

GI SPECIAL 7D14:

Out of the Frying Pan Into the ... Other Frying Pan



An Uncertain Trumpet: “Skepticism Among U.S. Commanders And Soldiers In Regard A Long-Term Strategy In Afghanistan” Doubts “About Whether Or Not This Is A Good Thing To Do”

“Even If We Win In Afghanistan, What Is Exactly That We’re Winning?’ General “Concerned That There Won’t Be Enough Helicopters To Quickly Evacuate Wounded Marines From The Battlefield”

"FOR IF THE TRUMPET GIVE AN UNCERTAIN SOUND, WHO SHALL PREPARE HIMSELF TO THE BATTLE?" CORINTHIANS 14:8

4.21.09 From Barbara Starr, CNN [Excerpts]

CNN exclusively joined Gen. James Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps, in southern Afghanistan to get a firsthand look at where the fight is headed.

Michael Hastings, a contributor for GQ magazine who just returned from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, said he felt a sense of skepticism among U.S. commanders and soldiers in regard a long-term strategy in Afghanistan.

"Essentially, the questions these officials asked were, 'What are we winning? Even if we win in Afghanistan, what is exactly that we're winning?'

"Maybe the answer is, maybe we're winning security gains, but that's not even for sure and certainly no guarantee of that," said Hastings, who was embedded with American forces.

"I think there is skepticism whether or not this is a good thing to do in the long run," he said.

Here's what the U.S. troops are up against in the south:

Insurgents are launching increasingly sophisticated ambush attacks.

Roadside bombs are the No. 1 killer, and mine detectors haven't been working as well as predicted.

Conway is concerned that there won't be enough helicopters to quickly evacuate wounded Marines from the battlefield, as fighting is expected to occur in remote locations.

The United States has intelligence that top Taliban and insurgent leaders in Afghanistan and Pakistan are joining forces.

Notes From A Lost War:

**The Blast Wave Had Blown The
Soldiers Down, And, Though The
Platoon Did Not Yet Know It, Killed A
Soldier On The Trail**



UNDER ATTACK: Specialist Robert Soto ran for cover last week as his platoon was ambushed in Afghanistan. Across the river, two comrades crouched behind a rock. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times



April 20, 2009 By C. J. CHIVERS, The New York Times [Excerpts]

ALIABAD, Afghanistan — The two Army lieutenants crouched against boulders beside the Korangal River.

Taliban gunfire poured down from villages and cliffs above, hitting tree branches and rocks and snapping as the bullets passed over the officers' helmets.

An American platoon was pinned in the riverbed, which had blossomed into a kill zone.

One squad and the radio operator were trapped in a wheat field on the far side. An improvised bomb had just exploded in their midst.

The blast wave had blown the soldiers down, and, though the platoon did not yet know it, killed a soldier on the trail.

The platoon leader, company executive officer and another squad crouched exposed at a stream junction, trying to arrange help as the bomb's smoke drifted through the misty rain. A third squad was on the slope behind them, returning fire.

Two footbridges separated the three American groups. No one could run across them during fire like this.

Another pitched firefight in a ravine in eastern Afghanistan had begun, shaped by factors that have made the war against the Taliban seem unending: grueling terrain that favors ambushes and prevents American soldiers from massing; villages in thorough collaboration with insurgents; and experienced adversaries each fighting in concert with its abilities and advantages.

The Taliban fighters had struck with surprise, stealth and familiarity with the ground, executing the sort of ambush that Afghan guerrillas have mastered for generations.

The Americans, seasoned by years of war here and in Iraq, would seek to create an intricately violent response, designed to undo the odds, save the pinned soldiers and kill the insurgents who, for a moment, had shown themselves.

Second Lt. Justin R. Smith, the platoon leader, called for help from an artillery battery, then radioed Sgt. Craig W. Tanner, the squad leader on the opposite side. Each man had found what cover he could. The platoon would fight where it was.

"Lead element: stand by where you're at," the lieutenant said. "If you come back across the river you're going to expose yourself." He glanced across the water at his radio operator, Specialist Robert Soto. "Soto!" he shouted. "Stay there! Stay! There!"

There are moments in many firefights that verge on chaos. This was one of them. Specialist Soto's ears were ringing. He could not hear. "We gotta move!" he shouted.

The American patrol had left Korangal Outpost, the base for Company B of the First Battalion, 26th Infantry, on Wednesday, roughly an hour before the ambush. Its mission had been to enter the village of Laneyal and meet with local elders.

Preparing for the mission, the company's Second Platoon had predicted a fight. The platoon had ambushed a Taliban unit a few days before, killing at least 13 insurgents.

The Taliban would want revenge, said Sgt. First Class Thomas Wright, the platoon sergeant, and a patrol to Laneyal meant a walk into a bad village.

Afghanistan is myriad wars within a war, with varying terrain, climates, economies and insurgent groups creating a puzzle of shifting contests for influence. The Korangal Valley is the center of one of the most vicious contests of all.

Relatively few Arabs or foreigners come here, the company's officers say. But the Korangalis, a hardened and isolated people with their own language, have managed to lock the American Army into a bloody standoff for a small space for more than three years. [So, "few Arabs or foreigners"? What happened to all that "Al Qaeda" in Afghanistan bullshit?]

The Korangalis have fought, the officers say, in part because they support the Taliban and in part because they are loggers and the Afghan government banned almost all timber cutting, putting local men out of work.

Korangal Outpost itself symbolizes the dispute.

It occupies a former sawmill, and the mill's displaced owner is a main organizer of the insurgency. **[So, the U.S. army took over the sawmill, pissed off the owners, and all the loggers are out of work. There's real counterinsurgency brilliance for you.]**

Company B's relations with local villagers are cordial but ultimately unhelpful, undermined by deception.

After the platoon ambushed the Taliban patrol several days earlier, for instance, elders arrived at the outpost to say that the Americans had shot up a search party of local men who were looking for a lost girl.

The company commander, Capt. James C. Howell, told the elders it was one of the most ridiculous lies he had ever heard. **[And if it wasn't?]**

The platoon reached Aliabad, the village on the slope opposite Laneyal, and began the descent down a stone staircase to the river. On the way down they met Zarin, an elder from Laneyal, who was heading up.

Zarin exchanged pleasantries and shook hands with Company B's executive officer, First Lt. John P. Rodriguez, and bounded quickly away.

The platoon continued on. With several soldiers remaining in Aliabad with guns aimed at the opposite side, two squads and the officers crossed a narrow footbridge and reached a point where two branches of the river converge.

Then the lead squad crossed the second bridge, entering a terraced wheat field.

The Taliban let the first five men cross, then detonated the bomb under Pfc. Richard A. Dewater, 21, as he walked up the trail. It was a huge explosion, heaving dirt and rock high in the air.

The Taliban opened fire. The ambush was on.

Lieutenant Smith asked Sergeant Tanner for a report. The blast had blown the sergeant off his feet, spinning him around and throwing him down. He was disoriented. He said he thought he had all of his men.

As the firing neared its peak, Lieutenant Smith ordered the men around him to disperse so they could not all be struck by a single burst of fire. Then he provided covering fire so the artillery observer and a machine gun team could run back across the first bridge, gain elevation in Aliabad and cover the squad in the field.

A soldier caught in an ambush — looking for safety while returning fire, with ears ringing and skin pouring sweat — can feel utterly alone, trapped in a box of crisscrossing lead and terrifying sound, with death an instant away.

He is actually part of something more complicated. Bullets flew down into the riverbed from three sides. But as the lieutenants worked their radios, soldiers outside the kill zone were trying to erode the Taliban's opening advantage.

Within the platoon, the squad in the rear of the column set up its machine guns and was firing on several of the Taliban shooting positions. A group of Afghan National Army soldiers, directed by a Marine corporal, was also firing.

In American firebases on ridges along the valley, soldiers with heavier machine guns and automatic grenade launchers focused on Afghan buildings in three villages — Donga, Laneyal and Darbart — from where the trapped platoon was taking fire.

Farther back, at Company B's outpost, a pair of Air Force noncommissioned officers was directing aircraft into position, while two 120-millimeter mortars were firing high-explosive and white phosphorus rounds at targets the platoon had identified.

Alternately crouched and standing on the open rock spur, the lieutenants rushed to influence the fight and plan an escape from the trap.

Once the American response began to build and the Taliban firing subsided, Lieutenant Rodriguez told Lieutenant Smith, they would throw smoke grenades along the river bank and pull back.

Specialist Soto could not wait. After mortar rounds began landing, he and a photographer for The New York Times dashed down the bank, splashed into the chest-deep brown river, lunged across the current and crawled out on the opposite side.

They staggered up the Aliabad slope and slipped behind a building as the platoon's guns fired, covering their dash. They had made it out of the worst of the kill zone.

The Taliban kept firing. The American squad in the wheat field, perhaps 50 yards away, radioed that insurgents were getting closer and that the soldiers risked being overrun. At almost the same time, Air Force Staff Sgt. Kenneth Walker radioed Lieutenant Rodriguez with news that the first 500-pound aircraft bomb was about to strike.

“They’re going to do the drop in, like, 30 seconds!” Lieutenant Rodriguez shouted to Lieutenant Smith. “Let your boys know!”

The aircraft had arrived just in time. A Taliban fighter appeared behind a stone fence. He was almost atop the soldiers in the field.

“We got muzzle flashes,” Lieutenant Smith said, and now the Americans had clear targets. The stones beside where the Taliban fighter had stood began to splinter as the platoon’s bullets struck it. Then the satellite-guided bomb whooshed in and exploded.

Two stray rocket-propelled grenades landed to the lieutenants’ left side. But the Taliban’s firing decreased, as if the insurgents, experienced with American tactics, had sensed the battle shifting and were being ordered back.

The platoon threw smoke grenades, obscuring visibility in the riverbed. Five soldiers appeared at the edge of the green stand of wheat, running toward the officers.

They leapt into the water. The two lieutenants had spent the fight exposed; now they ran back across the first footbridge. The platoon climbed the steep staircase into Aliabad and took cover.

As the soldiers panted for air, they cursed Zarin, the elder who had walked through the kill zone just before the ambush; he had set them up, they said.

Two more airstrikes blew apart two buildings on the opposite side from where the Taliban had been firing. The battle quieted.

Pfc. Rogger J. Webb looked at Specialist Soto, the last man to cross the bridge before the bomb had exploded on the trail. “Man, I thought —” he said.

“You thought I was gone?” Specialist Soto said.

Private Webb nodded. The platoon did a head count and came to an awful realization: Private Dewater was missing. He had walked into the wheat field with the squad. He had not run out.

Private Webb swore. Had the Taliban captured him? Had he been struck during the fight? The soldiers did not know. The platoon retraced its steps toward Laneyal as the sun set.

Back at the outpost, American and Afghan soldiers flowed out into the darkness. The Afghans would scour the riverbed in case the missing soldier had ended up in the water. The captain told the platoons to be prepared to search every house in the villages, in case the Taliban had dragged him off.

Wearing night-vision equipment, the platoon combed the ambush site in the rain. The company waited for news. At 8:10 p.m., Specialist Soto’s strained voice came over the radio.

“Break, break, break,” he said, using the convention for stopping all conversations.

Everyone knew what it meant. Lieutenant Smith’s voice replaced Specialist Soto’s. “We found him,” he said. The first explosion had killed Private Dewater and lifted his body into a tree.

“Roger,” the captain answered. “Understand all.”

Sgt. Matthew R. Kuhn climbed the branches to free the missing man. In an instant, Second Platoon’s mission had changed. It would carry Private Dewater on the first steps of his journey home.

The soldiers gently rested their friend onto a stretcher, organized into teams of litter bearers and began the long walk back, over the two footbridges, up the Aliabad staircase and past the other soldiers and Marines, who provided security and stood quietly in respect.

He was the fourth member of Second Platoon killed during nine months in the valley.

When the platoon reached its outpost at midnight, the company’s commander, Captain Howell, was waiting. The soldiers gathered in the darkness. The captain spoke of his pride in the platoon and offered the first of many words of condolence.

“There is nothing I can say or anybody else can say that will bring Dewater back,” he said, and reminded the platoon of its own ambush of the Taliban the week before. “But the best thing we can do for him is to continue to do the type of stuff that you guys did the other day.”

The soldiers headed for the plywood shacks where they live, for the remainder of a night in which almost no one would sleep.

In the morning they disassembled and cleaned their weapons and recalled their friend as they played his favorite song: “Nothing Else Matters,” by Metallica.

A heap of their bloody clothes burned in a small fire.

Private Dewater had been a combat replacement in the platoon: “A real humble dude, and totally positive about everything we did,” Specialist Soto said.

His body had already been flown off the outpost by helicopter in the night, the next step of the trip back to the United States.

A few hours later, the soldiers slipped into their body armor and helmets, hoisted their weapons and walked back out for an overnight patrol.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

April 22, 2009 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20090422-01

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier died April 22 from combat related injuries while conducting a patrol in eastern Baghdad. The Soldier's name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Eight U.S. Soldiers Wounded By Baqouba Municipal Building Attack; Two Occupation Staff Killed, Four Wounded

04/20/09 AP

A bomber wearing an Iraqi army uniform attacked a U.S. military delegation visiting the mayor of violence-wracked Baqouba on Monday, killing three Iraqi civilians and wounding at least eight American soldiers as well as three Iraqi policemen and other people.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Robert Wood said two of the dead Iraqis worked for a U.S.-financed provincial reconstruction team. He said an American working with the team and a British adviser were wounded.

Police officials said the bomber was disguised as a soldier – a tactic used before to pass through checkpoints – but U.S. forces have been attacked by actual members of Iraqi security forces as well.

The bombing occurred as a group of Iraqi officials, led by Mayor Abdullah al-Hiyali, waited at the main gate of the municipal building to greet the U.S. soldiers, said Raad al-Dahalaki, the deputy mayor of Baqouba, 35 miles (60 kilometers) northeast of Baghdad.

"When the U.S. soldiers left their vehicles and started to walk toward the building, a man wearing a military uniform mingled with the crowd of U.S. soldiers and Iraqi policemen and set off the explosion," al-Dahalaki said.

U.S. Military Vehicle Blown Up In Basra;

Casualties Not Announced



April 20, 2009: A roadside bomb went off Monday in Basra, damaging a U.S. military vehicle, police and eyewitnesses said. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

Resistance Action

19 April 2009 (AP) & Reuters April 22, 2009 By Sahar Issa and Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers

Insurgents in Baghdad killed a police intelligence official working for the Interior Ministry, said police and hospital officials. The drive-by shooting occurred as Col. Haider Hadi Fadhil stopped his car at the gate of his house in a neighborhood in eastern Baghdad. The attack also wounded Fadhil's brother.

Insurgents killed an off duty lieutenant-colonel in his car in west Baghdad, police said.

Sunday, persons shooting from speeding cars killed two U.S.-allied paramilitaries in separate incidents in Musayyib, about 40 miles (60 kilometers) south of Baghdad. The shootings took place as the paramilitaries were heading to a mosque, the Babil provincial police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in the Zaafaraniya district of southeast Baghdad, police said.

A mortar round wounded two civilians when it hit a power generator in the Zayouna district of east Baghdad.

Insurgents attacked a police checkpoint killing two policemen and wounding another in the city of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents attacked an Iraqi army checkpoint in western Mosul, killing one soldier, police said.

Police found the bodies of two U.S.-allied militiamen with bullet wounds to the head and chest in Hilla, 100 km (60 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

A parked car bomb targeted the motorcade of a colonel in the Peshmerga, the Kurdish forces in the central marketplace in Zummar district, 70 km to the northwest of Mosul at 9.30 a.m. Wednesday. No casualties were reported.

A car bomb targeted a checkpoint in Zummar district near Rabeia area manned by Peshmerga, the Kurdish forces at around 10 a.m. Wednesday. The checkpoint personnel waved for the driver to stop, when he didn't they opened fire at him and the car bomb detonated at a distance from the checkpoint injuring two Peshmerga. One civilian passerby was also injured by mistake by fire from the checkpoint personnel.

Insurgents kidnapped Fayadh Yaseen, an Arab judge in Kirkuk court as he was leaving his home in Khadraa neighbourhood on his way to work Wednesday morning.

Around 10 p.m. an insurgent threw a grenade on an Iraqi national police check point at the high way which leads to the Ministry of Finance building in downtown Baghdad on Wednesday. One policeman was killed and one wounded.

A bomb on Tuesday killed a policeman and wounded three others when it struck their patrol in the Amiriya district of western Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol in a crowded market wounded eight people, including a policeman, in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A car bomber on Tuesday attacked a military checkpoint and seriously wounded two soldiers in eastern Mosul, police said.

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

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

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

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



March 26 2009: At the U.S. Army Patrol Base of the 2-28 Infantry in Al Hillah, 100 km (62 miles) south of Baghdad, damage caused to a Humvee the day before during a patrol in the area. The Humvee was hit by an EFP, (explosively formed projectile) which partially destroyed the vehicle but caused no casualties. (AP Photo/ David Rising)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

4.20.09 ASSOCIATED PRESS & Reuters & Apr 21, 2009 (Xinhua via COMTEX)

Taliban militants captured the father of Afghanistan's education minister in a central province. Two militants on motorbikes seized the father of Education Minister Farouq Wardak in Wardak province's Sayed Abad district on Monday, said provincial Governor Halim Fedai.

Police clashed with militants in Khas Uruzgan district. Two policemen were wounded in the clash.

A bomber managed to enter the governor's compound in Herat province, 645 km (400 miles) west of Kabul. Police opened fire and the bomber's explosive vest detonated, said provincial council chief Hamayoun Azizi, who himself was one of three people wounded in the incident.

Five Afghan police have gone missing after a Taliban attack on Sunday in Ghazni province, 130 km (80 miles) southwest of Kabul, a provincial official said.

A roadside bomb killed two Afghan police in a remote area of eastern Nangarhar province, some 120 km (75 miles) east of Kabul on Sunday, a provincial official said.

One Afghan security guard was killed and three others sustained injuries as their car struck a roadside bomb in southern Afghan province of Zabul Monday, official said on Tuesday. "The gruesome incident happened in Shinki district on Monday evening," senior police officer Ghulam Jilani told Xinhua.

How Do You Like These Odds?



Pro-Taliban cleric Sufi Muhammad addresses some of his supporters in Mingora, capital of Pakistan's Swat Valley, April 19, 2009. (AP Photo/B.K. Bangash)

New Zealand Government Won't Send Troops Back To Afghanistan Without Exit Strategy

Apr 20 By RAY LILLEY, Associated Press Writer Ray Lilley, Associated Press Writer

WELLINGTON, New Zealand – New Zealand's prime minister said Monday that he wants an exit strategy before sending the country's elite Special Air Service combat troops back to Afghanistan as the U.S. has requested.

Prime Minister John Key said that sending the commandos for a fourth tour of duty in Afghanistan "would be a very hard decision, not something we would take lightly."

TROOP NEWS

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



The body of Army corporal Jason G. Pautsch at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, April 12, 2009. Pautsch from Davenport Iowa was killed while serving in Iraq.
REUTERS/Tim Shaffer

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

**“Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.”
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**“While there is a lower class I am in it; while there is a criminal element I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free”
-- Eugene V. Debs**

**“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**

**"When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, "No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country."
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

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**

**We stand in a moment of time between the eternal past and the eternal future, content that, for us, all that was before and all that will be cannot exist for us, and yet we exist because all that was before us gave us our moment in time, and we will share the responsibility for all that will exist in the eternal future.
-- Abraham Lincoln**

**Firearms are second only to the Constitution in importance; they are the peoples' liberty's teeth.
-- George Washington**

Enemy Fire

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: August 23, 2006
Subject: Enemy Fire by Dennis

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

Enemy Fire

**Barry was loving it shooting at the Colonel's
whirlybird, the great god in the sky.
His Lieutenant came running back panting,**

**“Barry, will you stop shooting
at the Colonel’s helicopter, he’s calling
on the radio telling me
my men are shooting at him.”**

**With moss on his teeth clenched,
eating out of cans, salt white sweat rings
around his neck shirt like a target, Barry spoke,
“Tell him to come down here
and fight with us and he will figure out
that we shouldn’t even be in this war
and let’s all go home.”**

**“But Barry,” “NO, instead, he is sitting
in his outfitted leather helicopter lounge,
with his ice and bar
so he can knock down one
if the stress gets to the pig.”**

**“Then after a tough day,
he flies back and takes a shower
and his Vietnamese whore child
helps him dress, buffs his boots
a couple of more times.” “But Barry.”**

**“NO, listen, then he saunters over
to the Officer’s Club and orders
a thick steak medium rare,
mushrooms and onions,”
“take it easy on the onions,
heartburn, you know.”**

**“I know, I know,” his Lieutenant
agrees, his forehead wrinkled,
“just don’t shoot at him anymore, Barry.”
On his radio, “Sir, my men are not shooting
at you. You must be taking enemy fire.”**

MORE FROM DENNIS SERDEL:

**“The Greatest Fear That The Few
That Own All The Wealth Have Is
Giving Guns And Ammo To Poor**

People Like Our Iraq And Afghanistan Soldiers” “You Really Do Fear That After You Keep Fucking Their Mothers And Fathers, Their Aunts And Uncles, Their Brothers And Sisters And Cousins And Neighbors And Friends That The Soldiers Just Might Get Together And March On Washington, DC. And NY City”

From: Dennis Serdel
Date: April 15, 2009
To: GI Special
Subject: When We are led to Believe a Lie

I was born in March of 1947 when my father came home from WWII after serving in the Army and married my mother, who worked as a Secretary in Kalamazoo.

Yes, I am a true "Baby Boomer" or in other words a "War Baby" born from "The Greatest Generation."

I now know how they are going to handle the influx of all the "Baby Boomers" from "The Greatest Generation" who are beginning to retire. [This refers to GM's plan to end health benefits and retirement income for autoworkers through bankruptcy. T]

But then, it was my turn to serve in the Army in Vietnam because I was fighting against an idea that a Country's wealth should be evenly spread to all it's citizens as fair as possible.

Instead, I was fighting for an idea that a few people should own the wealth of a Country and the rest of the citizens should be poor.

But then I joined a Union and I was Not poor but "Middle Class."

However, it looks like I shall return to my proper place again, that being poor.

Did I mention that my son is a "War Baby" from America's "Worst Generation?"

So let him be especially poor.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Soldiers and Veterans are another "Greatest Generation."

But the future of their "War Babies" looks like they will be poor anyway because that is the way America wants them to be, a few people have all the money and the rest of the citizens are poor.

So I have taken on the job of convincing our new "Greatest Generation" that when the wars are over, they will be tossed aside like used toilet paper and their reward will be to work at slave Worker wages to raise their "War Babies."

The government blindfolds them now with yellow ribbons, parades with all the trimmings and elaborate funerals to convince them that their Country really appreciates them serving and dying for the idea of America.

The greatest fear that the few that own all the wealth have is giving guns and ammo to poor people like our Iraq and Afghanistan Soldiers.

I mean, gee whiz Uncle Sam, you really do fear that after you keep fucking their mothers and fathers, their Aunts and Uncles, their brothers and sisters and cousins and neighbors and friends that the Soldiers just might get together and march on Washington, DC. and NY City.

Later,
Dennis

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

***Tiananmen Square:
April 21, 1989: Honorable Anniversary
Pissed Off People Rise Up Against A
Corrupt Government Of Tyrants,
Exploiters And Oppressors***



Carl Bunin Peace History April 16-22

Six days after the death of Hu Yaobang, the deposed reform-minded leader of the Chinese Communist Party, some 100,000 students from more than 40 universities gathered at Beijing's Tiananmen Square to commemorate Hu, voice their discontent with China's authoritative communist government, and call for greater democracy.

Ignoring government warnings of violent suppression of any mass demonstration, the students were joined by workers, intellectuals, and civil servants.

***April 22, 1992: Honorable Anniversary
Serbs Stand Up Against A Politician's
Plan For War***

Carl Bunin Peace History April 16-22

June 1994 By Ivan Vejvoda, New Internationalist [Excerpt]

It may come as a surprise to many Westerners that there was a large, spontaneous opposition within Serbia and Montenegro to the war waged by the Milosevic regime. Mostly it took the form of resisting conscription into the armed forces.

In Belgrade only 10 per cent responded to the call-up to what was then, in 1991, still the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA).

Thousands of young conscripts went into 'internal exile' hiding with friends and relatives. The latter would ignore knocks at the door so as to avoid receiving the call-up orders. Thousands of potential conscripts left the country and headed for Britain, France, Germany, Holland and Greece. Visas were not needed then – as they are today.

Even among those who did obey the draft, there was resistance.

The story of young Miroslav Milenkovic from a small town in Serbia is a poignant example of the dilemma faced by many.

When the new conscript reached barracks his unit had already split in two – between those who agreed to go to the front and those who were refusing.

Milenkovic went from one group to another, not knowing which group of friends and relatives to side with. At one point he stopped and, standing between the two groups, took his rifle and shot himself.

April 23, 1971; Above And Beyond





Carl Bunin Peace History April 20-26

In the final event of Operation Dewey Canyon III, nearly 1,000 Vietnam War veterans threw their combat ribbons, helmets, and uniforms on the Capitol steps along with toy weapons.



DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Perfect!

4.19.09: From: Veterans For Peace Discussion

Members of Congress should be compelled to wear uniforms just like NASCAR drivers, so we could identify their corporate sponsors.

Al-Qaida Announces Support For Republican Party Position On Iran

Apr 20 AP

CAIRO – Al-Qaida's No. 2 leader has ridiculed President Barack Obama's plan to increase troop numbers in Afghanistan in a new Internet audio recording released Monday.

Ayman Al-Zawahri also warned the Obama administration against any cooperation with Iran in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

"The more you cooperate with Iran, the more hatred you will generate from Muslims," he said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“You Have All Kinds Of Funding Available To Banks That Are Apparently Too Big To Fail”
“But When It Comes To Auto Manufacturing And Middle-Class Jobs And People That Don’t Matter On Wall Street, There Are Certainly Different Standards”**

[There always has been and continues to be a struggle for dominance between manufacturing and finance capital. This is merely the most current example, with finance capital having bought Obama and the Democrats, and therefore, now in command of sucking up the nation’s wealth. What a big surprise. T]

April 14, 2009 By Lance Selfa, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

In Michigan, the state hardest-hit by the auto industry's collapse--and whose union households voted for Obama at a 2 to 1 rate over Republican John McCain last November--the disparate treatment is a slap in the face.

As Brian Fredline, president of UAW Local 602 near Lansing, Mich., told the Associated Press:

"It's the age-old Wall Street vs. Main Street smackdown again.

"You have all kinds of funding available to banks that are apparently too big to fail, but they're also too big to be responsible...

"But when it comes to auto manufacturing and middle-class jobs and people that don't matter on Wall Street, there are certainly different standards that we have to meet--higher standards--than the financials. That is a double standard that exists, and it's unfair."

Just take a look at the most recently available figures on the financing of the 2008 election from the Center for Responsive Politics.

The leading industrial sector in providing money for Democratic candidates at all levels was the finance, insurance and real-estate sector, contributing more than a quarter of a billion dollars.

The Democrats received a bare majority (51 percent) of the total amount of money this sector spent on politicians in 2008, but it was the first time Wall Street spent more on Democrats than on Republicans since the early 1990s.

Time will tell whether this will be a sustainable trend, but the Democrats are making the running to be big capital's favorite again.

In total, the 2008 federal candidates to the House, Senate and White House raised \$3.2 billion, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. While this seems like a staggering sum, it is equivalent to the size of an average "mid-cap" company. When Microsoft tycoon Bill Gates is worth more than \$50 billion, the cost of the buying the Oval Office appears to be a bargain.

In 2008, Goldman Sachs executives donated \$6.9 million, 74 percent of it to Democrats.

Citigroup executives gave \$5.5 million, 61 percent of it to Democrats.

Considering that Goldman has received almost \$23 billion or more from the federal treasury since October and that Citigroup has received a federal guarantee against \$300 billion in losses, that's a return on their investment that any Wall Streeter would envy.

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.



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