

GI SPECIAL 7E11:



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

Torture

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: May 11, 2009
Subject: Torture

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

Torture

In a basement in Warsaw, Poland, Cheney is strapped to a water-board and flipped.

You knew there were No WMD's in Iraq, didn't you?

Gurgle, gurgle, No, No, there were WMD's.

Water-board and flipped again.

**Tell the truth, You knew there were No WMD's in Iraq.
Gurgle, gurgle, gurgle, Ok, there were No WMD's.
You thought Iraq would be a cakewalk like Desert Storm so you went
after the
OIL, didn't you.
No, why would I care about Iraq's Oil?
Water-board and flipped.
You wanted the Oil, didn't you?
Gurgle, gurgle, What Oil?
Water-board and flipped.
You were after the Oil, weren't you?
Gurgle, gurgle, Ok, Ok, We wanted the Oil.
You maimed and killed thousands of American Soldiers for Oil, Didn't
you?
No, No, We really cared about the Soldiers.
Water-board and flipped.
You could care less about the Soldiers, Right?
Gurgle, gurgle, Ok, I could care less about the Soldiers, All I care
about is Money.
You could care less about All the Iraqi Children, Women, Old Men or
Any of the Iraqi Millions you Killed, Right?
You want me to say I'm a Monster?
Water-board and flipped.
You could care less about the Iraqi people you killed, Right?
Gurgle, gurgle, I can't 'cough' handle this 'cough' water-boarding.
Water-board and flipped.
The Iraqi People mean nothing to you, Right?
Gurgle, gurgle, they are just like Killing Bugs or ants to me 'cough,
cough'.
You are a War Criminal, Right?
If I was a Criminal, I would be in jail.
Take the pliers and start pulling his teeth out.
Did I say something wrong?
Oh christ, auggg, ooooh, heeeeelp?
You have No Remorse or Conscience, Do You?
OOOowwwwww, that's killing me.
Do You ?
Just Stopppp, All I care about is ME.
Admit that we should Kill You?
No, No, I'm a human being.
Take that hatchet and start cutting his fingers off one by one.
Oh, godddddd, I'll say anything.
Admit that you are a War Criminal and that we should Kill You.
Oh christ, aagh, jesus.
Stop Swearing.
Ok, Yes, I am a War Criminal and please kill me, I can't take this**

anymore.

After we make a video of you confessing to all the Crimes You Made Against

Humanity, so we can show it to the World, we will send you to Guantanamo.

Send me Now, send me now.

After the Video and after we torture you to death, we will send what remains of

you to Guantanamo.

Get him out of here and make the video, bring him back later, send in the next

one.

Chaney, what did they do to you?

Watch out Bush, they are just animals.

Just like You.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Great Moments In U.S. Military History: Troops Kill 12-Year Old Selling Fruit Juice; Despicable U.S. “Official” Rat Filth Tell Their Usual Lies About It

May 9, 2009 By Ali Abass and Jack Dolan, McClatchy Newspapers Via Uruknet

MOSUL, Iraq — American soldiers opened fire and killed a 12-year old boy after a grenade hit their convoy in Mosul on Thursday.

The boy was found with ten thousand Iraqi dinars in his hand - worth less than \$9. U.S. officials said the money is evidence of a disturbing new trend.

“We have every reason to believe that insurgents are paying children to conduct these attacks or assist the attackers in some capacity, undoubtedly placing the children in harm’s way,” a U. S. military spokesman wrote in an email on Saturday.

But eyewitnesses said the boy, identified as Omar Musa Salih, was standing by the side of the road selling fruit juice - a common practice in Iraq -- and had nothing to do with the attack.

A friend, Ahmed Jassim, 15, said he was selling cans of Pepsi nearby when he heard the grenade explode.

He dove behind a parked car, then heard the roar of machine gun fire. "When the shooting was over and the patrol went away, I stood and I saw Omar on the ground covered with blood," Jassim said.

Another witness, Ahmed IzAldeen, 56, said he saw the person who threw the grenade.

It wasn't the boy, but a man in his twenties, he said.

IzAldeen said he saw the man standing behind a truck holding the grenade as the American patrol approached.

An American military statement on Friday said the 12-year old's shooting is still under investigation.

Some local officials, however, are already citing it as an example of the need for a prompt withdrawal of American troops to reduce tension in the city.

"When attacked, the Americans just open fire, whether on the gunman or just randomly," said Usama Al Nujaifi, a member of Parliament from Mosul.

"The American presence in the cities is wrong, we urged them to stay outside from the beginning."

Friends of the Salih family said he was the oldest of 6 children. He quit school in the first grade, when he was six or seven years old.

He was well-known in the Ras Al-Jadda neighborhood, where the attack took place.

Resistance Action

May 12, 2009 Reuters

A bomber drove a truck packed with explosives into an Iraqi police vehicle in Kirkuk on Tuesday, killing five policemen and wounding 15 bystanders, police and hospital sources said.

The blast destroyed the vehicle and damaged shops along a main street in the city center.

"There was a huge explosion and the glass in my shop windows smashed out," said blast victim Ahmed Mohammed, 32, who owns a shop selling blinds on the street.

"I saw flaming cars and people panicking, and my blood was everywhere," he added, swathed in bandages on his hospital bed.

Reuters TV footage showed emergency services towing away the blackened skeleton of the vehicle gutted by the blast.

Police Major Najim al-Obeidi, who witnessed the attack, told Reuters the bomber targeted it when day and night duty police officers were switching over, to maximize casualties.

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

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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Attack In Force On Governor's Office In Khost: Three U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Seven Hour Battle

5.12.09 KABUL (AP)

Eleven Taliban bombers attacked government buildings in eastern Afghanistan on Tuesday, sparking running gunbattles that killed at least 20 people and wounded three U.S. troops, officials said.

The assault began around 10 a.m. when a bomber in a burqa attacked the governor's compound in Khost, an eastern city on the border with Pakistan that houses a major American base. That blast was followed soon after by a car bomb explosion, said Wazir Pacha, the spokesman for the provincial police chief.

U.S. forces attending a nearby meeting responded to the attacks and killed an unknown number of militants, said Lt. Cmdr. Christine Sidenstricker, a U.S. military spokeswoman.

Khost residents hid from booming explosions and running street clashes that lasted until 5 p.m. At least eleven insurgents and nine others — including police and civilians — died, the Defense Ministry said.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, claimed that 30 bombers had attacked the government buildings.

A U.S. spokesman summed up the chaos in the midst of battle: “A lot of stuff is going on right now.”

The attack began with several attacks on the Khost governor’s compound, which drew small arms fire from nearby U.S. troops, U.S. military spokesman Chief Brian Naranjo said.

A team of six bombers then tried to attack the nearby police headquarters but was rebuffed by security forces and entered the neighboring municipality building, Pacha said.

Three bombers detonated their explosives, the Interior Ministry said, while other militants took 20 city employees hostage, Pacha said.

A second U.S. team was sent from the nearby American base, Camp Salerno.

But those troops were fired on en route, Naranjo said.

A U.S. soldier and an Afghan policeman were wounded and taken to Camp Salerno for treatment where they were in stable condition, he said. A number of militants were killed, he said.

After the militants entered the municipal building, a number of explosions reverberated from within, as U.S. and Afghan forces surrounded the area, an Associated Press stringer said from within the police chief’s compound.

It’s Official Now: There Is No Local Afghan Government Of Any Kind At All; The Military Dictatorship Run By Obama Tells Fake Afghan “President” To Fuck Off

May 11 By SUDEEP REDDY, The Wall Street Journal & Reuters & By Mail Foreign Service

WASHINGTON -- White House National Security Adviser James Jones rejected Afghanistan's demands that American forces halt air strikes in his country, despite protests there over a U.S. strike that allegedly killed dozens of Afghan civilians.

Afghan president Hamid Karzai has called for an end to air raids in his country after scores of civilians were killed in the latest attack on the Taliban.

His spokesman said the Afghan leader was 'very serious' about his demand.

Gen. Jones, speaking on ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopoulos" about the air strikes, said that "to tie the hands of our commanders and say we're not going to conduct air strikes, it would be imprudent."

He said commanders could not fight "with one hand tied behind our back."

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A foreign occupation armed forces member from the USA puts his hands on the body of an Afghan citizen without consent during a patrol in the Golestan district of Farah province, May 4, 2009. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 50,000 Afghan troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher

their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it “sovereign,” and “detain” anybody who doesn’t like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Afghans are sure a bunch of backward primitives.

[They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it’s bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country.

[What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by Barrack Obama. Why, how could anybody not love that? You’d want that in your home town, right?]

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; ALL HOME, NOW



U.S. soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division check their equipment after they arrive at a military base in Logar province April 13, 2009. REUTERS/Ahmad Masood

**“Death to America”
“The Massacre Of Civilians By The
American Forces Is A Crime That Our
People Will Never Forget”**

“Students Held Up Banners Including One That Called America The Biggest Terrorist Around The World”



Afghan students of Kabul University protest against U.S. air attacks which reportedly killed up to 140 civilians in one village last week. Mail Foreign Service

May 10, 2009 Pakistan News Via Uruknet & 11 May 2009 BBC

On Sunday, hundreds of university students in the Afghan capital, Kabul, protested against air strikes last week targeting Taliban fighters in the western Farah province.

Afghan sources said nearly 150 had been killed.

Chanting “Death to America,” “Death to the biggest terrorist” and “long live Islam,” they held banners reading “The blood of the Farah martyrs will never dry” and “USA is the world’s biggest terrorist.

The protesters also called for those responsible for the air strikes in Farah to be put on trial.

“Our people are fed up with Taliban beheadings and suicide bombings. On the other hand, the massacre of civilians by the American forces is a crime that our people will never forget,” a statement quoted by AFP news agency said.

How’s The War Going?

“General McKiernan The First General To Be Dismissed From Command Of A Theater Of Combat Since Douglas MacArthur”

May 11, 2009 By ELISABETH BUMILLER and THOM SHANKER, The New York Times Company

WASHINGTON — The top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David D. McKiernan, was forced out Monday in an abrupt shake-up intended to bring a more aggressive and innovative approach to a worsening seven-year war.

Pentagon officials said it appeared that General McKiernan was the first general to be dismissed from command of a theater of combat since Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

“Somalia’s Beleaguered Interim Government Has Lost Territory In Mogadishu As The Armed Opposition Advances”

5/11/2009 MOGADISHU (Sh. M. Network) & (Garowe Online)

At least ten people have been killed and more than 50 others were wounded in heavy shelling and fighting between government soldiers and Islamist rebels, witnesses said on Monday.

Fierce conflict took place in Yaqshid district in north Mogadishu where the two sides were fighting for the control Yaqshid police station.

Witnesses said several mortar shells were into the presidential palace where the Somali president Sharif Sheik Ahmed had held a press conference on Monday.

Residents in the districts of north Mogadishu said mortars have fallen many residential areas which frightened the remaining civilians in the area.

The sounds of the heavy shelling and gunfire could be heard in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Monday where government soldiers and Islamist rebels have been fighting for the last five days.

Islamists in Somalia's southern port of Kismayo have declared that the ongoing war in the capital Mogadishu will not stop, Radio Garowe reports.

Sheikh Abubakar Sayli'i, the Al Shabaab-appointed mayor of Kismayo, told a Monday press conference that the group had sent weapons and fighters to reinforce the armed opposition fighting against Somalia's U.N.-endorsed interim government.

"The administration and people of Kismayo are not neutral in the Mogadishu war, because they support the Mujahideen (opposition fighters) who are against the fake government," Sheikh Sayli'i said.

He stated that the Al Shabaab administration in Kismayo sent fighters, weapons and vehicles to support opposition groups fighting in Mogadishu, where violence since Thursday has left upwards of 60 people dead and more than 100 wounded.

"The ongoing war is a just war...the war will not stop until the Mujahideen take over Mogadishu," the Al Shabaab mayor of Kismayo vowed.

Somalia's beleaguered interim government has lost territory in Mogadishu as the armed opposition advances towards the Villa Somalia presidential compound, where President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed calls home.

TROOP NEWS

**Troops Forced To Use Foul Water "Two To Three Times As Contaminated As The Water Out Of The Euphrates River"
"The Soldiers' Sinks And Showers Were Pouring Out Untreated Wastewater"**

“A Sauna Of Microorganisms. Your Eyes, Ears, Anyplace There’s A Cut, A Person Would Be At Risk Of Containing A Pathogen”
“Carter Said KBR Supervisors Gave Him A Verbal Lashing: ‘The Military Is None Of Your Fucking Concern’”

May 12, 2009 By JEREMY ROGALSKI, KHOU-TV Defenders [Excerpts]

HOUSTON -- Take Houston’s heat on a miserable summer day and add 40 degrees, making temperatures 130 or more.

Next, add an extra 100 pounds of life-protecting gear to your body: bulletproof vests, guns and ammunition.

And then imagine not having enough water around to drink.

Stories of short supplies have haunted the U.S. military throughout the war in Iraq—things like inadequate body armor or unshielded Hummers.

But while many soldiers say they had good access to water and even Gatorade, the 11 News Defenders discovered that others, stationed all over the country and during all phases of this desert war, say something else was often missing.

“We were rationed two bottles of water a day,” said Army Staff Sgt. Dustin Robey, referring to 1 to 1.5 liter bottles.

And he said that wasn’t nearly enough.

“You’ll see guys throw up, you’ll see them pass out,” he said.

That’s no surprise. According to an Army Fort Bragg training document on preventing heat casualties in desert climates, water losses can reach 15 liters, or four gallons, per day per soldier. Additionally, Survival, a 1957 Department of the Army field manual, states “in hot deserts, you need a minimum of one gallon (of water) per day” just to survive.

Private Bryan Hannah recalled a troubling situation in 2007:

Private Hannah: “My sergeant told my lieutenant we didn’t have enough water and he said go find some.”

KHOU-TV: “What does ‘go find some’ mean?”

Private Hannah: “It means ‘if you don’t want to die, then go find some water.’”

Hannah and fellow soldiers did just that, finding it once again at a civilian contractor facility.

“We’d just run out and start grabbing cases of water and start throwing them in the gunner’s hatch,” said Hannah.

“This sounds like something that definitely needs to be looked into,” said Dr. Stephen Fadem, a kidney specialist with Kidney Associates PLLC, who also teaches at the Veterans Administration.

“If soldiers are saying that they are not getting adequate water, that needs to be taken seriously,” Dr. Fadem said.

In the short term, Fadem said you could collapse, and in the long term, “they may end up with kidney injury.”

The same training document from Fort Bragg details those very health concerns.

It states chronic dehydration is associated with kidney stones, urinary infection, rectal afflictions and skin problems.

“This can be very challenging,” said Dr. Fadem.

But KHOU-TV identified another problem with water in Iraq—dirty water in sinks and showers soldiers used.

“I mean it’s yellow, and it’s filthy,” said Sgt. Casey J. Porter.

Porter, an aspiring filmmaker, took video footage of rust-colored water from faucets at Camp Taji in 2008.

By that time in the war, Taji appeared less like a war zone and more like a mall.

“You can eat Subway, Burger King, you can buy a \$1,200 Oakley watch, but you can’t have clean water to brush your teeth with, what’s the real priority here,” Sgt. Porter said.

Turns out, at many similar bases, the water was supposed to be processed by Houston-based company KBR. In an internal KBR report, the company sites “massive programmatic issues” with water for personal hygiene dating back to 2005.

It outlines how there was no formalized training for anyone involved with water operations, and one camp, Ar Ramadi, had no disinfection for shower water whatsoever.

“That water was two to three times as contaminated as the water out of the Euphrates River,” said former KBR employee Ben Carter.

Carter, a water purification specialist, was the one to blow the whistle on it all.

He said he first noticed a problem when he found a live maggot in a base toilet at Camp Ar Ramadi.

He subsequently discovered that instead of using chlorinated water, the soldiers' sinks and showers were pouring out untreated wastewater.

"You're standing in what's essentially a sauna of microorganisms. Your eyes, ears, anyplace there's a cut, a person would be at risk of containing a pathogen," Carter said.

But when he wanted to inform U.S. forces, Carter said KBR supervisors gave him a verbal lashing.

"The military is none of your fucking concern, uh, which was shocking to me," Carter said.

Either way, kidney stones have become such a widespread problem among the troops that the military has set up a medical treatment center in Iraq to treat them.

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The remains of Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Mark A. Wojciechowski, of Cincinnati, Ohio, on May 1, 2009 upon his arrival at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Wojciechowski, 25, was assigned to 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif. He died April 30 while supporting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. (APhoto/Jose Luis Magana)

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.

Cocaine Cool



Photograph of artillery gun in my unit in Vietnam.

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: May 10, 2009
Subject: Cocaine Cool

Cocaine Cool

The U.S. Government is doing its SWAT thing in Pakistan, because that's what America does in the fast lane. These kinds of things happened everyday in Vietnam. Shit happens, and the Pentagon is full of shit with its cover up of the war crimes. As a Vietnam vet, you have to hold onto your history like a life preserver, because the lies keep coming at you with lightening speed. When I came back from Vietnam, you put all the puzzle pieces together and see the madness. The 155mm and 8 inch artillery guns on three of our firebases fired into civilian populated areas. You just kick ass, and commit war crimes. Fuck the civilians,

as some people said.
This is war motherfucker,
while civilians back home are pretending that Geneva Convention
Rules really exist.
Oh America,
my sleeping beauty,
you will get away with nothing.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
May 10, 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)

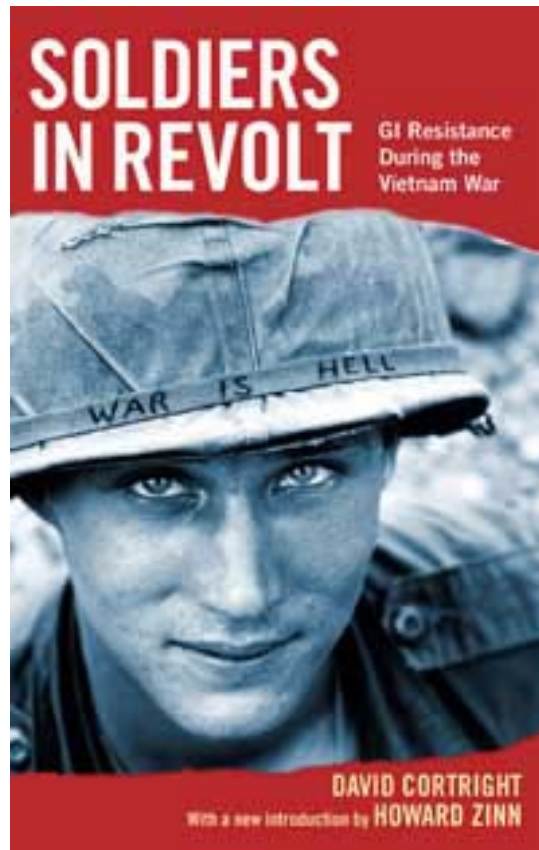
One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

**“The Courts Have Issued Several
Judgments Which For The First Time
Permit The Distribution Of Political
Literature Within Military
Installations”**

**“In A Sweeping First Amendment
Decision, The Court Declared That The
Military Did Not Have The Right To
Restrict Access To Parts Of An**

Installation Generally Open To The Public”



From: **SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1975.** [Now available in paperback from Haymarket Books]

We have seen numerous examples in which not a lack of authority but its very excessiveness have increased dissension and unrest.

Stern discipline has frequently only exacerbated internal difficulties and strengthened GI resistance.

Servicemen rooted in a society increasingly skeptical of authority and established institutions must inevitably rebel against the arbitrary punitive methods of the military establishment.

The present, medieval system is also fundamentally incompatible with the changed nature of modern military forces. The increasing pace of technological change and introduction of new and sophisticated military job specialties have changed the demands of military service, requiring greater abilities and more individual, initiative on the part of each soldier.

Military discipline and training, derived from times when armies had to be forced into open fire in mass infantry lines, can only impede the individual responsibility required in many modern military occupations.

Moreover, an increasing number of servicemen work in a bureaucratic or technical environment similar to that found in many civilian jobs. Indeed, many now live off post and commute to their forty-hour-a-week military job very much in the manner of the average civilian.

To claim that strict discipline is necessary for proper job performance is absurd.

One of the most controversial subjects of military reform is the administrative discharge system.

Nearly five hundred thousand Vietnam-era veterans have received less-than-honorable separations, often resulting in a lifelong barrier to GI benefits and decent employment.

Since adaptability to the military has little or no relation to one's ability to function in civilian life, the permanent deprivations of a "bad" discharge constitute a vindictive and senseless form of oppression.

Given the frequency with which commanders resorted to discharges as a means of eliminating political opponents, many punitively released veterans must be counted among those who resisted the military and the Vietnam War.

Similarly, the disproportionate number of blacks who received "bad" discharges were often leading activists in the GI movement and in many cases were victims of overt discrimination and repression.

Some may object that proposals for military democracy are hopelessly utopian, that military authorities will never yield to demands for GI rights.

While the ultimate goals of the GI movement are admittedly distant, the resistance effort has not been without impact.

Indeed, the pressures of continuous political struggle have resulted in important gains in recent years.

Perhaps the clearest example of progress in the campaign for enlisted rights is the increasing influence of civilian federal courts in the affairs of military discipline — what might be termed "the civilianization of military law."

In the past decade, servicemen have pushed relentlessly for Bill of Rights protections, and, through an unprecedented wave of GI court suits, have persuaded federal judges to assume jurisdiction over many crucial areas of military justice.

The vaguely worded catch-alls, Articles 133 and 134, have been seriously challenged; court-martial defendants have won the right to individual counsel; various unjust and discriminatory regulations have been nullified; the right to on-post distribution of political literature has been granted; etc.

The intrusion of civilian legal standards into the world of the military marks an important and potentially fundamental change in the nature of military law.

There have been literally hundreds of GI court cases, and it would be impossible for us to discuss even a fraction of them here. Rather, we shall review a few of the recent landmark decisions with greatest consequence.

One of the most important of these involved two Fort Ord soldiers, Don Amick and Ken Stolte, who in 1968 distributed a leaflet urging fellow GIs to join an anti-war union. The two were court-martialed under Article 134 for “disloyal statements” and sentenced to three years in prison.

In January 1973, however, Washington Federal District Judge Aubrey Robinson ruled that the Army had incorrectly interpreted the article in charging the two and threw out their convictions.

The Robinson decision was extended two months later, when a Washington Appeals Court declared that Article 134 was in fact unconstitutional because of vagueness and inadequate standards of guilt.

The case involved Marine Pfc Marl Avreeh, who had been convicted in Da Nang, during 1969, of anti-war activities.

The courts have issued several judgments which for the first time permit the distribution of political literature within military installations.

In November of 1972, the Supreme Court ruled that the conviction of antiwar activist Tom Flower for distributing literature at Fort Sam Houston was unconstitutional.

In a sweeping First Amendment decision, the court declared that the military did not have the right to restrict access to parts of an installation generally open to the public.

In a following case, *Jeness v. Forbes*, a Rhode Island district court decided that Socialist Workers Party candidate Linda Jenness could not be prevented from distributing political literature at Quonset NAS.

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**

In Praise Of Revolution

[Thanks to Fabian Bouthillette, The Military Project & Iraq Veterans Against The War, who sent this in.]

It is only later, when the inability of those in power to fulfil the obligations which legitimate their power and privileges becomes apparent that the question is sometimes asked outside militant circles: “whether kings, capitalists, priests, generals, bureaucrats, etc, serve any useful social purpose at all”.

05/01/2009 By Serge Halimi, Le Monde Diplomatique [Excerpts]

The polarisation of society inherent in the notion of “being in a camp” is unwelcome because instead we all ought to be showing our solidarity with our employer, our boss or his brand – while still knowing our place.

For in the eyes of those who aren't among its fans, the main charge against the revolution isn't its violence – sadly an all too common phenomenon in history – but something infinitely rarer: the upheaval of the social order which occurs when the proletariat and the affluent go to war.

In 1988, George H W Bush, looking for a knock-out argument to floor his Democrat opponent, Michael Dukakis, came up with this: “We're not going to be divided by class. You see, I think that's for European democracies or something else. It isn't for the United States of America.”

Class.

Just think how horrifying such an accusation must be in the US!

To the extent that 20 years later, at the moment when the US economy seems to be imposing sacrifices as inequitable as the profits that preceded them, the present incumbent in the White House judged it imperative to forestall popular anger thus: “One of the most important lessons to learn from this crisis is that our economy only works if we recognise that we're all in this together, that we all have responsibilities to each other and to our country... We can't afford to demonise every investor or entrepreneur who seeks to make a profit”.

Whatever ultra rightwing Republicans are claiming, Barack Obama is not about to start any revolution...

Even so, a charge levelled against major revolutions is they were violent.

Exception is taken to the massacre of the Swiss Guard during the storming of the Tuileries in August 1792, to that of the Russian royal family in July 1918 in Ekaterinburg

and to the liquidation of Chiang Kai-Shek's officers when the Communists took power in China in 1949.

But if you object to those, then you shouldn't ignore the famines of the Ancien Régime, which happened against a background of balls at Versailles and of tithes demanded by priests; or the hundreds of peaceful demonstrators massacred by Nicholas II's troops in St Petersburg on Bloody Sunday in 1905; or the revolutionaries in Canton and Shanghai thrown alive into the boilers of locomotives in 1927.

Not to mention the everyday acts of violence which were part of the social order the revolutionaries sought to overthrow.

"We lost all the battles, but we had the best songs."

This view from a Spanish republican fighter seeking refuge in France after Franco's victory sums up the problem of conservatives and their insistent message of submission.

Simply put, revolutions leave an indelible mark on history and human consciousness, even when they fail and even when they are later dishonoured.

They embody a moment when fate rises up and the people have the upper hand.

This gives them their universal resonance.

Each in its way –the mutineers of the Potemkin, the survivors of the Long March, the barbudos ("bearded ones") of Cuba's Sierra Maestra – echoes the actions of the soldiers of the Year II; that suggested to British historian Eric Hobsbawm that "the French Revolution demonstrated the power of the common people in a manner that no subsequent government has ever allowed itself to forget – if only in the form of untrained, improvised, conscript armies, defeating the conjunction of the finest and most experienced troops of the old regimes."

However desirable they may be, revolutions remain rare.

They require simultaneously: a broad mass of dissatisfied people who are prepared to act; a state whose legitimacy and authority are challenged by some of its usual supporters (as a result of economic incompetence, mismanagement of the military or crippling internal divisions); and finally, pre-existing radical ideas that question the social order and which, though they may be held only by a tiny minority to begin with, are capable of attracting all those whose loyalty to the old order has crumbled

The US historian Victoria Bonnell studied the workers of Moscow and St Petersburg on the eve of the first world war.

As this is the only instance of this social group being a major player in a "successful" revolution, her conclusion is worth quoting: "What distinguishes revolutionary consciousness is the conviction that grievances can be redressed only by a transformation of the existing institutions and arrangements, by the establishment of an alternative form of social and political organisation".

In other words, this consciousness doesn't appear spontaneously without some pre-existing political mobilisation and intellectual ferment.

This being so, the demands of social movements are primarily defensive – as can be seen at the moment..

They aim to re-establish a social contract which they believe to have been broken by the bosses, landowners, bankers and governments.

Food, work, shelter, education, prospects: not (yet) a glorious future but “a vision of the present stripped of its most painful aspects”.

It is only later, when the inability of those in power to fulfil the obligations which legitimate their power and privileges becomes apparent that the question is sometimes asked outside militant circles: “whether kings, capitalists, priests, generals, bureaucrats, etc, serve any useful social purpose at all”.

At this point, it is possible to talk of revolution.

The transition from one stage to another may occur quickly – in two years in 1789, a few months in 1917 – or may never happen.

For nearly two centuries, millions of political and union activists, historians and sociologists have been examining the critical variables: is the ruling class divided and demoralised?

Is its machinery of repression intact?

Are the social forces that seek change organised and capable of mutual action?

Nowhere have these studies been more abundant than in the US, where it is often a case of understanding revolutions and conceding all that they have achieved, the better to avert them.

May 13, 1968: Heroic Anniversary The French General Strike Begins



“We Are The Power”

Carl Bunin Peace History May 7-13

Workers joined Paris students' protest, launching a general strike calling for the fall of the government and protesting police brutality.

The protest by French students included occupation of The Sorbonne; by the end of the month over 10,000,000 had been involved in school and workplace occupations.

Troops Invited:

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project]

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



“April Marked The 16th Month Of The Current Recession, Matching The Longest Since The Great Depression”

05-08-09 By Heidi Shierholz, Economic Policy Institute [Excerpts]

April marked the 16th month of the current recession, matching the longest since the Great Depression.

The April 2009 employment data released this morning by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that while the pace of job loss is exhibiting signs of slowing — losing 539,000 in April compared to an average of 707,000 per month in the first quarter — today’s labor market is still shedding jobs at a breathtaking pace.

Since the start of the recession, the economy as a whole has shed 5.7 million jobs, totaling 4.2% of total employment.

But losses in the private sector alone have been much steeper, with a decline of 6.0 million jobs, or 5.2% of private employment. This rate of private-sector job loss was 50%

faster than the 3.5% private employment loss over the 16 months of the 1981/82 recession.

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

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.

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