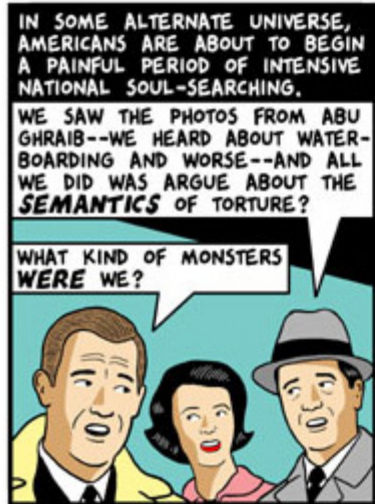


GI SPECIAL 7B8:

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

More Betrayal At The Top:

Commanding Officers Lost Track Of Tens Of Thousands Of Assault Rifles And Other Firearms In Afghanistan: “Some Weapons May Already Be In Taliban Hands”

Stockpile “Includes Thousands Of AK-47 Assault Rifles As Well As Mortars, Machine Guns And Rocket-Propelled Grenade Launchers”

Study Condemns “U.S. Central Command For Failing To Set Appropriate Procedures For Handling Weapons” & “Commanders Of The U.S.-Led Unit Charged With Training Afghan Police And Military Forces For Failing To Issue Appropriate Directives”

In an official response to the Pentagon report, Ellen E. McCarthy, a senior security official in the office of the undersecretary of defense for intelligence, acknowledged that “the theft, sabotage, exploitation or misuse” of arms and explosives in Afghanistan would “gravely jeopardize the safety and security of personnel and installations worldwide.”

February 12, 2009 By Joby Warrick and R. Jeffrey Smith, Washington Post Staff Writers & BBC [Excerpts]

Tens of thousands of assault rifles and other firearms in Afghanistan are at risk of being stolen because U.S. officials have lost track of them, according to a congressionally ordered audit that warns that some weapons may already be in Taliban hands.

The audit by the Government Accountability Office found that inventory controls were lacking for more than a third of the 242,000 light weapons donated to Afghan forces by the United States -- a stockpile that includes thousands of AK-47 assault rifles as well as mortars, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

There were no reliable records showing what ultimately happened to an additional 135,000 weapons donated by other NATO countries, the report said.

Many of the weapons, supplied between 2004 and 2008, were left in the care of Afghan-run military depots with a history of desertion, theft and sub-par security systems that sometimes consist of a wooden door and a padlock, the report said.

The lax controls extended even to such sensitive equipment as night-vision goggles, which have long given U.S. troops a critical edge in fighting Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan's rugged terrain, the GAO found.

Rep. John F. Tierney (D-Mass.) said the failures could lead to American soldiers being killed by insurgents using a weapon purchased by U.S. taxpayers.

The inspector general's report, commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen, blamed the U.S. Central Command for failing to set appropriate standards and procedures for handling weapons imported into Afghanistan.

The report also criticized commanders of the U.S.-led unit charged with training Afghan police and military forces for failing to issue appropriate directives to training teams and mentors.

Just nine people, led by an Army major, were assigned to oversee a program that disbursed more than \$1.7 billion in 2007, in contrast to a team of 77 led by a major general that oversaw a similar program in Saudi Arabia that disbursed 60 percent less money.

The head of the Afghan army's logistics unit told them he had no idea what arms units had already received, when supplies were arriving or who was sending them.

In an official response to the Pentagon report, Ellen E. McCarthy, a senior security official in the office of the undersecretary of defense for intelligence, acknowledged that "the theft, sabotage, exploitation or misuse" of arms and explosives in Afghanistan would "gravely jeopardize the safety and security of personnel and installations worldwide."

The report says:

US military officials failed to keep proper records on about 87,000 rifles, pistols, mortars and other weapons sent to Afghanistan between December 2004 and June 2008 - about a third of all the weapons sent.

There was a similar lack of management of a further 135,000 light weapons donated to Afghan forces via the US military by 21 countries.

The military failed even to record the serial numbers of some 46,000 weapons, making it impossible to confirm receipt of weapons or identify any which had fallen into the hands of militants.

The serial numbers of 41,000 weapons were recorded, but US military officials still had no idea where they were.

The report is reminiscent of an August 2007 study, also by the GAO, which found the US military could not account for some 190,000 rifles and pistols given to security services in Iraq.

ACTION REPORTS

New York National Guard Outreach:

**“The ‘Bring The Guard Home’
Brochure Was Extremely Well
Received”**

**“So Many Of The Soldiers Had Happily
Taken Packages That We Ran Out”**

From: Elaine B, The Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: February 09, 2009
Subject: New York National Guard outreach

Another successful outreach to the troops was conducted by the NYC Military Project group and their allies, on Saturday morning, Feb. 7. Eight of us showed up at the location at 5:45 AM, ready to get into action with our packets of literature, and home baked brownies and cookies, compliments of Sally.

Military Project members were joined by others who decided that this was a great way to spend their Saturday early morning hours, instead of catching up on much needed sleep! [Participants who aren't Military Project members are screened before being invited to come to an action.]

It's such a great feeling when you see people who are committed to the cause of bringing the truth to the troops.

We took our positions at the usual 3 locations, front entrance, side entrance and corner location near where most of the National Guard members park their cars.

Our arrival was perfect timing since no sooner than we took our positions, the Guard members, including many Iraq veterans, attending drill that weekend started arriving on foot and by vehicle. Although it was freezing outside, we distributed our lit packets (which included "GI Rights pamphlet", "IVAW brochure", "Bring The Guard Home" pamphlet, our new "Why We Are Here" statement [see below], the latest GI Special Guard handout, and copies of the DVD "Sir, No Sir!" and home baked cookies).

Immediately we were warmly received and at the time of sunrise in New York City, troops were happy to see us and take what we had to offer.

Some of them were chatty, and telling us to stay warm, greeting us with smiles and "good morning", only a few guard members wouldn't take our handout, however, they did so respectfully by saying "no thanks."

There were exchanges like "have a nice day" and when one guard member was offered a "Sir No Sir" DVD, he responded by saying "I watched it already." Immediately, he was asked what he thought of it. He responded by saying "it was good, I liked it." Another said he had a copy and was going to watch it as soon as he had the time.

It is really hard to have full conversations with guard members who are rushing inside to muster on a bitterly cold morning.

When pointed out, the "Bring The Guard Home" brochure was extremely well received. Quick comments and large smiles from many made it clear that they are opposed to any effort whatever to ship them off to fight for the Empire in Afghanistan.

One thing we did learn is that when preparing the packets of literature, it is important to put the most recent material on top, and enclosed in a Ziploc bag, since if it is the same wrapper, some of the Guard members said "Oh, I've seen that already." When there is new literature, which we incorporate at every outreach, it will be placed on top so those who have reported for duty at the armory before and know us, will take it without thinking it is the same old stuff.

A successful morning, and enjoyable time, despite the fact that we were cold and tired, our "troops" handed out almost 150 lit packets and 20 DVD's within 1 ½ hours!

Towards the end of the action, and will bring more next time.

It's a good thing we came with 25 extra packages of our publications. Most of the time our maximum is 125, but this Saturday was a bonanza of activity.

One MP member sat on the curb quickly collating the extra lit into packets, and reached up to passing Guard members who laughingly took the last of the batch.

MORE:

WHY WE ARE HERE

Our mission is to support and provide aid to members of the armed forces opposed to continuing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

All troops – including members of the National Guard and Reserves – have every right to question and oppose the wars and occupations.

No one has more of a right.

Every time you speak out, it gives a voice to the soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan who don't want to be there. It gives others the courage to resist and openly dissent inside the military.

A soldier's voice, when it's raised, carries authority. People will listen. During Vietnam, the anti-war movement within the armed forces was the decisive factor in ending the war.

Now we're at a decisive moment in history. The majority of the American people want the troops to come home now, but it's clear the Obama Administration has no intention of ending the wars.

Armed forces resistance will stop them.

No one has a bigger stake.

If you would like to organize with other dissenting soldiers, get more informational packages like this one or get help distributing them, attend one of our meetings, or speak to us with any questions you may have, contact us.

We're here to help you.

The Military Project
Box 126,
2576 Broadway,
New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

Email: contact@militaryproject.org

MORE:

**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.

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

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

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



A U.S. soldier holds a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne during New Year celebration in U.S. military Camp Taji near Baghdad January 1, 2009. REUTERS/Erik de Castro

**NEED SOME TRUTH?
CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Blast In Afghanistan Kills Sharpsville Marine



Marine Sgt. David W. Wallace

January 28, 2009 By Joe Pinchot, Herald Staff Writer

Carol Wallace last talked to her son, Marine Sgt. David W. Wallace, on Christmas morning, and he couldn't have been more thankful for all the cards and letters that the people of the Shenango Valley sent him for the holidays.

"The joy in his voice reminded me of the young boy seeing all the presents under the Christmas tree," Mrs. Wallace, of Sharpsville said in an e-mail to The Herald, which had published Wallace's address through its Military Mail Call program.

Wallace was calling from Afghanistan. He sounded "wonderful" that day, Mrs. Wallace said Wednesday, leaving a joyous memory that took a bittersweet turn Tuesday, when Mrs. Wallace learned that her son had been killed.

Wallace was the first soldier from Mercer County to die in Afghanistan since the U.S. invaded to knock the Taliban from power.

Mrs. Wallace said her son died at 12:30 a.m. Eastern time, 10 a.m. Afghanistan time, in Helmand Province in the southern part of the country, in an improvised explosive device blast.

Wallace was on foot when the explosion occurred, but Mrs. Wallace said she did not have more details.

A spokesman for Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where Wallace's unit is based, said another member of his unit, Sgt. Trevor J. Johnson, 23, of Forsyth, Mont., also died.

Wallace, 25, a Sharpsville native and 2002 graduate of Sharpsville High School, was a combat engineer with the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force.

His duties included identifying, removing and exploding IEDs, conducting searches, working on vehicles and construction projects, Mrs. Wallace said.

Wallace was involved in building an air base and helped construct a training village in Iraq.

"His main thing was to deal with IEDs," Mrs. Wallace said.

Wallace left for Afghanistan Nov. 5. He served two tours in Iraq, from September 2004 to April 2005 and July 2007 to January 2008. He also served in Bangladesh, Dubai and other parts of the world with a Marine expeditionary force.

He entered the Marines on Sept. 23, 2002, enlisting under the buddy system with his friend, Mike Kulka.

Ron Haywood, another Buddy, said Wallace — better known as "Walleye" around town — had wanted to enlist for some time.

"He was talking about it since, I think, 10th grade, when the recruiters came in (to school)," Haywood said.

"He was always into guns and tools and beating on cars and things," said Mark Zreliak, who had known Wallace since they were 5 or 6 years old.

Wallace enjoyed the "excitement of the challenge" that a military career provided, said Mrs. Wallace, a member of Daughters of the American Revolution. "He was a dedicated Marine," she said. "He chose to go into the profession willingly. He was a very proud Marine. He took the opportunity to excel when he could."

Wallace was one of a long line in his family who have served in the military, including his grandfathers, and his brother, Steven, a Navy sonar technician stationed in Guam. Steven is heading home for his brother's funeral.

Seeing David Wallace in the military probably played a role in Steven Wallace enlisting, Mrs. Wallace said.

“He saw the opportunities that his brother had in joining the Marines,” she said.

David Wallace loved sports, particularly football and wrestling, and hunting and fishing.

“He was fun-loving,” Mrs. Wallace said. “He was a jokester. Pranks were not beneath him.”

“He was just a goofball,” said Derek Songer, a friend. “He was silly. He always made you smile.”

Wallace leaves behind his wife, Erica, from Jacksonville, N.C., a 5-year-old stepson, Landon, whom he considered his son, Mrs. Wallace, said, and a 2-year-old daughter, Brooklyn.

Haywood, who saw Wallace when he came home in September, and Chad Bucciarelli said Wallace talked a lot about his daughter and his family.

“He always looked out for his mom,” added Bucciarelli, who talked to Wallace last week. “He was a good friend. He would do anything for you.”

“He was very passionate about his family,” said Matt Magnelli, another friend. “He was a good guy. He respected everybody.”

Wallace missed “everybody back home,” Bucciarelli said. Wallace spoke of Afghanistan as being “rough,” but did not expect to be there much longer, Bucciarelli said.

“He was a real American hero,” Haywood said. “He was the type of guy, whatever he did, he did 110 percent.”

Notes From A Lost War:

**“The Young And Important
Commander From The New
Generation Of The Taliban
Movement Of Pakistan Held His
First Press Conference And
Arrived In His Personal Armored
U.S. Military Humvee”**

“He Had Captured It During A Recent Raid On A NATO Supply Convoy Bound For Afghanistan” “I’ve Heard Taliban Commanders Talk About How Much One U.S. Soldier Is Worth”

The shops in this industrial rim of Peshawar are filling with military equipment and computers looted from the most recent empire to bog down in this hostile and impenetrable terrain: the United States of America.

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]

February 11, 2009 By Shahan Mufti, Global Post

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — Throughout the ages, this ancient Silk Road town near the border of Afghanistan has been the place where the black market thrives and the military spoils of empires are hawked openly.

Here in the storefronts you can still buy antique field rifles left over from the British presence of the 19th century and find uniforms and revolvers from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Now the shops in this industrial rim of Peshawar are filling with military equipment and computers looted from the most recent empire to bog down in this hostile and impenetrable terrain: the United States of America.

In the age of computerized high-tech warfare, it is not just American hardware available on the black market.

Now there is also vital technology and information up for grabs and — as military officials here and in the U.S. fear — leaking into the wrong hands in this region where the Taliban have a known presence.

I was recently able to purchase a U.S. military laptop for \$650 from a small kiosk, which is known as the “Sitara Market,” on the western edge of the sprawling open-air markets on the edge of Peshawar.

The laptop, which has clear U.S. military markings and serial numbers, contained restricted U.S. military information, as well as software for military platforms, the identities of numerous military personnel and information about weaknesses and flaws in American military vehicles being employed in the war in Afghanistan.

Longtime observers of the region and military experts say the open market on U.S. military hardware and technology is increasingly compromising the American military supply route that runs from the Pakistani seaport in Karachi through the Khyber Pass and into neighboring Afghanistan.

“This kind of trade has been happening in the past, but not so openly,” said Rahimullah Yusufzai, a Peshawar-based journalist who has reported from Afghanistan and Pakistan for several decades.

“In the past few months this has started in a big way,” he added.

Lt. Col. Mark Wright, a Pentagon spokesman, told Global Post, “There has been a fairly constant amount of pilferage or losses” as trucks operated by civilian contractors have been attacked or looted along the supply routes from Karachi to the Khyber Pass.

NATO supply convoys have been repeatedly attacked in the last six months and looted periodically inside Pakistan en route to military bases in Afghanistan.

These attacks are a major source for the military equipment that ends up in Sitara market, according to Pakistani and U.S. officials.

But there are other avenues as well.

The shopkeeper selling the laptop, who did not reveal his name, said the laptop offered to Global Post was brought in by one of his “suppliers” who specialize in smuggling across the Afghan border.

“I’ve had two or three like this come in the past few months,” he said about the laptop glistening on a glass counter under the sun.

It was displayed in the shop amid racks of combat fatigues and Kevlar vests and tool kits.

A few shops down, U.S. military issue stabilized binoculars are on sale for about \$100 and a night vision mount for an automatic weapon went for approximately \$300. Gore-Tex boots and Oakley sunglasses line the displays of several nearby shops.

In markets like this one and the hundreds of others like it along a one-mile stretch of road, items from chewing gum to machine guns are brought in illegally over land from China, the former Soviet republics in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

There are also stacks of large, locked fiberglass containers that appear to be cases for weapons, military vehicle parts or larger computers.

(When attempting to open one case the shopkeeper interjected, saying that the reporter had “no business seeing what’s inside” unless he owned a helicopter.)

“They get a good price so I like them,” said the shop owner, referring to the laptops with accompanying U.S. military documentation and markings as well as serial numbers.

A good price means \$800, he says. This would be a steep price in the secondhand market for a regular Intel Pentium M laptop manufactured in 2004.

But this is not ordinary equipment.

The rugged laptop, which weighs approximately 15 pounds, is manufactured by Miltope Corporation of Hope Hull, Alabama. It is a Maintenance Support Device (MSD), the kind that has been used by the U.S. military since 2001.

Based on documents and photographs inside the computer, the assigned user of the laptop likely belonged to the U.S. Army's 864th Engineer Combat Battalion, which has had several deployments in Afghanistan and worked on road projects around Kandahar.

The U.S. Army uses these computers for diagnostics and maintenance of its weapons systems (aviation and missile), as well as generators and wheeled and tracked vehicles. The laptop was being sold with the original fiberglass casing and power pack and included cables that can connect the machine to a network or other military hardware.

The computer also contained dozens of manuals on how to operate, assemble and trouble shoot U.S. Army equipment — everything from “space heaters” to “up-armored humvees.”

Some of the manuals contain restricted information and warn that “distribution is limited to U.S. government agencies,” with instructions to “destroy by any methods that must prevent disclosure of contents or reconstruction of the document.”

But the machine — and all the information inside — was available for a price in the open market in Peshawar. And it makes an attractive investment for anyone who has in their possession any form of serious U.S. military hardware.

One such person is Hakimullah Mehsud.

The young and important commander from the new generation of the Taliban Movement of Pakistan held his first press conference in the Orakzai Agency of the tribal areas in November and arrived in his personal armored U.S. military humvee.

After vowing to increase attacks on NATO convoys he showed off his new vehicle to a group of 20 reporters and told them he had captured it during a recent raid on a NATO supply convoy bound for Afghanistan.

Similarly, local print media reported in June that the Pakistani officials confirmed that a militant group in the tribal areas captured parts for three U.S. helicopters — Chinook, Black Hawk and Cobra — while they were being shipped in large cargo containers from Peshawar to Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, a several hundred-page technical operational manual for the UH-60 and the EH-60 Black Hawk helicopters can be bought out of a bargain bin in Sitara Market for less than \$10.

A warning on the cover page of the photocopied helicopter manual from 2003 reads: "This document contains technical data whose export is restricted Distribution authorized to the DOD and DOD contractors only due to Critical Technology."

That such sensitive technology and information is being traded in the open market is a bad sign for U.S. forces battling the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"The Taliban have always had access to technology," said Ahmed Rashid, author of "Taliban."

The militant groups in Pakistan, he said, have been very well trained in the past while fighting in Kashmir and against the Soviets in Afghanistan. "This stuff has been available in Afghanistan, but they can use it in Pakistan now and probably do a lot more with it," he said.

The laptop also had pre-installed software that gives the owner of the machine access to American military construction, repair and maintenance databases.

One software package, the Interactive Authoring and Display System, was developed by the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command and is used by all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Another piece of software, FED LOG, gives its user access to logistical information for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the Federal Logistics Information System.

The computer also contained hundreds of email addresses of military personnel and names and phone numbers with locations and communication between groups in the U.S. Army.

I informed Mark Boyd, the military attache at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, of my discovery of the market and purchase of the laptop, and described its contents to him. He declined to make any public comment.

One senior U.S. Army official said, "We're aware of this problem."

He said that all sensitive information and important military equipment is destroyed when a convoy is attacked and left vulnerable to looting "for exactly this reason."

The only way this material could fall into the black market, he said, is if all of the military personnel were killed in the attack or if there was someone like a rogue contractor on the inside who was selling it.

"That's information and equipment that obviously we don't want in their hands," the official added, referring to the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

"The question is how do you put a stop to it?" he asked.

Answering that is not easy, and military officials in Pakistan and the U.S. concede they are struggling with the problem.

“There’s now a deep culture of moving contraband in the tribal belt and across the border from Afghanistan,” said Major General Athar Abbas, the head of public affairs for the Pakistan military forces.

While acknowledging that it also makes the Pakistan military’s fight difficult, he said it’s “accepted that contraband will end up in the market.”

Meanwhile, the leak is not only empowering the militants in Afghanistan and Pakistan technologically and logistically, but also financially.

“I’ve heard Taliban commanders talk about how much one U.S. soldier is worth,” said Yusufzai, whose deep reporting in the region has provided him unique access to Taliban leaders.

They estimate that the basic apparel of one American soldier in combat is worth over a thousand dollars in Sitara market.

And as for the equipment that ends up in the open market, Yusufzai says it is alarming — but not because it’s available.

“If it ends up out there it has to be surplus,” he said. “They must be keeping the really good stuff for themselves.”

Resistance Action

Feb. 8, 2009 By JASON STRAZIUSO Associated Press & Feb 12 AFP

In Helmand’s capital, Lashkar Gah, an unknown assailant beheaded the top official dealing with refugee affairs inside his house Sunday, said Daud Ahmadi, a police spokesman. Abdul Samad Mazari was killed after a few men entered his house pretending to have a meeting with him, Ahmadi said.

KHOST, Afghanistan: An elderly man, who appeared to have difficulty walking, blew himself up and killed a policeman who was helping him in Afghanistan on Thursday, a local official said. The bombing happened outside the offices of the governor of the eastern province of Paktika. Police at the entrance to the governor’s office were assisting the man, who had trouble walking, when he set off explosives strapped to his body, provincial spokesman Hameedullah Zohak told AFP. Five were wounded, one critically, in the suicide blast, he said.

A group claiming to be Taliban said that they fired four rockets overnight at a government compound near the western city of Herat. There were no casualties, officials said.

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

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!</p>

TROOP NEWS

480 More National Guard Troops Off To Obama's Imperial Slaughterhouse

INDIANA GUARD TROOPS TO IRAQ

About 130 soldiers from the Indiana National Guard's 38th Combat Aviation Brigade will deploy to Iraq later this year. The soldiers, from the brigade's Headquarters and Head-quarters Company, will be activated in the summer.

Once mobilized, the soldiers will train at Fort Sill, Okla., before going overseas. In Iraq, they will conduct missions such as medical evacuation and battlefield circulation flights in southern Iraq.

INDIANA NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN

Nearly 200 soldiers from the Indiana National Guard's 38th Infantry Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company will be activated in the summer to deploy to Afghanistan.

The soldiers, whose unit is based in Indianapolis, will train at Camp Atterbury before going overseas.

While deployed, the soldiers will facilitate the reception, training, housing and sustainment of U.S. troops entering the country. They also will assist the Afghan government with security, construction and agricultural support in their area of operations.

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS READY FOR IRAQ

The National Guard is deploying more than 110 soldiers with the 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, to Iraq along with 12 Black Hawk evacuation helicopters. The 400-day mission began Jan. 31 with troops headed to Fort Sill, Okla., for training before deployment to Iraq.

Guard Capt. Adam McCarthy says more than 60 soldiers are being deployed for the second time, and eight are preparing for at least a fourth time.

NORTH DAKOTA GUARD INTEL MISSION TO AFGHANISTAN

Soldiers from the National Guard's 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery, left Feb. 3 to train at Fort Hood, Texas, for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

While deployed, the 43 soldiers will be tasked with monitoring enemy activity and providing real-time intelligence to commanders on the ground.

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

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

Iraq Veteran Thrown Out Of National Guard For Being A Lesbian: “It Didn't Make A Difference When I Went To Iraq”

February 9, 2009 Pink News

A woman who served for nine years in the Kansas Army National Guard has been discharged after a co-worker told authorities she is a lesbian.

Amy Brian is an Iraq veteran.

She is the first service member to be dismissed from the Kansas Army National Guard, made up of reservists, under a 1993 law that bans openly gay people from serving in the US Armed Forces.

After a co-worker told Guard officials via email she had seen Ms Brian kissing another woman in a checkout line at Wal-Mart, an investigation began.

Despite her service since 1994, including a tour of duty in Iraq, she was dismissed last month.

“Everyone ... knew I was gay, and no one had a problem with it,” Ms Brian said.

“It didn’t make a difference when I went to Iraq. It didn’t make a difference when I drove that truck. It didn’t make a difference in my ability to serve my country.

“I was not separated because of any type of misconduct but plain and simply because someone else had a problem with my sexuality.”

Little-Known Benefit Aids Veterans “\$22 Billion A Year Goes Unclaimed”

February 8, 2009 BY PAULA BURKES, NewsOK

A little-known veterans’ benefit for long-term care expenses is available to wartime veterans and their spouses. But the benefit is being overlooked by thousands of families, industry observers say.

The Special Pension for Veterans’ Aid and Attendance pays up to \$1,644 a month, \$19,736 annually, toward assisted living, nursing homes or in-home care for veterans 65 and older who served at least 90 days and one day during wartime — stateside or overseas. Veterans and their spouses can receive up to \$23,396 annually and spouses of deceased veterans, \$12,681.

Yet, an estimated \$22 billion a year goes unclaimed, said Don Soard, a volunteer with Operation Veteran Aid in Oklahoma City. In 2007, only 134,000 seniors nationwide received the benefit, which was established in 1952.

“Literally hundreds of thousands don’t even know about it,” Soard said. “Due to incomplete information, many disqualify themselves on income or assets or find the paperwork too burdensome.”

Soard helps families complete the necessary forms, so that approval comes in four to six months. The process is streamlined for vets who are blind or have memory issues and widows with medical needs, he said. Most applicants qualify and payments are retroactive, Soard said. The few who are denied on excessive liquid assets can seek financial advice to qualify, he said.

Soard started his volunteer mission two years ago, following the deaths of two family members who served in WWII.

“If they’d known about this benefit, they’d have a much better quality of life in later years,” he said. “Without it, many vets are forced to go on Medicaid.”

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.

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

Take In A Deep Breath America



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: February 09, 2009
Subject: Take In A Deep Breath America

Take In A Deep Breath America

As far as suicides among active duty soldiers and veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are concerned, we in America have just seen the tip of the iceberg. Two tours will be twice the chance of suicide. Three tours will be triple the chance of suicide. Four tours will be four times the chance of suicide. These soldiers will be deleted by this country like unwanted e-mails.

Why?

Because the American people do not support the troops. Nobody wants to do the math.

Take in a deep breath America, the wars are coming home to the stuffed closets of your mind.

When you fall asleep at the wheel,

people die in your neighborhood.
Eventually,
they may die in your own home.
When I was in Vietnam toward the end of the war,
this is what I saw.
Blood on my hands,
brains in my lap.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
February 9, 2009

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)

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

Remote Control

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

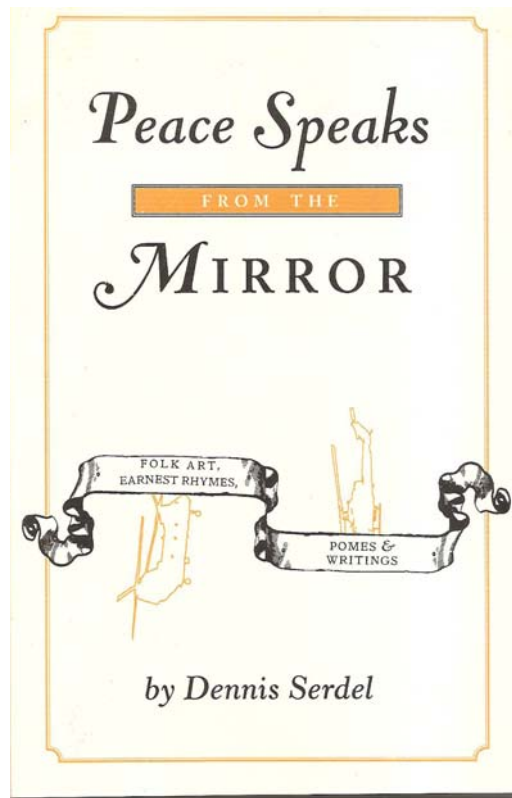
Sandy was humping in his brown and tan camouflaged desert fatigues
with a 50 + pound rucksack, his 16, ammo, helmet, heat, sweat
and a television set on his shoulders where his head would be.
His whole company had televisions heads,
but sometimes the news would say, all's quiet on the western front
"stay the course" and they knew that was a lie.
blirp a car bomb went off killing and killing ad infinitum
TV heads had an incredible 140,000 plus
with satellites beaming that "the war is lost"
instead of from the fear ridden embedded news
that would only say "we are winning slowly"

instead of telling the people the truth.
Another TV head was in high definition
but soon red blood that looked real, “was real”
started dripping down the screen on the new blue carpet,
his wife began to scream at her husband
to “change the channel.”

The Armchair General grabbed the remote and “changed channels”
only to find another TV head in Germany
and a picture of his white amputated legs.
His wife was still cleaning up the blood
when oozing blood from his mangled legs
dripped two big drops of “thick dark news” on the back of her head.
Before she could yell, her Armchair General
grabbed the remote and “changed channels”
A picture on the tv head showed a soldier
showing pictures of his wife and kids back home.
His wife let out a scream as two military men
were knocking on the door.
Marie opened it and cried,
“It’s Sandy, isn’t it? “ “Is he still alive T”
Her two children stood behind her
waiting for the answer.

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Let me know.

Dennis Serdel

February 13, 1968: The Anniversary Of Five Honorable Soldiers Who Stood Up

Carl Bunin Peace History February 11-17

Five soldiers were arrested at a pray-in for peace in Vietnam at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Two were court-martialed for refusing to stop praying. The pray-in was repeated a year later.

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OCCUPATION PALESTINE



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

[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."]

"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops." Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



"I AM OUTRAGED AT THE MONEY (KA-CHING) WALL STREET IS PAYING OUT (KA-CHING)... IN EXECUTIVE BONUSES."

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“This Is The Kind Of Fiscal Pressure That Can Cause The Kind Of Civic Upset That Leads To Revolution”

“Banks’ Problems May Overwhelm Their Governments’ Ability To Cope With Them”

German Government Bond Sale Fails

These pressures are starting to affect sovereign borrowing, too: Germany recently auctioned 10-year government bonds -- but the government was left holding 32% of the offer, in what analysts regarded as a failed deal.

FEBRUARY 2, 2009 By JACK WILLOUGHBY, Barron’s Weekly [Excerpts]

Little wonder that countries have had a difficult time selling their own debt to investors worried about both general economic conditions and the possibility that the banks’ problems may overwhelm their governments’ ability to cope with them.

Moody’s Investors Service recently downgraded the credit ratings of Latvia, and commented on Greece; the agency cited, in part, bank problems in both countries. Ireland was just put on credit watch with a view to downgrade by Moody’s because of its banking crisis.

RECENTLY LATVIA, WHOSE central bank has bailed out the country’s banking system, was the scene of demonstrations and populist rhetoric aimed at granting borrowers relief on loans from Swedish banks -- which have a big presence in the Baltic nation.

If the Latvian government grants this relief, it would seriously hurt Swedish lenders, whose central bank has borrowed \$25 billion from the Fed in these currency-swap lines.

“This is the kind of fiscal pressure that can easily rip the European Union apart, and cause the kind of civic upset that leads to revolution,” says Sean Egan, co-founder of Egan-Jones, a credit-rating firm in Pennsylvania.

These pressures are starting to affect sovereign borrowing, too: Germany recently auctioned 10-year government bonds -- but the government was left holding 32% of the offer, in what analysts regarded as a failed deal.

Economists Carmen Reinhart of the University of Maryland and Ken Rogoff of Harvard have studied sovereign defaults going back to the 14th century, and found that mass sovereign defaults tend to run in waves when currencies begin to melt down.

Says Reinhart, "We've found that global banking crises cause the kind of turbulence that leads to sovereign defaults. It's just beginning."



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