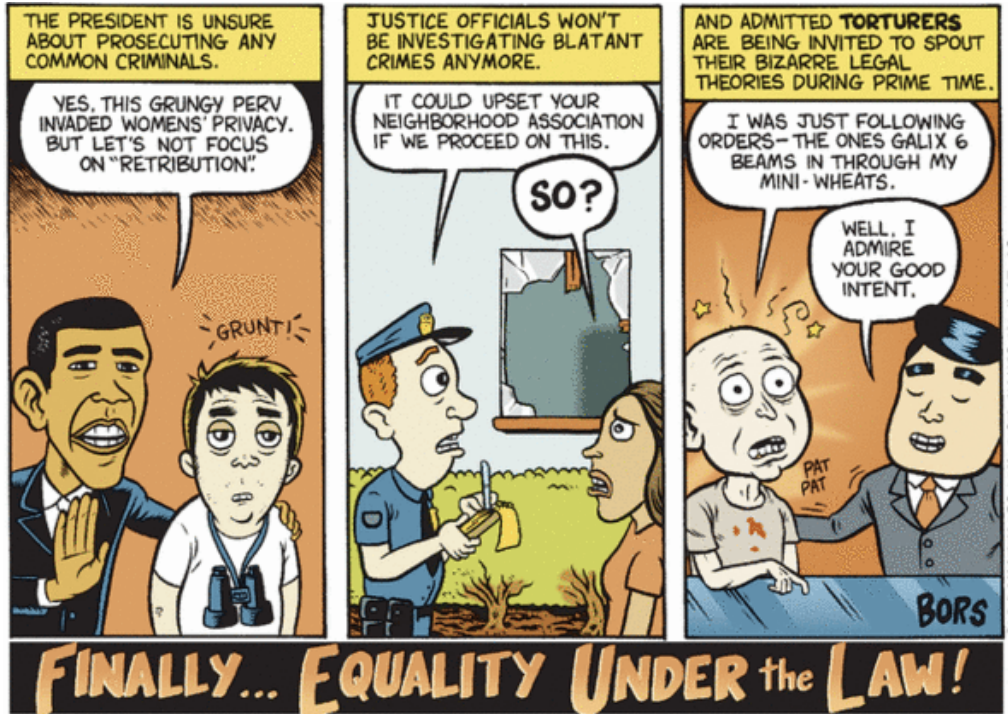


GI SPECIAL 7D21:



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

**“We Will No Longer Stand By
As Silent Witnesses To The
Betrayal Of The American
Soldier!”**

**“The Military Has Taken Our Youthful
Passion And Deep-Seated Ideals And
Has Twisted Them To Serve
Corporate Interests And Political
Goals”**

“Instead Of Defending Freedom, We Are The Instruments Of Oppression”



04/19/2009 By Daniel Blain [Iraq Veterans Against The War]

Branch of service: Army Reserve (USAR)

Unit: B Co, 787th MP Bn, 94th RRC, 302nd CSB, 412th Engineer Command

Rank: PFC

Home: West Springfield, Massachusetts

Served in: Ft. Leonard Wood, MO; CONUS; Bocas Del Torro, Panama

We, the people of America and citizens of the world, must send a message to the leaders of this country.

It must echo off the canyons and mountains; it must resound through the woods and over the rivers: we will no longer stand by as silent witnesses to the betrayal of the American soldier!

I have been thinking a lot about why I joined the military.

I remember playing with GI Joe and pretending to be a soldier. I grew up watching World War II movies like Guadalcanal Diaries, 30 Seconds over Tokyo, The Sands of Iwo Jima and the like.

Serving in the military was honorable, patriotic, the right thing to do and something that every young man should do. During my high school years I thought I was unable to join because of “asthma”.

Then came that fateful day in September 2001. I was a freshman in college – we received news that the White House had been hit by a plane; however, soon afterward the news was corrected and every television on campus was tuned into the media coverage of the twin towers, the pentagon and the field in PA.

I never wanted to join the military so bad.

I went out that afternoon and cut my classic men's haircut to a military high and tight. I spoke to my parents about enlisting... they wanted me to finish school and since they were paying for it, I was willing to wait. It would be four long years later before I was able to join.

In August of 2005, I was at an air show at the local Air Force Reserve base and I saw the army recruiters. I asked one of them if asthma was a reason someone couldn't join – he replied that as long as the person could pass the PT test, they were in... I was thrilled – I enlisted about a week later as an Army Reserve MP. I shipped off to Ft. Leonard Wood, MO just 13 days after I took the oath.

My story is similar to hundreds of thousands of soldiers who have signed up to defend freedom, protect America or free the oppressed masses from a brutal dictator.

We sign up with good intentions.

We want to better ourselves; pave the way to a college degree; get some kind of financial stability.

We are not monsters: we are not killing machines; we are brothers and sisters, sons and daughters; fathers and mothers; just people looking to better our country, our world, and ourselves.

We have good intentions and willing hearts.

We give up our freedoms and place our trust in those who are responsible for sending us into battle.

We have no reason to doubt them – they are soldiers too – they will always make the right decision.

Sadly, the military has taken our youthful passion and deep-seated ideals and has twisted them to serve corporate interests and political goals.

Instead of defending freedom, we are the instruments of oppression.

Instead of bringing peace to the world, we spread conflict and battle; instead of saving life, we destroy it.

The military has betrayed the American soldier.

They have taken the freshest, most passionate of human beings and trained them in the art of killing. They help you overcome your fear of killing. They vilify the enemy – they tell rousing stories of the warriors that have gone before and they tell terrible stories of the treachery of the enemy. They teach you to destroy the enemy (whom ever he may be) without regard for own safety. Mission first; Follow Orders.

There are no courses on what to do when the highest military leadership gets it wrong.

There is no briefing on what to do when you wake up and find your ideals are just empty pipe dreams, and all those idealistic visions you had of serving are just Hollywood legend.

Every year, more and more soldiers are waking up.

Some are waking up because of their experiences in combat, while others are waking up because of some other life experience such as the birth of a child, marriage, something they read ...etc.

For those who see or experience this betrayal, it can feel a lot like Neo when he was told that the world he lived and believed in was nothing more than a carefully constructed fantasy.

They don't know what to believe anymore. Their entire world collapses around them: they become depressed, suicidal, or narcissistic. With no person to turn to, disillusioned veterans often turn to drugs or alcohol, self-medicating their pain away.

While the government refuses to do anything other than symbolic gestures, the soldiers and their families pay the price. For many soldiers, this self-destructive behavior is often successful. The suicide rates for soldiers are astronomical! In 2007, more than 5 soldiers tried to kill themselves every day! One study in 2007 stated: "One age group stood out. Veterans aged 20 through 24, those who have served during the war on terror. They had the highest suicide rate among all veterans, estimated between two and four times higher than civilians the same age. (The suicide rate for non-veterans is 8.3 per 100,000, while the rate for veterans was found to be between 22.9 and 31.9 per 100,000.)" (http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/13/cbsnews_investigates/main34964...) While the government and many conservatives claim that bloodshed is over, we have yet to see the real casualties. We must add hundreds of soldiers to the casualty count.

What help is out there for veterans? The VA is under-funded and overwhelmed.

The internal unofficial climate in the military is "tough it out" or "suck it up and drive on".

Sure – there are the obligatory Power Point presentations delivered by an officer because it has to be checked off a list of required briefings – they are about as helpful as a pie chart is to the driver of a car dangling off a cliff. The few private GI outreach organizations are overwhelmed, and during the strained economy, they too face a shortage of funding. A few soldiers are turning to faith: the number of conscientious objectors is on the rise, but the vast majority of soldiers in need of help simply drift along: alone in a sea of people.

I have tried for two days to finish this article.

Every ending has seemed cheap and forced.

Then tonight it hit me: there is no end – there is no conclusion. Although the Obama administration has taken several steps in the right direction, the betrayal continues.

Every year, over 80,000 young men and women sign their lives away.

Soldiers continue to be deployed in support of wars of aggression and revenge. Veterans continue to struggle to receive basic medical and psychiatric care from a broken system. The drive and passion of American youth is still being manipulated for political power. When will it end?

It will end when we the people refuse to allow violence in our name; when we, the soldiers and veterans, refuse to be used like pawns in a chess game.

We, the people of America and citizens of the world, must send a message to the leaders of this country.

It must echo off the canyons and mountains; it must resound through the woods and over the rivers: we will no longer stand by as silent witnesses to the betrayal of the American soldier!

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Wounded In Riyadh Ambush

4/29/2009 AP

The American military says a U.S.-Iraqi patrol has been ambushed while distributing grants to Iraqi businesses near the northern city of Kirkuk.

Iraqi officials say two civilians were killed when the Americans returned fire, but the U.S. military says those killed were enemy fighters.

U.S. spokesman Maj. Derrick Cheng says several people launched grenades and began shooting Wednesday as the patrol was handing out micro-grant money to stimulate small businesses in the town of Riyadh.

He says reports indicate "two enemy killed and one wounded." He says one American was also wounded.

Ex-Gunny Fired For Telling The Truth About Incompetent Mercenary Company; Then The Thieving Fucks Lie About It To Congress: “U.S. Officers At Base Hammer Said They Did Not Feel Secure Due To The Inadequate Qualifications And Training Of The Guards”

Apr 27 By RICHARD LARDNER, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON – U.S. military officials want to know if an employee for a private security contractor was fired for telling investigators about serious deficiencies in training and equipment for Ugandan guards hired to protect an American base in Iraq. **["If"? There's no fucking "if" about it. See the rest of the report.]**

Information about John Wayne Nash's sudden departure from Iraq after he met with staff from the Commission on Wartime Contracting was forwarded by U.S. Central Command to the office of the Pentagon inspector general.

The inspector general's military reprisal investigation unit is reviewing the material to determine if a full inquiry is warranted, according to a defense official who requested anonymity because he is not allowed to publicly discuss the matter.

The military relies on hired guards at bases in Iraq so troops are available for combat duties. Overall, there are five companies providing security at bases in Iraq under contracts with an estimated value of \$250 million.

A majority of the guards are from Uganda and other East African countries. Guard salaries are about \$700 a month on average.

Nash, a retired Marine Corps master gunnery sergeant, was security contractor Triple Canopy's on-site manager at Forwarding Operating Base Delta, which is about 90 miles south of Baghdad.

Triple Canopy of Herndon, Va. denies Nash was disciplined. Jayanti Menches, a company spokeswoman, says he is still employed and is currently home on a regular rotation.

But the commission has a different version of events.

The independent panel is investigating waste and fraud in wartime spending.

During a fact-finding visit to Base Delta on April 4-5, commission staff were told by military contracting officers that the Triple Canopy guards don't have enough vehicles to do the job and must rely on the Army for transportation. Basic personal gear, such as gloves, is often scarce.

Triple Canopy holds the \$35 million security contract at Base Delta. Under the terms of the contract, awarded in September 2007, the company is required to provide all labor, weapons and other equipment that the guards need.

Nash had been instructed by his superiors at Triple Canopy not to meet with the commission staff, according to Bob Dickson, the panel's executive director.

Nash did so anyway and confirmed what they'd been told by the contracting officers.

Shortly after that, Dickson and others on the commission learned he'd been dismissed.

"We talked with him one day, and he was leaving the country five days later," Dickson said.

Reached at his home in Jacksonville, N.C., Nash referred questions to his lawyer in Washington. In a brief note to The Associated Press, the lawyer, Thomas Fay, would only say that he is representing Nash "in connection with the circumstances surrounding his departure from Iraq as an employee of Triple Canopy."

During their visit to Iraq, Dickson and other staff found Forward Operating Base Hammer had similar problems, including a shortage of weapons and night vision gear and poorly trained guards.

U.S. officers at Base Hammer said they did not feel secure due to the inadequate qualifications and training of the guards, according to information the commission has sent to military authorities, members of Congress and the State Department. The officers at Hammer required the Sabre guards to take a 40-hour course on security operations before they could begin working.

Sabre International Security, based in Baghdad, has a \$42 million contract to provide security at Base Hammer.

Concerned the equipment and training deficiencies leave the bases vulnerable, the Commission on Wartime Contracting alerted military officials in Iraq and at Central Command in Tampa, Fla.

"Incidents such as this are a concern in their own right, but they are a particular concern to the commission if they prove to be indicators of broader, systemic problems that impede the delivery of critical services to American military forces in a war zone," Dickson said.

Sen. James Webb, D-Va., a co-sponsor of the legislation establishing the Wartime Contracting Commission, said it would be “unacceptable” if any contractor employees were terminated for cooperating with the commission.

“An employee of a government-contracted firm does not contract away his or her obligation — not right — to talk forthrightly with properly constructed government inquiries,” Webb said in a statement to the AP.

Remember The Traitor Bush Raving About How His Invasion Ended “Rape Rooms” In Iraq? Now The Occupation Presides Over An Iraq Full Of Rape Rooms; “I Regret What Some Of My Colleagues Are Doing But Fighting Against Them Will Just Make Shorter My Way To A Grave”

“The Iraqi people are now free. And they do not have to worry about the secret police coming after them in the middle of the night, and they don't have to worry about their husbands and brothers being taken off and shot, or their wives being taken to rape rooms. Those days are over.”

-Paul Bremer, Administrator, Iraq Coalition Provisional Authority, Sept. 2, 2003

“Iraq is free of rape rooms and torture chambers.”

-President Bush, remarks to 2003 Republican National Committee Presidential Gala, Oct. 8, 2003

Apr. 27, 2009 By Afif Sarhan, IOL Correspondent

BAGHDAD — Salman (not his real name) says he was locked up, beaten, raped and humiliated for long months.

His abusers, according to him, were not vicious gangs or armed militias, but rather those who, by law, were supposed to protect him.

"I was beaten more than four times per week, and sometimes I stayed the whole night inside a room being interrogated and tortured," the young man told IslamOnline.net, recalling his 9-month ordeal in police custody.

"After one month...they started to rape me every week," he added with a painful look in his eyes.

Salman was detained for nine months without being told why and was never allowed a visit by a lawyer despite his family's frantic efforts to find his whereabouts.

He says the horror started from his first day in police custody, but it is the routine rape nightmare that continues to eat into his soul.

"Always having one holding a gun in my face while the other two guys were raping me, the feeling I had was that I would live that life until I die in prison," said a tearful Salman.

"I started praying to God to take my life."

Finally, his suffering came to an end after his family paid \$9,000 to get him released from custody.

"The day I was released, the same rapists walked me through the main gate and threatened me that if I dared speak with any person about what happened, my mother and sister would be next."

But even after his release, Salman's nightmare is far from over and he feels the scars will be with him until he goes into his grave.

"It was too hard for a man who was going to marry in few weeks to see his honor being destroyed."

Tragic as it is, local rights groups say Salman is just one of hundreds, if not thousands, of abuse cases in police custody.

"The victims of such abuses come to our office in a complete nervous breakdown," Hanna Zuhair, spokesperson for Prisoners' Association for Justice (PAJ), told IOL.

"Many have tried to commit suicide, but no police officers were charged for what they have done."

Zuhair, whose Baghdad-based organization campaigns for the rights of detainees, recalls the case of an 18-years-old who also was a victim of rape.

"(He) was raped in prison after arrested from his college gate for walking with a person who looked like a terrorist."

Even government officials admit that sexualized torture has become rampant among police ranks.

"There is also a huge number of raped women," affirms Sawsan al-Barack, a senior official at the Ministry of Human Rights.

In many cases, officers raid homes asking a woman to accompany them because her husband is going to be released.

“They are happy with the news and most of the time they don’t ask a male relative to go with them,” said a senior ministry official, requesting anonymity.

“When inside the vehicle, she is threatened that if she doesn’t collaborate, her husband is going to suffer the consequences in prison.”

Recently, a mobile-recorded video showing a woman in the city of Fallujah being raped by a police officer was leaked to the media.

The investigation revealed that the woman had been drugged after visiting her husband in detention.

What adds insult to injury is that police abuses go unpunished.

“Sometimes I feel hand-tied as we can not press charges against an officer,” says al-Barack, the Human Rights Ministry official.

She explained that in most of the cases neither the victim nor witnesses would agree to press charges against the perpetrators, fearing reprisals against themselves or their families.

Ali Ramizi, a senior Ministry of Interior officer, agrees.

“Sometimes it is hard to find out who was responsible as the victim is too afraid to get recognized or to be a witness in court.”

Even police officers who reject the acts of their colleagues are afraid to speak up.

“I regret what some of my colleagues are doing but fighting against them will just make shorter my way to a grave,” a local police officer in Baghdad told IOL, asking not to be named.

“If I speak out about what is happening in prisons, my family might be the ones who will suffer the consequences.”

But Zuhair, the rights advocate, insists there has to be a way to hold rapist police personnel accountable for their crimes.

“We are talking about the group of men who are supposed to protect us but instead are beating, raping and arresting innocent Iraqis. It is unacceptable,” he said.

“When these victims turn into terrorists, the government doesn’t see that they had their very reasons.”

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier From 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Killed Near FOB Keenan

28 Apr 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a British soldier from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards has been killed in southern Afghanistan today, Tuesday 28 April 2009.

The soldier was taking part in a reassurance foot patrol [whatever the fuck that is] alongside the Afghan National Army in the vicinity of Forward Operating Base Keenan, north east of Gereshk in Helmand province, when the incident happened.

Despite the very best efforts of his colleagues around him, he was killed instantly as a result of an explosion; the cause of which is being investigated.

[It is not necessary to await the results of the investigation to conclude “the cause of which” is Afghan citizens resisting a foreign Imperial occupation of their nation by force of arms. They are right to do so. T]

Car Bombing Wounds 5 German Soldiers In Kunduz

April 29 (Xinhua)

A car bombing targeting German troops Wednesday in northern Afghan province of Kunduz wounded five soldiers, provincial governor told Xinhua.

Mohammad Omar told Xinhua that the incident occurred at noon time on a highway between Ali Abad district and Kunduz city when the suicide bomber driving an explosive laden car attacked the convey of German troops wounded five soldiers and destroyed one vehicle” Mohammad Omar told Xinhua.

The attack just happened on the same day that German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier visited Afghanistan.

Firefight In Zangabad:

“The Firefight Offered A Preview Of The Americans’ Summer In Southern Afghanistan” “It Is Going To Be Bloody”

April 29, 2009 By Dexter Filkins, The New York Times [Excerpts]

Only 10 minutes inside the tiny village of Zangabad, 20 miles southwest of Kandahar, a platoon of American soldiers stepped into a poppy field in full bloom on Monday. Taliban fighters opened fire from three sides.

“From the north!” one of the soldiers yelled, spinning and firing.

“West!” another screamed, turning and firing, too.

An hour passed and a thousand bullets whipped through the air. Ammunition was running low. The Taliban were circling.

Then the gunships arrived, swooping in, their bullet casings showering the ground beneath them, their rockets streaking and destroying. Behind a barrage of artillery, the soldiers shot their way out of Zangabad and moved into the cover of the vineyards.

“When are you going drop the bomb?” Capt. Chris Brawley said into his radio over the clatter of machine-gun fire. “I’m in a grape field.”

The bomb came, and after a time the shooting stopped.

The firefight offered a preview of the Americans’ summer in southern Afghanistan. By all accounts, it is going to be bloody.

Like the guerrillas they are, Taliban fighters often fade away when confronted by a conventional army.

But in Afghanistan, as they did in Zangabad, the Taliban will probably stand and fight.

Resistance Action

April 26 AFP & April 28 (Reuters)

A roadside bomb blast killed five policemen in the Zhari district of southern Kandahar on Sunday, the interior ministry said in a statement. Two other police were injured, it said. The ministry said the police were on patrol “inspecting the opium fields”.

Another three policemen were killed and two wounded in a similar incident in central Wardak province, just south of the capital Kabul, the ministry said.

A senior civil servant was killed in Kandahar on Sunday in a drive-by shooting by gunmen speeding past on a motorbike, an official said.

A roadside bomb killed five Afghan police as they conducted an operation against militants on Monday in Paktika some 150 km (95 miles) south of Kabul, the interior ministry said.

**FUTILE EXERCISE:
ONLY 15 MILLION MORE TO QUESTION:
ALL HOME NOW!**



U.S. soldiers 10th Mountain Division questions an afghan citizen during a patrol in Logar province April 13, 2009. REUTERS/Ahmad Masood

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

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

TROOP NEWS

A Skilled Craftsman Inspects His Work



Secretary of Defense Gates, Arlington National Cemetery April 27, 2009. (AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari)

No Cut In War Deployments For At Least Two Years: [The Empire Needs You]

Apr 27, 2009 By Gina Cavallaro, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpts]

Deployment lengths will drop from 12 months to nine months in about two years, said Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey, who also predicted a quicker increase in dwell time than originally projected.

“We’re not going to get there, I don’t think, in the next two years, but shortly after that I think we’d be able to do something,” Casey said. [Right. And the check is in the mail.]

“Right now, the volume of the deployments is just too fast, too much.”

By this summer, there will be four brigade combat teams in Afghanistan, double the number of combat troops that have been in that theater at any time since October 2001.

At the same time, 12 BCTs will be on duty in Iraq, for a total of 16 BCTs deployed for 12-month rotations.

Thousands of support troops, such as aviation, medical, engineer, logistics and military police, will also be needed in both theaters.

The Army, Casey has said, is “out of balance” and stretched.

Fort Stewart Soldier Gets Year In Prison For Deserting To Canada

April 29, 2009 Associated Press

FORT STEWART, Ga. — An Army soldier tearfully apologized for going to Canada to avoid deploying to Iraq and was sentenced Tuesday to a year in prison after pleading guilty to desertion.

Spc. Cliff Cornell spent four years in Canada before the Canadian government denied him asylum as a war objector. Cornell came back to the U.S. and turned himself in to authorities in February to avoid being deported.

The 28-year-old soldier from Mountain Home, Ark., sobbed in a Fort Stewart courtroom Tuesday as he told the judge he was sorry. He said he fled to Canada in January 2005, a month before his 3rd Infantry Division unit was scheduled to deploy to Iraq, because he feared for his own life and couldn't stomach the thought of killing.

“It was wrong for me to leave my unit and go to Canada,” Cornell said. “I was very anxious about whether I might be asked to do things that might violate my conscience. I felt trapped. I didn't know what to do.”

The judge, Col. Tara Osborn, also ordered Cornell's rank be reduced to private and for him to receive a bad conduct discharge.

Cornell is the third U.S. service member to be tried by the military for fleeing to Canada.

Prosecutors had asked for a 15-month prison sentence and a dishonorable discharge for Cornell, arguing his decision to flee put other members of Cornell's unit in jeopardy.

“They had to fill his space with a soldier who was not trained up and had to learn on the job,” said Capt. Edward Piasta, an Army prosecutor. “And he didn't come back until Canada refused his refugee status and he was threatened with immediate deportation.”

Cornell had trained as a driver and gunner in the 1st Battalion, 39th Artillery Regiment, which deployed to Iraq in 2005 to provide security details for senior officers.

In Canada, Cornell worked at a grocery store on Gabriola Island in British Columbia. Branum said Cornell hopes to return there after he's released from prison.

A dishonorable discharge would have made that more difficult for Cornell, Branum said. The bad conduct discharge would be viewed more like a misdemeanor conviction, rather than a felony, on his record, the attorney said.

“Current And Former Military Personnel” Suing KBR For Injuries From Iraq Burn Pits: “They Sought Profit In Lieu Of Safety”

April 28, 2009 By Adam Levine, CNN Pentagon Supervising Producer

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- A series of civil lawsuits against defense contractors KBR and its former parent company Halliburton claims the companies endangered the health of U.S. troops and contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan by unsafely burning massive amounts of garbage on U.S. bases.

Six lawsuits were filed Tuesday and three more are scheduled to be filed Wednesday in state courts on behalf of current and former military personnel, private contractors and families of men who allegedly died because of exposure to the fumes from the burning garbage. Attorneys for the plaintiffs also are seeking to file a class-action suit.

The lawsuits are the first coordinated effort by plaintiffs to extract damages for the claimed health effects from the burn pits. The military has acknowledged the concerns but said its own test of the most notorious case, the Balad Air Force Base burn pit, found there is no prolonged health risk for those who were exposed for a year or less to the fumes.

But the military's report on the fumes also acknowledged it cannot account for all the items burned in the Balad pit.

At one point the open pit burned everything from plastics and food to medical waste, with jet fuel used as an accelerant at times.

The lawsuits, filed Tuesday in Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, New York and North Carolina, seek damages “in an amount sufficient to strip defendants of all of the revenue and profits” earned. KBR and Halliburton were paid millions of dollars to oversee the waste management for the military.

In all there are 70 plaintiffs who will file suits, according to lead attorney Elizabeth Burke. The lawsuits filed Tuesday and Wednesday represent 21 plaintiffs, with an addition 50 or so suits to still be filed, according to Burke.

“They sought profit in lieu of safety,” Burke said of the KBR and Halliburton.

Lying, Shit-Eating Recruiter Rat Scum At It Again: “The Recruiters With The Army Medical Corps Gave Assurances That Wearing A Beard And Turban — Mandatory Articles Of The Sikh Faith — Would Not Be A Problem” [And It’s Sure Not A Problem When They Need Some Sikh Troops For Back Up, Is It?]



Guess Who’s Having No Problem At All With Beards And Turbans
[militaryphotos.net/forums/]

Apr 26, 2009 By Tony Lombardo, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpts]

Torn between their Sikh faith and their military duty, two soldiers are fighting Army policy that requires them to shave their beards, cut their hair and remove their turbans.

“I don’t think it’s fair for anybody to ask me to choose between my religion and my country,” Capt. Kamaljeet Kalsi said. “Shaving my beard and taking off my turban — these are part of my body. It’s part of my being.”

Kalsi, a doctor trained in emergency medicine, and 2nd Lt. Tejdeep Singh Rattan, a dentist, were first recruited for the Army’s Health Professions Scholarship Program.

Kalsi said the recruiters with the Army Medical Corps gave assurances that wearing a beard and turban — mandatory articles of the Sikh faith — would not be a problem.

And during several years of graduate school and medical training, Kalsi and Rattan both said their beards and turbans drew no concerns.

Now facing active duty in July, Kalsi and Rattan said their superiors are no longer accepting of their religious accommodations.

As a result, the soldiers, through a civil rights group called the Sikh Coalition, recently filed formal complaints with the Army Inspector General’s Office and the Defense Department.

Father Of KIA Soldier Has It Right: “It Was Cast As A Way To Protect The Privacy Of Grieving Families” “I Think It Was To Protect The Government’s Butt”

Apr 27, 2009 By Randall Chase - The Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — In the weeks since the Pentagon ended an 18-year ban on media coverage of fallen soldiers returning to the U.S., most families given the option have allowed reporters and photographers to witness the solemn ceremonies that mark the arrival of flag-draped transfer cases.

The ban on media coverage dated back to 1991, when President George H.W. Bush imposed it during the Persian Gulf War. It was cast as a way to protect the privacy of grieving families, but critics argued that officials were trying to hide the human and political cost of war.

“I think it was to protect the government’s butt,” said David Pautsch, who allowed the media to witness the return of his son Jason, an Army corporal from Davenport, Iowa, who was killed with four other soldiers in a bombing in Iraq.

He said the ban was more about minimizing the political impact of Americans dying overseas.

Pautsch said he understands the military is trying to be sensitive but believes families should be asked whether they want to speak to the media rather than having to volunteer their desire.

“We shouldn’t be afraid of letting people express their opinions,” he said.

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

Marines, Civilians And Their Families At Lejeune 1955-1958 Face Health Risk From Contaminated Water:

April 27, 2009 Military.com Via Ben Chitty, Vet Pax

Stars and Stripes reports the U.S. Marine Corps is still trying to reach Marines, civilians, and their families who lived at Camp Lejeune, N.C., over a 30-year period when the drinking water was contaminated.

Former residents of Camp Lejeune, N.C., who lived or worked there before 1988 are encouraged to register with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, by calling (877) 261-9782 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST.

Or visit the U.S. Marine Corps <https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater/>

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

“An Area Where Obama’s Administration Has Allied Itself Squarely With That Of The Bush Administration”

“Bagram Houses Far More Prisoners Than Guantánamo, In Reportedly Worse Conditions And With An Even Less Meaningful Process For Challenging Their Detention”

April 23, 2009 By Jeremy Scahill, RebelReports

As the Obama administration faces mounting pressure to appoint an independent special prosecutor to investigate torture and other crimes ordered by senior Bush administration officials and implemented by CIA operatives and contractors, the ACLU is opening up another front in the battle for transparency.

But this one is not exclusively aimed at the Bush era. Today, the ACLU filed a Freedom of Information Act request seeking to make public records on the US-run prison at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. The group is seeking documents from the Departments of Defense, Justice and State and the CIA.

As the ACLU states, “the U.S. government is detaining more than 600 individuals at Bagram, including not only Afghan citizens captured in Afghanistan but also an unknown number of foreign nationals captured thousands of miles from Afghanistan and brought to Bagram. Some of these prisoners have been detained for as long as six years without access to counsel, and only recently have been permitted any contact with their families. At least two Bagram prisoners have died while in U.S. custody, and Army investigators concluded that the deaths were homicides.”

The Obama administration has refused to grant habeas corpus rights to prisoners at Bagram, but a federal judge recently ruled that three prisoners can challenge their detention in U.S. courts.

The Obama administration, in continuing a Bush-era policy, is appealing the ruling.

According to the ACLU, “The prisoners, who were captured outside of Afghanistan and are not Afghan citizens, have been held there for more than six years without charge or access to counsel:”

“The U.S. government’s detention of hundreds of prisoners at Bagram has been shrouded in complete secrecy. Bagram houses far more prisoners than Guantánamo, in reportedly worse conditions and with an even less meaningful process for challenging their detention, yet very little information about the Bagram facility or the prisoners held there has been made public,” said Melissa Goodman, staff attorney with the ACLU National Security Project.

“Without transparency, we can’t be sure that we’re doing the right thing – or even holding the right people – at Bagram.”

This is a very important case to monitor, particularly because it is an area where Obama’s administration has allied itself squarely with that of the Bush administration.

This is not “looking backwards” at all, it is looking at the present and it aint Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld running this sick, unconstitutional show.

Denying Attacks By War Profiteers, Obama Regime Says Spending For Imperial Wars Will Be More Than Ever

April 28, 2009 By Dan Eggen, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

Some of the nation's largest defense contractors, labor unions and trade groups are banding together to argue that the Obama administration is putting 100,000 or more jobs at risk by proposing deep cuts in weapons programs.

The defense industry and its supporters argue that the proposals by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates will increase unemployment during a historic economic crisis. Why, they ask, would President Obama push hundreds of billions in stimulus spending to create jobs only to propose weapons cuts that would eliminate tens of thousands of them?

Gates and other Obama administration officials argue that job-loss fears are overstated, and note that the Pentagon's overall budget would increase by \$20 billion, to \$534 billion, under the plan released this month.

The defense sector is a major Washington powerbroker, giving nearly \$26 million to congressional candidates last year and spending \$150 million on lobbying, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

MORE:

And They’re Not Lying For Sure:

War Profiteer Lockheed Gets \$399.9 Million Pentagon Order For A Giant Bag Full Of Gas

April 27 (Bloomberg)

Lockheed Martin Corp., the world's largest defense contractor, received a \$399.9 million order from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency to develop an airborne radar blimp, the Pentagon said on its Web site.

Lockheed and partner Raytheon Co. were awarded the contract for the Integrated Sensor Is Structure program, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency said in a separate news release.

The companies will develop the scale model of a radar that would be about 6,000 square meters (7,176 square yards) in size and embedded in a blimp 6 miles above the earth, the statement said.

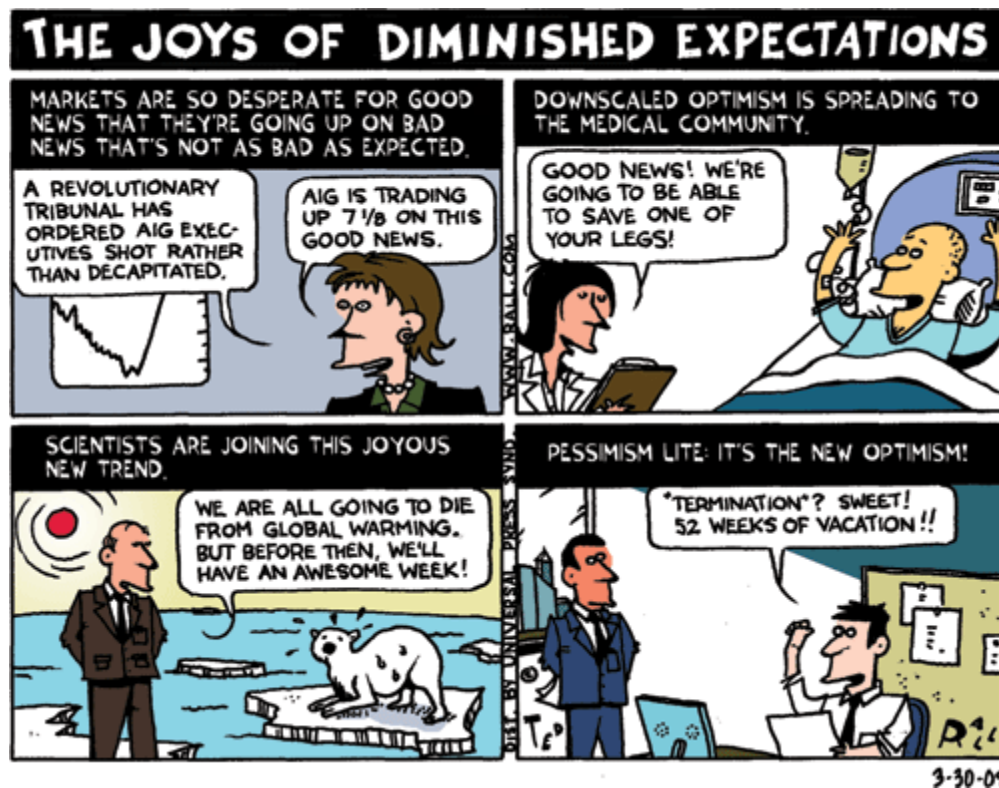
Bethesda, Maryland-based Lockheed and Waltham, Massachusetts-based Raytheon received \$100 million initially and will get the remainder in phases to finish the project by March 2013, Walker said.



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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**Win One For Our Side!
L. A. Must Pay \$13 Million For Cop
Terror Attack On Immigrant Rally;
“All Of The Peaceful Demonstrators That
Suffered From The Wrongful Police**

Actions On May 1st 2007 At The MIWON March And Rally Will Be Eligible To Receive Compensation For The Violation”

24 April 2009 Asian Journal, Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES—In a press conference in LA, Multi-ethnic Immigrant Workers Organizing Network and Pilipino Workers Center announced that a \$13M settlement has been won in their lawsuit against the Los Angeles City government for the inhumane police actions of the LAPD against the MIWON march and rally on international workers day two years ago.

All of the peaceful demonstrators that suffered from the wrongful police actions on May 1st 2007 at the MIWON march and rally will be eligible to receive compensation for the violation.

Filipino participants of the said rally are enjoined to contact PWC to fill out claim forms to avail of the settlement.

The march had a multi-ethnic mix of participants, including a significant contingent from the Filipino-American community. When the police began to disperse the crowd, the Filipinos there were also forced to flee, which violated their rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of speech.

“We never heard a warning. Suddenly the police were firing tear gas and rubber-bullets into the crowd.

“One of the Filipina caregivers, Normita, was going to speak on the stage to advocate for genuine legalization for all immigrants, when we had to start running. We had to duck into a doorway because we were completely out of breath. It was terrible,” stated Strela Cervas, active volunteer of Pilipino Workers Center.

Aquilina Soriano-Versoza, executive director of the Pilipino Workers Center, said that the settlement won is a victory for the community.

PWC recognizes that what happened on May 1st 2007 was not a “melee,” but in fact wrongful actions committed by the police against a peaceful demonstration.

“No amount of money can erase the trauma experienced by the demonstrators, but the settlement sends a strong message that the community does have a right to voice its opinions and messages without threat of violence,” said Versoza.

| |
|------------------------|
| 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



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