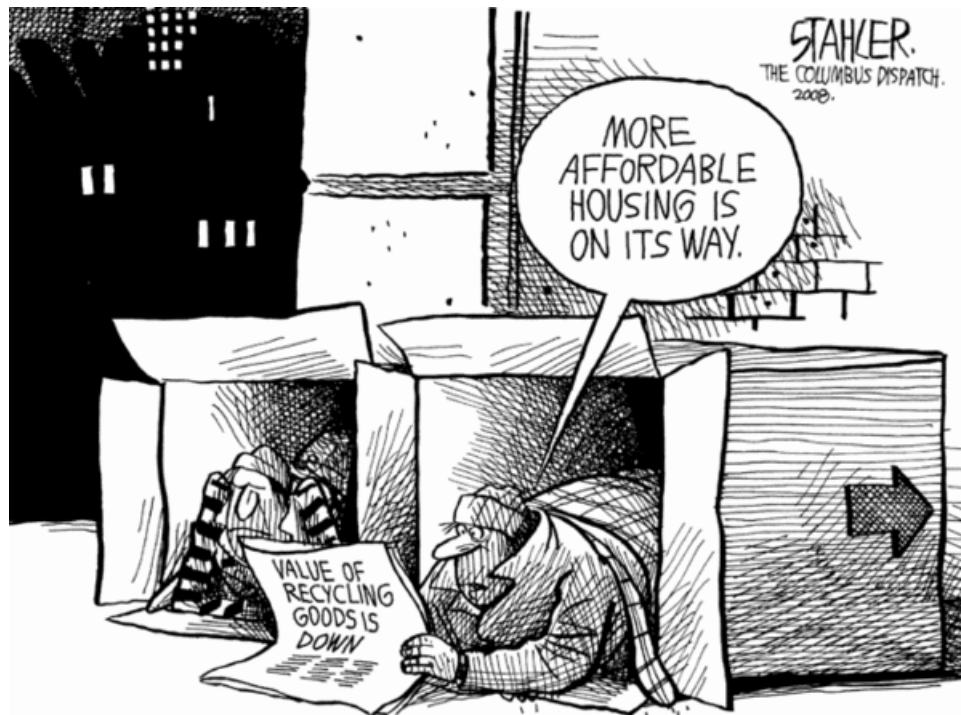


GI SPECIAL 7A6:



Notes From A Lost War:

**“When I Am Fighting Here, I Am
Fighting A Professional Army,”
Marine Captain Says;
U.S. Commands’ Brilliant Solution:
Less Body Armor For Troops & Less
Armor For Military Vehicles
[And Therefore, Of Course, Even More
Dead U.S. Troops]**

When the Taliban does take on the Marines, it's a different kind of fight, Marines said. For one, the Taliban will wait until they're ready, not just when an opportunity appears. They'll clear the area of women and children, not use them as shields. And when the attack comes, it's often a full-scale attack, with flanks, trenches and a plan.

Jan 11 By Nancy A. Youssef, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

DELARAM, Afghanistan — On a sunset patrol here in late December, U.S. Marines spotted a Taliban unit trying to steal Afghan police vehicles at a checkpoint. In a flash, the Marines turned to pursue, driving off the main road and toward the gunfire coming from the mountain a half mile away.

But their six-ton vehicles were no match for the Taliban pickups.

The mine-resistant vehicles and heavily armored Humvees bucked and swerved as drivers tried to maneuver them across fields that the Taliban vehicles raced across.

The Afghan police trailed behind in unarmored pick-up trucks, impatient about their allies' weighty pace.

The Marines, weighted down with 60 pounds of body armor each, struggled to climb up Saradaka Mountain. Once at the top, it was clear to everyone that the Taliban would get away. Second Lt. Phil Gilreath, 23, of Kingwood, La., called off the mission.

"It would be a ghost chase, and we would run the risk of the vehicles breaking down again," Gilreath said. The Marines spent the next hour trying to find their way back to the paved road.

The men of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, based at Camp Lejeune, are discovering in their first two months in Afghanistan that the tactics they learned in nearly six years of combat in Iraq are of little value here — and may even inhibit their ability to fight their Taliban foes.

Their MRAP mine-resistant vehicles, which cost \$1 million each, were specially developed to combat the terrible effects of roadside bombs, the single biggest killer of Americans in Iraq.

But Iraq is a country of highways and paved roads, and the heavily armored vehicles are cumbersome on Afghanistan's unpaved roads and rough terrain where roadside bombs are much less of a threat. **[Stupidity award of the year, so far, for that comment. IEDs were up 100% in 2008 from 2007, and slaughtering occupation troops wholesale.]**

Body armor is critical to warding off snipers in Iraq, where Sunni Muslim insurgents once made video of American soldiers falling to well-placed sniper shots a staple of recruiting efforts. But the added weight makes Marines awkward and slow when they

have to dismount to chase after Taliban gunmen in Afghanistan's rough terrain.
[Yesterday, it was reported the Taliban are deploying sniper teams. So, by all means, cut back on the body armor. Right. More about that below.]

Even the Humvees, finally carrying heavy armor after years of complaints that they did little to mitigate the impact of roadside explosives in Iraq, are proving a liability.

Marines say the heavy armor added for protection in Iraq is too rough on the vehicles' transmissions in Afghanistan's much hillier terrain, and the vehicles frequently break down — so often in fact that before every patrol Marine units here designate one Humvee as the tow vehicle.

In Iraq, armored vehicles could travel on both the roads and the desert. Here, the paved roads are mostly for outsiders - travelers, truckers and foreign troops; to reach the populace, American forces must find unmapped caravan routes that run through treacherous terrain, routes not designed for their modern military vehicles.

In Iraq, a half-hour firefight was considered a long engagement; here, Marines have fought battles that have lasted as long as eight hours against an enemy whose attacking forces have grown from platoon-size to company-size.

And Col. Duffy White , the commander of the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force , said he anticipates that Marines will be wearing less armor by spring, when fighting season begins again.

“Hopefully we have not become wedded to the vehicles,” White said, a reference to the MRAPs, which currently are required for every patrol.

“They tell me that Afghanistan is Iraq on steroids,” said Gilreath, who is on his first deployment and hasn't served in Iraq .

During a patrol that found the Marines surrounded by poppy fields, they spotted two men on a motorcycle trailing them. It was the only other vehicle on an otherwise unused paved road.

“You see that. They're watching us,” Gilreath radioed to his fellow Marines.

When the Taliban does take on the Marines, it's a different kind of fight, Marines said.

For one, the Taliban will wait until they're ready, not just when an opportunity appears.

They'll clear the area of women and children, not use them as shields.

And when the attack comes, it's often a full-scale attack, with flanks, trenches and a plan, said one Marine captain and Iraq veteran who asked not to be identified because he wasn't sure he was allowed to discuss tactics.

Afghans “are willing to fight to the death. They recover their wounded, just like we do,” said the captain.

“When I am fighting here, I am fighting a professional army. If direct fighting does not work, they will go to an IED. They plan their ammunition around poppy season. To fight them, you are pulling every play out of the playbook.”

U.S. troops also are frustrated by the different rules of engagement they must operate under in Afghanistan. Until Jan. 1, U.S. forces in Iraq operated under their own rules of engagement. If they saw something suspicious, they could kick down a door, search a home or detain a suspicious person.

But in Afghanistan, they operate under the rules of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, of which U.S. troops are part. Under those regulations, only Afghans can search buildings and detain people.

Gilreath felt that frustration shortly after he spotted the trailing motorcycle. Radio chatter mentioned a local bomb-making factory, though it didn't say where. Gilreath decided to investigate two nearby homes. Trailing behind was one Afghan police truck, the only one available that day.

The Marines secured the perimeter and the handful of Afghan police officers searched one clay structure, then the other. But they moved slowly. Some Marines started peeking the windows, doing their best to honor ISAF rules and still satisfy their urge to search.

As the burka-clad women huddled with their children outside, and the men tried to assure the Marines they were law abiding, a single Afghan man began walking off through a nearby field. There weren't enough Afghan police to both search the homes and stop the man.

“We just need more everything,” Gilreath said afterward.

MORE:

U.K. Forces In Afghanistan In Worst Ever Winter Campaign “Roadside And Suicide Bombs An Expanding Tactic That Has Taken A Bloody Toll On Soldiers And Civilians For The Past Year”

“The Death Rate Has Already Surpassed The Equivalent Period Of Most Of The Customarily-Tougher Summer Tours”

11 January 2009 By Terri Judd, Independent News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

British troops are fighting their deadliest winter campaign to date in Afghanistan as the Prime Minister continues to resist calls to send reinforcements.

Traditionally the onslaught from the Taliban has quietened over the icy winter. Less than three months ago Foreign Secretary David Miliband spoke of the “winter lull” offering a chance to plan the next phase of a campaign aimed at supporting Afghan governance. But the hiatus has failed to materialise this year and the fighting has been relentless.

In the first two-and-a-half months in Helmand, 3 Commando Brigade has suffered 17 deaths. By contrast, the previous 2006 and 2007 winter tours cost 10 and 12 men respectively over a six month period. Fatalities have been matched by injuries. In the first half of December there were 58 wounded servicemen or women admitted to the field hospital in comparison with a total of 43 in January last year.

The death rate has already surpassed the equivalent period of most of the customarily-tougher summer tours, only matched so far by the toll wreaked on 16 Air Assault Brigade this year.

British commanders in Helmand insist the heavy losses are due to the fact that the Royal Marines and attached army units have been “taking the fight to the Taliban” in a previously untouched insurgent stronghold.

Experts, however, believe the surge has more to do with a build up of locally-based militants, increasingly sophisticated terrorist tactics and a pre-emptive strike to disrupt this year’s elections.

Despite Afghanistan’s unforgiving winters, the insurgents now operate on a year-round basis.

David Livingstone, Chatham House international security expert, said the increasing sophistication of insurgent tactics meant they were deliberately pre-empting an anticipated spring offensive by NATO forces.

Of the 18 British deaths this tour, five lost their lives in Sond Chara. By contrast 11 died in explosions with roadside and suicide bombs an expanding tactic that has taken a bloody toll on soldiers and civilians for the past year.

Mr Burton said: “Sticking an IED by the side of the road in freezing conditions only takes two or three men in a small detail,” said Mr Burton. “It is showing a tragic trend in the country.”

Mr Burton [Paul Burton, Director of Policy Research at The International Council on Security and Development] said: “They (the Taliban) are agile in a way that is costing more lives. The military paint a positive scene – that they are on the run. That may be the case, but with such a hard winter one can only really look at the situation deteriorating, unfortunately.”

MORE:

**“The Situation Is Getting Worse”
“Almost Every Coalition Forces’
Camp In Afghanistan Is Named For A
Life Cut Short”
“Flags Are Rarely Seen Fluttering At The
Top Of Their Poles Anymore”**

January 13, 2009 By Danna Harman, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor
[Excerpts]

Camp Keating, Afghanistan - Keating, Fritsche, Lowell, Bostick, Cherry-Beasley.

The list goes on and on.

Almost every coalition forces’ camp in Afghanistan is named for a life cut short.

Officers give briefings in front of plaques bearing the photographs of the dead. Camps are rechristened to memorialize their names.

And flags are rarely seen fluttering at the top of their poles anymore.

The situation is getting worse. In recent months, coalition deaths here have outnumbered those in Iraq, and attacks in 2008 were up by 28 percent over the previous year, says Col. Skip Davis, strategic adviser to Gen. David McKiernan, who commands the approximately 70,000 troops in Afghanistan.

A record 294 NATO soldiers were killed in Afghanistan last year; 155 were Americans, according to icasualties.org.

When his base was targeted by enemy mortar fire on a recent night, Colonel [Salvatore] Petrovia told his troops hold their fire, and instead set off early the next morning in a convoy of Humvees.

“I elected not to fire, and instead investigate,” he explains.

On the days leading up to the attack, Petrovia's troops had been out in the nearby villages handing out backpacks and pens to school kids. After the mortar attack, they returned to ask for help.

"We were hit last night, do you know anything about it?" Petrovia asked Afghan police officers stationed nearby. They were praying at the time, they reply, and heard nothing.

"What about you guys?" he asks a group of schoolteachers, for whom the Americans are building a new building. Nothing.

Petrovia and his soldiers slowly hike up steep goat paths into the sandstone and shale mountains to search for where the mortar was fired.

The day drags on, the paths end, the and progress is slow.

There is no one to talk to, no sign of a launch.

**"Taliban Are Not The Product Of
A Factory"**

**"They Have Risen From This
Society And Are Being Supported
By This Society"**

**"Defend Your Country Against
Foreign Occupation"**

**[Only 170,000 More Occupation Troops
Necessary For Victory]**

Jan 13 by Sardar Ahmad, (AFP) [Excerpts]

Afghanistan's long years of unrest have produced a new generation of Islamic militants, many of them bent on holy war, who are reinforcing the "old Taliban" in their deadly insurgency, analysts say.

Afghan historian and political commentator Habibullah Rafi agreed.

The insurgents fighting against the US-backed government of President Hamid Karzai are a "combination of old and new Taliban," he told AFP.

“The leaders are the same old leaders but the foot soldiers are new recruits who have joined the Taliban against the international forces in a holy war.

“The Taliban message is, ‘Defend your country against foreign occupation’. This is a strong message, which has helped recruit thousands of new fighters from among passionate Afghan villagers.”

“The absence of Afghan forces in the provinces has created a favourable situation for the Taliban,” analyst Haroon Mir from the Afghanistan Centre for Research and Policy Studies told AFP.

“Taliban take advantage of the population’s dissatisfaction with the government and with the foreign presence in the country,” he said.

This makes it difficult to say how many Taliban fighters there actually are, but US military officials have said they may number up to 20,000. [Counterinsurgency 101: To win, an occupation must have minimum 10-1 advantage. So, it will take only about 170,000 more occupation troops to do it. Duh. T]

Taliban spokesman Yousuf Ahmadi, asked about claims that his fighters are trained in Pakistani camps funded by Al-Qaeda and foreign Islamist groups, responded: “We are Afghans.”

“Taliban are not the product of a factory,” Ahmadi told AFP by telephone. “They have risen from this society and are being supported by this society. We are fighting for our beliefs.”

Welcome To Liberated Afghanistan: News Editor Faces Death Penalty From U.S. Collaborators For Criticizing All Religions

January 14, 2009 Agence France-Presse

An Afghan news editor has been arrested for publishing a newspaper article rejecting that religions, including Islam, were passed to humans through divine revelations, an official said on Wednesday.

The news editor of a small Kabul newspaper, Payman Daily, was picked up Tuesday, days after the allegedly blasphemous article was printed, the deputy attorney general, Fazel Ahmad Faqiryar, told AFP.

“He was arrested for publishing an article in which he has rejected revelation. This is an insult to Islam and the rest of the religions,” Faqiryar said.

The journalist, whom Faqiryar would not name, was being investigated. If found guilty under Afghanistan's law, which is based on Islamic Sharia law, he could face a sentence ranging from a reprimand to the death penalty, the official said.

The journalist was arrested after a council of Islamic clerics and a government media disciplinary commission found that the article was "an insult to Islam," the official said.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



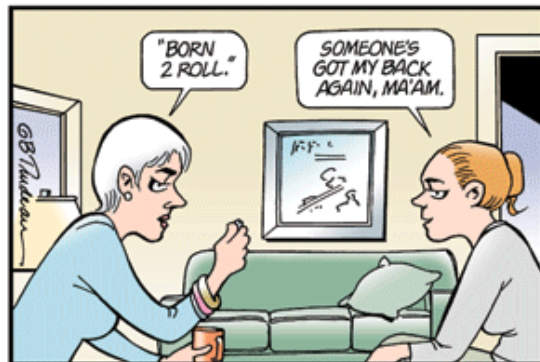
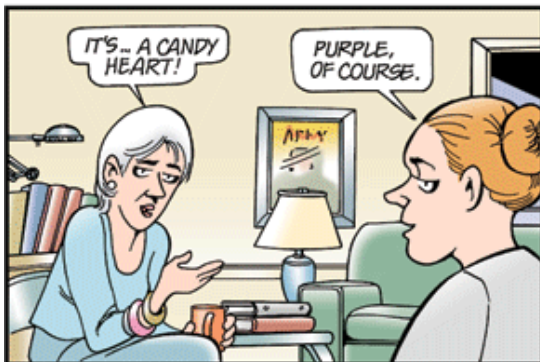
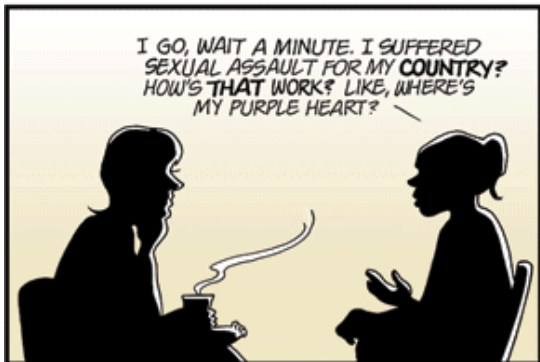
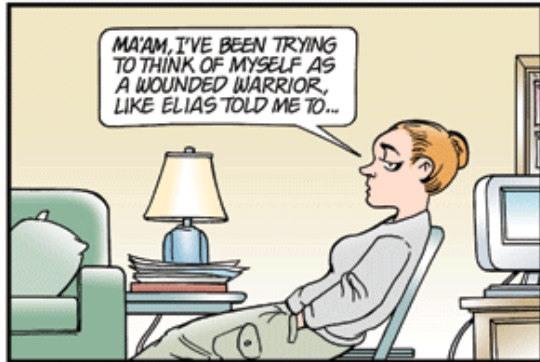
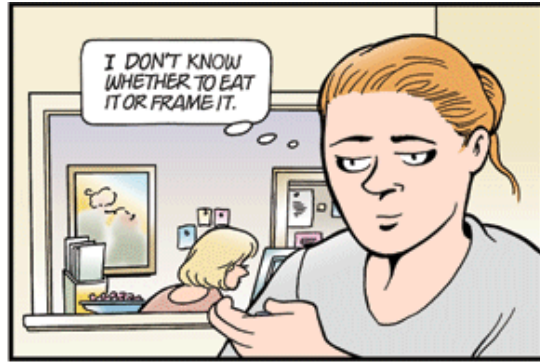
US soldiers patrol in Paktika province along the Afghan-Pakistan border in November 2008. (AFP/File/David Furst)

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

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

TROOP NEWS



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www.dreamwork.com

3,500 From 1st Cav Off To The Imperial Slaughterhouse

January 19, 2008 Army Times

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, of Fort Hood began deploying to Iraq in early January.

This is the third Iraq deployment for the brigade of about 3,500 troops, which served there from January 2004 to March 2005, and October 2006 to January 2008. In between those deployments, in October 2005, the brigade was sent to New Orleans to help with humanitarian relief operations following Hurricane Katrina.

The brigade is deploying this month to Iraq after spending 12 months at home.

No Sanctuary: Canada Deports AWOL Soldier, Husband

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Another first for women."]

Jan 7, 2009 The Canadian Press

TORONTO — The first woman soldier to flee the U.S. military for Canada to avoid the Iraq war has been ordered deported along with her husband and their young children.

Kimberly Rivera said Wednesday her requests to stay on humanitarian and compassionate grounds were rejected. Rivera is likely to be court-martialed when she returns to the United States and could face up to five years in prison.

Rivera, a first class army private stationed in Fort Carson, Colo., served in Iraq in 2006 and came to Canada the following year after she refused redeployment.

She lives in Toronto with her husband and three children — the youngest is 6 weeks old and Canadian born.

Rivera said she'll discuss her options with her husband and supporters but feels she's come to the "end of the road."

The family must leave Canada by Jan. 27 unless the order is reversed.

The group War Resisters Support Campaign says four other resisters and their families face deportation in January.

In July, Robin Long became the first American resister to the Iraq war to be removed by Canadian authorities. Long, who also was stationed at Fort Carson, was sentenced to 15 months in prison after pleading guilty to a reduced charge of desertion.

During the Vietnam War, up to 90,000 Americans successfully won refuge in Canada, most of them to avoid the military draft. The majority went home after the United States granted amnesty in the late 1970s. Many also were given permanent residence status in Canada that eventually resulted in citizenship.

Canadian parliament's lower house passed a nonbinding motion in June allowing U.S. military deserters to stay in Canada, but the conservative government ignored the vote.

Conservative government party members opposed the motion, not willing to risk straining ties with Washington over the issue or fight rulings already made by the courts and immigration officials.

More Bosses Refusing To Hire Back Guard & Reserve Members; Too Many Deployments

January 19, 2008 By Karen Jowers, Army Times [Excerpts]

There are signs that employers are having increasing difficulty complying with the law related to rehiring National Guard and Reserve members returning from military duty.

"The op tempo of the Guard and Reserve is having a dramatic effect on employers' willingness to comply" with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, said Mathew Tully, an attorney who specializes in military law and writes a legal column for Army Times.

Some employers say it's worth it for them to reach a monetary settlement rather than rehire the service member, Tully said.

'We've seen a dramatic increase in complaints compared to 2006," he said.

"Irrespective of what the law says, employers tend to get aggravated with multiple call-ups." Guard and reserve members are not just being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, but are being pulled away for training and other duty.

The number of cases of USERRA complaints handled by volunteer ombudsmen for the Defense Department's National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) increased by about 12 percent in 2008, compared to 2007, following a steady decline over the previous four years.

Service members who want free help can go to the ESGR, which tries to broker an informal solution between service members and employers before informing

service members that they can file a case with the Department of Labor or hire a private attorney.

But regardless of how many cases come to the ESGR or other federal agencies, that's the "tip of the tip of the tip of the iceberg," said Sam Wright, a retired Navy captain and attorney who is an expert on USERRA who works for Tully's law firm.

Complete information on the total number of USERRA cases 'just does not exist,' he said.

An unknown number of service members decide to hire their own attorneys for help in resolving the issue with the employer, or to sue the employer, he said.

"We're seeing more employers who are fighting back," he said. 'They're getting legal help to try to find ways around this.

Another hidden factor is people who never complain. They may think they have rights, but don't know what to do.'

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

Jan 11 (Reuters) & Jan 12, 2009 AFP & January 13, 2009 By Sahar Issa, McClatchy Newspapers

"Three soldiers were killed when a roadside bomb exploded as their convoy was moving in Yarmuk area in western Baghdad," a military source said.

Three policemen were injured when a roadside bomb targeted a police patrol near the Shaab sports stadium in central Baghdad.

Insurgents killed three policemen when they attacked a police patrol in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Four policemen were wounded by a car bomb on Saturday in southern Mosul, police said.

Four policemen were wounded by a roadside bomb on Saturday near al-Tayaran Square in central Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeted a National Police patrol in Doura, southern Baghdad at 8 p.m. injuring eight civilians.

A roadside bomb targeted a police patrol in New Mosul, western Mosul City killing one policeman, injuring another.

Insurgents opened fire upon a policeman in al Najafi Street, central Mosul severely wounding him.

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

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.**

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

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“The Zionists Are Nothing More Than Imposters, International Terrorists, Who In No Way, Shape Or Form Represent The Peace Loving Jewish People And Therefore Have No Right To Even One Inch Of Earth In The Holy Land”

The Outcry Of Worldwide Authentic Judaism Condemning The Genocide In Occupied Palestine

בעזרת האלקים
נטורי קרתא של היהדות החרדית – פלשתינא

NETUREI KARTA OF THE ORTHODOX JEWRY OF PALESTINE JERUSALEM, PALESTINE



NETUREI KARTA [New York City]

28/12/08 Jerusalem, Palestine, nkp@neto.bezeqint.net

Worldwide Authentic Orthodox Judaism strongly condemns the genocide being carried out by the Zionist occupation army through air attacks on Gaza city within the sovereign state of Palestine with the intention of demoralizing the Palestinian people together with

their democratically elected leaders in order to rip them of the most basic and legitimate rights to govern their people; to expel innocent men, women and children from their homes while denying from the most basic human rights and other vital needs; murdering men woman and children while blatantly defiling human rights and all international laws norms.

All this is being carried out due to their sadistic desire to destroy the legitimate Palestinian government which was democratically elected and empowered with a wide majority and to “punish” the Palestinian people who chose this government through pure democratic means, for the refusal to recognize the criminal Zionist entity as a “State”.

We hereby call to all the nations of the world and especially to those enlightened Arab nations who seek fairness and freedom to utilize all possible means to prevent this great genocide by the Zionist forces who wish to occupy the Palestinian nation who are already suffering from daily bloody Zionist attacks while the free world stands in silent frustration.

We G-D fearing Jews hereby declare that the Zionist entity, in its entirety have no connection to the authentic Jewish people and their religion which is completely against any type of murder or violence.

The Zionists are nothing more than imposters, international terrorists, who in no way, shape or form represent the peace loving Jewish people and therefore have no right to even one inch of earth in the Holy Land.

WHO IS GOING TO COME TO THE IMMEDIATE AID OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEM FROM GENOCIDE?

WE CALL OUT TO THE ENTIRE WORLD OF MORAL PEOPLE TO STEP UP AND BE COUNTED AND NOT STAND BY SILENTLY AS THE ZIONIST BEASTS CONTINUE THEIR RAMPAGE AND DESTRUCTION!

We beseech G-D to quickly save the Palestinian people and its leaders from the claws of the Zionist monsters and strongly await the day when the legitimate rule over all of Palestine will return to the later with Al-Kuds as is capital and all the Zionists will be driven out of the land by G-D's hand and we should see with our eyes G-D's the crystallization of G-D's promise to his faithful prophets to reign over the entire world in His Holy Kingdom and then all Nations shall serve Him together.

Signing with pain and with rage,

Rabbi Meir Hirsh
NETUREI KARTA PALESTINE

Zionist Filth Kill Woman And Her Daughter Carrying White Flag:

“Do You Think I’m Against Them Firing Rockets Now?” “No. I Was Against It Before. Not Anymore”

January 13, 2009 By Taghreed El-Khodary and Sabrina Tavernise, The International Herald Tribune [Excerpts]

GAZA: Growing numbers of Palestinians are fleeing their homes for makeshift shelters in schools, office buildings and a park as the Israeli Army continues to press its military campaign deeper into the city of Gaza.

Movement is complicated by the confusion over when it is safe to leave. When the Abu Hajaj family received a leaflet last weekend, they took it as a sign of safe passage.

But Majad Abdel Karim Abu Hajaj, a teacher at a UN school, said his mother and sister were killed as they walked holding a white flag. Their bodies remain where they fell, he said, because ambulances cannot get to the area.

Palestinians interviewed in Gaza on Monday cited another reason for their flight: Israeli soldiers, they allege, are firing rounds of a noxious substance that burns skin and makes it hard to breathe.

A resident in the southwest part of Gaza on Monday showed a reporter a piece of metal casing with the identifying number, M825A1, which Marc Garlasco, a military analyst with Human Rights Watch, identified as white phosphorous. It is typically used for signaling, producing smoke screens and destroying enemy equipment.

Dalal [Major Jacob Dalal, an Israeli military spokesman] would not say whether Israel was using white phosphorous but said: “The munitions we use are consistent with international law.”

Still, white phosphorous causes injury, and a growing number of Gazans report being hurt by it in Beit Lahiya, Khan Yunis, and in eastern and southwestern Gaza City. When exposed to air, it ignites, the group says, and if packed into an artillery shell, it can rain down flaming chemicals that cling to anything they touch.

Luay Suboh, 10, from Beit Lahiya, lost his eyesight and skin on his face Saturday when, his mother Siham said, a casing clung to him as he darted home from a shelter where his family is staying.

The substance smelled like burned trash, said Jaawanah, the mother who fled her home in Zeitoun, who had experienced it too.

She had no affection for Hamas, but her sufferings are changing that.

“Do you think I’m against them firing rockets now?” she asked, referring to Hamas. “No. I was against it before. Not anymore.”

Up To His Neck In Their Blood: Obama Signaled The Israeli Government To Attack Gaza; After The Election, The Faithful Dogs Obeyed Their New Master



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

“If somebody was sending rockets into my house where my two daughters sleep at night, I’m going to do everything in my power to stop that.

“I would expect Israelis to do the same thing.”

– Sen. Barack Obama
July, 2008, speaking in Sderot, Israel

“The U.S. Government Decides How Much Leeway Israel Has, And This Leeway Defines How Successful The ‘Israel Lobby’ Will Be”

January 9, 2009 By Lance Selfa, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

The most popular explanation usually given for the American elite’s pro-Israel bias is that it fears the wrath of the “Israel lobby.”

There is a powerful network of Zionist organizations--led by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)--that donates money to pro-Israel candidates and lobbies the U.S. government on behalf of Israel. There’s nothing anti-Semitic about pointing this out. These groups are quite open about their activities, and they aren’t shy about touting their own influence.

But are these organizations and their lobbying efforts the reason why the U.S. supports Israel?

From a socialist point of view, the answer is no.

Israel annually receives more than \$3 billion in U.S. aid.

Egypt runs second at around \$2 billion.

Yet no one would seriously claim that the aid Egypt receives is the result of an “Egyptian lobby.”

It’s no coincidence that Israel and Egypt are the two top recipients of U.S. aid. Both are important U.S. allies in the region where the lion’s share of the world’s oil is located.

Since the end of the Second World War, the U.S. has tied its “national security” to its access to and control of the flow of oil. That’s why the U.S. has given military and economic aid to prop up “friendly” states in the region--not only Israel, but Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf monarchies, too.

The U.S. puts Israel at the top of the list because its government and population form the only uniformly pro-U.S. state in the region. In countries like Egypt, pro-Western governments rule over restive populations that hate the U.S. government’s support for Israel and for their own oppressive regimes.

Even the quisling government of U.S.-occupied Iraq isn’t completely reliable.

The U.S. government decides how much leeway Israel has, and this leeway defines how successful the “Israel lobby” will be.

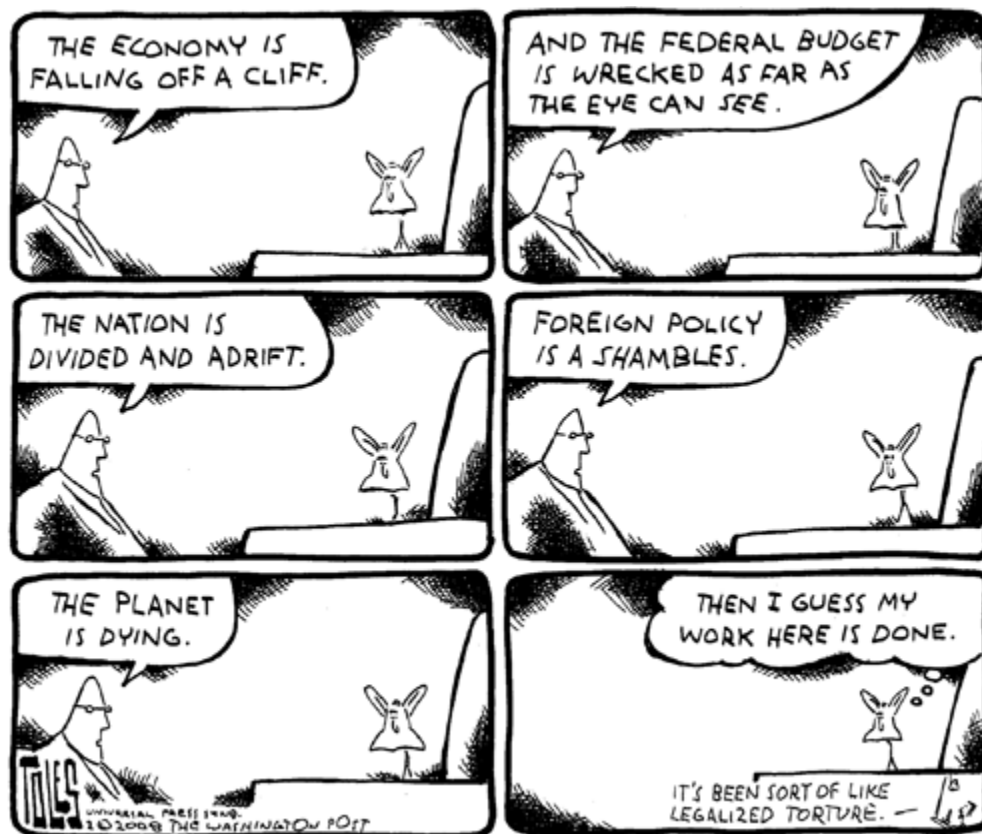
As long as Israel remains central to U.S. imperialism in the Middle East, Israel will continue to receive U.S. backing and aid.

That's why Israel's ace in the hole in Washington isn't AIPAC, but the Pentagon, the CIA and the military-industrial complex.

And as long as the national security establishment remains committed to Israel, elected politicians will provide the political cover that justifies the billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars that Israel receives.

[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



Obama Poised To Become Most Ass-Kissed President In History

Comment: T

Borowitz, article below, missed another fat target: The Racist Left, which repeatedly portrays Obama as a well-meaning but simple fellow who truly wants to do the right thing, but, you see, he's at the mercy of the evil politicians in Washington DC who want to do things like send more troops to die in Afghanistan. They babble stupid bullshit about how he really wants peace, but those nasty DC people won't let him do what he really wants.

The fact is that Obama is a master of politics, winning the Presidency in one of the best organized presidential campaigns in U.S. history. He is arguably the most brilliant political tactician to have emerged in a generation.

He knows exactly what he has done, is doing, and plans to do in the future, including keeping the Empire at war, and killing as many U.S. troops, Afghans, and Iraqis as he believes necessary to preserve it.

And he supports Israel's massacres in Gaza.

Only racist scum could even think, let alone argue publicly, that he is some innocent but dimwitted peacemaker who needs protection against sinister forces. He *is* the new, fresh, wholesome, smiling sinister force.

***Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,
And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
And frame my face to all occasions.
-- Gloucester, "Henry VI"-Shakespeare***

January 13, 2009 The Borowitz Report

When he is inaugurated on January 20, President-elect Barack Obama is on track to become the most ass-kissed president in the nation's history, some historians believe.

Those experts say that with conservative pundits and evangelists scurrying to hop aboard the Obama bandwagon, in addition to the liberal talking heads who have been kissing his ass for months, the President-elect's buttocks are being sucked to a degree that is without precedent.

"Abraham Lincoln is perhaps our country's greatest president," says Doris Kearns Goodwin, noted historian and author of the bestselling *Team of Rivals*, "but he never had his fanny kissed like this."

At MSNBC, a top executive announced today that the news network would suspend its regular programming between now and the Inauguration "to administer one long, glorious blowjob to President-elect Barack Obama."

The network's new promos reflect this agenda, as a disembodied voice asks the viewer, "Do you remember the moment when you fell in love with Barack Obama?"

At the final press conference of his presidency, George W. Bush ruefully contrasted his treatment by the press with the historic level of suckage being bestowed on the President-elect's buttal region.

"You people never kissed my hiney like you're kissing his, and you know it," Mr. Bush said. "As far as I'm concerned, you bastards can all go to hell."

Mr. Bush later struck an elegiac note, saying that he was considering several options for his retirement, including a return to full-time drinking.

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

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CLASS WAR REPORTS

Welcome To The Occupied U.S.A. Police Murder An Unarmed Man On The Platform Of A Transit Station

January 7, 2009 By Todd Chretien, Socialist Worker

ON NEW Year's Eve, as scores of horrified people looked on, Oakland transit police forced 22-year-old Oscar Grant to the ground, knelt on his head and then shot him in the back.

Grant, an African American father of a 4-year-old daughter and an Oakland grocery store worker, died several hours later. The bullet entered his back, ricocheted off the concrete floor and punctured his lungs.

Police attempted to confiscate cell phone videos taken by Bay Area Rapid Transit passengers and initially claimed that security cameras didn't record the incident. However, in the last two days, they have been forced to admit that the security cameras did capture the assault.

Additionally, one especially graphic video taken by a passenger was released by the Bay Area television station KTVU. It shows an unarmed and unresisting Grant, lying face down, shot at point-blank range by an officer as his horrified friends and onlookers watch.

Although police and BART authorities still refuse to give the name of the officer who shot and killed Grant, KTVU obtained a copy of the civil lawsuit filed by Grant's family, which names officer Johannes Mehserle as the shooter.

Grant "was unarmed and offered no physical resistance to BART police officers," according to the claim filed by attorney John Burris. According to KTVU's summary of the lawsuit:

Grant fell to his knees and put his hands up "in an effort to demonstrate that he was submitting to the Latino officer's thuggish display of authority."

But the officer dug his knee into Grant's back, causing Grant to "yell out in agony," the claim states.

"Grant feared for his life and 'made a valiant effort to de-escalate the situation by appealing to the officer's sense of humanity by telling the officer that he had a 4-year-old daughter' and asking the officer not to use a Taser gun on him, according to the claim.

"The claim alleges that Mehserle, who was standing nearby, knelt down and restrained Grant's hands, then 'inexplicably' stood up, drew his firearm and pointed it directly at Grant's back.

"The claim states, 'Without so much as flinching, Officer Mehserle stood over Mr. Grant and mercilessly fired his weapon, mortally wounding Mr. Grant with a single gunshot wound to the back.'"

THE NEW Year's killing has provoked a growing community response as the police account of the incident has fallen apart. Although Mehserle has yet to issue a statement, according to media accounts, police officials suggested to the press that he intended to use his Taser gun on Grant and claimed he might not have recognized the difference between the two weapons.

That assertion has been met with disbelief by anti-police brutality activists. Burris cast further doubt on the police account at a January 4 press conference:

“It’s an outrageous set of facts. My sense is clear that this was an unjustifiable shooting. There were no movements, and he was not trying to overrun the police officer. A gun cannot discharge accidentally. You have to have your finger on the trigger.

“When conduct like this occurs, there is a price to pay. Police have to be held accountable when they engage in this kind of unlawful conduct.”

Following the killing, a spirited, spontaneous protest of 20 people took place outside BART Police headquarters on January 5. Grant’s family is holding a memorial for him in his hometown of Hayward, just south of Oakland, on January 7.

Activists are planning a rally to demand justice for Oscar Grant at the Fruitvale BART station in Oakland later in the day, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. The protest was called by concerned community members and is spreading quickly by word of mouth.

Police brutality is nothing new in Oakland. In the last few years, a string of police killings have angered residents, including last spring’s shooting death of 15-year-old José Luis Buenrostro-Gonzalez, which remains an open case, with no officers being accused of any wrongdoing.

“We have no intention of letting the cops off the hook,” said Dana Blanchard from the Campaign to End the Death Penalty. “The whole criminal injustice system is rotten, and we’re going to do everything we can to make sure Oscar Grant’s death shines a light on it.”

“Almost All The Prison Guard And Police Unions Endorsed Obama Over McCain”

Paul Wright, December 2008 December Prison News [Excerpts]

Mr. Obama comes to the presidency with a scant record of accomplishment for the poor in general and prisoners in particular.

Given the huge impact that criminal justice practices have on both the poor in general and poor communities of color in particular, the injustices and disparities are long past need for serious change. Whether any change comes remains to be seen.

We can note that almost all the prison guard and police unions endorsed Obama over McCain and Vice President Biden has for decades been a proponent of many of the most repressive laws and crime bills to be enacted.

A year from now we can see how far hope has gotten us.



[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran]

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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.

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'Peace Speaks From The Mirror' by Dennis Serdel

From: Mark Shapiro, Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: January 13, 2009
Subject: (micro-book 'review') 'Peace Speaks From The Mirror'

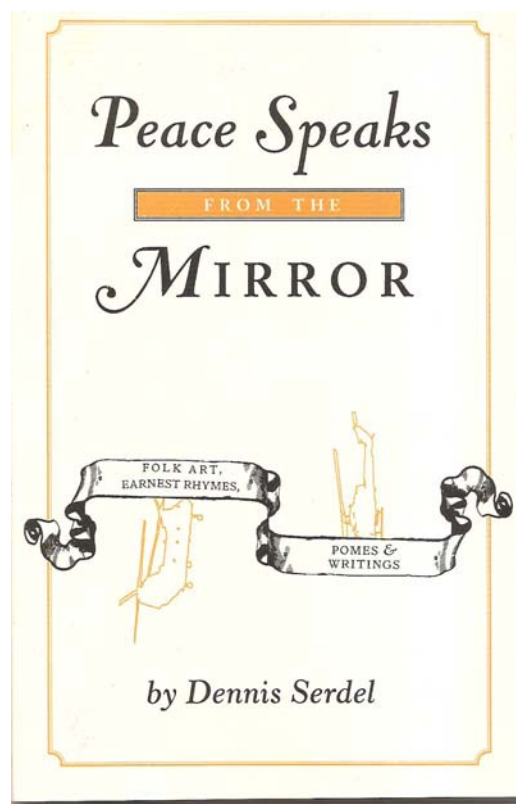
The copy of 'Peace Speaks From The Mirror' by Dennis Serdel I ordered arrived today.

Great little book.

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I'd encourage readers of 'GI Special' to order a copy, It's a little work of art! A real gem!

REPLY: Here's the info:



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