using the area to launch attacks on the capital and the national highway that is an economic lifeline to the south.

Given its location in between more populous urban centers, insurgents have made alarming gains in Wardak.

A shadow government collects taxes and runs roadside checkpoints, according to intelligence reports and residents, while fighters are largely free to train, stash arms and kidnap victims without interference.

In recent months, the increased level of Taliban activity, the weakness of Afghan security forces, and the prospect of mass voter intimidation ahead of next year’s national elections have forced the U.S.-led coalition to pay closer attention to the province and, in particular, Jalrez.

Lt. Larry Kay, of the U.S. Army's 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry known as "Red Currahee," first went to the valley with his company in late spring to set up a firebase at its mouth.

In six months, he said, he never had a day off, beating back 27 attacks in June alone. Of the 70 men in his company, 30 were wounded and two died in combat.

"The (insurgents) are very aggressive and highly trained, always ready to exploit a weakness," he said.

"You will not have an advantage in Jalrez."

Red Currahee, accustomed to punching above its weight, sought to project strength in numbers this time. More than 400 troops mobilized recently on a disruptive operation into the valley, making the five-hour journey from their home base, Forward Operating Base Sharana, in western Paktika province.

The long trip got off to a rough start. In Ghazni province, next to Paktika, an improvised explosive device blew up under an Afghan police Ford Ranger pickup at the front of the convoy, killing two and wounding four.

Farther ahead, the \$270 million U.S.-funded highway that connects Kabul with Kandahar looked like a motor graveyard. The burned-out remains of delivery trucks lined the road, scarred every few miles by bomb blast sites.

The convoy stopped at a fortified outpost to wait for nightfall, after which the difficulties of traveling in the dark were manifest. One Humvee equipped with thermal vision was temporarily disabled when a jingle truck - so called because it is decorated with small bells and tassels - crashed into a wheel.

It was still dark when the convoy reached Jalrez.

Moving into defensive positions on each side of the valley, U.S. forces established a command perimeter in the village of Eshma-Kheyl to provide a clear vantage point in case of an insurgent attack. But nothing stirred.

"It's almost too quiet," said Capt. Spencer Wallace, scanning the rows of adobe compounds.

"They knew we were coming."

As other platoons moved house to house to check for enemy fighters, Capt. Wallace assembled a small group of tribal elders for a "mini-shura," or meeting, in a carpeted living room. In the Pashtu language, he exchanged pleasantries with the bearded men, noting that it was the first time his troops have entered the valley without coming under fire.

Zabiullah Ameri leaned forward and assured the officer that his village supports the government and welcomes American troops as brothers.

"Why, then, are there so many attacks against us in this valley?" Capt. Wallace asked.

“We are like a soccer ball. Everyone who comes through wants to kick us,” said another man who was wearing a white head wrap. “We don’t know who is our enemy and who is our friend.”

The elders guaranteed the U.S. troops’ safety in Eshma-Kheyl, though they said they could not vouch for neighboring villages.

Before departing, Capt. Wallace pressed the elders to share with their community the good behavior of his troops in contrast to the heavy-handed “enemies of Afghanistan,” using Pashtu words.

“It’s the same language all the time: ‘There’s no enemy here,’” he later explained.

Intelligence reports had indicated that several men living in the area were known to harbor Taliban militants. Members of Baker Company fanned out to red-flagged homes in search of details and weapons caches.

In one of the homes, owned by a local big man known simply as Wazir, they found a book of telephone numbers and black-and-white photos that appeared to be of Taliban figures.

A plate of half-eaten rice suggested that someone left in a hurry.

Subsequent interviews with neighbors confirmed the man in question maintained close ties with militants operating in the valley, a useful piece of information that officers said will help them better understand grass-roots insurgent networks.

Afghan Army officials corroborated the suspicions of U.S. officers, telling them that plans of the Jalrez operation had somehow leaked all the way down to local bazaar merchants a day ahead of the battalion’s approach.

U.S. officers could only shake their heads in disgust.

Word soon arrived that a weapons cache of old grenades and rocket-propelled grenade fuses was uncovered in a shed at the edge of an apple orchard astride the paved valley road. Most of the contents were destroyed, though some items were given to cash-strapped Afghan Army fighters supporting the operation.

“Counterinsurgency is about achieving effects on the battlefield every day,” said Lt. Col. Tony Demartino, the operation commander. “If you’re always looking for gold rings, you’re gonna continue to miss buckets of brass rings.”

Moments later, the crack of artillery fire off a steep rock face overhead interrupted what had been a quiet day.

Alpha Company, assigned to protect the southern ridge in case enemy fighters began to gravitate toward the valley, was targeted with two errant rockets. They fired back. Rolling clouds and a flurry of snow seemed to signal a fight was coming, yet the nervous calm held.

The next morning brought a change of plans, and unexpected visitors.

At least 100 locals suddenly reared their heads. Their curiosity momentarily turned to panic when an F-15 fighter jet, dispatched to reassure them, did the opposite with a screaming flyby down the valley at 500 feet.

Red Currahee had planned to distribute food and winter clothes before returning to base at noon. When an Afghan general arrived, U.S. officers stood back and put him in charge of the handouts - cooking oil, flour, sweaters - to put an Afghan face on the relief.

The Afghan general then relayed what was happening to the new governor of Wardak province, Muhammad Halim Fedayi, who decided that he, too, would like to pay a visit, his first to the restive valley.

Deserted a day earlier, the village was now abuzz with anticipation. What was supposed to have been a fierce engagement had rapidly turned into a public relations coup.

The governor, visibly ill at ease being so deep inside an insurgent stronghold, said a prayer to the crowd and pledged to do more to assert the state's authority in the months ahead.

Winging it, Col. Demartino then proposed to the governor that he make an impromptu visit to the district center a few miles down the valley road as a symbolic gesture of his office.

The stop lasted less than 10 minutes.

"In this kind of war, you can only plan so much," the colonel said.

Maj. Rob Fouche, smiling at the public about-face to the operation, touted it as evidence that "everybody appreciates a bit of security."

But some locals worried that the coalition's short-term presence might do more harm than good.

"We are scared because someone might tell the Taliban that we talked with the Americans and they will kill us," said Delawar, 34, a truck driver from Eshma-Kheyl.

Muhammad Hosseini, a Jalrez native who recently returned from five years living in Manchester, England, after his visa extension was denied, lamented how dangerous the area has become.

U.S. forces "are here now but they will be gone soon," he said. "The Taliban will be back."

“I Think They Have Come To Kill Us. We Cannot Walk Freely,

Celebrate Weddings And Other Parties In Our Country”
“If They Start An Insurgency As A Result Of The Behaviour, No One Will Be Able To Stop Them”
“A Growing Sense Of Anger And Resentment Towards The Presence Of International Troops In The Country”

2-Dec-08 By Sayed Yaqub Ibrahimi in Kunduz, Afghan Recovery Report [Excerpts]

“It was terrible,” recalled Mohammad Ismail of the night in early September when International Security Assistance Forces, ISAF, mistook his vehicle for that of a suicide bomber.

The 20-year-old was driving back from a wedding party on the outskirts of the north-eastern city of Kunduz.

“When I drove the car back a few metres, I saw the blood everywhere and everybody was unconscious. I had lost two of my fingers and one bullet had hit my shoulder,” he said.

The incident left three of his passengers – one woman and her two children – dead. Ismail, two other women and three children, were also wounded.

The shooting is reminiscent of similar incidents elsewhere in the country, where foreign forces have mistakenly struck civilians, leaving Afghans with a growing sense of anger and resentment towards the presence of international troops in the country.

Acting on a tip-off to be on the lookout for a Corolla station wagon, German forces from the Kunduz Provincial Reconstruction Team, PRT, together with the Afghan National Army, ANA, and Afghan police, established a checkpoint on the main highway five kilometres east of the city.

According to police sources, at approximately 9.45 pm, a Corolla station wagon drove onto the highway from a side road.

Alerted to the ISAF presence, the station wagon turned and sped away, and the troops opened fire. The vehicle escaped, but a hail of bullets instead hit Ismail’s Corolla sedan which was behind it.

Toyota Corollas are common in Afghanistan and are frequently used by insurgents in suicide attacks.

Ismail insisted he had followed the Germans' instructions.

"When the (ISAF troops) issued a warning with lights and the (first) car did not stop, I – as I always do – tried to stop, but...was their response was to fire," he said.

Abdul Rahman Aqtash, chief of security at Kunduz police headquarters, who was not present at the scene, said, "According to our information, when the station wagon appeared, the German soldiers ordered it to stop but it escaped, and the Corolla following the station wagon, which had returned from a wedding party, did not stop either, so the Germans thought this car also belonged to the terrorists and opened fire."

Although Afghan forces in the region regularly conduct joint patrols with ISAF, Aqtash attributed this incident to a lack of information sharing on the part of the Germans.

"We were with them on patrol as usual, but we knew nothing about the intelligence they had received. We were searching cars when the Germans opened fire. It was (only then that) they told us they had received intelligence about a suspected car entering Kunduz city," he said.

Locals have expressed anger over the shooting, reflecting a hardening of attitudes towards foreign forces in Afghanistan's relatively secure north.

Mohammad Alam, 63, who lives near where the failed ambush took place, said, "There was a lot of firing. We thought the Taleban had attacked. We locked our doors and did not go to the mosque the next morning fearing the Taleban.

"(The foreign forces) do not know Kunduz and its people. (Locals) have been calm so far, but if they start an insurgency as a result of the behaviour, no one will be able to stop them."

Akbar Khan, 45, a resident of Khanabad district and the brother of the deceased woman, said, "We thought they had come for our security, but now I think they have come to kill us. We cannot walk freely, celebrate weddings and other parties in our country."

Ali Mohammad, 30, a taxi driver in Kunduz, said he believed that more of what he described as provocation by foreign forces may drive local residents to support the Taleban.

"We currently see that the Taleban are very active in this province and are looking to take advantage of such situations," he said.

TROOP NEWS

“It Is A Sickening Feeling To Realize That I Took Part In What Was Basically A Daily Slaughter Of A Proud People”

“I Could Not, In Good Conscience, Continue To Serve In The U.S. Army”

“We Have Destroyed Nations, Killed Leaders, Raided Homes, Tortured, Kidnapped, Lied, And Manipulated Not Just Citizens And Leaders Of Our Enemies, But Of Our Allies As Well”



André Shepherd: Foto: © Connection e.V. Weitere Fotos

[Thanks to Dave Blalock Stop The War Brigade, who sent this in.]

Statement of André Shepherd at press-conference in Frankfurt/M. (Germany),
November 27, 2008

Hello, my name is Andre Shepherd, and I was a member of the U.S. Army before finding that my conscience would no longer allow for me to continue in such a capacity.

I am currently Absent Without Leave and am requesting asylum in Germany. I am asking for your support in this difficult matter.

I enlisted in the military in January of 2004 and worked my way up in rank from private to specialist by the time I left my unit in June of 2007. I served most of my enlistment in Katterbach, Germany, with the 412th Aviation Support Battalion and was deployed to Iraq from September 2004 to February 2005.

My mission in Iraq was to repair and maintain the AH-64 Apache helicopter, which were then used to support the infantry or to find and destroy the "enemy combatants."

My job appeared harmless, until one factors in the amount of death and destruction those helicopters caused to civilians in Iraq.

When I read and heard about people being ripped to shreds from the machine guns or being blown to bits by the Hellfire missiles as well as buildings and infrastructures being destroyed I began to feel ashamed about what I was doing.

It is a sickening feeling to realize that I took part in what was basically a daily slaughter of a proud people.

The second battle for Fallujah is a vivid reminder of the level of destruction that these and other weapons can inflict upon a population.

I believe the Apache is responsible for a significant portion of the civilian death toll in Iraq which at last count was at least 500,000.

I am remorseful for my contribution to these heinous acts, and I swear that I will never make these mistakes again.

When enlisting, I took an oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

After my deployment to Iraq, however, I began to question whether I was doing what I had signed up to do.

I spent many months researching the causes of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and what the U.S. military was doing in those countries, and I came to the conclusion that both invasions were illegal according to U.S. and international law.

We have destroyed nations, killed leaders, raided homes, tortured, kidnapped, lied, and manipulated not just citizens and leaders of our enemies, but of our allies as well.

I could not, in good conscience, continue to serve in the U.S. Army.

The U.S. military does not offer a discharge for someone who believes they are being asked to take part in an illegal war, but believes appropriate force is occasionally necessary.

I had to choose between ignoring my beliefs and leaving the military illegally. For me, the correct path was clear: I had to leave.

It is perhaps appropriate that I am applying for asylum in Germany, where the Nuremberg trials took place 60 years ago. One of the main things that were established during these trials was that one cannot defend one's actions by claiming to have merely been following orders.

If I had stayed in the U.S. Army and continued to participate in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, I could not legally argue that I was just doing my job. Here in Germany it was established that everyone, even a soldier, must take responsibility for his or her actions, no matter how many superiors are giving orders.

I recognize that the U.S. military could try to charge me with desertion with intent to shirk hazardous duty during a time of war. If I were to be found guilty of such a crime, U.S. military regulations state they have the right to convict me with a penalty of death. Nevertheless, I made the decision that I believe is right.

There have been many Germans who have called the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan illegal and immoral. It is only logical to suggest then that the soldiers who participate in these wars are also committing illegal and immoral acts.

The question now is whether Germany will grant asylum and stand with those soldiers who refuse to take part in these wars.

Barack Obama will become president of the United States in January. He campaigned with a message of change and has stated he wishes to end the Iraq War. He has repeatedly stated that as president he will move the troops from Iraq into Afghanistan.

However, this does not translate into sympathy for those who refuse to take part in an illegal war. I believe no pardon or amnesty will be given before both conflicts have ended. Furthermore, fellow AWOL Army soldier Robin Long was recently deported from Canada to the United States, where he now sits in military prison.

Mr. Obama never stated an intention to reversing the Bush Doctrine, nor has he stated any intention to bring the Bush administration to justice for their part in these criminal activities.

Mr. Obama's silence on these issues speaks volumes as to his current disposition toward those who refuse to fight.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Tim Huber from the Military Counseling Network and Rudi Friedrich from Connection e.V..

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3,500 From Fort Bragg Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

December 04, 2008 The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG - The 82nd Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade began deploying to Iraq this week.

The 3,500 paratrooper brigade is deploying for the fourth time since Sept. 11, 2001. The brigade, nicknamed the Panthers, deployed to Afghanistan in July 2002 and twice to Iraq in August 2003 and August 2006.

Poisoned By Chemical Exposure In Iraq, Indiana Soldiers Sue KBR; When They Got Sick, KBR Told Them It Was "Dry Desert Air"

For the Guardsmen, KBR's "knowing acts and omissions" resulted in "months and months of unprotected, unknowing, direct exposure to one of the most potent carcinogens and mutagenic substances known to man," the lawsuit alleges.

Dec 3 By Scott Bronstein and Abbie Boudreau CNN Special Investigations Unit & By CHARLES WILSON, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

Indiana National Guard soldiers sued the big defense contractor KBR Inc. on Wednesday, saying its employees knowingly allowed them to be exposed to a toxic chemical in Iraq five years ago.

The federal suit filed in U.S. District Court alleges the soldiers from a Tell City-based unit were exposed to a carcinogen while protecting an Iraqi water pumping plant shortly after the U.S. invasion in 2003.

The soldiers say that they, along with other American civilian contractors, were exposed to the chemical at the Qarmat Ali water pumping plant in southern Iraq shortly after the U.S. invasion in 2003.

KBR was tasked with getting the plant up and running using civilian contractors. The National Guardsmen were assigned to protect the civilian workers.

The odorless sodium dichromate was used at the plant as an anti-corrosive, the lawsuit says. The chemical contained nearly pure hexavalent chromium, the toxic substance that poisoned homeowners in Hinkley, California, and was made famous by activist Erin Brockovich, according to the suit.

The 23-page complaint claims that Houston-based KBR knew at least as early as May 2003 that the plant was contaminated with sodium dichromate, a known carcinogen, but concealed the danger from civilian workers and 139 soldiers from the Indiana Guard's 1st Battalion, 152nd Infantry.

For the Guardsmen, KBR's "knowing acts and omissions" resulted in "months and months of unprotected, unknowing, direct exposure to one of the most potent carcinogens and mutagenic substances known to man," the lawsuit alleges.

"The most frustrating thing is that these guys are finding out years later that they were exposed to something," said Mike Doyle, one of the Houston attorneys representing the Guardsmen.

"KBR managers knew full well long ago that this stuff was incredibly dangerous. But there was no information about it for years. And now these soldiers are facing some pretty serious health concerns. They're going to be stuck with this the rest of their lives," said Doyle.

"It's not right, what they done," said Mark McManaway, a 55-year-old truck driver from Cannelton who has since retired from the Guard. McManaway, the main plaintiff in the lawsuit, has suffered nosebleeds and rashes he believes are due to the chemical exposure.

"The worst part is that the military has only just recently advised us that the stuff we were exposed to was much worse than they thought while we were out there," said McManaway.

"It's in our bodies, but we don't know how bad it is. Maybe within the next five years cancers could start showing up. You've got a ticking time bomb in you -- and when's it going to go off?"

The chemical, used to remove pipe corrosion, is especially dangerous because it contains hexavalent chromium, which is known to cause birth defects and cancer, particularly lung cancer, the lawsuit said. The cancer can take years to develop.

Some of the soldiers who served at the site now have respiratory system tumors associated with hexavalent chromium exposure, the lawsuit states.

The lawsuit seeks reimbursement for medical costs, monitoring for cancer and other health problems and unspecified monetary damages.

The toxic chemical made famous by Brockovich in California was a diluted form of hexavalent chromium that caused serious illnesses after being ingested by homeowners through their water.

The chemical the Guardsmen were exposed to in Iraq was a nearly pure form of the chemical and could have been inhaled directly by anyone working at the plant.

The U.S. Senate held hearings in August on emerging concerns about the exposure to the toxic chemicals after reports of civilian contractors and their exposure to the chemicals at the water plant.

But officials of the National Guard -- and most of the Guardsmen who worked at the plant -- were not even aware of the possible dangers at the time of the hearing. Some heard about for the first time during the televised hearings. Only then did the National Guard begin efforts to find the men, some of whom had already been back in the United States for four years.

When Guard members and American civilians working at the plant began to have nosebleeds, KBR managers told them they were simply caused by the dry desert air, the lawsuit says.

But nosebleeds are a symptom of acute hexavalent chromium poisoning, it says.

The work wasn't shut down until September 2003, after KBR managers in full environmental protective gear inspected the plant while workers and Guard members remained unprotected, the Guard members contend.

The plant later reopened, but workers now wore protective gear, said Michael P. Doyle of Houston, the lead attorney in the case.

The extent of the company's knowledge of the hazard didn't become clear until congressional hearings this June, the lawsuit claims.

"They knew and they didn't tell nobody until they get drug into a Senate committee, where they have to start telling some of the truth," McManaway said. "It's not right."

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. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

Scum In Command:

“Hundreds Of Complaints From Servicemembers Who Believe They’ve Been Harassed, Passed Over For Promotion Or Forced Into Retirement For Not Following The Religious Preferences Of Their Commanding Officers”

November 12, 2008 By Leo Shane III, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — A coalition of atheists and agnostics wants the new White House to protect young military members from what they see as rampant religious discrimination in the services.

The Secular Coalition for America held a news conference Monday urging new rules against proselytizing and more training for chaplains on how to handle nonreligious troops.

“When they say ‘there are no atheists in foxholes’ it’s slanderous,” said Wayne Adkins, a former Army first lieutenant who served in Iraq in 2004 and 2005. “To deny their existence is to deny that they serve.”

Jason Torpy, a retired soldier and president of the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers, said his group isn’t opposed to Christianity or any other organized religion.

“We just recognize that religion and religious people get a lot of support from the military,” he said. “What about the rest of us?”

Torpy said his group has fielded hundreds of complaints from servicemembers who believe they’ve been harassed, passed over for promotion or forced into retirement for not following the religious preferences of their commanding officers.

Adkins said equal opportunity office investigators in the service ignored his complaints about harassment and mistreatment because he was an atheist, which in part led to his decision to leave the service.

About one-fifth of current servicemembers identify themselves as having no religious preference, according to Defense Department statistics.

Only a small percentage of troops identify themselves as atheists or agnostics, but Torpy said that’s because they fear retribution. Without new rules, he said, there isn’t any guarantee they can avoid that kind of treatment.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action: Fallujah Resistance Launches Coordinated Attack: Police Station Destroyed

December 3, 2008 By HAMID AHMED (AP) & Dec 4 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press Writers & By Jomana Karadsheh, CNN & (Reuters) & By Laith Hammoudi, McClatchy Newspapers

BAGHDAD - Iraqi police say at least one civilian has been killed and five others wounded when a bomb attached to a minibus exploded in eastern Baghdad. Police and hospital officials say the explosion Wednesday appeared to target employees of Iraq's Ministry of Education who were on their way to work. A police officer says a private bus provided by the ministry was picking up employees when the bomb exploded. The officer says the explosion occurred while employees were boarding the bus.

The inspector general for Iraq's Ministry of Social Affairs died after a bomb attached to his vehicle detonated in central Baghdad, the official said.

Three tribal leaders from the Iraqi province of Diyala were among killed in a bombing in Baquba, the provincial capital, an interior ministry official said. The bomb was attached to a bicycle.

Insurgents shot dead an on duty police officer in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Two members of the national police were injured by a bomb near al Wathiq intersection in Karrada neighborhood in downtown Baghdad around 10 a.m.

Insurgents killed and police officer and injured his colleague in downtown Mosul city on Thursday morning.

In Fallujah, the apparently coordinated blasts struck within minutes of each other outside the concrete barriers surrounding two police stations in different sections of Fallujah.

Bombers simultaneously rammed oil tankers into the two Iraqi police posts.

The Islamic State of Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on a Web site used by militants.

A senior Iraqi police officer in Fallujah said one of the blasts leveled a police station and damaged several nearby houses. A police station in central Fallujah was also struck, he said.

"I was drinking tea in my house when a big explosion took place. It was like an earthquake," said Saad Ibrahim, a 34-year-old mechanic who lives near one of the police stations.

The U.S. military said initial reports showed that 13 people were wounded, including nine Iraqi policemen.

A curfew was temporarily imposed in parts of Falluja following the coordinated attack, the official said.

Local journalists say they have been prevented from videotaping the aftermath.

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

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Comment On A Headline

Bush On The Economic Crisis: 'I'm Sorry It's Happening'
[Headline: December 1, 2008 Associated Press]

[Also from the news story:]

"On the war in Iraq, Bush said the biggest regret of his presidency was the "intelligence failure" regarding the extent of the Saddam Hussein threat to the United States."

I can't find enough vitriol for this 'sorry' sack of sandwich filling.

Will saying "sorry" bring back 4813 GIs dead in Two wars or more than 10 times that with injuries to live with for the rest of their lives?

How does "sorry" translate into the languages spoken in those countries?

I could vent for pages and pages, it would be therapeutic, but I must get on with doing my share for the war effort.

SSG N (ret'd)

Troops Invited:

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“The Wars In Iraq And Afghanistan, When Viewed From The Receiving End, Are State-Sponsored Acts Of Terrorism”

December 01, 2008 By Chris Hedges, Truthdig [Excerpts]

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, when viewed from the receiving end, are state-sponsored acts of terrorism.

They have left hundreds of thousands of people, who never took up arms against us, dead and seen millions driven from their homes.

We have no right as a nation to debate the terms of these occupations. And an Afghan villager, burying members of his family's wedding party after an American airstrike, understands in a way we often do not that terrorist attacks can also be unleashed from the arsenals of an imperial power.

Robert Pape in “Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” found that most suicide bombers are members of communities that feel humiliated by genuine or perceived occupation. Almost every major suicide-terrorist campaign—over 95 percent—carried out attacks to drive out an occupying power. This was true in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Chechnya and Kashmir, as well as Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Terrorism, as Pape wrote, “is not a supply-limited phenomenon where there are just a few hundred around the world willing to do it because they are religious fanatics. It is a demand-driven phenomenon.

“That is, it is driven by the presence of foreign forces on the territory that the terrorists view as their homeland.

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

RECEIVED

“A Big Congratulations To (Former) Spc. Andre Shepherd”

From: Mark Shapiro

To: GI Special

Sent: December 03, 2008 11:56 AM

Subject: (GI Special 6L2) - 'This is the best 'GI Special' headline I've seen in years!

“66,000 U.S. Troops May Be Eligible For Asylum In Germany:

“German Federal Administrative Court Ruled In 2005 That The Iraq War Violated International Law And Labeled The Invasion An Act Of Aggression

“The Country Must Grant Asylum To Deserters If The Conflicts They Are Fleeing From Are Being Conducted In An Unlawful Manner

“[Spc. Andre Shepherd Is The Tip Of The Spear]”

This is the best 'GI Special' headline I've seen in years! I've had a smile on my face all day!

Here's hoping tens of thousands of GI's will walk off their bases in Germany put two fingers up say FUCK THE ARMY and never look back.

Those A-Holes in the Pentagon would be paralysed with fear!

And a big Congratulations to (former) Spc Andre Shepherd for his brave decision to become a Deserter.

As a former Deserter myself let me say Welcome to the 'Club' Andre, Best of Luck and never stop fighting the Bastards!!

MORE:

From: IVAW Member [Germany]
To: GI Special
Sent: December 03, 2008
Subject: Re: GI Special 6L2: 66,000

Hey I'm glad at least somebody is publishing Andre's story.

Good Job.

“All The Money Gained Illegally By Contractors Could Be Used For Bail-Outs”

From: JM
To: GI Special
Sent: December 03, 2008 12:12 AM
Subject: What's being done to get this money back?

“War Profiteers Got \$300 Million For Cheating And Faking Work In Iraq” [GI Special headline]

This is food for thought. This money should be recouped.

How about inventing a reason to incarcerate the offenders in Guantanamo on a basis of “pay-up or ----”

You already know I think executives should use their own money to save their companies eg the sale of their private jets would help a lot.

Next all the money gained illegally by contractors could be used for bail-outs.

Bush has devised ways to legalise limitless detention and torture surely ways can be found to recoup money from crooked dealers.

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://williambowles.info/gispecial/2008/index.html>;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

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BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



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