

GI SPECIAL 7H13:



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

Attention

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: August 13, 2009
Subject: Attention

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

Attention

War Is Sex With No Love

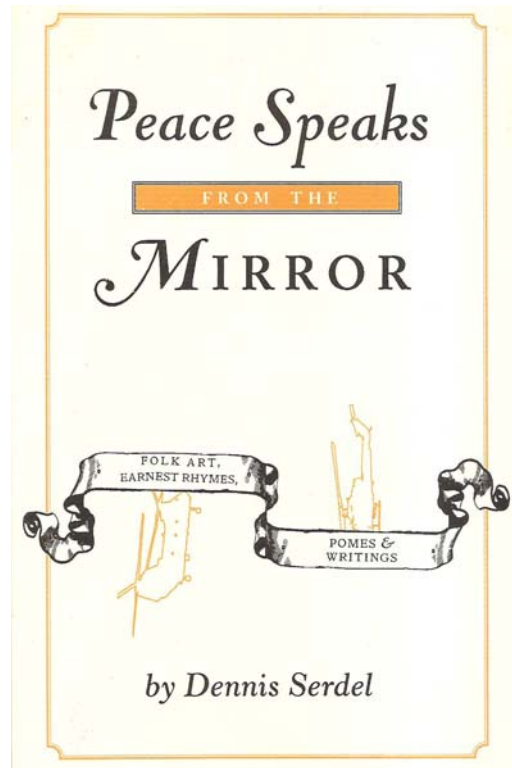
It's Only Good
For A Little While War Is Rape
It Is For Generals War Is A Whore
It Is For The Soldiers
War Is Being Too Tired
For Sex Is Failure War
Is Failure Sex Is Money
War Is Money It Is A Pimp
A President Who Signs
The Paychecks Of The Soldiers
So They Can Buy Sex
Buy War Buy Dying For Sex
War Is Young Boys
Who Are Virgins To War
Is Breaking Their Cherries
As Boys See War Is Sadistic
With No Love Only Hate
War Is Sex With An American
Woman Fifteen Months Ago
Love Fading Separating
War Is A Wife Whore
Having Sex Cheating Not Knowing
Each Other War Is Divorce Sex
Not Meant For Married Soldiers
War Is Slut Sex In A Bar
A One Night Stand Sex War Is
Hate Sex No Love War Is
Pregnant Sex Not Possible
While Overseas War Is
Whore Sex In Iraq War Is
Congressman Caught Sex
Who Pays For The
War Is Preacher Caught Sex
Praying Dead Sex War Is
God Sex With No Love
Like War Is.

MORE:

**MORE OF DENNIS SERDEL'S WORK IN
*PEACE SPEAKS FROM THE MIRROR:***

Get Some While There Still Are Some To Get:

[You've know the power of the poems by Dennis Serdel from the front pages of GI
Special: now they're in book form: Ordering information below: T]



Books are \$15 Post Paid:
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Dennis Serdel
339 Oakwood Lane
Perry,
Michigan 48872

DENNIS SERDEL:
Shipped to Vietnam in November 1967.
Returned home in October 1968 to Kalamazoo, Michigan.
Joined Veterans For Peace in January 1990.
Joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War when Iraq and Afghanistan War started.

**Walt Whitman
Carl Sandburg
Allan Ginsberg
Dennis Serdel**

T

**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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Roxboro Native Killed Saturday In Afghanistan



August 5, 2009 By GREY PENTECOST, Staff Writer, Roxboro Courier

Franceen Jones said that those who knew her son Richie knew him as a very caring and loving person. He cared about his family, his friends, his country. And, it was in proud service to his country that Pfc. Richard K. Jones, 21, of Roxboro, died Aug. 1 in Afghanistan after insurgents attacked his patrol.

In a news release Monday, the Department of Defense announced Jones' death, along with the deaths of two other soldiers who were with him. They were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colo.

“Joining the military was something Richie really wanted to do,” said Jones’ mother. “It was his way of doing his duty and serving his country.” She added, “I’m proud my son was able to serve his country to keep the United States free.”

Jones joined the Army in the fall of 2008 and was deployed to Afghanistan in May of this year.

Clermont Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Awarded Purple Heart



Clermont's Alexander Miller was killed in Afghanistan this week.

August 4, 2009 Anthony Colarossi, Sentinel Staff Writer

CLERMONT - A 21-year-old soldier from Clermont who was killed following an insurgent attack in Afghanistan has been awarded the Purple Heart, military officials announced today

Army Spc. Alexander J. Miller died Friday when insurgents attacked his unit with rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire in Nuristan Province, Afghanistan, the Defense Department said Monday.

Today, Army officials out of Fort Drum, N.Y., announced Miller's awards and citations for service. They include the Purple Heart; the National Defense Service Medal; the Afghanistan Campaign Medal; the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; the Army Service Ribbon; the Overseas Service Ribbon; the NATO Medal; and the Combat Infantryman's Badge, said Julie Cupernall with Fort Drum Public Affairs.

"It's a big deal," Cupernall said of being awarded the Purple Heart. "You bled for your country."

Miller was with the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), based in Fort Drum.

He attended schools in South Lake County, playing a variety of sports, and his mother said he always wanted to be in the military.

"This is what he wanted to do his whole life," Sue Miller said at her kitchen table in Clermont Monday night. "He wanted to serve his country."

She said the military notified her about her son's death Friday but gave her few details. "They just said it had gone bad."

Alex Miller joined the military at age 19, and went to Fort Benning, Ga., for basic training and then to Fort Drum.

Her son didn't talk much about the war the last time he came home to visit in June, Sue Miller said. "He just enjoyed his time at home with his friends and everything." She described him as "smart, funny and full of life."

He had hoped to attend the University of Central Florida after the Army.

Miller's stepfather, Rob Nadon, said Alex played football and baseball at South Lake High. "Any challenge you put in front of him, he would give it his all," Nadon said. "And he put everybody before himself."

Miller is also survived by brother Richard Miller, 23, of Clermont, and half-brothers John Miller of California and Jason Grove of Tennessee. Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

As of Aug. 1, according to the Defense Department, 759 service people had died in the Afghanistan war, including 48 from Florida.

Knoxville Marine Killed In Afghanistan



Gregory A. Posey

Aug 3, 2009 By Sara Shookman, WVLT

East Tennessee mourns the loss of a hero.

The Department of Defense reports that Lance Cpl. Gregory A. Posey died Thursday of combat injuries in Afghanistan. He was 22 years old.

Posey was fighting in the Helmand province, what has become a hot zone in Afghanistan.

Family says Posey was a Marine born to fight for his country, deployed in May.

"He was happier now than he had been in several years," says his aunt, Renee Hurt of Winchester. "He was doing what he wanted to do."

Posey grew up in Winchester, graduating in 2005 from Franklin County High School.

Then he came to the University of Tennessee for computer and engineering classes.

"He was very bright, intelligent handsome young man. He had lots of friends," says Hurt.

Neighbors at the Knoxville apartment complex where Posey used to live say he was friendly, a nice guy, who loved motorcycles and his job.

It was here in Knoxville where followed his father's footsteps in military life.

"His dad was in the service for 24 years, and that's all he's ever known is military," Hurt says.

A Navy brother of his father's agrees.

"Greg had always wanted to serve in the US Marine Corps," says Steve Redd of Knoxville.

He joined the Marine Corps in March of 2007.

Posey was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force of Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

His family says he had a true appreciation for the sacrifices that military men and women make.

Now his own ultimate sacrifice will be his legacy. "As a member of the Marine Corps, as a member of the Navy family that he was a part of, and just as a person in general, he will be sorely missed," says Redd.

"We're very proud of him for what he was doing, but it doesn't take away the pain that he's gone," says Hurt.

So now his family pulls together, knowing Gregory Posey's life will be remembered. "There are people out there fighting for us. He was one of them."

'He Was Protecting His Marines'

August 07, 2009 By ROBBYN BROOKS, News Herald

PANAMA CITY — Anthony Garcia knew what he wanted to do before he graduated from high school.

He was Navy-bound.

"He was very passionate about it," said Nicholas Cooper, who went to Haney Technical Center with Garcia. "He wanted to be a SEAL, but being a corpsman was the next best thing at the time. Turned out to be even better."

Garcia and Cooper joined the Navy together in July 2006, and Petty Officer 3rd Class Garcia reported to Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, in February 2009. Garcia, 21, was a hospital corpsman assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and he deployed to Afghanistan with a unit of about 1,000 Marines in May, Marine officials reported.

He died Wednesday "while supporting combat operations in Farah Province, Afghanistan," according to a Department of Defense news release. "Tyndall, Fla." was listed as his hometown.

"There are two things a Marine will ask for in the field: God and the doc," Cooper said. "He died for his country. He was protecting his Marines."

Garcia last logged on to his MySpace account Aug. 4. His headline reads, "Turn that frown upside down" and his status is "chill." Garcia recently married his wife, Jewell, and Cooper said his friend was excited to be deploying when they spoke in May.

"That's what we joined for. That's what we were here for and trained so hard for," Cooper said. "We're combat medics. We take care of Marines. They protect us, and when they need us, we go in."

"I think everyone was looking forward to deployment so they could do what we do," said Patrick Horgan, who worked with Garcia in Hawaii.

HM1 (FMF/CAC) Horgan was an independent duty corpsman with Garcia's Hawaii-based unit. He recently returned from Afghanistan, so he didn't deploy with the rest of the group.

"He had a great sense of humor. He liked to joke around," Horgan said of Garcia. "He had a tight bond with his friends, definitely. He really liked where he was at and had a wonderful camaraderie with the Marines."

On his MySpace page, Garcia wrote he was born in Denver but "grew up an Air Force brat and moved around a lot," joining the Navy right after graduating from Haney, where he had majored in the school's residential electrician program.

“Things would have been rough for me in school,” Cooper said about his high school days with Garcia. “He was the first person that befriended me. He took the time to show me around and helped me out.

“He was a great friend. He was on your side and would back you up no matter what.”

Garcia will be awarded the Purple Heart, the National Defense Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Afghanistan Campaign Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Cooper said he has not been able to reach his friend’s father, who is active-duty airman at Eglin Air Force Base, but he hopes to attend Garcia’s funeral.

Attempts to reach Garcia’s family Friday were unsuccessful. Funeral arrangements have not been announced.

“You hear about the deaths over there,” Cooper said. “As a corpsman, you know that happens. But it is unbelievable that he is one of the fallen heroes of this war. He was a hero among heroes. He was defending his country and was taking care of his Marines.”

Natchez Man Killed In Afghanistan

August 4, 2009 By Julie Cooper, The Natchez Democrat

NATCHEZ — Sgt. First Class Severin Summers gave nearly 20 years of his life to military service, and he smiled through almost every minute of it, a family friend said Monday.

Summers of Natchez was killed by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan over the weekend. His wife Tammy Summers was notified by a sergeant major and a chaplain from the Army National Guard Sunday night, friend Phyllis Beach said.

Tammy last contact with her husband was via e-mail Saturday.

Tammy spent Monday en route to Dover, Del., where her husband’s body was being sent. No arrangements have been made, and it may be several days before the military releases Summers’ body, Beach said.

Summers was deployed July 2 for Afghanistan, a repeat trip for the special forces soldier and ranger.

Recently, he was stationed in Bagram, Afghanistan, but had recently left for Marzak, Afghanistan.

Beach said Summers loved to hunt, was a true outdoorsman and lived his life as an open book.

“If you knew him, you knew him,” she said. “He was a very jovial, bubbly person.”

Summers married Tammy Jan. 17 of this year.

“They were that perfect couple,” Beach said. “She met him right before he was deployed three years ago. They were soul mates.”

Summers also has a 13-year-old daughter, Shelby, who lives in Baton Rouge.

He is survived by his parents West and Charlene Summers of New Roads, La., three brothers and one sister.

One brother is currently serving in a different part of Afghanistan and another brother is serving in Iraq.

Summers split his time in the states between a house in Natchez and his job as the Mississippi Special Forces recruiter in Bentonia.

During Hurricane Katrina, Summers was stationed at the National Guard Armory in Natchez.

Welcome To Obama's War: ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Marines patrol a rocky hill in the Golestan district of Farah province May 7, 2009.
REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic



Soldiers from the U.S. Army 26th Infantry wait for a helicopter to lift them from a mountain side during an operation against the Taliban in the Korengal Valley of Afghanistan's Kunar Province on May 13, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines from the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade walk in blowing sand at Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan's Helmand province June 9, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines from the 2nd MEB, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines battle Taliban fighters near Now Zad in Afghanistan's Helmand province June 20, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



A U.S. Marine from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines inside his forward operating base near Now Zad in Afghanistan's Helmand province on June 22, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. soldiers of 10th Mountain Division pull an armoured vehicle after it slid down a road during a patrol in the village of Qaleh-ye-Naw in the mountains of Wardak Province in Afghanistan July 11, 2009. REUTERS/Shamil Zhumatov

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

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

GI Special Available In PDF Format

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email contact@militaryproject.org

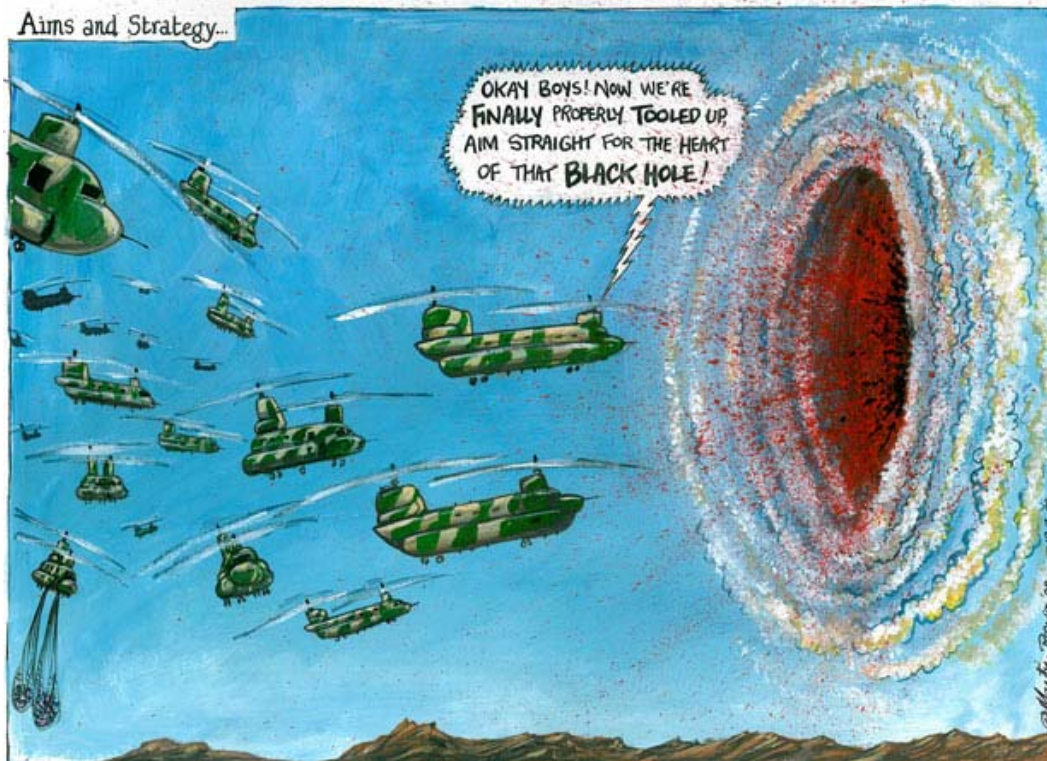
TROOP NEWS

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



June 2, 2009: a wounded U.S. soldier at the U.S. hospital in Bagram Air base, north of Kabul, Afghanistan. The 10th Mountain Division soldier was wounded and three of his comrades died when the vehicle they were driving was hit by roadside bomb in Nerkh district of Wardak province. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool) Photo Tools

The British Army Readies More Helicopters For Afghanistan



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project.]

3,000 Days Against Imperial War In Front Of Parliament: “A Broken Nose From A Worker At The US Embassy And Another Broken Nose From An Israeli”

From: Paul O'Hanlon
To: GI Special
Sent: August 12, 2009
Subject: Brian Haw will clock up day 3,000 of his peace vigil next week

Hello from Edinburgh, Scotland.

I read GI special regularly –great stuff.

I think a guy who deserves a special mention is London Parliament Square peace protester Brian Haw who has been living opposite the 'mother of all parliaments' for over 8 years now.

The authorities have done all they can to get rid of him but he won't go.

He often talks to the many passing tourists, many of whom are sympathetic. He has been assaulted several times including getting a broken nose from a worker at the US Embassy and another broken nose from an Israeli.

In spite of everything he is still there and on Wednesday 19th August will clock up day 3,000 (three thousand).

PRESS RELEASE FOR BRIAN HAW'S 3,000TH DAY IN THE SQUARE

Dear Thomas

I would like to draw your attention to the ongoing demonstration by London Parliament Square peace campaigner Brian Haw. He has been on his one-man peace protest for over 8 years now since June 2nd 2001.

His protest was initially against the injustice and suffering caused to the people of Iraq by the UN economic sanctions and the bombing of the country by the US and UK.

Eight years later, after invasion and occupation, Iraqis have lived through another terrible period and western troops have pulled out to continue their war in Afghanistan with the US and NATO bombing claiming many civilian casualties.

Wednesday August 19th will see him reach day 3,000 (three thousand) of his vigil. Surely this is a very noteworthy performance – imagine living and sleeping in Parliament Square for such a long time – he uses the public conveniences at Westminster underground (subway) station and gets food from supporters.

Despite hassle from the police and others, Brian and supporters remain lawfully opposite Parliament reminding those in power of the costs of their wars.

The MPs (Members of Parliament) across the road in the House of Commons were in the news constantly in June 2009 with details of many fraudulent expense claims.

By contrast, Brian Haw, the guy who sleeps directly opposite them, and who has not a corrupt bone in his body received no media attention at all.

Brian has a website: <http://www.parliament-square.org.uk/>

**Here are some recent photos of his protest taken last month:
<http://www.bristol.indymedia.org.uk/article/690712>**

Yours Sincerely,
Paul O'Hanlon

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**

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

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

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

The Pants-Pissing Liberal Hysteria About Evil Militia Maniacs Being Mean To Poor Little Helpless Members Of Congress

Comment: T

Of course millions and millions and millions of people increasingly hate and fear the government.

And loathe and despise the politicians in Congress.

They are right to do so.

They are highly intelligent and perceive correctly who the enemy is, robbing them blind by the trillions of dollars and sending their kids off to stupid wars.

Of course more and more want to tear the house down.

That is also a sign of intelligence.

If the radical left doesn't organize them against the government and the status quo, the radical right will.

The posturing "progressives" of the world whining on the internet about the growth of the radical right and how mean they were to Congressman Thieving V. Fatfuck at the town hall meeting will not organize anything.

The liberals merely help the extreme right grow by defending the status quo in general and the Obama regime in particular.

People are more and more fed up with that lying bullshit. More and more people see clearly the status quo is a tub of shit being emptied on their heads 24/7.

They're looking for other people as enraged with everything and everybody in Imperial DC as they are.

So if the only choice on offer is between liberal apologists for the government and Congress, and the extreme right, guess who that leaves offering a radical alternative to the shit in DC and growing accordingly.

Time to make friends with soldiers.

They have the weapons and organization that can defend us all.

And the danger isn't that these stupid, incompetent, deluded maniac assholes from some militia or other will march on Chicago or New York or Los Angeles.

Fortunately, there are literally millions of weapons in private hands in urban America. The Chicken Crotch Militia would last about 20 minutes showing up in Brooklyn.

The danger is from some General who decides he has to take over to save America from chaos.

If you're worried about how things are going, go make friends with some troops.

Face to face.

The life you save may be your own.

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

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

**August 16, 1819:
Horrible Anniversary:
THE PETERLOO MASSACRE
“The Government’s Attitude Was
Made Clear By Its Total Endorsement
Of The Massacre”**



[spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk]

‘Rise, like lions after slumber.

**In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many- they are few!'**

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

When all the contingents had arrived and assembled in the centre of Manchester, something like 12 per cent of the population of the county of Lancashire, and over half that of its industrial South East were present. It was the largest assembly England had ever seen.

As soon as all the contingents had filled St Peter's Field, to the point where, according to a contemporary report, people were packed in so tightly that 'their hats seemed to touch', the area was ringed by 1,500 troops with cannon.

1981 By Graham Milner, Unpublished

On August 16, 1819, mounted regular troops and yeomanry of the British army, acting on the instructions of Government officials, attacked without warning a mass meeting of over 100,000 people drawn from the industrial centres of Lancashire in the north-west of England.

The meeting, held on St Peter's Field in the centre of Manchester, the major industrial city of Lancashire, had been organised as part of a national campaign to win a radical reform of the British parliament and to redress the economic grievances of working people.

Over four hundred men, women and children were killed or seriously injured as a result of this 'action'.

One of the cavalry units involved - the 11th Hussars - had been present at the Battle of Waterloo, which had occurred four years earlier. As soon as the massacre became known to the public, the savage sobriquet 'Peterloo' was universally adopted.

The August 16 massacre in Manchester was one outcome of an extraordinarily powerful and determined agitation for social and political justice in England which at times approached pre-revolutionary proportions. The primary social force behind this mass agitation was the new working class.

This new class, the industrial proletariat, emerged from the industrial revolution, a transformation of economic and social relations that began towards the end of the 18th century, primarily in parts of north-west England. The cradle of this revolution was in fact south-east Lancashire, and Manchester in particular.

Here, technological innovations developed in the latter third of the 18th century, such as the steam engine, the power loom and the spinning jenny, were applied to the previously-dispersed, domestic-based cotton industry then existing. The 'putting-out'

system, whereby spinners and weavers worked at home at more or less their own pace, was replaced by vast factories employing hundreds or thousands of workers.

The new machine industry was concentrated in these factories. Raw materials and fuel for the machines came from the coal and iron extraction industries then emerging in other parts of England and Scotland. Around the factories grew up large industrial towns such as Rochdale, Stockport, Oldham and Blackburn, as well as the world's first industrial city - Manchester.

The previously-existing social order broke up in Lancashire and other emergent industrial districts, and was replaced by a new one.

Ties of dependence descended from feudalism - a deferential hierarchy linking 'masters' and 'men'; the static, rigid order overseen by landlord and parson; all this was burst asunder and replaced by the cut-throat world of capitalist competition.

In these regions the whole pattern of life was revolutionised.

By 1800, of English cities, Manchester was second only to London in size.

Near to the centre of Manchester, in large opulent houses, lived the new rich - the capitalist factory owners. Surrounding the factories lived the workers and their families. Many of these workers were ruined hand-loom weavers or hand spinners forced to seek work in factory towns like Manchester, as competition from cheap, machine-produced goods forced them out of their traditional occupations.

Many capitalists made quick fortunes raising jerry-built, back-to-back slums to house the workers. Almost without exception these slums were overcrowded, damp, ill-lit, without sanitation, and without running water or gardens.

Many who sought employment were denied it by the frequent slumps that punctuated the evolution of capitalist industry. Those who did find work were faced with ruthless exploitation and appalling working conditions.

Long hours - fourteen hours per day was quite usual - abysmally low wages, child labour and dangerous, unguarded machinery were the norm. Sexual abuse of women by foremen and capitalists was rampant. Immigrant workers, especially those from Ireland, fared particularly badly.

The new working class was by no means a 'dormant, passive mass' in the face of these conditions of life and work. It hit back at its oppressors in an increasingly intelligent, organised and effective way.

Working class radicalism in England was on the rise when the French Revolution broke out in 1789. Jacobin democratic clubs sprang up across the country during the 1790s, inspired by the Revolution in France, and by widely-circulated books such as Tom Paine's 'The Rights of Man'.

The Government's repression of domestic radicalism, which it combined with a reactionary war against the French republic, was strongly and widely opposed by workers.

The historian Edward Thompson, in his book 'The Making of the English Working Class' reveals how the English workers fought back during the period of the French wars, by organising unions and secret societies in defiance of the Combination Acts, and by burning mills and smashing the machines that threatened their livelihoods.

By 1815 the revolutionary ferment brewing underground burst forth in the mass radicalism that was to come to a head in 1819.

At this time Manchester and its surrounding area was, among governing circles, considered to be the most 'turbulent and seditious' in the country. The mass movement as a national force directed itself towards achieving first political rights, and secondly social and economic justice.

Political rights included first and foremost a democratic, representative parliament, and it included the sweeping away of 'Old Corruption'. Under that system bribery and patronage of electors were rife.

Old Sarum, which had been the parliamentary seat of William Pitt the Elder, consisted of a few tufts of grass, while Manchester, with its population of 200,000, went unrepresented. Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, under which religious minorities - Jews, Roman Catholics and Non-Conformists in particular - faced discrimination in public life, was another major issue.

Repeal of the anti-trade union Combination Acts, and the monopolistic Corn Laws also were major focuses of organised agitation.

The ongoing economic struggle for improved wages, shorter hours and better working conditions was made more imperative by the acute distress of the post-war years in England.

Industry and trade slumped.

Unemployment rose and was swelled by the return of demobilized troops from Continental Europe.

Wages fell. Actual starvation faced many working-class communities.

Joseph Johnson, a shareholder in the Radical newspaper the 'Manchester Observer', wrote of conditions in Manchester in 1819, the year of Peterloo: 'Everything is almost at a standstill, nothing but ruin and starvation stare one in the face. The state of the district is truly dreadful.'

The Government in power at this time, that of the Tory Prime Minister Lord Liverpool, has been described as one of the most reactionary and repressive in British history. It represented the interests of no more than a narrow ruling class of big landowners, City financiers and merchants.

Liverpool and his closest advisors were firmly convinced that England was on the brink of revolution.

The Home Secretary, Sidmouth, who had control of the police, militia and army units stationed in England, had organised an elaborate network of spies to disrupt the radical movement.

Castlereigh, another of Liverpool's ministers, had been instrumental in the suppression of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 and the subsequent terror campaign and forced Union of Ireland with Britain.

Control of Manchester itself was in the hands of the descendants of the same local landed clique that had ruled this once small market town in pre-industrial times. Landowners and clergymen dominated the local magistracy - this body was to have direct responsibility for instigating the Peterloo massacre.

A local levy of merchants, manufacturers, publicans and shopkeepers, all rabid enemies of the working-class radical movement, formed the backbone of the 'Manchester and Salford Yeomanry Cavalry' - the body that charged into the assembly at St Peter's Field.

Although one of the powerhouses of the mass movement for radical reform was centered in the industrial districts of Lancashire, by 1819 a coordinated national effort was well under way, based on mass mobilisations in all the major cities.

1817 had witnessed a huge meeting of workers, mainly spinners and weavers, assembling on St Peter's Field to see off the famous 'March of the Blanketeers' from Manchester to London. The march sought redress of economic grievances.

1818 had been a year of mass strikes aimed at restoring falling wage levels. These strikes showed a great capacity by workers for discipline and organisation, with meetings, marches and pickets in Manchester and Stockport.

A new feature of these actions was the increasing participation of women workers. Union Societies were founded to develop basic education in the working class and to circulate the ideas of radicalism in an organised way. Women had their own separate Union Societies.

The workers' press advanced the ideas of radicalism with imagination and tenacity. The most widely-read newspapers among radicals and radical sympathisers were William Cobbett's 'Political Register', as well as 'The Black Dwarf'.

A typical issue of the Radical 'Manchester Observer', founded in 1818, included alongside a demand for the impeachment of Sidmouth, coverage of the republican revolution in Venezuela.

Mass meetings for parliamentary reform and for the repeal of the hated Corn Laws, which artificially inflated the price of bread, took place in Stockport and Manchester in the first half of 1819.

By July thousands of workers had begun drilling on the moors and in the fields outside working-class districts in Lancashire. The same thing occurred in other

parts of the country. In July as many as 2000 workers paraded in semi-military formation along the High Rd from Manchester to Rochdale.

These preparations were primarily aimed at improving organisation for the planned August mass meeting at St Peter's Field, to which contingents from surrounding towns were to march. The planned assembly in Manchester was part of a broader national effort for July-August 1819, which organised large meetings in Birmingham, Leeds and London.

The reactionary oligarchy controlling the city of Manchester made preparations in league with Sidmouth and the national Government for what amounted to the waging of civil war on the workers expected to pour into Manchester to demand reform of parliament.

In July the magistracy formed an 'Armed Association for the Preservation of the Peace' and enrolled special constables.

Military units in the S.E. Lancashire areas were mobilised as part of a national military alert. As soon as instructions came through, the yeomanry sent its sabres to be sharpened.

On the final weekend before the rally at St Peter's Field the city magistracy sat in almost continuous session to discuss ways and means of dealing with the mobilisation.

In the weeks before the St Peter's Field meeting, which as everyone expected would be the largest meeting ever seen in England, Manchester's streets and buildings were covered with posters and placards, and thousands of leaflets and fliers were distributed.

The publicising and organisation of the assembly was a major achievement of communication and organisation. Assembly points were announced from which people in the towns and districts surrounding Manchester could gather and from there march in disciplined contingents to the rally.

August 16 in Lancashire was a lovely summer day with a cloudless sky and a hot sun shining. There was a confident, cheerful and festive atmosphere as the contingents gathered and prepared to march.

Bands played, and the beautiful banners, woven and embroidered with great care, were unfurled. Oldham's banner was of pure white silk, emblazoned with the inscriptions 'Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments - Election by Ballot', and 'No Combination Acts: Oldham Union'.

Saddleworth's was jet black, with the inscription 'Equal Representation or Death' in white over two joined hands and a heart. One of the banners carried by the Stockport contingent read 'Success to the Female Reformers of Stockport'. Many red caps of liberty were carried.

When all the contingents had arrived and assembled in the centre of Manchester, something like 12 per cent of the population of the county of Lancashire, and over half that of its industrial South East were present. It was the largest assembly England had ever seen.

As soon as all the contingents had filled St Peter's Field, to the point where, according to a contemporary report, people were packed in so tightly that 'their hats seemed to touch', the area was ringed by 1,500 troops with cannon.

No-one in the crowd, least of all the organisers, suspected that an attempt to physically disperse the meeting was planned. Meetings such as this, even if smaller and without the same evident discipline and organisation, had been held many times before up and down the country.

The ensuing massacre was completely unexpected and unprovoked, and met with little organised resistance.

The city magistrates had even gone to the lengths in their preparations for the massacre of employing scavengers to remove every stone, brick or possible missile from the Field and surrounding streets, so that the meeting's participants were thus left entirely without defence.

Barely had Hentry Hunt, the main featured speaker, begun to address the meeting when mounted troopers of the yeomanry charged the hustings to arrest him and others on the platform.

At first the crowd, which had not been aware of the presence of the troops, did not panic and Hunt shouted: 'Stand firm, my friends: there are only a few soldiers, and we are a host against them'.

But as the yeomanry, many of whom were drunk, charged with sabres drawn, slashing and cutting their way through the crowd and trampling and crushing many people, chaos and panic gripped the field.

According to witnesses cited in Joyce Marlow's account 'The Peterloo Massacre', the yeomanry, having tasted blood, went berserk. They dragged the speakers and organisers from the hustings and would have killed Hunt had he not been quickly whisked away to jail. The yeomanry continued to slash and cut indiscriminately at men, women and children alike, while smashing wagons and platforms, and tearing the banners and the caps of liberty. The regular cavalry then moved onto the field to complete the work. Hundreds more people suffered serious injuries from the slashing sabres and flying hooves, or were smothered under piles of falling bodies.

Ten minutes from the first charge it was all over. Samuel Bamford, the Lancashire poet, described the scene:

'...the field was an open and almost deserted space. The hustings remained, with a few broken and hewed flagstaves erect, and a torn and gashed banner or two drooping; whilst over the whole field were strewn the caps, bonnets, hats, shawls and shoes and other parts of male and female dress; trampled, torn and bloody. The yeomanry had dismounted - some were easing their horse's girths and some were wiping their sabres'

Many more people were killed and maimed as the troops continued to 'disperse' the crowd through surrounding streets.

That night one person was shot dead and several injured in clashes between soldiers and crowds of angry workers.

The Government's attitude was made clear by its total endorsement of the massacre.

The Prince Regent, then disporting himself on his yacht, made it known, through Sidmouth, what great satisfaction he had derived from the magistrate's 'prompt, decisive and efficient measure for the preservation of public tranquility'. Despite repeated and widely-voiced demands for one, there was never an official inquiry into the Peterloo Massacre.

An immense wave of anger swept across England in the wake of the massacre.

The mass movement for reform was not appreciably set back by the Peterloo massacre. A huge crowd estimated by the conservative 'Times' at 300,000 lined the streets of London to greet Hunt after his release from jail.

Meetings were spurred all over England by the events at St Peter's Field, especially in the North East counties, where over 50,000 miners marched into Newcastle from surrounding districts.

Loyalist forces in this area began arming, and the pitmen took up arms to defend themselves. In the months of October and November, according to Edward Thompson, workers across the country stocked pikes and other weapons to defend themselves and their meetings.

Drilling and armed demonstrations were reported in Newcastle, Wolverhampton, Wigan, Bolton and Blackburn.

Divisions within the Radical movement's leadership between constitutionalists and revolutionaries were not resolved, and this crisis of leadership, combined with renewed Government repression and an economic upturn brought this early phase of mass working class struggle to a close.

The events in Manchester on August 16, 1819 however, will remain forever inscribed in the collective memory of the international working class.

Shelley's poem 'The Masque of Anarchy' was written just after Peterloo, and its final stanza carries the fighting sentiments of thousands of workers:

**'Rise, like lions after slumber.
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many- they are few!'**

Troops Invited:

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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