

## GI SPECIAL 7H18:

**“Bloodiest Month For British Troops As Ministers Defend Afghanistan Campaign”**



[Steve Bell, The Guardian, UK]

# **“The Possibilities Seem Endless”**

**Brass Invite EVERYBODY On  
Active Duty To Post Edits To The  
Field Manuals:**

# **The Col. Says “Now, Imagine That Anybody Can Go On The Wiki And Make A Change”**

## **“As Is True With Wikipedia, Those Changes Will Appear Immediately On The Site”**

**“Our motto is, ‘If you ever thought what would I do if the Army let me write doctrine, now is your chance,’ “ he said.**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & The Military Project, who sent this in. He writes: “The possibilities seem endless.”]

August 13, 2009 By NOAM COHEN, The New York Times [Excerpts]

Join the Army, where you can edit all that you can edit.

**In July, in a sharp break from tradition, the Army began encouraging its personnel — from the privates to the generals — to go online and collaboratively rewrite seven of the field manuals that give instructions on all aspects of Army life.**

**The program uses the same software behind the online encyclopedia Wikipedia and could potentially lead to hundreds of Army guides being “wikified.”**

“For a couple hundred years, the Army has been writing doctrine in a particular way, and for a couple months, we have been doing it online in this wiki,” said Col. Charles J. Burnett, the director of the Army’s Battle Command Knowledge System.

“The only ones who could write doctrine were the select few.

“Now, imagine the challenge in accepting that anybody can go on the wiki and make a change — that is a big challenge, culturally.”

**Not surprisingly, top-down, centralized institutions have resisted such tools, fearing the loss of control that comes with empowering anyone along the chain of command to contribute.**

Yet the Army seems willing to accept some loss of control.

**Under the three-month pilot program, the current version of each guide can be edited by anyone around the world who has been issued the ID card that allows access to the Army Internet system.**

About 200 other highly practical field manuals that will be renamed Army Tactics, Techniques and Procedures, or A.T.T.P., will be candidates for wikification.

**As is true with Wikipedia, those changes will appear immediately on the site, though there is a team assigned to each manual to review new edits.**

**Unlike Wikipedia, however, there will be no anonymous contributors.**

The colonel said that he was hopeful that by reaching out to the 140,000 members of the Army's online forums, he would be tapping the kind of people who would be comfortable collaborating on the Web.

**“Our motto is, ‘If you ever thought what would I do if the Army let me write doctrine, now is your chance,’ “ he said.**

The seven guides in the pilot program frequently touch on areas that the rank-and-file soldier has had to master because of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including topics like Desert Operations, Army Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations and the movements of an infantry rifle platoon within a Stryker brigade combat team.

The introduction of wikis is part of a revamping of the Army's field manual system, which currently has more than 500 different guides that cover crucial, so-called capstone doctrine — like interrogation or counterterrorism — as well as highly specialized guidance on, say, how to stay warm during cold-weather operations.

Under the new plan, 50 or so capstone guides will remain field manuals and will not be open to collaborative editing, said Clinton Ancker, a retired colonel who, as director of the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate at Fort Leavenworth, is supervising the pilot program. More than 200 other former field guides are likely to be consolidated or even scrapped, he said.

**Still, the reaction of the rank and file thus far has been tepid. A visit to the site hosting the seven wikified guides shows that there has been little editing over the first six weeks.**

In part, this slow acceptance reflects the different priorities between Army theorists and the working Army, according to Mr. Papparone, a retired colonel with a Ph.D. in public administration.

## **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**

## **ACTION REPORTS**

# **Doubling Back Outreach [New York National Guard]**

From: Alan Stolzer, The Military Project  
To: GI Special  
Sent: August 21, 2009  
Subject: Doubling Back Outreach

Sometimes a first effort comes up short.

Today 6 Guardsmen patrolling a NYC transit terminal didn't react almost at all to my presence and intro; one did say he'd just returned from Afghanistan and felt he "made a difference." Another said he knew me but refused anymore lit, lightly bumping fists instead of shaking hands.

Upon doubling back to the terminal, however, there was another group that DID react and took 4 handouts, one sergeant willing to converse and was surprised to hear of our outreach record in Harlem.

He made sure his buddy took lit as well. Another knew me but accepted lit as I told him it was mostly new stuff. There was no time to ask how he felt about the previous handout.

If you don't succeed at first, try again.

Material distributed:  
Military Project contact card, with Military Project and IVAW contact information  
GI Rights Pamphlet  
Traveling Soldier (latest)  
IVAW Fightback pamphlet

**MORE:**

## **ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!**

**An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.**

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to GI Special for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so. If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

**NOTE WELL:**

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not in any way identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the wars.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs identifying information be published in reporting on the action.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

**“WHY Are We In A Deserted Town? What Are We Doing?”**

**“Why They Are Making These Young Men Patrol A City That Is DESERTED?...Can They Answer That?”**

**“Little By Little, These Boys/Young Men Are Being Maimed, Or Taken From Us...”**

**“There’s No Oil, There Are No Civilians, No Livable City, No Infrastructure...There’s NOTHING”**



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

Aug-11-2009 By Tim King Salem-News [Excerpts]

(SALEM, Ore.) - Questions are beginning to circulate about the spike in Marine Corps casualties in Afghanistan.

Salem-News.com has been reporting about the increasing numbers which represent an entirely different rate than anything the Corps has seen in years.

One place where Marines are continuing to draw attacks is Afghanistan's toughest ghost town, called Now Zad. The Wall Street Journal's Michael M. Phillips wrote in late May that senior commanders turned down a request from the Marines to dispatch a 1,000-man battalion to the town.

Instead he says they prefer, “to concentrate forces in areas with more hearts and more minds.

Yet the military says keeping a lone company in Now Zad ‘fixes’ the insurgent force in place, even if outright victory isn’t possible.

Now, more than two months later, Marines are still fighting for this seemingly unimportant, abandoned and remote village.

Now Zad, Afghanistan is in the Northwest section of the troubled Helmand province, which is located West of the Kandahar province which has been a major scene of fighting in this war.

**One family member writing to Salem-News.com asked, “Why they are making these young men patrol a city that is DESERTED?...can they answer that?”**

**“My heart is broken that all these young men are dying in Now Zad and the surrounding areas of Afghanistan....recently Argentine, Lembke, and Whittle.....or, losing limbs.”**

But the fighting in this remnant of a town continues.

This region of Afghanistan according to several reporter’s descriptions, resembles a WWI battlefield like Flanders or The Somme. Close proximity firefights are not uncommon as Marines encounter Taliban forces on patrols in places like irrigation ditches.

The politics mean little to the Marines on the ground who keep up the fight against Taliban militants, or to their families who see Now Zad as not just a ghost town, but a great mystery in the general sense.

**“I just don’t understand it....There’s no oil, there are no civilians, no livable city, no infrastructure...there’s NOTHING...and yet, they are required to patrol that city/town, and little by little, these boys/young men are being maimed, or taken from us...”**

**“WHY are we in a deserted town? What are we doing?”**

It is vital that Now Zad does not go down as this war’s Hamburger Hill.

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**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:**

**That is not a good enough reason.**



U.S. Marines from the 3rd Marines walk through a mud walled compound near Now Zad in Afghanistan's Helmand province June 20, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



U.S. Marines from the 5th Marines patrol in the Nawa district in Afghanistan's Helmand province July 4, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)





US Marines search for roadside bombs in Afghanistan's Helmand province on July 13. (AFP/File/Manpreet Romana)



U.S. soldiers of 4th Brigade patrol a road along the Pesh Valley in Afghanistan's Kunar province July 20, 2009. REUTERS/Tim Wimborne

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

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

**Idiot Of The Year, So Far:  
The British Defense Secretary:  
“Mr Ainsworth Admitted That He Did Not  
Know The Strength Of The Taliban  
Forces, But Insisted That He Could Be  
Confident Of Victory”**

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

17 Aug 2009 By James Kirkup and Rosa Prince, Telegraph Media Group Limited

Ninety-four British service personnel were wounded in action in Afghanistan last month, the Ministry of Defence has said, as two more dead soldiers were named.

The MoD released casualty figures showing that a total of 236 British personnel in Afghanistan have been admitted to field hospitals as “wounded in action” this year.

July’s total of 94 wounded was more than twice the 46 recorded in June. In July, there were also 19 personnel recorded as “very seriously injured”, a category which includes those who lose limbs. Another 12 were “seriously injured”.

The number of personnel wounded in July was more than the total for the whole of 2006, when the total was 85. A total of 204 British personnel have now been killed in Afghanistan, putting the Government under growing political pressure.

The details of the troops’ deaths came as Bob Ainsworth, the Defence Secretary, insisted that Britain’s conflict with the Taliban in Afghanistan is “winnable”.

Mr Ainsworth admitted that he did not know the strength of the Taliban forces, but insisted that he could be confident of victory, despite growing concern about the mission among critics of the war.

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## TROOP NEWS

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



The remains of Army Spc. Carlos E. Wilcox Saturday, July 18, 2009 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Wilcox, 27, of Cottage Grove, Minn. died July 16 in Basra, Iraq of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

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## 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

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

**“It Was Inevitable That Rounds  
With My Initials On Them Were  
Blowing Civilians Up In Their  
Sleep, But No One Wanted To  
Double Check The Maps”**

**“My Final Days In The Service Were  
At Fort Hood Where I Was Arrested  
By The Killeen Police Several Times  
For Becoming Associated With An  
Underground, Anti-War Coffeehouse  
Called The Oleo Strut”**

# “There Is No Escaping The Grim Parallels Between The Wars Of Then And Now”



August 17, 2009 By David Crowder, Newspaper Tree.

As a nation remembering our wars, we commemorate the big dates like Dec. 7, 1941 for Pearl Harbor and the start of U.S. involvement in World War II or June 6, 1944 for D-Day and Aug. 8, 1945 for the end of that war.

We have not tried to memorialize dates for the Korean, Vietnam and Iraq wars or our other major military actions because there have been too many of them and the causes or outcomes were not as clear as the ones we choose to remember collectively.

As President John Kennedy said in his 1961 inaugural speech, “Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.”

So, the veterans of those conflicts quietly keep their own anniversaries, or vainly try to forget them.

The one date I never forget each year is Aug. 18 because on that day in 1969, I was inducted into the Army and everything changed.

The secret I kept for years afterward was the fact that in a moment of personal confusion, or insanity, I volunteered for the draft after my first year of college.

Thinking back, I can still remember that summer 40 years ago.

Maybe it was just being 20, but there was something electric about those days driven by music that was angry on one hand and sweetly idealistic on the other, promising a changed new world if we could only overthrow the old one.

On separate but parallel tracks, there were two movements going on: one against the war in Vietnam that was sweeping hundreds of thousands of mostly draft-age white kids into the streets, and the other, a black civil rights movement marked by mass demonstrations, beatings, killings and fiery riots in cities across the country.

Martin Luther King had been assassinated on my birthday the year before and Sen. Robert Kennedy went down two months later, leaving both the civil rights and anti-war causes without their most influential voices.

And every night, TV news brought the war home to us in pictures like no one had ever seen before – or since.

It was a time to act, and I, mixed up and stirred up, chose to put the major decisions of my life on hold by leaping into military service without really considering what that might mean.

We showed up at the Dallas induction center, a few volunteers and nearly 100 draftees, and they locked the doors behind us. Before the day was out, we were all on a plane to Fort Bliss for basic training.

For a naive college kid from Highland Park High, the Army was a very rude awakening.

The training barracks was stuffed with angry black young men from up north, a cohort of tough white boys from Alabama and Georgia and others, like me, who didn't fit in with either group.

It was a bad recipe, and when the lights went out, the fights began. A favorite was a brutal variation on the summer camp blanket party in which groups attacked individuals in their beds by throwing a blanket over them and beating them with fists and entrenching shovels.

A lot of guys landed in the base hospital.

I made two trips myself but completed training eight weeks later, with eight new pounds of new muscle and two good scars.

I left Bliss, bound for artillery training at Fort Sill, swearing never to return to El Paso. But I harbored strange fondness for the smell of creosote in the air on those cool, damp mornings when we ran laps in the courtyard at 5 a.m. before breakfast.

Never say never.

Sill was a very different experience.

I wound up in field artillery intelligence and fire direction center training with a bunch of college grads, college drop-outs and guys who were good at math. We were lousy soldiers who marched out of step in long, sloppy strands to and from classes. But we gained a beginning ability to put howitzer rounds on a target miles away without blowing up our own soldiers, at least on paper.

On graduation day, we formed up in four companies to hear our names read out along with our next duty stations. After every name but two, the drill sergeant called out "Republic of South Vietnam."

The party was over; we were about to trade The World for The Nam.

While home for Christmas, one chilly night on a bench beside Turtle Creek, I asked my high school sweetheart to marry me when I got back. She said she would, but I don't think either of us believed that would really happen.

And it didn't. But she was at Love Field to send me off, and I could swear they were playing John Denver's "Jet Plane" as we said goodbye.

It was the soldiers' anthem for such farewells in Vietnam and everything we left behind.

Our plane set down at Ben Hoa Airbase on Jan. 3 after a long, nervous flight, with a stopover in Hawaii where a lot of us got drunk. Three days later, I was on Fire Support Base Compton or Granite, I'm not sure which, attached to a First Air Cavalry 155 mm artillery battery.

Like most FSBs, it was a heavily fortified clearing on a jungle hilltop. But for occasional mortar attacks, it was quiet place to get used to fear, filling sandbags, being dirty all the time, 12-hour shifts seven days a week and the sound of the guns at all times of day and night.

Then came the order to break down, pack up and move by helicopter to another firebase closer to the Cambodian border. It was something we would do again and again, moving closer to the border, and the war began to heat up for us.

Many in our unit had seen heavy action before: mortar and rocket attacks followed by steady fire from the tree line while sappers armed with satchel charges wove their way through the wire in the dark, past exploding claymore mines to reach bunkers, command and communication posts and the artillery pieces.

We would all see that again.

As time passed, most distinctions of color and class melted away in the face of our common enemies – the NVA, Viet Cong and military order – as we counted the days until the big bird would take us back to The World, hopefully standing up.

If Vietnam was a scary place, and it was, going into Cambodia was harrowing.

No movie can convey, though a few have tried, the sense of being under a dark sky, surrounded immediately by the sounds of GIs, boom boxes on top of the hooches and the pungent smell of marijuana, and beyond that by a ominous circle of triple canopy jungle, crackling with animal noises that would suddenly go quiet, leaving just the pulsing buzz of a million insects.

What was out there?

Who was out there?

It was every boy's perfect nightmare.

When I choppered to my first Cambodian LZ that spring, my legs hanging out the side door of a Huey, I got to see a beautiful landscape of meticulously groomed rice patties, farm fields and picturesque villages that had not seen war for generations.

When we pulled out some months later, the border region was pockmarked by red, water-filled craters left by B-52 bombing runs intended to destroy underground bunker complexes and disrupt the Ho Chi Minh Trail that supplied North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops in the South.

Our Cambodian operation did slow traffic for a while and contributed to some hope in Washington that the war could be successfully turned over to a poorly generated South Vietnamese Army and a corrupt government whose leaders were more interested in getting rich than establishing a Jeffersonian democracy in a country that knew nothing about voting.

But the chances that a foreign army could defeat a determined, disciplined and dedicated home-grown military that had fought the Japanese to a stand still in the '40s, defeated the French in the '50s and seemed able to take all the punishment the world's most powerful war machine could dish out seemed doubtful, even to this private.

What happened to Cambodia as a direct result of our incursion we would not find out for some years.

I slowly became disaffected by the waste of valuable lives and materiel in an unwinnable war and the careless disregard our military showed for the communities and people we had come 8,000 miles from our shore to save from communism.

Every night, our artillery batteries routinely fired two-hundred pound artillery rounds at pre-selected targets along roads and sometimes close to sleeping villages in order to harass and interdict potential enemy movements.

Everyone knew that without regular recalibration for upper level winds, artillery rounds can land far away from their intended targets.

For a time before the Cambodian incursion, I was assigned to our battalion headquarters in Phouc Vinh to backup and double check the firing data going to the guns in the field.

There in the battalion fire direction center, I saw real maps showing cities, villages, roads and other features we didn't see on the featureless grid maps we used in the field. I began to plot where our rounds were really going on the wall map and to see how recklessly we were using our artillery near population centers.

It was inevitable that rounds with my initials on them were blowing civilians up in their sleep, but no one wanted to double check the maps, much less make calls up the line about in appropriate targets.

I learned better than to keep complaining, Pfc. to officer, and began losing sleep.



A medic gave me a huge jar of valium to relax. It was, in the jargon of the times, a radicalizing experience that earned me no promotions but was good for a ride back to my original unit, which was then in Cambodia.

I wasn't as good a soldier for the second half of my tour as I was in the first.

My days in country piled up and after 11 months and 16 days, I received a gift every GI hoped for: orders home two weeks before my year was up and just in time for Christmas.

In a day, I went from a remote fire base in Tay Ninh Province to Jingle Bells in Dallas and snow in Atlanta where my girlfriend was in college.

It was almost cruelly abrupt, and I was already in a simmering rage, but happy, briefly, to be home.

**My final days in the service were at Fort Hood where I was arrested by the Killeen police several times for becoming associated with an underground, anti-war coffeehouse called The Oleo Strut.**

**They would sweep us up for things like suspicion of vagrancy or of hitchhiking, disorderly conduct and blocking the sidewalk on an empty street at 9 o'clock on a Tuesday night.**

It was there that I wrote my first newspaper articles for the Strut's Fatigue Press. My civilian accomplices were dedicated socialists. They called me their bourgeois buddy because I didn't share their politics, only their objective.

After nearly getting court marshaled for illegally distributing bundles of the Fatigue Press on post and pasting peace signs on my Beetle, I was discharged honorably and early to return to college.

**I spent the better part of two years with Vietnam Veterans Against the War, briefly heading the Dallas office, and getting arrested again and again – rarely charged but often roughed up by police as extrajudicial punishment for our activities.**

One day, I accidentally left my cherished Vietnam boonie hat, decorated with peace signs and grenade pins, at a Pizza Hut in Austin.

It was a painful loss but it somehow broke the Vietnam spell for me. The war for Americans was ending and my attention shifted to girls and graduation, thanks to the G.I. Bill. I traded in my law school plans for journalism, a choice I have only occasionally regretted.

Today, I count myself blessed and lucky.

**Although my views have moderated with age, there is no escaping the grim parallels between the wars of then and now.**

**We ignited the war in Iraq with the false provocation of WMDs that didn't exist.**

**And we escalated the Vietnam War based on the false provocation of an fabricated attack on a U.S. destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin. Thank you, Rumsfeld and McNamara.**

Iraq seems like Vietnam without the trees, and we can only hope that the outcome for that nation will be something better than what it would have been without us and without so much of our blood mixed in the streets with theirs.

For the veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, especially the wounded and disabled, it doesn't seem their lot is much better than the vets of my generation or any generation, I suppose.

We will pay that sad price for another generation.

Still, we should be, as Kennedy quoted Romans 12:12, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation."

Forty years doesn't seem so long. That old girlfriend whose letters, still stained with Vietnam's red clay, I have kept on a small green barrel she gave me for Christmas in '69?

She befriended me last month on Facebook.

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**“What We Are Experiencing Is A Massive Redistribution Of Income From The American Public To The Financial Sector”**

**“What Did Americans Gain From An Unaffordable War In Iraq That Lasted Far Longer Than World War II”**

**“The Answer Is Obvious: Nothing Whatsoever”**

[Thanks to Linda O, who sent this in.]

August 19, 2009 By PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS, CounterPunch, [Excerpts]

*“In a little time, no middling sort. We shall have a few, and but a very few Lords, and all the rest beggars.” R.L. Bushman*

*“Rapidly you are dividing into two classes--extreme rich and extreme poor.” “Brutus”*

The fact of the matter is that the US is ruled by powerful interest groups who control politicians with campaign contributions.

Have a look at economic policy. It is being run for the benefit of large financial concerns, such as Goldman Sachs.

It was the banks, not the millions of Americans who have lost homes, jobs, health insurance, and pensions, that received \$700 billion in TARP funds.

The banks used this gift of capital to make more profits. In the middle of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, Goldman Sachs announced record second quarter profits and large six-figure bonuses for every employee.

The Federal Reserve’s low interest rate policy is another gift to the banks. It lowers their cost of funds and increases their profits.

With the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act in 1999, banks became high-risk investment houses that trade financial instruments such as interest rate derivatives and mortgage backed securities.

With abundant funds supplied virtually free by the Federal Reserve, banks are paying depositors virtually nothing on their savings.

Despite the Federal Reserve’s low interest rate policy, beginning October 1 banks are raising the annual percentage rate (APR) on credit card purchases and cash advances and on balances that have a penalty rate because of late payment.

Banks are also raising the late fee.

In the midst of the worst economy since the 1930s, heavily indebted Americans, who are losing their jobs and their homes, are to be bled into bankruptcy by the very banks that are being subsidized with TARP funds and low interest rates.

Moreover, it is the American public that is on the hook for the TARP money and the low interest rates. As the US government’s budget is 50 per cent or more in the red, the TARP money has to be borrowed from abroad or monetized by the Fed. This means more pressure on the US dollar’s exchange value and a rise in import prices and also domestic inflation.

Americans will thus pay for the TARP and low interest rate subsidies to their financial rulers with erosion in the purchasing power of the dollar.

**What we are experiencing is a massive redistribution of income from the American public to the financial sector.**

And this is occurring during a Democratic administration headed by America’s first black president, with a Democratic majority in the House and Senate.

Consider America’s wars.

As of the moment of writing, the out-of-pocket cost of America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is \$900,000,000,000.

When you add in the already incurred future costs of veterans benefits, interest on the debt, the forgone use of the resources for productive purposes, and such other costs as computed by Nobel economist Joseph Stiglitz and Harvard University budget expert Linda Bilmes, "our" government has wasted \$3,000,000,000,000--three thousand billion dollars--on two wars that have no benefit whatsoever for any American whose income does not derive from the military/security complex, about which five-star general President Eisenhower warned us.

It is now a proven fact that the US invasion of Iraq was based on lies and deception of the American public.

The only beneficiaries were the armaments industries, Blackwater, Halliburton, military officers who enjoy higher rates of promotion during war, and Muslim extremists whose case the US government proved by its unprovoked aggression against Muslims.

No one else benefitted.

Iraq was a threat to no one, and finding Saddam Hussein and executing him after a kangaroo trial had no effect whatsoever on ending the war or preventing the start of others.

**The cost of America's wars is a huge burden on a bankrupt country, but the cost incurred by veterans might be even higher.**

Homelessness is a prevalent condition of veterans, as is post-traumatic stress.

American soldiers, who naively fought for the munitions industry's wars, for high compensation for the munitions CEOs, and for dividends and capital gains for the munitions shareholders, paid not only with lives and lost limbs, but also with broken marriages, ruined careers, psychiatric disorders, and prison sentences for failing to make child support payments.

**What did Americans gain from an unaffordable war in Iraq that lasted far longer than World War II and that put into power Shi'ites allied with Iran?**

**The answer is obvious: nothing whatsoever.**

**What did the armaments industry gain? Billions of dollars in profits.**

Obama is the presidential candidate who promised to end the war in Iraq. He hasn't.

Here we have the US government, totally dependent on the generosity of foreigners to finance its red ink, which extends in large quantities as far as the eye can see, completely under the thumb of the military/security complex, which will destroy us all in order to meet Wall Street share price expectations.

Why does any American care who rules Afghanistan? The country has nothing to do with us.

Did the armed services committees of the House and Senate calculate the risk of destabilizing nuclear armed Pakistan when they acquiesced to Obama's new war there, a war that has already displaced two million Pakistanis?

No, of course not.

**The whores took their orders from the same military/security oligarchy that instructed Obama.**

**The great American superpower and its 300 million people are being driven straight into the ground by the narrow interest of the big banks and the munitions industry.**

**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 to [thomasfbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057**

## **Fraud Alert: Fake Version Of GI Special Article Being Circulated**

On August 17, Larry C sent this email to GI Special referring to an article in GI Special: "Yours (copied below) is the absolute most awesomely correct take on the health-care protesters that I have seen. Rock on!"

The only problem was that the copy of the article Larry C. received wasn't the article that had run in GI Special.

It was a fraud.

Some piece of shit decided to take the article that appeared in GI Special and rewrite it, cutting out chunks of it.

If you like a GI Special article, fine, send it around.

If you don't, fine, leave it alone.

**But keep your filthy scumbag plagiarizing, dishonorable, forging hands off it otherwise.**

T

## **[The Original Article]**

# **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.

T

## **[The Fake] Liberal Hysteria About Evil Militia Maniacs Being Mean To Poor Little Helpless Members Of Congress**

**[In addition to changing the headline, some of the other mutilations are in italics.  
T]**

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. Fathead 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.

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

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

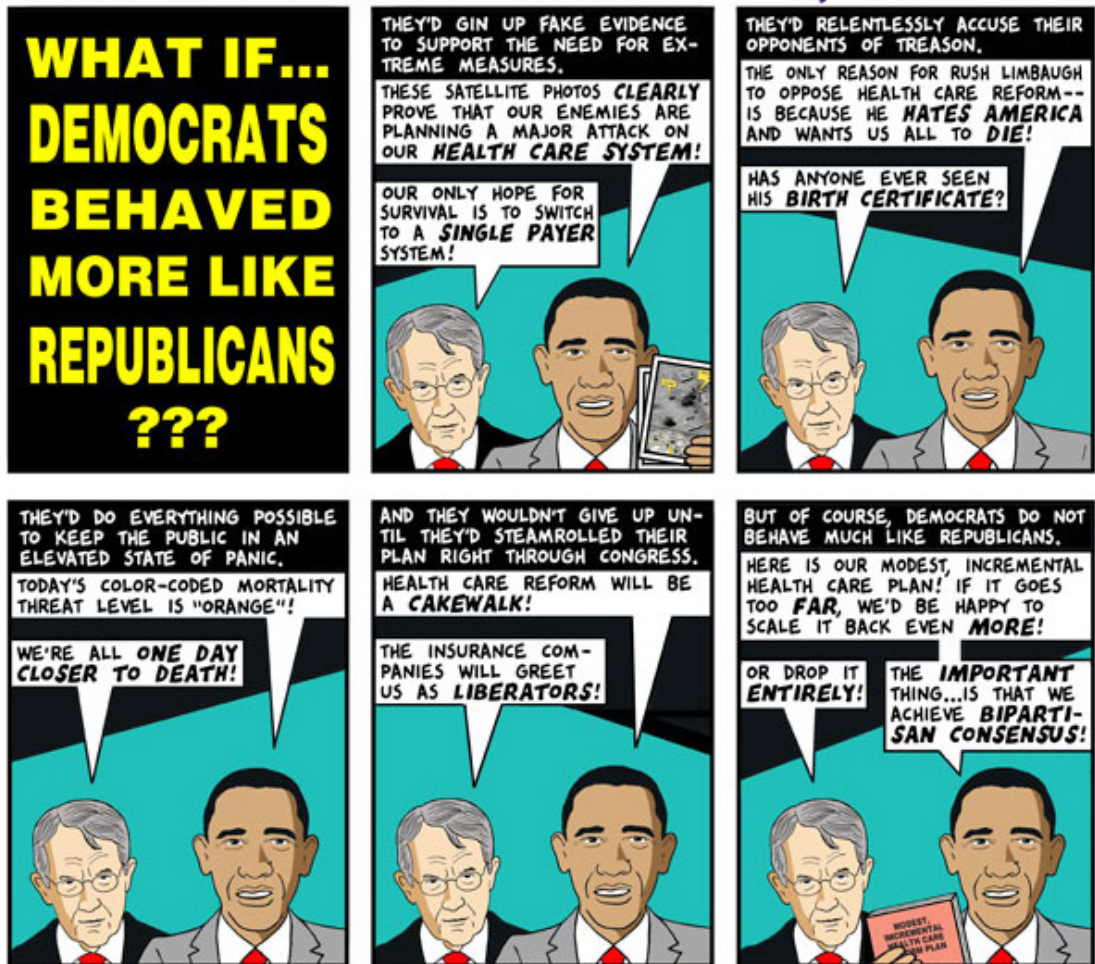


“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

### THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

**GI Special Available In PDF Format**

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email [thomasfbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net)

# President George W. Obama Explains The Occupation Of Afghanistan



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

August 17, 2009: From Obama's Speech to Veterans of Foreign Wars, Phoenix, Arizona

"This is not a war of choice.

"This is a war of necessity.

"Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again.

"If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which al Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans.

"So this is not only a war worth fighting.

"This is fundamental to the defense of our people."

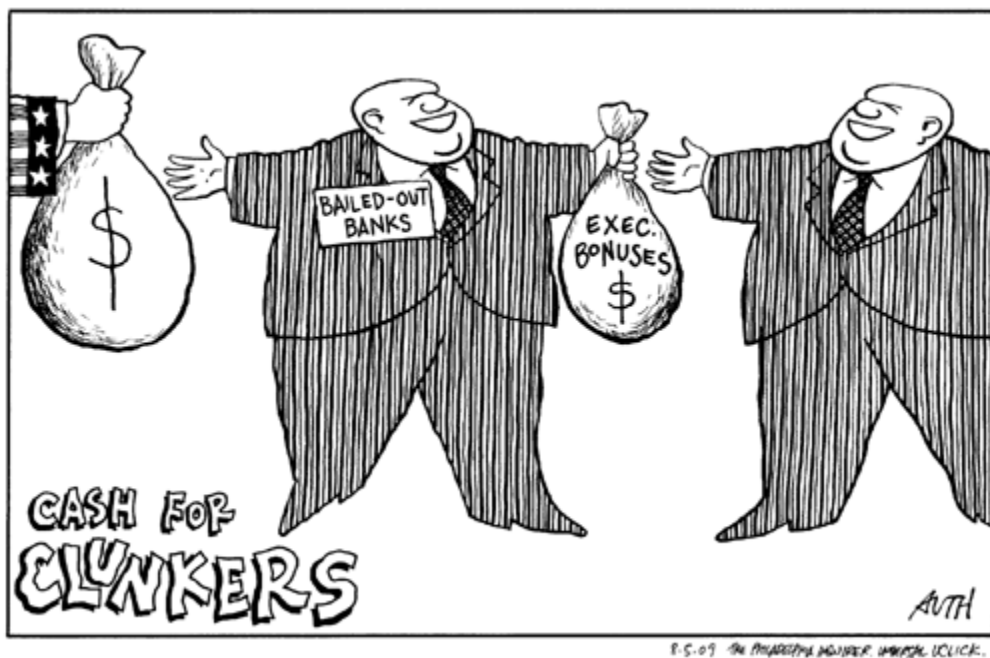
## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

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.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! ([www.ivaw.org/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

## CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“Protesting Steelworkers In China  
Have Forced The Government To  
Abandon Privatization Plans For The  
Second Time In A Month, In A Sign Of  
Increasing Labor Activism”**  
**“Thousands Of Workers Protested Last  
Week And Took An Official Hostage”**

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

August 16, 2009 By KEITH BRADSHER, The New York Times & AUGUST 17, 2009 By SHAI OSTER, The Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

**Protesting steelworkers in China have forced the government to abandon privatization plans for the second time in a month, in a sign of increasing labor activism.**

Officials in Henan province on Sunday called off the sale of state-owned Linzhou Iron & Steel Co. where some 3,000 workers have been demonstrating since Tuesday,

**Thousands of workers protested last week and took an official hostage, in the latest sign of increasing labor activism in the country's steel industry.**

According to Xinhua, about 400 employees surrounded the Linzhou offices Tuesday to block Dong Zhangyin, an official from the regional office of the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, the agency in charge of state-owned companies.

Xinhua did not mention what became of the official who had been held hostage.

**Local, provincial and national government agencies have been reluctant to use overwhelming force against protesting workers.**

**China Daily newspaper reported Saturday that police had tried to break through the ranks of workers Friday in the latest incident, at Linzhou Iron & Steel in Anyang City, in Henan. China Daily did not say if the police had been successful.**

The official Xinhua news agency said that the workers decided Saturday to halt their protests after a government mediation team agreed to reconsider the takeover.

**The demonstration comes on the heels of a protest in Northeast China, during which a manager was beaten to death when thousands of workers at the Tonghua Iron & Steel mill, afraid they would lose their jobs, held violent demonstrations.**

The success of steel workers in blocking privatization could embolden workers in other industries, experts on Chinese labor issues said Sunday.

"It is no longer possible to push through privatization regardless, without considering the workers' interests," said Geoffrey Crothall, a spokesman for the China Labor Bulletin, a labor rights advocacy group based in Hong Kong.

In a sign of high-level interest in the recent unrest, the government-sponsored All China Federation of Trade Unions has posted a prominent series of commentaries at the top of its Web page under the heading, "Corporate restructuring: participation of the trade union is essential."

**Chinese law has long required that each privatization be approved by the workers' congress of the affected company.**

**But local government officials and company managers have frequently been able to rig the approval by running the congresses themselves, Mr. Crothall said.**

Local and provincial government agencies have been wary of losing control of businesses that are often vital to their economies, and many workers are opposed to consolidation.

Xinhua said that Fengbao Iron & Steel had already paid 180 million yuan, or \$26.5 million, of the 259 million yuan it bid at an auction to acquire Linzhou Steel. The 180 million yuan will be refunded, Xinhua said, citing an unidentified local official.

The workers felt the company's new owners weren't paying them enough compensation.

**The central government's policy of encouraging mergers and privatizations has met heated resistance from workers afraid they will lose their jobs. But the violence -- and success -- of recent instances stands out.**

While there are no signs of the rise of a coordinated national labor movement, worker activism has been increasing, and has won some high-profile concessions. China's workers are officially represented by the All China Federation of Trade Unions, which is controlled by the Communist Party and government.



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