

GI SPECIAL 7E21:



Memorial Day:

05/22/2008 By Michael William [Iraq Veterans Against the War]

Silence breaks upon each thought in passing
marked by the quiet bugling of despair -
as we pause to raise our eyes to the heap
of the dead silence ever amassing

can we not be led to scream? To so rage
upon our chests as if we could exhume
thoughts lost in the welter of dust and time?
Will we continue to deploy, engage,

and destroy our innocent thoughts? and sigh
for their quiet passing? There, another

and yet another dragging toward their tomb.

Those shamelessly servile to fear will reap
nothing, for they sow nothing to the air
and mute will they remain until they die.

Memorial Day

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: May 22, 2008 5:07 PM
Subject: Memorial Day by Dennis

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

Memorial Day

Depression is crashing down on the Soldier
from clouds in the air reflecting dead heroes
he can't seem to shake anything off
it has seeped into his body and brain
like hounds on the loose chasing enemies
inside himself that won't come out
that can hardly be seen except for Americans
who send him cards and packages that
he doesn't open anymore because he doesn't know
them or his family or himself or anybody anymore
as the dust flies behind his Humvee waiting
for their death, his death it doesn't
matter anymore, nothing is important
driving into his death he hopes because
he can't take it anymore he needs to be rescued
but helicopters never land
until it is too late everybody dead
except him or everybody is alive
except him as he screams in the air of the desert
but he is only screaming at himself
as the needle goes in and the doctor
tells him not to worry he will be with
his fellow Soldiers in no time, no time at all
but time has stopped there is no history

nothing in the future except for now and dead heroes
between nothingness and nothingness
between half life and half death
he no longer cares about going on living
for what, this ugly world is just evil
the way it takes people, squeezes happiness,
feelings of love out of them, leaving empty cartridges
on a highway in Baghdad motors running
full speed ahead and as he cries to God but God is dead
and the highway he has traveled is bloody
red and black, black and red
a game of dangerous
his family doesn't know him anymore
as he sits on the porch and stares with dead eyes
waiting for someone to give him a gun again.

“Don't Waste Any Time In Mourning. Organize.”

Joe Hill, before his execution by the State of Utah for organizing unions 11.19.1915.

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

Vermont-Raised Soldier Slain In Iraq



May 18, 2009 WCAX

Springfield, Vermont

Violence is again escalating in Iraq and a Vermonter is among the latest American casualties. Army Corporal Ryan McGhee, 21, mostly recently lived in Virginia, but he did spend a good part of his life growing up in Springfield. And the people there remember him well.

McGhee's life was taken suddenly last week during a shootout in central Iraq.

McGhee's mother told friends in Springfield that her son died a hero.

"Apparently there was a sniper who shot down at Ryan and his company, mortally wounding Ryan, but he was able to get ground cover for his troops and return fire," Michael Laplante said.

Laplante's stepson and McGhee were best friends. And Laplante said he treated the soldier like one of the family.

"He had the best attitude, was very trustworthy, he had a great smile. Just a lot of charisma," Laplante said.

McGhee was originally from Tennessee but attended junior high in Springfield. He left a lasting impression on teachers there.

"As soon as you walked up to him, his hand was out before yours and he was going to shake your hand. Which is unusual for a 14-, 15-year-old kid," recalled John Swanson, a middle school teacher.

Swanson knew McGhee from a trip they took together to Gettysburg. The social studies teacher says he still remembers the last time they spoke.

"Walking into high school, he was walking out, and he shook my hand and said, thanks for everything you have always done for me," Swanson said.

McGhee was planning to come back to Vermont to introduce his fiancée to old friends. Now, they will hold on to him with memories.

"He was extremely positive in life," Laplante said. "He wasn't a negative person; he didn't let a lot get him down."

McGhee died during his fourth tour overseas. He was in Afghanistan three times before his most recent tour in Iraq.

Laplante is helping to organize a memorial service with both friends and family in Springfield, but a date had not been set.

McGhee is the third student from the middle school in Springfield to be killed in Iraq.

National Guard Sgt. Kevin Sheehan died in 2004. Marine Lance Corporal Kurt Dechen lost his life in 2006.

**“If The Americans Don’t Start Keeping The Promises They Made To His Group And Him He’ll Fight Again”
“All Our Arms Are From Old Army Caches Underground; They Will Allow Us To Fight Another 20 Years”**

May 21, 2009 By Leila Fadel, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD - Abu Fatma dresses in suits now. He cuts his hair short and talks like a politician.

He looked down at his tie and his clean gray suit.

“Don’t be fooled by my clothes,” he said.

Abu Fatma agreed to put his guns aside as part of a deal with the U.S. military last year but the former Sunni Muslim insurgent, once known as a killer with no mercy, is still a fighter.

If the Americans don’t start keeping the promises they made to his group and him he’ll fight again, he said.

“All our arms are from old army caches underground; they will allow us to fight another 20 years,” said the Kurd from the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. “I’ve told the Americans, ‘If you keep alienating the people, all the Iraqis will fight.’ “

“(Other groups) ask us, ‘What did the Americans do?’“ Abu Fatma said. “This question has become the most embarrassing question I hear. . . . I’m stumped and embarrassed. I don’t have an answer.

“I say, ‘Don’t lay down your weapons,’ because otherwise I would be dishonest.”

Now Abu Fatma wonders whether it was all a mistake. He doesn’t want to fight again, but he watches as leaders of the Awakening groups are detained and those from other former insurgent groups remain in hiding, wanted by the Iraqi government.

He was tortured and detained multiple times for his part in the resistance, and he continues to use his nom de guerre instead of his real name because he's still worried that the government will detain him.

If he has to fight again, he will, he said.

It's unclear how influential he and his group are, but one American military official said that he'd seen them produce results. He thinks that Abu Fatma's army has some 5,000 men and is a way to reach other insurgent groups.

"Every group was telling these guys, 'Listen, you are being foolish, because the coalition and the Iraqi government are going to use you to get rid of us,'" said the U.S. military official, who agreed to speak only on the condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to talk. "When they are finished with us, they are going to get rid of you."

He worries that the "prophecy is now being fulfilled."

The Iraqi government is "breaking the backs of these organizations," the official said. "The problem is some of them will drift back to their old groups. . . . some will go back immediately to fighting, and the others might return home and just look the other way."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Here Is No Guarantee, There Is A Blast Everyday”

25 May 2009 Written by Qadir Shah, Quqnoos

An Afghan army soldier is wounded in a roadside bomb, exploded a hundred meters from the governor office in eastern Khost city

The remote-controlled bomb, blew up on Monday noon, shocked the Afghan restive eastern city once again.

The wounded soldier is taken to the hospital in Khost city and his health status is termed stable, Col Abdul Qayum Baqizoy, Khost Police Chief told Quqnoos.

"I saw when the huge explosion happened but luckily many people were not around there," Mohammad Nabi, a local driver in Khost said.

He added the soldier was guarding the area close to the governor office, where a group of suicide bombers attacked two weeks ago.

Later the security forces cordoned off the area and became on alert, after they learned that another mine was also planted in the city.

“We defused the second bomb an hour after the first explosion. We became able to prevent a tragedy,” Khost Police Chief added.

One blast in more and less a part of the everyday occurrences in the volatile Afghan province, bordering Pakistan, a local resident said.

“Here is no guarantee, there is a blast everyday,” Basir Mohammad, another resident said.

The day before, another remote controlled bomb exploded that left 4 locals wounded, including a policeman.

Khost province is known as a stronghold of the Taliban. The US-led coalition forces have also warned the presence of Al Qaeda militants there.

Resistance Action



A police car after was it was attacked, near Forward Operation Base (FOB) Masum Ghar in Kandahar province, May 24, 2009. Militants attacked the police car on Friday May 22 with an improvised explosive device (IED), killing one police officer and wounding four others. REUTERS/Jorge Silva

24 May 2009 Quqnoos

Seven Afghan soldiers were wounded in two separate incidents, Saturday, in the restive Kandahar province

In the first incident in Zeray district, the Tailban launched rocket attacks on the Afghan military base where left three soldiers injured, Afghan Defence Ministry said.

Following the rocket attack, Taliban militants ambushed a convoy of the Afghan National Army soldiers in Panjwaye, another volatile district of Kandahar.

According to a MoD statement, one ANA officer was killed and four others were wounded in the gun battle.

An ANA vehicle is also damaged in the firefight.

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

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

**BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
POINTLESS WAR:
ALL HOME NOW**



3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division in Logar province April 13, 2009.
REUTERS/Ahmad Masood

Welcome To Liberated Afghanistan: Easy Pickings For World-Class Thieves And Other War Profiteers; “Afghanistan 176th Out Of 180 Countries On Its Corruption Among Public Officials And Politicians”

May 24 By RICHARD LARDNER, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON – The job of rebuilding Afghanistan is shaping up as an ominous sequel to the massive, mistake-riddled U.S. effort to get Iraq back on its feet.

Since 2001, the U.S. has committed nearly \$33 billion for reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. Yet as President Barack Obama sends more troops and aid to quell a growing insurgency, there's been no detailed public accounting of where the money has gone and how effectively it's being spent.

As in Iraq, where the U.S. has contributed \$50 billion for rebuilding, the flow of money to Afghanistan outpaces the ability to track it. Already, an inspector general looking into the U.S. handling of Afghanistan reconstruction has found worrisome evidence of lax oversight and costly projects left foundering.

Afghanistan presents difficult challenges. It lacks Iraq's modern infrastructure and oil to generate revenue. Work sites are often in remote and primitive locations, making it hard for investigators to keep tabs on progress and ensure contract terms are being met.

Even when projects are initially successful, there are no guarantees they'll stay that way. Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries and can't sustain improvements without heavy international aid.

It is hamstrung by a government rife with corruption, by a thriving drug trade, by weak procurement rules and by lax enforcement.

A U.S. government watchdog to oversee the American tax dollars pouring into projects throughout Afghanistan wasn't even created until 2008 — seven years after U.S. troops invaded the country to hunt down al-Qaida members and oust the Taliban.

The office of the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, led by retired Marine Corps Gen. Arnold Fields, still lacks staff and money needed to do its job properly.

But even its early efforts show troubling signs.

In its first audit report, released this past Tuesday, Fields' office reported that a military command in Kabul managing \$15 billion in U.S. programs to develop Afghanistan's security forces cannot be sure the money is being spent wisely.

The auditors examined a \$404 million training contract held by a large U.S. consulting company and found the government official responsible for monitoring the vendor's performance worked at an Army office in Maryland — nine time zones away.

More cause for concern is found in Khost, a town on Afghanistan's violent border with Pakistan, where a failed electric power station points to the inability to sustain critical projects.

At a cost of \$1 million, the power generation plant in Khost was transformed from a dilapidated building into a modern facility with three newly installed generators.

In September 2008, the fully functioning plant was turned over to Khost's ministry of energy and water.

When U.S. inspectors visited the site in March, only one generator was still operating and only at 60 percent of capacity. The plant's manager said the two generators out of commission were missing parts.

U.S. money also was used to train 25 poor women to cultivate and sell saffron, a spice being promoted in Afghanistan as an alternative to growing opium poppies. The project was completed on time and on budget.

But Afghan authorities didn't have the resources to keep the program going for the two years needed to make it self-sustaining.

Fields has been to Afghanistan twice in the past few months. Both times he has met with Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai, who Fields says has pleaded for help in battling corruption inside his government.

Transparency International, a nongovernment organization based in Berlin, ranked Afghanistan 176th out of 180 countries on its corruption perceptions index last year.

The index assesses the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians. Only Haiti, Iraq, Myanmar and Somalia were rated lower.

Fields passed Karzai's requests to the departments of State and Defense. He's received little response.

"I'm not satisfied," Fields said.

Stuart Bowen, Fields' hard-charging counterpart in Iraq, has showed that a watchdog with a wide view is essential for such an enormous undertaking.

Bowen has been on the job since October 2004. His office has issued 276 audit and inspection reports. Its investigative and oversight work has resulted in 21 criminal indictments.

In January, he published "Hard Lessons," a grim history of how Iraq's rebuilding spiraled from a prewar estimate of \$2.4 billion to nearly 25 times that much.

"There was a lot of waste," Bowen said. "Billions of dollars in waste."

At a congressional hearing in March, Bowen recounted a recent meeting with a business executive whose company did electrical contracting in Iraq and is now working in Afghanistan.

He told Bowen all his reports about Iraq were on the mark.

"Then he said, 'I want to tell you that the same thing is going on in Afghanistan,'" Bowen said.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Heavy Fighting Explodes In Capital Of Somalia; "Ethiopia And The United States Are Keen To Prevent Islamic Forces From Coming Into Power"

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

May 22 2009 MOHAMED OLAD HASSAN, AP & May 24 (Reuters)

Hundreds of government soldiers attacked Islamic insurgents across the Somali capital amid heavy artillery shelling Friday, battling along streets strewn with bodies as they tried to regain lost ground.

The U.S.-backed government, which held just a few blocks of Mogadishu before the fighting erupted early in the day, claimed it had taken rebel-controlled areas, but the insurgents said they repelled the attacks.

The government offensive followed a few days' lull after Islamic insurgents staged a major attack in Mogadishu. Despite successes, the insurgents failed to gain control of

key installations like the airport and presidential palace, which are guarded by African Union peacekeepers.

The Islamic fighters also had been expanding their hold on territory in central Somalia taken from clan militias allied to the government.

But the militants halted when neighboring Ethiopia moved several columns of troops over the border to secure key towns.

Ethiopia, which helped government troops drive Islamic militiamen out of the capital late in 2006, worries about the insurgents' links to rebel groups on its own soil.

Regional leaders issued a hurried statement Friday in support of the beleaguered U.S.-backed government, which took advantage of the calm in recent days to resupply and regroup its troops before launching Friday's assault.

Both sides fired mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and missiles mounted on trucks into residential areas.

Mark Schroeder, an analyst at Stratfor, an international intelligence company, said he did not expect Somalia's fighting to end soon.

Two insurgent groups have cobbled together an alliance seeking to overthrow the weak government and its allied militias.

In addition, Ethiopia and the United States are keen to prevent Islamic forces from coming into power in Somalia, Schroeder said. They are particularly opposed to the al-Shabab militia.

He noted Somalia's new president, Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed, has a personal rivalry with Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, an Islamist leader who arrived in Mogadishu a month ago after two years of exile in Eritrea.

Ahmed and Aweys, who come from the same clan, once fought alongside each other against the previous administration and its Ethiopian allies. But Ahmed signed a peace deal, clearing the way for him to become president, and Aweys now regards him as a traitor.

There is also a rivalry between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which is supporting Aweys. Eritrea, which broke away from Ethiopia after a long, bitter war, is eager to weaken its archenemy any way it can.

A bomber killed six policemen and a civilian on Sunday in Somalia's capital and Islamist insurgents warned more attacks would target pro-government forces in the coming days.

Abdifatah Shaweye, deputy governor of Mogadishu, said the bomber drove a 4x4 vehicle to the gate of a police headquarters and detonated it by the guards.

"Four died on the spot, two others died of serious injuries, and one civilian (died)," a police commander, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

Islamist insurgent group al Shabaab, has been spearheading the rebel offensive with allied guerrilla group Hizbul Islam. They stepped up attacks in the capital early in May.

Security sources say the Islamist insurgents have been planting more sophisticated roadside bombs in recent months and Iraq-style suicide attacks have become more frequent.

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR IMPERIAL WARS?



The remains of Army Spc. David A. Schaefer Jr., 27, of Belleville, Ill. May 18, 2009 upon his arrival at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Spc. Schaefer Jr. died May 16 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Infantry Brigade, Schweinfurt, Germany. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

“We Have A Fuller Understanding Of Memorial Day Than Civilians Who Have Never Been To War And Haven’t Lost Friends In Combat”

“Understand This, Then: Scott Camil’s Long War Is Not Over”

May 24, 2009 By Ron Cunningham, Editorial page editor, Gainesville.com

At dusk on Oct. 12, 1967, Sgt. Scott Camil, of Hialeah, was crouched in a bomb crater in South Vietnam’s Hai Lang National Forest in the middle of a ferocious fire fight.

A concussion grenade landed nearby, peppering his legs with shrapnel and rendering one of them numb.

“Kane,” Camil screamed to a fellow Marine. “The bottom of my leg — is it still there?”

“You’re leg’s still there,” PFC Stephen Kane responded. “You’re all set.”

“Reassured, Camil ignored the injury and went back to his task of calculating the enemy’s location,” writes Doyle D. Glass, in his 2007 book “Lions of Medina: An epic account of Marine valor during the Vietnam War.”

Operation Medina was mounted to drive the North Vietnamese out of the forest, a goal not fully achieved. Of the 187 marines involved, 11 were killed and 75 wounded.

Camil calls Operation Medina the worst days of his life.

A lot has happened to Camil in the 42 years since Operation Medina. He came home to help found Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He and seven others were charged by the federal government with conspiring to disrupt the 1972 Republican National Convention in Miami.

The “Gainesville 8” conspiracy trial resulted in acquittals across the board. And Camil would remain in this university city to become Gainesville’s best-known and most-enduring political and anti-war activist.

“I went from a 100-percent flag-waving, right-wing person who would do what the government wanted to someone who thinks for himself,” Camil told Glass in “Lions of Medina.”

This Memorial Day weekend, Scott Camil, now leading Veterans for Peace, is manning his post at Westside Park, directing logistics and operations for the third annual “Memorial Mile.” Eighth Avenue’s Solar Walk has been temporarily transformed into a visually stunning memorial for the American service men and women who have given their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001.

This year, Memorial Mile consists of more than 4,900 small plastic tombstones. Each one bears the name of a fallen American soldier. Each tiny marker notes that soldier’s date of death, age, branch of service and hometown.

Fifteen of the markers denote the deaths of service people with local ties and are graced by tiny American flags to make them easier to find. Camil keeps a master list that

enables him to quickly direct inquiring visitors to the precise location of each and every marker on the avenue.

In previous years, the rows of tombstones marched east along the south side of Eighth Avenue. But with some 400 additional casualties to account for since the last Memorial Day weekend, faux tombstones now line both sides.

Going into the weekend, Camil and his volunteers were still preparing fresh tombstones to account for the latest war deaths.

The first year of Memorial Mile, Camil says, "I was really thinking that the war wasn't going to last. Now I'm wondering what we're going to do if we run out of room going down the other side of Eighth."

The rows of tombstones are grouped under signs that denote key events in the War on Terror.

Afghanistan, 2001.

Iraq, 2003.

There's even a sign marking the date of George W. Bush's notorious "Mission Accomplished" speech.

Alas, plastic tombstones continue on from that point of presidential hubris for a depressingly long distance.

This year, a new sign has been added — one that Camil says doesn't sit well with all of his fellow Veterans for Peace members.

It is a sign marking Barack Obama's swearing in as Commander in Chief.

"Some of my people are upset with it," he says. "They don't want to beat up on Obama. But everything that comes after that sign is Obama's responsibility. Veterans for Peace is not a partisan organization."

If you haven't seen Memorial Mile yet, please do so before it is dismantled at sunset tomorrow, Memorial Day. It is an emotionally gut-wrenching experience.

And it would be a mistake to dismiss this as nothing more than an anti-war protest.

The care and painstaking attention to detail that went into the preparation and set up of this temporary memorial is testament to the respect and honor accorded to all who have died in these wars.

"Because we're Veterans for Peace, some people automatically think this is about nothing but anti-war," Camil said. "If the American Legion did this, those same people would think nothing of it."

“We’re vets, and many of us are war veterans. We have a fuller understanding of Memorial Day than civilians who have never been to war and haven’t lost friends in combat.”

That Memorial Mile was erected at all this year — at the tail end of a week of relentless rainfall — says something about the determination of Veterans for Peace members and supporters to make sure that those who have so recently perished in all of our names are not forgotten.

“I want people to think about the cost of war ... the price that’s really being paid, the burden that’s being carried on very few shoulders,” says Camil.

“I personally believe that as long as a society accepts war as a legitimate means of conflict resolution, that society cannot be considered civilized.”

Forty-two years ago, a young man from Tampa crouched in a bomb crater in Vietnam and wondered if he had lost his leg to a grenade blast.

If you talk to him today, at his outpost on Memorial Mile, you will come to understand that Scott Camil hates war as only a warrior can.

Shortly after Doyle’s book was published, Camil gave me a copy with this inscription: “I spent about 600 days in Nam. Those days shaped who I am today. This book is about real people and real war. It is important to me that people understand me.”

Understand this, then: Scott Camil’s long war is not over.

Hence, Memorial Mile.

**HONOR THE WARRIOR,
NOT THE WAR**

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
Fighting for Veterans, Peace and Justice since 1967
www.vvaw.org



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

The Need For Combat Troops And The Desire To Control Costs Create “Huge Institutional Pressures” For The Army To Ignore PTSD “Whenever Possible”

April 10, 2009 By Mark Benjamin and Michael de Yoanna, Salon.com [Excerpts]

In two stories published this week, Salon has described how a soldier secretly taped a psychologist saying that the Army was exerting pressure not to diagnose soldiers with post-traumatic stress disorder. Psychologist Douglas McNinch of Fort Carson, Colo., twice states on the recording that the Army discourages PTSD diagnoses.

Paul Sullivan, executive director of the advocacy group Veterans for Common Sense, said that when soldiers with PTSD are booted out of the Army without a proper rating for PTSD, they are essentially shortchanged for their service in the wars and left to fight with the Department of Veterans Affairs for benefits.

Together, the need for combat troops and the desire to control costs create what David Rudd, chairman of the Texas Tech department of psychology and a former Army psychologist, calls “huge institutional pressures” for the Army to ignore PTSD and the psychological impact of war whenever possible.

“The military is not geared to treat psychiatric illness,” Rudd said. “They continue to have difficulty accepting the psychological costs of war.”

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**

Search and Destroy



From: Richard Hastie
To: Thomas F Barton
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2009 4:50 PM

Subject: Search and Destroy

Search and Destroy

**Two Vietnam veteran friends stand before
the monument at My Lai in 1994.
Facing the truth is looking at yourself
in the mirror.
It's about facing the shame.
It's about facing the unthinkable.
If you can't hear the moaning,
you'll do it all over again.
Fast forward to 2009,
and America is doing it all over again.
When you search and destroy your own history,
you burn your own village down.
Mike Hastie**

**U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
May 21, 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**

Torture Day Two

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: May 21, 2009
Subject: Torture Day Two

**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 Day Two

Somewhere in Warsaw Poland, a dark cold basement, water creeping down the walls like the swine flu, light bulbs splattered with mucus dangling from bare wires above , fresh red and dried dark red blood on the floor.

Bush W: "You ain't gonna strap me to that waterboard, are you? Ya'all know torture was Cheney's idea and ya got him already."

"Shut up, strap him to the waterboard."

Bush W: "Look see, I heard this here waterboarding is really bad, makes ya feel like your drowning. Can't ya-all do something else?"

"Ok, take the electric drill and start drilling his right knee cap."

Bush W: "Aaaahhhh, Lauraaaaa, yewoow, help meeeeeeeeeeeeeeee."

"You authorized the waterboarding and torture, didn't you?"

Bush W: "Look see, I just read the teleprompter, Cheney wrote what to say."

"Drill his left knee cap."

Bush W: "Aaaaaaa-eeeeee, Okaaaaaaa, Okaaaaaa, I authorized it, I signed the paperworkkk."

"You are a War Criminal, admit it or we will waterboard you."

Bush W: "Can't ya-all do something different, please don't waterboard me."

"Ok, unstrap him, flip him over and strap him down again."

Bush W: "Ya-all know it's kinda cold down here with no cloths on."

"Shut up, take that broom handle and that American flag and start shoving it up his rectum."

Bush W: “Dang itttt, that’s starting to hurt.”

“Admit that you are a War Criminal and that we should kill you.”

Bush W: “I’m alot of things but I ain’t no criminal.”

“Shove more of that flag in.”

Bush W: “Mamaaaaa, Oooooohhh mannnn, I’ll sayyy anythingggg.”

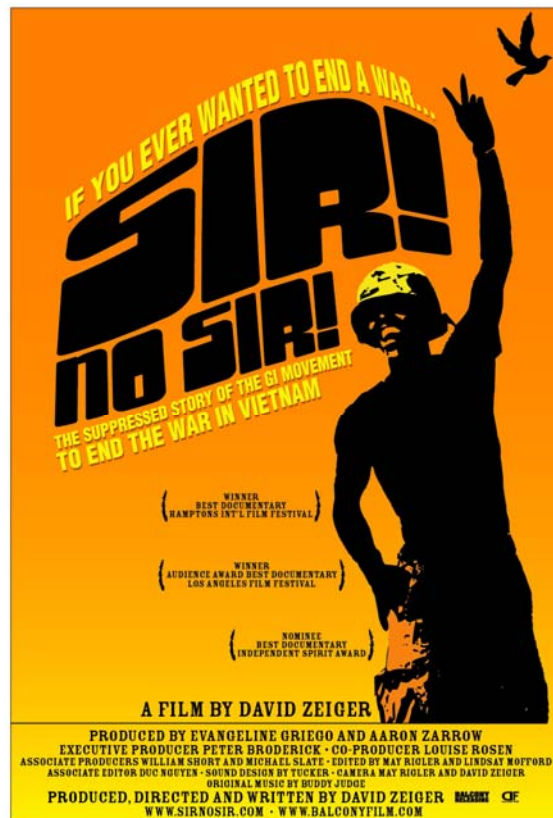
“Ok, go video tape him saying he is a War Criminal so we can show it to the world.
Bring in the next one.”

Rumsfeld: “W, what’s that flag hanging out of your ass?”

Bush W: “It ain’t whistling Dixie.”

Rumsfeld: “These people are Monsters.”

“Just like you.”



Vietnam: They Stopped An Imperial War: Honor And Respect To Them All

Sir! No Sir!:

The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at
http://www.sirnosir.com/home_dvd_storefront.html

Also available is a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

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SOLDIERS NOW**

**HELP GET SIR! NO SIR!
INTO THE HANDS THAT NEED IT MOST**

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Evil Anniversary:
May 24, 1934: Germany
"It Is The Aim Of The State Police To
Support Zionism And Its Emigration
Policy As Fully As Possible"**

From: Human Smoke; The Beginnings of World War II, By Nicholson Baker, Simon & Schuster; New York 2008

REINHARD HEYDRICH, head of the intelligence branch of the German secret police, read a position paper prepared for him concerning Jewish policy.

It was May 24, 1934.

“The aim of Jewish policy must be the emigration of all Jews,” the paper said. Jewish “assimilationists”—those who wanted to live their lives as Germans within Germany—should be discouraged; while Zionists—those who wanted to emigrate to Palestine—should be encouraged, according to the memo.

“It is the aim of the State Police to support Zionism and its emigration policy as fully as possible”:

Every authority concerned should, in particular, concentrate their efforts in recognizing the Zionist organizations and in supporting their training and emigration endeavors; at the same time the activities of German-Jewish groups should be restricted in order to force them to abandon the idea of remaining in Germany.

In this way, Germany would eventually become a country “without a future for the Jews.”

Heydrich, a blond man with a high forehead and long, spidery fingers, began helping Zionist organizations set up agricultural training centers, so that Jews would know how to farm when they reached Palestine.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”]

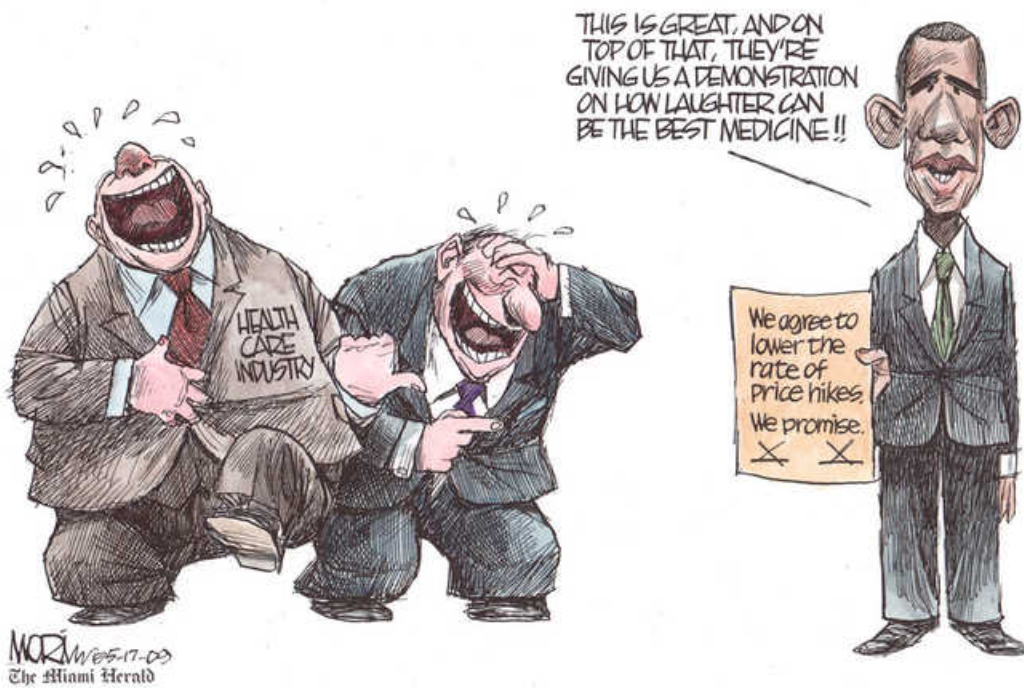
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Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS



“Voting Yes Is Like Digging Your Own Grave And Tipping The Executioners”
Auto Workers:
“If UAW Members Ratify The New Contract, They Will Lose The Right To Vote And Set Themselves Up For More Reductions In Pay, Benefits, Working Conditions, And Pension In 2011”

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran & United Auto Workers GM Retiree, Perry, Michigan, who sent this in.]

May 25, 2009 By Gregg Shotwell [United Auto Workers & Soldiers Of Solidarity]

No one has to read the Lowlights of the UAW-GM contract to know what it's all about.

CEOs get bailed out, workers get sold out.

No one has to analyze the fine print. This one isn't about nickels and dimes. This one is the big one.

This one is about the right to unionize.

We better get it right this time. We won't get a second chance.

If UAW members ratify the contract with GM, they will give up the right to vote on the contract in 2011. Instead, the contract will be decided by arbitration based on parity with non union plants. That's the hidden agenda.

The UAW will be effectively decertified as a bargaining agent.

Rank and file members will have no more rights than non union workers in 2011.

The next contract will make this one look like desert topping.

The government's gift of debt forgiveness comes wrapped in ribbons of union busting ultimatums. Not only do we stand to lose jobs and money, we stand to lose the right to bargain collectively.

Post bankruptcy, CEOs will pocket millions in bonuses while workers who sacrificed vacation time, break time, overtime, and raises, will collect repetitive stress injuries and debts. We won't recover.

Workers will once again be forced to pay for mismanagement and fraud.

You think this contract is bad?

What do you think we'll get in 2011 when we can't even vote?

GM expects to save a billion per year in labor costs on this contract. How much will they take out of our hides when we don't have a vote?

Nonunion transplants pegged their compensation at rates that dissuaded union organizing.

But that levee collapsed and the farm is awash with alligators.

Toyota and Honda are free to lower compensation to depths heretofore unheard of. \$14 is not the bottom line. Parity with nonunion plants will be lower in 2011 than it is now.

And new hires won't be the only ones bending over the barrel. In 2011 UAW members will not only take another pay cut, they will lose defined pension benefits without a vote.

Parity with non union plants means the pension will be converted to a 401-k just like the new hires have now. It's been done before.

On December 31, 2007 IBM canceled its pension plan. Benefits from that plan stopped growing and employees were switched to a 401-k. IBM estimated that employees who were relatively far from retirement age would receive on average 12 percent less than they would have under the old pension plan. Of course, that optimistic estimate was before the 2008 market crash. IBM expected to save billions and they certainly did. The company saved, workers lost.

If UAW members ratify the new contract, they will lose the right to vote and set themselves up for more reductions in pay, benefits, working conditions, and pension in 2011. Those losses will never be recovered.

Voting yes is like digging your own grave and tipping the executioners.

Terrorist Conspiracy Takes Over Atlanta;

Calling Themselves “Police,” Gang Scum Wound, Kill & Lie About It



The family of Tramaine Miller released his hospital photo after he was shot by an Atlanta cop

As the 91-year-old Johnson bled to death on her living room floor, police handcuffed her and planted drugs.

May 19, 2009 By Patrick Dyer, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

ATLANTA--"What is a Black man's life worth in Atlanta?" radio deejay Derrick Boazman asked the angry crowd at City View Apartments. More than 200 people had gathered for a May 12 candlelight vigil and community rally to end police shootings.

The vigil was for 28-year-old Tramaine Miller, the latest victim of Atlanta police, who was scheduled to undergo emergency surgery May 14.

Tramaine had been hospitalized in serious condition since May 5 when off-duty Atlanta cop Reginald Fisher shot him in the face at point-blank range. The bullet shattered his jaw and was still lodged in his skull.

Community anger accelerated when Tramaine's family courageously released a photo of Tramaine's swollen face in his Grady Hospital bed. Pastor Derrick Rice called this "the same courage Emmett Till's mother exemplified," in reference to Emmett Till's open-casket funeral following his vicious lynching and mutilation by Southern racists in 1955.

Tramaine was delivering medication to his quadriplegic aunt, who lives in City View Apartments, when Fisher, who was moonlighting as a "courtesy officer," deemed Tramaine "suspicious" and drew his gun.

According to witnesses, Fisher then smashed Tramaine's window and shot him in the face. Miller was unarmed.

Witnesses also reported that after shooting Tramaine, Fisher, who remains on paid leave, didn't call for any medical help, leaving apartment residents to call 911. As a result, Tramaine lay bleeding in his car for 30 minutes without any assistance.

"There's nothing to indicate there was any concern from officers about Mr. Miller living or dying," stated Tramaine's attorney Muweli Mel Davis.

Many at the rally likened this to the police treatment of Katherine Johnson, who was murdered in 2007 by Atlanta police after officers raided the wrong house and shot her.

As the 91-year-old Johnson bled to death on her living room floor, police handcuffed her and planted drugs.

Police harassment and violence "happens all the time," said rally attendee Frederick Huston, an electrician who was born and raised in this neighborhood. "We're used to it." As he showed the scars on his wrists from police handcuffs, he added, "This is modern-day slavery."

Following Johnson's murder, the Atlanta Citizen Review Board was formed in an attempt to provide more oversight of Atlanta police. But the board has been impotent in the face of the blue wall of silence.

"Atlanta police have consistently and repeatedly refused to provide requested reports, information, recordings and other records," admitted board chairperson Roderick Edmond.

Local activist Sacajawea Hall summed up the necessity for grassroots organizing to stop police terrorism. "I think it's important every time something like this happens to come into the streets," said Hall.



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

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

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