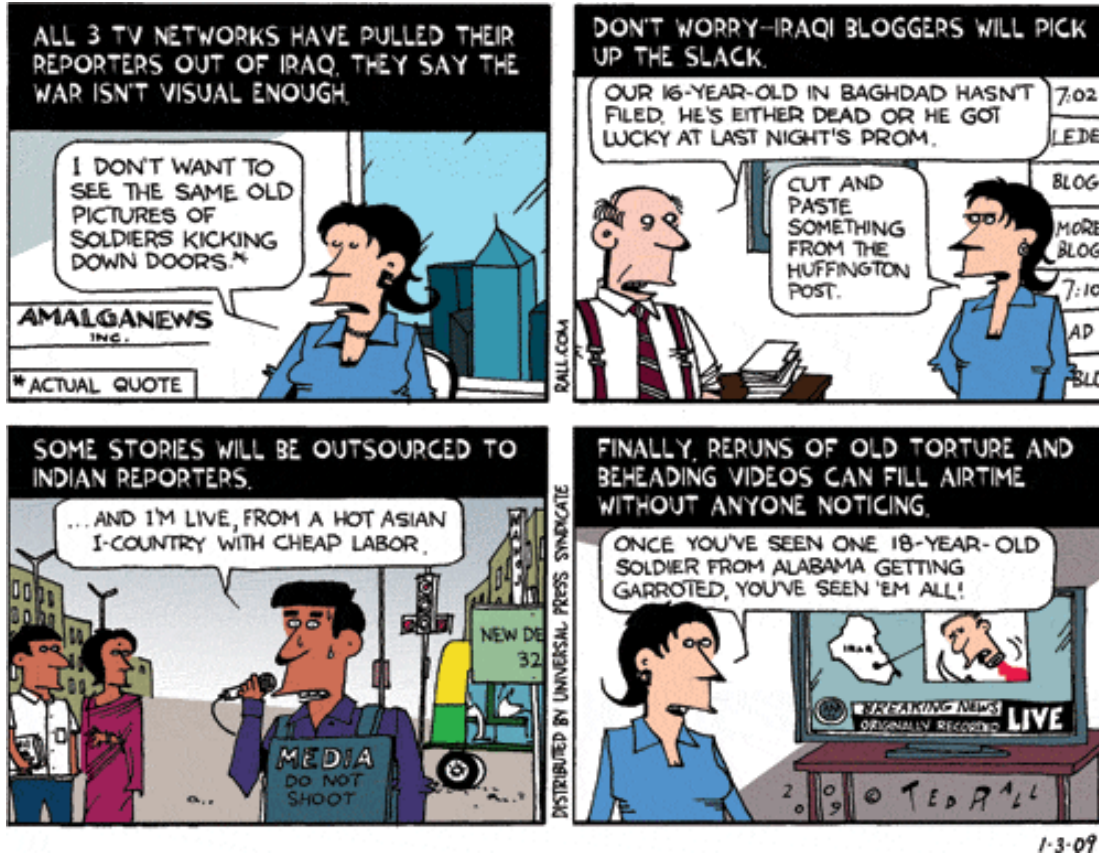


GI SPECIAL 7A4:



“Unrest Takes Different Forms”

New York National Guard
[4th ANNIVERSARY OUTREACH BY THE
MILITARY PROJECT]

From: Alan Stolzer
To: GI Special
Sent: January 10, 2009
Subject: 1/10 Outreach

JANUARY 10, 2009 - 4th ANNIVERSARY OUTREACH OF THE MILITARY PROJECT

The 4th anniversary of The Military Project outreach effort was celebrated where it started - the [XXXX] National Guard armory.

And, as at all others, distribution of lit, snacks and DVDs was met with respect and politeness by the troops reporting for drill. Consistently, those refusing our offerings were polite.

Five of us, including three newcomers, used the 2 main entrances for distribution that included 120 packs of lit (GI Rights pamphlet, brand new Traveling Soldier, the revised Military Project "Why We Are Here" statement and the Keep The Guard Home folder), 21 DVDs of "Sir! No Sir!" and numerous packs of home baked cookies and brownies the troops appreciate, especially the fact they're homemade.

The 3 newcomers took to their task with enthusiasm and were thrilled and thankful for the opportunity to serve troops.

They feel, as we do, it's the only way to go.

Because of the cold, troops entered the armory quickly, declining any opportunity to chat. Nevertheless, the new outreachers quickly warmed to the task and were as good as anyone I've seen doing this work - and I've made every outreach.

One of the newcomers discovered a coffee shop on the west side of [XXXX] Boulevard that many soldiers use en route to the armory. This coffee shop served as an extra place for distribution as we used it for exactly that purpose, handing out the remaining packs after we were done at the armory.

The person made a critical, acute observation: several soldiers were late and didn't give a damn that they were! An interesting sign, perhaps even telltale since unrest takes different forms.

Our updated outreach list has already provided results since 2 of the newcomers responded to e-mails and phone calls while others, unable to come, expressed interest in future outreaches.

The list will be pruned and expanded to serve our task better.

After all, we may be approaching the long awaited spark that makes all our work worthwhile.

See you 2/7, the next outreach, 5:45 am sharp!

MORE ACTION REPORTS WANTED:

FROM YOU!

An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to GI Special for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so. If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

NOTE WELL:

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not in any way identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the war.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs his or her name be listed as reporting on the action.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

US Soldier Killed By Baghdad IED

10 January 2009 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20090111-01

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier died when an improvised explosive device struck his vehicle in eastern Baghdad at approximately 8 p.m. Jan. 10. The Soldier's name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

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



A patrol in eastern Baghdad, Iraq, Dec. 21, 2008. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**Royal Marine From UK Landing Force
Command Support Group Killed In
Kajaki**

11 Jan 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a Royal Marine from UK Landing Force Command Support Group (UKLF CSG), operating as part of 45 Commando Royal Marines was killed as a result of an explosion on the morning of 11 January 2009 in the Kajaki area of Helmand province.

He was taking part in a routine reassurance patrol when the explosion occurred. He received immediate medical attention at the scene but sadly died of his wounds.

Yuman Wounded In Afghanistan



January 10, 2009 – Yuma Sun

A Yuma native serving with the Army in Afghanistan is recovering from injuries suffered in a suicide bombing last week.

Staff Sgt. Gabriel Garcia, serving with the 1st Infantry Division, was struck in the right arm by shrapnel in the explosion set off by a suicide bomber in Khandajar, Afghanistan, on Thursday, his wife Christina told The Sun on Saturday.

Doctors could not save his arm and it had to be amputated, she said.

Garcia, a 2001 Kofa High School graduate and seven-year veteran of Army, is in a hospital in Germany while waiting to be flown to a hospital in the United States, Christina Garcia said.

"The family is doing well," she said. "He's in stable condition. He's doing well. Hopefully, soon we'll be able to see him."

She said she, the couple's 3-year-old son Cain and Gabriel Garcia's parents, Arturo and Barbara Garcia of Yuma, will be flown by the Army to see him once he arrives stateside.

Australian Troops Suspected Of Butchering Afghan Civilians

8 Jan 2009 Radio Australia News

Australian soldiers are being investigated over claims they may have wounded or killed up to nine civilians during fighting in Afghanistan.

The soldiers were part of a coalition force battling Taliban insurgents near Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan Province.

The Australian Defence Force says a review of operations in the region has found Australian troops could have been involved.

The International Security Assistance Force and the Afghan Government will conduct a joint investigation into the incident.

The ADF is also conducting its own investigation.

Notes From A Lost War:

**“Almost Every Day We Were Involved
In Intense Fire-Fights Ranging From
Rocket-Propelled Grenades And
Small Arms To Four-Hour Battles
With The Enemy Forces As Close As
30 Metres”
A “360-Degree Battle”**

05.01.09 Associated Newspapers Limited & AFP

Details have emerged of a massive operation by British, Afghan and coalition forces in Afghanistan in which troops fought at close quarters, in knee-deep mud and in fierce trench battles reminiscent of the First World War.

The offensive in central Helmand province involved more than 1,500 troops and was one of the largest operations mounted by the Royal Marines since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said.

It was fought over 18 days around the town of Nad-e-Ali to capture four key Taliban strongholds.

Some of the Royal Marines taking part trudged more than 60km through mud with packs on their backs while also fighting insurgents at close quarters, the MoD revealed.

A Lance Corporal, signaller with the 77th Armoured Engineer Squadron, said: “I was in Nad-e-Ali for just over two weeks ... Some of the places we stayed in were a nightmare - sleeping in the mud was the worst.

“(At times) we were exposed and moving ahead of our infantry protection. It felt like we were being watched and it was difficult to tell who the enemy was - it was pretty scary.”

The operation, which culminated in a battle on Christmas Day, claimed the lives of five British servicemen and wounded scores of others. About 100 Taliban fighters were killed, including a senior commander.

Operation Sond Chara - Pashto for Red Dagger - was named after 3 Commando Brigade's shoulder badge.

Describing Sond Chara, Captain Dave Glendenning, commander of the marines' artillery support team, said: "Almost every day we were involved in intense fire-fights ranging from rocket-propelled grenades and small arms 'shoot-and-scoots' to four-hour battles with the enemy forces as close as 30 metres."

It involved Danish, Estonian and Afghan troops, and saw the marines at one point fight hand-to-hand in a "360-degree battle", the ministry said.

Resistance Deploying Snipers To Kill U.S. Troops: "We Have A Very Capable Enemy" "The Afghan Use Of Marksmen Goes Back Hundreds Of Years, In A Country In Which Fighting Is Commonplace"

January 4, 2009 By Nancy A. Youssef, McClatchy Newspapers

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Taliban fighters increasingly are deploying precision marksmen to fire on U.S. troops at greater distances throughout opium-producing southern Afghanistan, according to the top two commanders for the southern region.

The increased use of marksmen is the latest Taliban shift to asymmetrical warfare and away from confronting U.S. troops in conventional fights, commanders said.

The number of coalition troops killed in southern Afghanistan has increased sharply in the past two months.

So far, shooters have made use of long-barrel rifles, not specialized sniper weapons.

Instead, they take advantage of the rough terrain to shoot at troops safely from afar, he said.

If the Taliban develops a corps of snipers, it would mark a major shift for U.S. troops in southern Afghanistan.

When snipers began appearing in Iraq's once-restive Anbar province in 2005, U.S. troops had a difficult time protecting themselves from attacks and began wearing more armor.

At one point, Iraqi insurgent groups began filming their sniper attacks, and the images of Marines falling to them became a rallying point for the insurgency.

Coalition officials said they didn't have statistics on how much more often the Taliban was employing precision shooters, how far the shooters were expanding their distances or casualties related to the change of tactics.

A Marine officer who has faced Taliban fighters said he had seen them shoot from as far away as 400 yards.

Statistics compiled by the International Security Assistance Force show a 25 percent increase in direct-fire incidents last year, which could include shots by marksmen.

Most of the Taliban shooters are Afghans, not foreign fighters, the officials said.

The Afghan use of marksmen goes back hundreds of years, in a country in which fighting is commonplace.

The use of precision shooters "is more a kind of intuition that I have. But sometimes we see high-quality enemy in the area of central Helmand. ... It shows we have a very capable enemy," said Maj. Gen. M.C. de Kruif, the Dutch commander for Regional Command South.

IEDs Growing In Effectiveness: Col. Cade Concedes That Blasts Are "More And More Complex"

Each time Canadians switch tactics, the insurgents catch on and change their methods, too. For example, when Canadian patrols began travelling off-road to avoid buried explosives, the insurgents followed their tire tracks into the desert.

January 7, 2009 JANE ARMSTRONG, Globe and Mail [Excerpts]

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN — Taliban-planted roadside bombs, which have killed 10 Canadian soldiers in the past five weeks, have grown far more sophisticated this winter, Canadian military officials say.

Trooper Brian Good, killed Wednesday morning north of Kandahar city, became Canada's first war casualty of 2009 from an improvised explosive device.

Scores more Afghan police, army and civilians have been killed and maimed by the bombs, which insurgents plant on busy routes, as well as in ditches and culverts lining the roads.

Winter is traditionally a period when fighting dies down in the Afghan countryside as fighters leave the country for Pakistan. Not so this year.

The deputy commander of coalition forces in Kandahar, Colonel Jamie Cade, Wednesday night called the string of IED attacks a “plague.”

And at a grim news conference at Kandahar Air Field Base, Col. Cade conceded that the IED blasts are becoming “more and more complex.”

Indeed, like a persistent virus, the spate of fatal IED attacks has highlighted the shortcomings of Canadian attempts to outmaneuver the bomb makers.

Each time Canadians switch tactics, the insurgents catch on and change their methods, too. For example, when Canadian patrols began travelling off-road to avoid buried explosives, the insurgents followed their tire tracks into the desert.

Insurgents have also begun planting the bombs on asphalt roads, then paving over the bomb, making them very difficult to detect for foreign forces who travel these roads in armoured vehicles.

And last month, one fatal blast that killed two Canadians came just hours after the military claimed a victory with the killing of an insurgent who was suspected of masterminding bomb attacks.

Now For The Good News From Afghanistan! No U.S. MIA: “It’s Easier To Locate The Dead”

January 9, 2009 by Tom Bowman, All Things Considered [Excerpts]

The war in Afghanistan is the first in American history in which no soldiers have been listed as missing in action.

One reason for that can be attributed to people like Air Force Capt. Ed Blanchet, who flies a rescue-and-recovery helicopter. One of his recoveries of a fallen soldier took place just over a year ago in a steep ravine, where his helicopter’s blades came within feet of a sheer rock face.

That soldier was Sgt. Jeffrey Mersman, just 23 and on his fourth combat tour. He left behind a wife and four stepchildren. His father, Robert, says Jeffrey loved the outdoors and he had always wanted to be in the military, like his grandfather.

“My father would always take him fishing and stuff — wherever he wanted, you know. Always picking him up after school to take him fishing or hunting,” Robert Mersman says.

Blanchet’s two Pave Hawks flew for six hours north toward the rugged peaks of Nuristan province. They flew in with all their lights out, to avoid being spotted by the enemy. Master Sgt. Tom Ringheimer was a gunner on Blanchet’s helicopter. As they circled, Ringheimer scanned the ground through his night-vision goggles.

When they finally saw chemical lights around a human form on a ledge hundreds of feet below, the helicopters dropped four men off in the valley. The men rappelled with ropes down to where the soldier lay.

Blanchet says they didn’t have much time.

“We wanted to do this before the sun came up, because a hovering helicopter is an easy target in the daytime,” Blanchet says. They could see Taliban campfires not too far away.

The soldier had fallen down the cliff during a firefight with the Taliban. His unit was ambushed on the way home from a meeting with tribal leaders.

Things soon got complicated for the helicopter rescue crew, because the men on the ledge couldn’t climb out of the ravine with the dead soldier.

“They were basically trapped,” Blanchet says. “They couldn’t get back out of there, they couldn’t get back up the terrain. So that’s when it was necessary for us to have to go in and try to hoist them out.”

After 45 minutes and several attempts, the crew pulled the rescuers and the soldier into the helicopter, with little time to spare, says Blanchet.

“We had just enough gas to try to get them out that one last time before the sun came up,” he says.

It’s easier to locate the dead in Afghanistan’s desert terrain — there are no triple canopy jungles or forests to shield the fallen, [Larry Greer, an official with the Pentagon’s POW/MIA office] says, and the American helicopter patrol units common in Afghanistan make it more likely everyone will be accounted for.

More Good News; IED Attacks Up 100% In 2008

January 5, 2009 AAP

US ambassador William Wood said last week that the number of insurgent bomb attacks had doubled in 2008 over the previous year to roughly 2,000.

More than 290 foreign soldiers were killed in 2008, most of them in bombings, as well as more than 1,000 Afghan security forces, according to estimates.

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

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

TROOP NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



Services for twenty-year-old Army Spc. Tony J. "T.J." Gonzales, San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery, killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad Dec. 28. Mattos Newspapers, Inc.

“Widespread Complaints” About Fucked Up Marine Body Armor

January 3, 2009 Associated Press

BAGHDAD – Acting on widespread complaints from its troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Marine Corps has ordered major modifications to its body armor to improve comfort, mobility and safety, The Associated Press has learned.

Earlier in 2008, the Marine Commandant, Gen. James Conway, temporarily suspended an order for more than 20,000 of the so-called Modular Tactical Vests.

Because the vest rides higher on the chest for added protection, and features shoulder straps and buckles for adjustment and quick removal, several Marines blamed it for causing facial bruises when rifle butts slipped during recoil.

To better shoulder their weapon, some Marines loosened straps to lower the vest, exposing their upper torsos, according to a Marine field commander in Iraq who spoke on condition of anonymity because it is against policy for troops to alter the vest.

The vest has a tab for quickly removing the vest to prevent a tragedy, such as when a Marine in an older jacket couldn't remove it and drowned.

But Marines complained that the tab snagged equipment, and are now told to tuck away the tab.

Unlike previous jackets, which Marines could just throw on and go, this one requires training or online video courses on how to wear it.

**“After All I Did For The Army,
They Took My Money And Kicked
Me To The Curb And Said, ‘Don’t
Let The Door Hit You In The Ass’”
Army Says He Has PTSD From Iraq
Combat, Then Throws Him Out, Holds**

His Pay And Demands Enlistment Bonus Be Returned; “They Acknowledge That PTSD Causes Misconduct, And Then They Boot Them Out For Misconduct”



Lt. Gen. John Mulholland meets with other shit-eating rats on his staff to plan exciting new ways to fuck over combat veterans with PTSD. At last report, he is still walking around loose, all body parts intact.

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,532nd time, there is no enemy in Iraq or Afghanistan. Their citizens and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started these wars of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't tell the truth: U.S. Imperial wars are about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback is overdue. T]

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Military Project & SSG N (ret'd), Veterans For Peace & Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

08 January 2009 by: Kelly Kennedy, The Army Times [Excerpts]

After serving two tours in Iraq — tours filled with killing enemy combatants and watching close friends die — Sgt. Adam Boyle, 27, returned home expecting the Army to take care of him.

Instead, service member advocates and Boyle's mother say his chain of command in the 3rd Psychological Operations Battalion at Fort Bragg, N.C., worked to end his military career at the first sign of weakness.

In October, a medical evaluation board physician at Bragg recommended that Boyle go through the military disability retirement process for chronic post-traumatic stress disorder — which is supposed to automatically earn him at least a 50 percent disability retirement rating — as well as for chronic headaches.

The doctor also diagnosed Boyle with alcohol abuse and said he was probably missing formations due to the medications doctors put him on to treat his PTSD.

But in December, Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, signed an order forcing Boyle out on an administrative discharge for a “pattern of misconduct,” and ordering that the soldier pay back his re-enlistment bonus.

Last year, after a number of troops diagnosed with PTSD were administratively forced out for “personality disorders” following combat deployments, the Defense Department changed its rules: The pertinent service surgeon general now must sign off on any personality-disorder discharge if a service member has been diagnosed with PTSD.

“Not even a year later, they’re pushing them out administratively for ‘pattern of misconduct,’ “ said Carissa Picard, an attorney and founder of Military Spouses for Change, a group created in response to the personality-disorder cases.

“I’m so angry. We’re seeing it all the time. And it’s for petty stuff.”

In Boyle's case, according to Picard and Boyle's mother, Laura Curtiss, the soldier had gotten in trouble for missing morning formations and for alcohol-related incidents such as fighting and public drunkenness.

“The whole thing is absurd to me,” Picard said. “They acknowledge that PTSD causes misconduct, and then they boot them out for misconduct.”

Doctors first diagnosed Boyle with PTSD after his second deployment ended in 2006, when he moved to a new unit. After he missed his first formation, he said he went in to talk to his first sergeant to explain he was having problems with depression, PTSD and insomnia. But after that, he said, no one ever asked how he was doing.

“They just said, ‘You messed up. Here’s what we’re going to do to you,’ “ Boyle said. “I would have loved it if someone had sat me down and had a heart-to-heart with me. I tried. I stuck with the counseling.”

But counseling at Fort Bragg was also difficult, he said, because there were not enough doctors for more than one counseling session a month, and because he had to explain his story to seven different therapists over two years.

He received two Article 15s, one for not reporting to duty while helping a girlfriend who had been in a car accident, and one for not returning home three days early from leave after drunk-and-disorderly conduct in a bar. Over that time, he said he was also

experiencing flashbacks, anger-management and relationship issues, trust issues and guilt.

Picard said she has seen at least a dozen cases of soldiers with PTSD being pushed out for a “pattern of misconduct.”

Chuck Luther, also with Military Spouses for Change, said he’s working on four cases similar to Boyle’s now.

Boyle’s mother gave another reason: “You can hear it in his voice,” Curtiss said. “He can’t believe the Army’s doing this to him. He needs counseling. He needs medication. He needs it even more now because of what they’ve put him through.”

Boyle always wanted to be in the Army, Curtiss said, and served in junior ROTC while in high school. He planned to be an officer, worked as psychological operations sergeant, received a Good Conduct Medal and two Army Commendation medals, and wanted to spend his career in the military.

Instead, he was twice diagnosed with PTSD and said he enrolled himself in the Army’s substance abuse program and went to group and individual counseling for his disorder, just as he was supposed to.

The administrative discharge means Boyle will have to prove that his PTSD is service-connected when applying for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and he’s not eligible to immediately receive the counseling he needs through the transition program for service members moving between the military and VA systems.

“The military is creating a societal issue,” Luther said. “These guys come out with no resources, and they’re angry and feeling betrayed. But commanders are thinking, ‘Do I rehabilitate him or do I get rid of him expeditiously so I can replace him with someone who can deploy?’ “

Paul Sullivan, executive director of Veterans for Common Sense, said the Army should have provided Boyle with legal representation; that Boyle should remain in military therapy until VA processes his claim; that he should get an honorable discharge and go through the disability retirement process; and that the military needs to apply the same rules to “pattern of misconduct” as it does to personality disorders.

Retired Army Lt. Col. Mike Parker, who has worked as an advocate for service members going through the disability retirement system, said the cases are frustrating because veterans’ groups just fought to get the military to automatically award 50 percent disability ratings for people with PTSD severe enough to force them to leave the service, as is required by law. Many troops with PTSD had been receiving far lower ratings.

“Even though they have this new regulation saying they can’t kick them out for personality disorders, they can still kick them out for misconduct,” he said. “Everything they say, they have an escape clause.”

Boyle received word that Mulholland was standing behind his decision.

That means Boyle must repay the Army \$18,500 for his re-enlistment bonus. The Army also withheld 65 days' worth of leave payments and his final paycheck.

"I have nothing," Boyle said. "After all I did for the Army, they took my money and kicked me to the curb and said, 'Don't let the door hit you in the ass.' "

Combat Troops Denied Purple Hearts For PTSD: "Shedding Blood Is The Objective"

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "There are so many outrageous statements in this article, that if I were to put the BS in bold, the who thing would be dark. But the last line, "Shedding blood is the objective." is a real doozy."]

January 7, 2009 By LIZETTE ALVAREZ and ERIK ECKHOLM, New York Times
[Excerpts]

The Pentagon has decided that it will not award the Purple Heart, the hallowed medal given to those wounded or killed by enemy action, to war veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder because it is not a physical wound.

The decision, made public on Tuesday, for now ends the hope of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who have the condition and believed that the Purple Hearts could honor their sacrifice and help remove some of the stigma associated with the condition.

The disorder, which may go unrecognized for months or years, can include recurring nightmares, uncontrolled rage and, sometimes, severe depression and suicide. Soldiers grappling with PTSD are often unable to hold down jobs.

In May, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said awarding Purple Hearts to such service members was "clearly something that needs to be looked at," after he toured a mental health center at Fort Bliss, Tex.

One in five service members, or at least 300,000, suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or major depression, according to a Rand Corporation study in 2008.

For some soldiers suffering from the disorder, the historical distinction between blood and no blood in an injury fails to recognize the depths of their mental scars.

A modern war — one fought without safe havens and with the benefit of improved armor — calls for a new definition of injuries, some veterans say.

Kevin Owsley, 47, who served in the Ohio National Guard in 2004 as a gunner on a Humvee and who is being treated for PTSD and traumatic brain injury, said he disagreed with the Pentagon's ruling.

Unable to hold a job, Mr. Owsley supports his family on disability payments. This week he told his Veterans Affairs doctor he was fighting back suicidal impulses, something he has struggled with since his return.

“You relive it every night and every day,” he said. “You dream about it. You can see it, taste it, see people getting killed constantly over and over.”

“It is a soldier’s injury,” he said, angrily, in a telephone interview on Wednesday.

But a Pentagon-supported service group, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, has strongly opposed expanding the definition to include psychological symptoms, saying it would “debase” the honor.

The Purple Heart in its modern form was established by Gen. Douglas MacArthur in 1932. Some 1.7 million service members have received the medal, and, as of last August, 2,743 service members who served in Afghanistan and 33,923 who fought in Iraq had received the award.

The medal entitles veterans to enhanced benefits, including exemptions from co-payments for veterans hospital and outpatient care and gives them higher priority in scheduling appointments.

But a Pentagon-supported service group, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, has strongly opposed expanding the definition to include psychological symptoms, saying it would “debase” the honor.

“Would you award it to anyone who suffered the effects of chemicals or for other diseases and illnesses?” John E. Bircher III, director of public relations for the group, said Wednesday. “How far do you want to take it?” **[So, rat Bircher says if you get hit by a chemical attack, no Purple Heart for you? What a worthless, stupid, heartless, lame-brained piece of shit. But he’s “Pentagon supported,” so why be surprised?]**

There have been recent changes in awarding Purple Hearts. The criteria was expanded in 2008 to include all prisoners of war who died in captivity, including those who were tortured. “There were wounds there,” Mr. Bircher said.

“You have to had shed blood by an instrument of war at the hands of the enemy of the United States,” he said.

“Shedding blood is the objective.”

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

Involuntary Recall Hits Granddad: “Here He’s 50 Years Old, Getting His AARP Card, And Here He’s Being Redeployed With All These 18-Year- Olds”

[Thanks to Fabian Bouthillette, IVAW & Military Project, Sandy Kelson, Veterans For Peace & Military Project & Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace & IVAW

January 2, 2009 Reported by Jeremy Finley, Internet Broadcasting

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -- A veteran who has been out of the military for 15 years and recently received his AARP card was stunned when he received notice he will be deployed to Iraq.

The last time Paul Bandel, 50, saw combat was in the early 1990s during the Gulf War.

“(I was) kind of shocked, not understanding what I was getting into,” said Bandel, who lives in the Nashville, Tenn., area.

In 1993, Bandel took the option of leaving the Army without retirement and never thought he would be called back to action.

“Here he’s 50 years old, getting his AARP card, and here he’s being redeployed with all these 18-year-olds,” said Paul’s wife, Linda Bandel.

“I can understand, say, ‘Here, we have this assignment for you stateside. Go do your training,’” said Paul Bandel. “But, ‘Hey, here’s a gun, go back to the desert.’”

Involuntary recall allows the military, regardless of age or how long someone has been out of service, to order vets back into active duty.

“Anger’s not the word. I was more concerned about the financial impact it’s going to do. My pay’s probably cut in half,” said Paul Bandel.

“Right now, I’m just in disbelief because it’s like the disbelief that this could be happening 15 years after being out of the military. It’s like a dream or a nightmare,” said Linda Bandel.

The veteran is dusting off his old uniforms and torn between his duty to his country and obligations as a grandfather.

“I certainly never thought I’d be going back there at this point in my life,” said Paul Bandel.

The last missile system the veteran was trained to operate is no longer used by the military.

Calls to the Army and the Pentagon about how many men and women in their 50s are being called back to duty were not returned Wednesday.

Paul Bandel will be deployed overseas until 2010. His wife plans to move in with her elderly parents until his return.

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 Douglass, 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**

Backward Love Affair

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: January 09, 2009
Subject: Backward Love Affair 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

Backward Love Affair

**I will die for you
I will give up my life for you
because that is how deep I love you
stars and stripes of love
you are my one and only
without you there is nothing
I love my President with all my heart
with every ounce of my being
even though one is white
and one is black
It is so hard to say
but I love my Congress too
I will do anything that they ask**

me to do without questions
because I love you too
I will give up an arm
give up a leg I will die for you
because I could never find someone
in the whole wide world
as good as you
I will kill for you to show my love
I haven't any idea what I would do
without you
You can have sex with me
even sodomize me
for all I am worth until
the end of time
my Evangelical Chaplain
the only kind of Chaplains we have
said these are the end times
I hope he is right because
I don't know how much more
I can stand, I didn't mean to say that
I love him too
That is how much I love you
that is how deep I will die for you
even though you gave me syphilis
I love the Supreme Court too
I will torture anybody until
they die because I love you too
But I'm running out of words
to say to all of you
so I will send Hallmark cards
to you
that say my phony love for you
so much better except they don't
say I will die for you
I will give my life for you
will do everything
you want me to do, I will never not do
what you want me to do
I will die for you
I don't care who we are fighting
or why because that is
how deep I love you
I will even commit suicide
for you.

**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

January 8, 1912: Heroic Anniversary



Carl Bunin Peace History January 7-13

The African National Congress was founded in South Africa. The ANC (now multi-racial) was the first black political organization in South Africa.

It was formed to combat the racially separatist system known as apartheid.

January 10, 1776: Magnificent Anniversary



Thomas Paine

Carl Bunin Peace History January 7-13

Thomas Paine anonymously published his influential pamphlet, "Common Sense."

In it Paine questioned the fundamental legitimacy of the rule of kings, and advocated the doctrine of independence for Americans, and the rights of mankind.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Palestinian March in Portland, Oregon 12-30-08



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: January 07, 2009
Subject: Palestinian Children Holding Up pictures

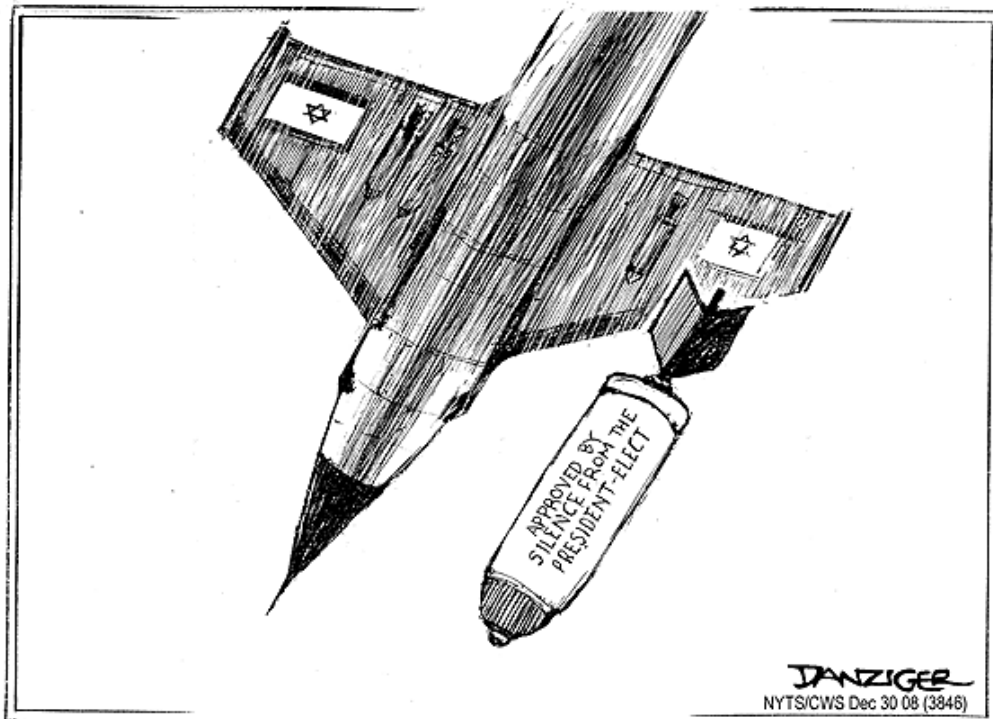
Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)



A wounded Palestinian child at Gaza City's al-Shifa hospital following Zionist attacks. (Photo: AFP/Yasser Saymeh)

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "All the planes, tanks, ammo, rockets, bombs, bunker busters, radios, radars, etc., are supplied by US taxpayers, enriching the arms makers and dealers. We've been warned in the past. What will it take to get our attention?"]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



RECEIVED

A Vietnam Veteran Asks: “How Can We Help Get Our Soldiers Out Of Iraq?”

From: BW
To: GI Special
Sent: December 30, 2008
Subject: VA Benefits Slingshot

I saw a copy of the VA Benefits Slingshot; GI Special on the internet. I was very moved by what you and others had to say.

I was stationed in Pleiku, Vietnam in 1969.

I saw the war and hated what we were doing there.

How can we help get our soldiers out of Iraq?

I saw this whole thing coming as Bush ramped up the escalation in '02 and I knew we were repeating the same mistake we made in 'Nam.

So many dead and hurt and it could have all been avoided.

I look forward to hearing from you and others.

Best regards,

B

REPLY:

**“The Troops Have The Answers To Your
Questions And Those Of Others.
“They Can End This War”**

From: Alan Stolzer, The Military Project

To: BW

Sent: January 02, 2009

Subject: REPLY

Dear Brother,

My name is Alan Stolzer. Thomas Barton and I are members of The Military Project, an organization that outreaches to active duty military personnel who oppose the disastrous wars we've been mired in for too long as it is.

I am the Civilian Outreach Coordinator and in answer to your question “how can we get our soldiers out of Iraq?” we in The Military Project say outreach is the best possible way.

For example: on January 10th we will be headed for a National Guard armory here at 5:45 am to hand out literature, snacks and DVDs as we've been doing for four years now.

Invariably we're received well by the troops coming for drill.

We're also outreaching to two other armories on that same date in the greater New York area.

The troops have the answers to your questions and those of others. They can end this war.

We know of the horrors you faced in Vietnam or else you wouldn't have contacted us in the first place.

Clearly you understand that action is necessary to end the wars in view of your "hating what we were doing there (Vietnam)." We join you in that intensity.

We'd like to continue this correspondence, get your opinions and see if, ultimately, we can work together.

Together is a word a lot of us began to understand during the Vietnam era. That word still works.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

In respect and solidarity,

Alan Stolzer

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

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

Got an opinion? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

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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