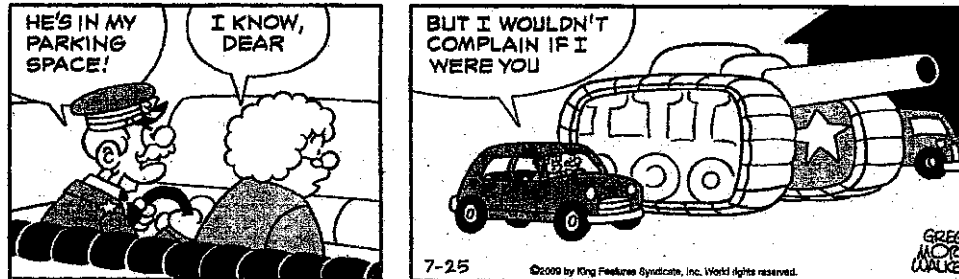


GI SPECIAL 7H2:



ARMORY REVISITED 8/1: New York National Guard: “How About More Lit?” We Asked Displaying The Remaining 10 Packs Or So: “Sure,” He Said, “If You Could Spare Them”

From: Alan Stolzer, The Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: August 02, 2009
Subject: 8/1 Outreach

The second 7:30 am outreach to a New York National Guard Armory (which we've been trying to access for years) in less than a month proved even more successful than the first on 7/12.

A contact made then informed us of this outreach opportunity. Consequently we were able to distribute 40 lit packages, 45-50 snack bags and one DVD of “Sir! No Sir!” The reason for the lack of DVDs was my poor planning.

The lit was comprised of the latest GI Special National Guard issue, an announcement of David Zeiger's release of the Winter Soldier web series, our new business card, the GI Rights pamphlet and the “Why We Are Here Statement.”

Our outreach team consisted of myself and Military Project ally, AC. Lit copies were provided by another MP ally, DR.

Our contact greeted us on the armory steps but being busy with the morning's activities excused himself and went back inside. We'll talk again soon.

Distribution then went easily, although sporadically since soldiers came individually and at different times and all troops from young privates to grizzled sergeants (one serving in the NY State Guard which only serves domestically) were pleased to be approached on their way inside.

An older sergeant told us he wasn't allowed political conversation or lit acceptance and remained outside, at times recounting patriotic experience in Vietnam (2 tours) and Ground Zero where he immediately went upon hearing of the 9/11 attacks. He told us "if it was up to him he would have bombed Mecca the next day" underlining his preferences.

There were further war-related accounts but, nevertheless, he never interfered with our distribution or conversation with other, younger soldiers.

Toward the end of the outreach young soldiers who had been inside before we arrived left the armory in their gym clothes ready for their run around the neighborhood

We offered the last of the snacks for post run energy revitalization and the sergeant in charge who had already accepted our offerings gladly took these.

"How about more lit?" we asked displaying the remaining 10 packs or so.

"Sure," he said, "if you could spare them."

We could.

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.

All identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

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.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

A Marine To The Bitter End

07/27/2009 By Sig Christenson - Express-News

Lance Cpl. Brandon T. Lara was in such a hurry to become a Marine that he graduated early from New Braunfels' Canyon High School.

A few weeks after turning 18 on Oct. 7, 2006, Lara traded his diploma and a bedroom dotted with Marine Corps posters for the rigors of basic training and the chance to at last live the dream. He didn't even stick around town for Thanksgiving or Christmas, as his dad wished. It was time to be a Marine.

“Since he was a little boy, that's all he talked about, joining the Marines,” his father, Jacob Lara Jr., said, adding that he wasn't quite sure why the young man wanted to serve in the corps. “I know he had an uncle on his mother's side that was a Marine and I think the whole uniform, as nice as it looks — his dress blues — and just the respect and honor that are given the Marines, he just wouldn't choose any other branch.”

The dream ended on a mission just over a week ago in Anbar province, when Lara, 20, of New Braunfels was killed in combat. As his family mourned over the weekend, those in the San Antonio area closed ranks.

They lined the streets of Randolph AFB after Lara's body was flown here Sunday from Dover AFB, Del., holding flags and banners celebrating his service. They were back

again Monday, standing at roadside rest stops and overpasses on Interstate 35 as the Lara funeral procession headed toward Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Some waved flags. Others held their hands over their hearts.

“I don't know how many flags they had out there,” said Lara's father, a 37-year-old fire extinguisher technician living in Seguin. “It seems like hundreds of them.” In California, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger ordered flags at the capitol flown at half-staff in honor of Lara, who served with the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton. He praised Lara as a “brave Marine who sacrificed his life fighting for the freedoms that are dear to this country,” and “fought with honor and courage.”

The somber farewell was in keeping with the younger Lara's state of mind. This was his second tour of Iraq since 2007, and there were signs that he was changing. A quiet boy who could be a jokester and a prankster, Lara had evolved from listening to hard rock to Christian rock and rap. Just what caused that isn't clear, but his father and brother said they saw it happening.

“He was a changing a lot,” said Jonathon Lara, a 17-year-old junior at Victory Academy, a private school in Seguin. “Just like talking with him you'd notice a difference.”

As kids, Jonathon Lara said that his older brother “tricked me into trading one of my Pokémon cards, like my best one for a regular one.” Over time, though, Brandon Lara grew serious, working part-time fast food jobs and playing baseball at Canyon High School.

“Growing up, Brandon was quiet, but he had just this personality about himself that would attract people to him,” said Jacob Lara, his dad. “You wanted to be his friend. He could make you laugh. When you tell your friend, ‘I have your back,’ Brandon truly meant that. If you were his friend, he was there for you. And perhaps that's why he went into the Marines.”

ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW



June 7, 2009: Iraqi National Police stand and watch as U.S. Army soldiers from 5th Infantry Regiment enter a building in Mosul. (AP Photo/ Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

BRITAIN RENEWS CALL FOR AFGHANISTAN TALKS WITH TALIBAN



[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan

Aug 2 (AFP)

Two more foreign soldiers were killed when their vehicles struck home-made bombs in southern Afghanistan, the force said Sunday.

The troops, whose nationalities were not disclosed, died on Saturday.

The US military said the latest soldiers to die were not from its forces.

Marine From Camp Pendleton Killed In Afghanistan Offensive



The casket of Sgt. Michael W. Heede Jr. arrives at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware.
Credit: Associated Press.

July 15, 2009 Los Angeles Times

Marine Sgt. Michael W. Heede Jr. has become the first Marine from Camp Pendleton killed in Afghanistan during the current offensive to oust the Taliban from key areas of Helmand Province.

Heede, 22, of Delta, Pa., was killed Monday during combat operations, the Marine Corps announced today. He was a combat engineer with the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division based at Camp Pendleton.

Heede enlisted in 2005 and served in Iraq from November 2006 to April 2007. Among his citations was the Combat Action Ribbon, awarded only to Marines who have come under enemy fire.

Rosemount Soldier Dies From Afghan Combat Injuries

07/20/2009 By Becky Nahm, KSAX-TV

An Army Ranger from Rosemount died from injuries he suffered in a battle in Afghanistan earlier this month.

Ben Kopp is the fifth Minnesota troop member to die in recent days.

Kopp was shot in the leg during combat July 10.

He had been undergoing treatment at Walter Reed Medical Center. But over the weekend, his mother, Jill Stephenson, posted news of his death on his CaringBridge website.

She said that he had not regained consciousness since going into cardiac arrest after being treated for heavy bleeding.

Kopp's friends were surprised to hear of his passing.

Carly Jauman said, "When I heard the news it was really, really shocking. I really thought he would be ok."

His friends said he had a big personality and an even bigger heart and he only wanted to serve. That giving spirit continued in his death. His mother said his organs were donated.

Kopp served two tours in Iraq before his tour in Afghanistan.

Friday another Minnesotan serving in Afghanistan died in combat. Captain Thomas Gramith who was 27-years-old and from Eagan died when his F15E Strike Eagle went down near Kabul. A second officer died in the crash.

The U.S. Air Force said the crash was not caused by the enemy, but hearts are heavy at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base where the men were based.

Col. Mark Kelly said, "The loss we incur here is a family loss. It's very, very close and personal. "

The two deaths follow the deaths of three Minnesota National Guard troops killed in Iraq. Spc. Daniel Drevnick of Woodbury; Spc. James Wertish of Olivia; and Spc. Carlos Wilcox IV of Cottage Grove died Thursday in Basra.

Oklahoma Soldier Is Killed By A Roadside Bomb In Afghanistan

7/23/2009 By SARA PLUMMER World Staff Writer

A soldier from Duncan was killed Monday in Afghanistan after the humvee he was in was struck by a roadside bomb, the military said Wednesday.

Army Pfc. Dennis Pratt, 34, was among four soldiers killed in the incident, the military said.

"I guess it just split their humvee in half," said Sinnamon Pratt, Dennis Pratt's mother.

Sinnamon Pratt and her husband, Jim, were notified Monday that their son had died, just 10 minutes after the Army notified Pratt's wife, Michelle.

"I asked if it was a mistake and they said no," Sinnamon Pratt said.

Funeral arrangements are still pending, but Sinnamon Pratt said her son's body will return to Oklahoma in three to five days and he will be buried at Fort Sill.

Pratt joined the Army two years ago and loved it, she said. He was stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y., where his wife and two sons live.

"He told us he finally found his niche. He was going to make a career out of it," she said. "He got in kind of late. They called him pops because he was the oldest."

What's the hardest, Sinnamon Pratt said, was her son would have left Wednesday for two weeks of rest and relaxation before his tour ended in December. He planned to continue in the Army as a military police officer.

Pratt was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) of Fort Drum, N.Y.

Also killed in Monday's incident was Sgt. Gregory Owens Jr., 24, of Garland, Texas; Spc. Anthony M. Lightfoot, 20, of Riverdale, Ga.; and Spc. Andrew J. Roughton, 21, of Houston.

The explosion near their vehicle followed an attack by enemy forces using small-arms and rocket-propelled grenades, the military said.

She and her husband supported their son in his decision to make the military his career, Sinnamon Pratt said.

"Jim was so proud of him. Right now he feels guilty, but we're a military family," she said. "We're not mad at the Army. We're just really upset."

Sinnamon Pratt's father served in World War II, Jim Pratt served in the Vietnam War, and her youngest son, Kyle, served in Iraq.

Dennis Pratt cared deeply for his family, including his 9-year-old daughter, and two sons ages 8 and 3, his mother said.

"He was very family oriented," she said. "He loved his kids, he loved Michelle."

Her son just loved his life, she said.

"He was fun to be around. He had a goofy smile and striking blue eyes," she said. "You couldn't want for a better person."

Some Recruits Pretended To Shoot Poorly To Avoid Being Sent

Where The War Against The Taliban Is Most Intense: One Source Of Friction Has Been The Decision By The U.S. Government To Replace Kalashnikov Assault Rifles With American M-16s: “It's Just A Piece Of Plastic That Can Break Down After A Few Rounds”

August 2, 2009 By Pamela Constable, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

KABUL -- On a bleak and sweltering plain littered with rusty Soviet tanks, pairs of grimacing military recruits crawled beneath a barbed-wire net one recent morning, dragging their rifles through the dust. Two trainers followed, shouting at them to move faster and stooping to correct their movements.

The training session was part of an ambitious campaign, backed by the United States and Britain, to increase the Afghan National Army's ranks from 88,000 to 134,000 men in the next three years.

One recent source of friction has been the decision by the U.S. government, which funds most of the army's training and equipment, to replace Soviet-made Kalashnikov assault rifles, the standard Afghan weapon for the past 30 years, with American-made M-16s. Since February, Afghan troops have been required to train with the M-16.

U.S. officers here said the M-16 is lighter and more accurate, and is highly effective at long distances if properly cleaned and maintained.

Afghan officers said they understand the advantages of the M-16, but many soldiers at the training camp grumbled that it is harder to keep clean and to aim, and is less durable.

“They tell us it is better than the AK, but it's just a piece of plastic that can break down after a few rounds,” said Abdul, 24, a trainee from Helmand province, as his buddies nodded in agreement.

“It is not good for conditions in Afghanistan. Do they really want us to stop in the middle of a fight to clean our weapons?”

The most common complaints, however, were more personal. Many recruits said they missed their families and resented being confined to the base and having their cellphones confiscated during the six-week basic training course.

[I]t was clear that some felt uncomfortable being trained to fight other Afghans, and officers said some recruits pretended to shoot poorly to avoid being sent south, where the war against the Taliban is most intense.

**FUTILE EXERCISE:
ONLY 10,000 MORE TO GO:
ALL HOME NOW!**



A U.S. Marine works to dismantle an explosive device after finding it on a road in Golestan district of Farah province, Afghanistan, May 8, 2009. REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

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

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

TROOP NEWS

HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS



The casket of U.S. Marine Cpl. Nicholas Xiarhos at the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne, Mass. July 31, 2009. Xiarhos died after being injured in a roadside bomb blast in southern Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Lisa Poole)

Ratfuckers In Command Lied About Danger Of Burn Pit Poisons:

**“Of About 400 Troops Who Have
Come Forward To Say They Believe
They Were Sickened By Burn Pit
Smoke, About 300 Have Respiratory
Illnesses”**

**“A 2005 Survey Of 15,000 Troops
Deployed To Iraq Or Afghanistan Found
That 69% Had A Respiratory Illness”**

August 3, 2009 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

Seven months before Defense Department officials said there were no known long-term health effects due to exposure to open-air burn-pit smoke, Army researchers sent out a report on the health effects associated with particulate matter exposure in Iraq and Afghanistan that paints a slightly different picture.

“Particulate matter air pollution is hypothesized to affect health on two time scales,” states the report by the Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

“Long-term exposure, on the scale of months to years, may influence the incidence of chronic disease and susceptibility; and short-term exposure, on the scale of days, may precipitate acute health events. Health effects of particulate matter on both scales may range in severity from subclinical to deadly.” The report, “Potential Health Implications Associated with Particulate Matter Exposure in Deployed Settings in Southwest Asia,” was submitted for publication to *Inhalation Toxicology Journal* in December and published in March.

It included data from a second report, “Characterizing Mineral Dusts and other Aerosols from the Middle East,” that showed particulate matter levels at each of 15 sites — including Joint Base Balad, Iraq, where an open burn pit once devoured as much as 240 tons of trash a day — was above World Health Organization, as well as military, standards for fine particulate matter.

The report attributed that particulate matter to sand, fossil fuel combustion, industrial aerosols — and fires. Each of 15 sites the center tested in Afghanistan, Kuwait, Iraq and Qatar had fine particulate matter counts that exceeded military guidelines for yearlong exposure — in some cases by as much as threefold.

All of the sites were at least double the one-year military guidelines for fine particulate matter.

“Open burn pits and simple incinerators with little or no air pollution control devices, used at some locations to process waste in (Iraq and Afghanistan), generate smoke plumes that may pose a considerable health hazard to deployed personnel,” lead author Coleen Weese wrote in the Army report.

“The health effects of chronic exposure to particulate matter include increases in lower respiratory symptoms, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, reductions in lung function, and ... in life expectancy (primarily due to cardiorespiratory mortality),” she wrote.

Since the wars began in Iraq and Afghanistan, the annual number of respiratory and chest symptom cases among service members has increased by 20,000, according to military morbidity reports. Annual chronic obstructive pulmonary disease cases have increased by 10,000, chronic sinusitis cases by 20,000 and “all other respiratory disease” cases by 8,000.

Of about 400 troops who have come forward to say they believe they were sickened by burn-pit smoke, about 300 have respiratory illnesses. And a study by a Vander-bilt

University doctor found that about 50 Fort Campbell, Ky., soldiers had been sickened with bronchiolitis — a rare lung disorder — because of “inhalational exposure.”

According to the Weese report, a 2005 survey of 15,000 troops deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan found that 69 percent had a respiratory illness, one-fourth of whom required medical care.

Exposure to fine particulate matter — tinier than the circumference of a human hair — has been linked to a “6 percent increase in the risk of death from all causes” with each increase of 10 micrograms per cubic meter, Weese wrote.

Fine particulate matter generally is human-caused: combustion of fossil fuels, industrial aerosols and fires. The problem is exacerbated in the Middle East, a region that is already comparatively heavily polluted. In Iraq, civilians use leaded gasoline and businesses melt down computers to get at recyclable materials. In Kuwait, petrochemical processing pollutes the air. And in Iraq and Afghanistan, giant burn pits at every military installation add to the mix.

When asked if troops are being warned of the danger, monitored for exposure or notified to look for symptoms, Army officials said they could not comment on the report before press time because they were busy preparing for a deployment health conference.

On July 13, Craig Postlewaite, deputy director of the Pentagon’s office of force readiness and health assurance, told Military Times that a 2008 study found “no indication of any long-term health risks in personnel deployed to Joint Base Balad.”

But that same risk assessment found that “particulate matter concentrations were detected above the (military exposure guidelines) in 50 of 60 total samples collected and assessed for particulate matter and analyzed for heavy metals.”

“Particulate matter exposure in the U.S. Central Command region has been previously identified as a potential health concern and is being addressed in other studies,” the assessment stated.

In fact, in the courtyard of the H-6 troop housing area at Balad, where troops say the smoke was so heavy that they had to clean their rooms twice a day to get rid of the black ash that settled on everything, the Balad assessment found particulate matter levels on one day at 299 micro-grams per cubic meter — six times the one-year military exposure guideline of 50 micrograms per cubic meter.

Particulate matter levels exceeded military guidelines on every day the courtyard was tested.

The Balad report goes on: “Respiratory diagnoses are more of a concern from high particulate levels, and all sites could potentially be affected by high particulate levels common in area of operation.”

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

Families Of UK War Dead Wait Years For Inquests; “Much Of The Information About Equipment Shortages, Training Failures And “Friendly-Fire” Incidents Has Come To Light Through Coroner’s Inquests”

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

August 1, 2009 Francis Elliott and Frances Gibb, The Times [Excerpts]

Grieving relatives of servicemen killed in Afghanistan are having to wait more than two years to learn about the circumstances in which their loved ones died.

Inquests are outstanding on almost 100 troops killed on the front line. The backlog has increased by a third in three months, The Times has learnt. Families are having to wait between nine months and a year for even “straightforward” inquests.

There have been 377 operational deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001, according to the Ministry of Defence. Its statistics show that 97 inquests remain open or about to start. As fatalities rise sharply with Operation Panther’s Claw, the queue is expected to get even longer.

Much of the information about equipment shortages, training failures and “friendly-fire” incidents has come to light through coroner’s inquests.

On Thursday, an inquest found that inadequate training in the use of night goggles and the absence of infrared vehicle lights contributed to the deaths of Colour Sergeant Phillip Newman and Private Brian Tunnicliffe, in September 2007. The coroner, David Masters, is expected to write a “Rule 43” letter to Mr Ainsworth demanding to know what improvements have been made.

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

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.

-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”

Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.

**“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**

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**

Psychedelic Blues

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 follows *Psychedelic Blues*]

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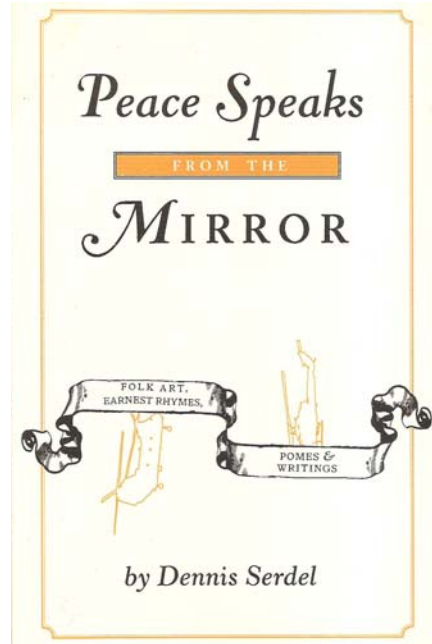
By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

Psychedelic Blues

**Where are you now all my children
my colorful hippies peace signs and beads
sandals long hair and Woodsrock
peyote acapulco gold LSD and bell bottoms
you were there when the Soldiers came “home”
dumped into the States after fighting in Vietnam
Chocolate Watch Band, Strawberry Alarm Clock
Where are you now my students
you fought for peace like Black Sabbath
are you still the same or is all that is left
is smoking pot and memories, Lollipop Shoppe
Counter culture remains HP Lovecraft,
Freak Scene, or are you watching Fox TV
with a W on the back of your car where**

a peace sign sticker used to be.
We have seen hypocrites old dove's
turn into chicken hawks with age.
Twin Towers fell crashed the Pentagon too
yes, the same one where they tear gassed you
and the Electric Prunes, the Paisleys made
all the children cry.
Come on all my children, this is another war
that is wrong Iron Butterfly, Tiffany Shade,
Stone Circus bring our Soldiers home
on a Jefferson Airplane.

**MORE OF DENNIS SERDEL'S WORK IN
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Books are \$15 Post Paid:
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Allan Ginsberg
Dennis Serdel**

T

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Bring Our Troops Home And Deploy Some To Madison, Wisconsin: Armed Domestic Enemy Combatants Openly Attack Free Speech Rights Of Iraq Veterans

July 27, 2009 By Aileen Paguio, Socialist Worker

MADISON, Wis.--Until about a year ago, Madison police generally respected the First Amendment right to sell political literature on State Street, a pedestrian street downtown between the University of Wisconsin (UW) campus and the state Capitol.

But over the past year, the Madison Police Department has ticketed the International Socialist Organization (ISO) several times, with fines totaling several hundred dollars, for distributing literature.

Madison has a reputation as a progressive town. The UW campus and downtown were centers of political activity for the movement against the Vietnam war in the 1960s and '70s, with many different groups taking part in lively debate. In that tradition, the ISO has been distributing Socialist Worker on State Street for more than 20 years.

Over the last few years, city politicians and officials and the police have been slowly restricting activities on State Street. They began with cracking down on panhandling, then developed plans to “renovate” Lisa Link Peace Park--a place where the homeless gather and activists table--with a carousel.

Now, city Alderman Mike Verveer is talking about requiring that street musicians buy vendor's licenses.

The objective is to turn State Street into a shopping mall, devoid of anything political or anything else deemed “undesirable” by city government.

It is in this atmosphere that the police have been repeatedly ticketing the ISO for supposedly violating city ordinances, such as placing a table on the sidewalk or vending without a license..

Other groups such as the Madison Area Peace Coalition, the local antiwar group and Iraq Veterans Against the War have also been harassed for simply leafleting. One activist was even ticketed for sidewalk chalking, which is legal.

We won't take this violation of our right to free speech without a fight. Everyone should be outraged at these efforts to stifle left-wing voices. We must take this outrage to the city to demand that they guarantee and defend our right to free speech.

Sign a petition to demand that Madison's public spaces remain available, free of charge, to artistic and political expression, including the sale and distribution of literature.

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

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

**Canadians Plan A Proper
Response To A U.S. Surveillance
Balloon:**

“Protesters At ‘Moon The Balloon’ Will Simultaneously Drop Their Trousers” American Supporter Says “This Abomination Merely Escalates The Homeland Security Stupidity Along The St. Clair River”

[The custom of “mooning” is ancient, originally thought to be a way to frighten off dangerous demons. Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project, who sent this in. T]

July 30, 2009 Canwest News Service & Jul 31, 2009 Nick Aveling, Staff Reporter, Toronto Star & August 1, 2009 By TYLER KULA, THE OBSERVER

SARNIA, Ont. — A Sarnia resident is organizing a protest to express his displeasure over a balloon equipped with a surveillance camera that was hoisted last week just across the St. Clair River in Port Huron, Mich., with its eyes set on the border.

The event, “Moon the Balloon,” is scheduled for 5 p.m. on Aug. 15 in Sarnia's Centennial Park.

Any Canadian with two cheeks and a sense of outrage is invited to join in.

By Friday night a Facebook group had more than 300 “confirmed guests” planning to take part in the protest.

Eli Martin said Thursday he hopes protesters at “moon the balloon” will simultaneously drop their trousers to send a signal that Sarnia “doesn't like being watched.”

The 50-foot helium balloon has a \$1- million high-tech camera capable of identifying the name on a ship 12-15 kilometres out in Lake Huron, according to the American company operating it.

The Sierra Nevada Corp., is testing the technology that could eventually be used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The balloon is shaped like an airplane wing and carries a camera to monitor the international border adjacent Sarnia's downtown.

“The balloon is a clear violation of our privacy and our sovereignty,” said Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley, who, though he won't be taking part in the protest, believes “greatly in freedom of speech and freedom of expression.”

"I've talked to a retired major general who's the leader on the project. He doesn't understand that we would see this as invasion of privacy. He just doesn't get it."

A Michigan man says a surveillance balloon monitoring Sarnia from the skies above Port Huron underscores a growing distrust of Canada by U. S. security officials.

"Over the last few years we've watched this continual escalation of these helicopters going up and down the river," said Robert Carroll, a Warren, Mich. resident who vacations on Harsens Island in the St. Clair River.

"I almost feel like, 'What, are we at war with Canada?'"

Carroll has written U. S. President Barack Obama, both Michigan senators and his congressional representative to decry the eye-in-the-sky over Port Huron.

"This abomination merely escalates the Homeland Security stupidity along the St. Clair River," he told the president.

"On top of the endless drone of U. S. Coast Guard, Border Patrol, and Homeland Security helicopters flying at low levels along the river day and night, we now have to endure another worthless, misguided intrusion."

Carroll, who frequently visits friends in Canada, said he may join the protest himself.

"Not all Americans have lost their collective marbles here," he said.

"There are some of us that think this whole thing has gone too far and has the potential to be a huge waste of American taxpayer money."

Jerry Sweet, 40, who grew up in Sarnia but lives in Yellowknife plans to attend the protest if not in body, then in spirit – and on paper.

"I have a couple of friends from Sarnia who live in northern B.C. We're going to get together and take some pictures, put them on a banner and ship it down to Sarnia so one of my relatives can moon for us by proxy," said Sweet.

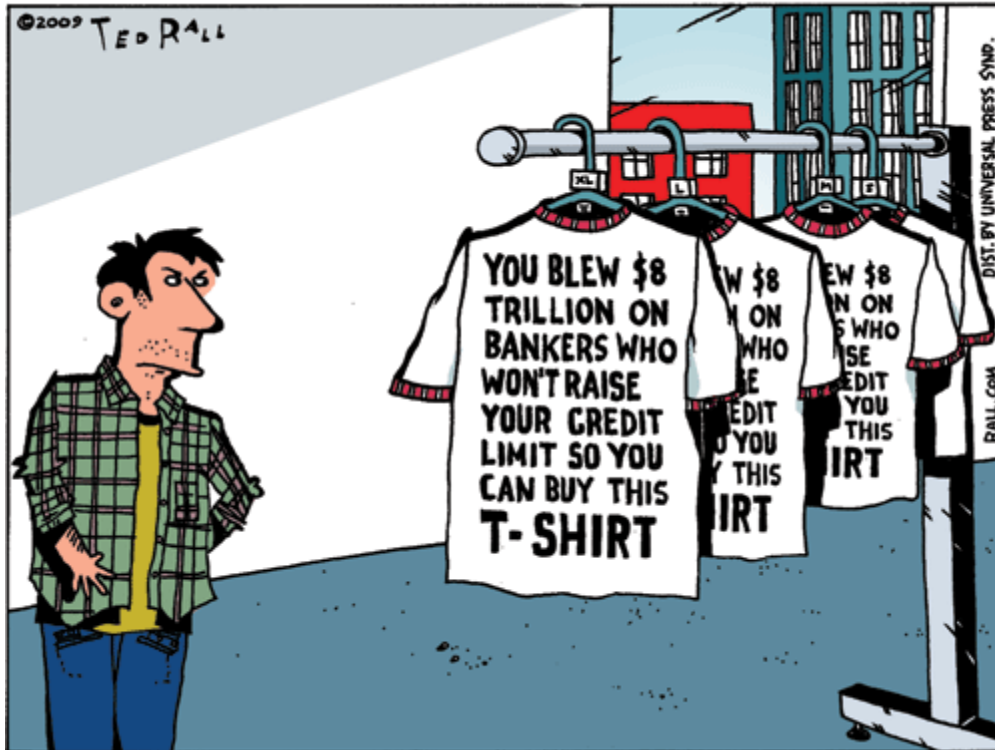
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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/)

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**“Professor Gates Did Absolutely Nothing Wrong”
“You Can Yell At A Cop In America. There Is No Law Against That”**

“It Is Not An Offense For Which You Are Supposed To Be Arrested.”

“Black People Are Constantly Being Stopped, Searched, Harassed, Publicly Humiliated, Assaulted, Arrested And Sometimes Killed By Police Officers In This Country For No Good Reason”



Most whites do not want to hear about racial problems, and President Obama would rather walk through fire than spend his time dealing with them.

Black people need to roar out their anger at such treatment, lift up their voices and demand change.

Anyone counseling a less militant approach is counseling self-defeat.

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

July 31, 2009 By BOB HERBERT, The New York Times

Cambridge, Mass.

No more than five or six minutes elapsed from the time the police were alerted to the possibility of a break-in at a home in a quiet residential neighborhood and the awful clamping of handcuffs on the wrists of the distinguished Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.

If Professor Gates ranted and raved at the cop who entered his home uninvited with a badge, a gun and an attitude, he didn't rant and rave for long. The 911 call came in at about 12:45 on the afternoon of July 16 and, as The Times has reported, Mr. Gates was arrested, cuffed and about to be led off to jail by 12:51.

The charge: angry while black.

The president of the United States has suggested that we use this flare-up as a "teachable moment," but so far exactly the wrong lessons are being drawn from it — especially for black people.

The message that has gone out to the public is that powerful African-American leaders like Mr. Gates and President Obama will be very publicly slapped down for speaking up and speaking out about police misbehavior, and that the proper response if you think you are being unfairly targeted by the police because of your race is to chill.

I have nothing but contempt for that message.

Mr. Gates is a friend, and I was selected some months ago to receive an award from an institute that he runs at Harvard. I made no attempt to speak to him while researching this column.

The very first lesson that should be drawn from the encounter between Mr. Gates and the arresting officer, Sgt. James Crowley, is that Professor Gates did absolutely nothing wrong.

He did not swear at the officer or threaten him. He was never a danger to anyone.

At worst, if you believe the police report, he yelled at Sergeant Crowley. He demanded to know if he was being treated the way he was being treated because he was black.

You can yell at a cop in America.

This is not Iran.

And if some people don't like what you're saying, too bad.

You can even be wrong in what you are saying.

There is no law against that.

It is not an offense for which you are supposed to be arrested.

That's a lesson that should have emerged clearly from this contretemps.

It was the police officer, Sergeant Crowley, who did something wrong in this instance.

He arrested a man who had already demonstrated to the officer's satisfaction that he was in his own home and had been minding his own business, bothering no one.

Sergeant Crowley arrested Professor Gates and had him paraded off to jail for no good reason, and that brings us to the most important lesson to be drawn from this case.

Black people are constantly being stopped, searched, harassed, publicly humiliated, assaulted, arrested and sometimes killed by police officers in this country for no good reason.

New York City cops make upwards of a half-million stops of private citizens each year, questioning and frequently frisking these men, women and children.

The overwhelming majority of those stopped are black or Latino, and the overwhelming majority are innocent of any wrongdoing.

A true "teachable moment" would focus a spotlight on such outrages and the urgent need to stop them.

But this country is not interested in that.

I wrote a number of columns about the arrests of more than 30 black and Hispanic youngsters — male and female — who were doing nothing more than walking peacefully down a quiet street in Brooklyn in broad daylight in the spring of 2007.

The kids had to hire lawyers and fight the case for nearly two frustrating years before the charges were dropped and a settlement for their outlandish arrests worked out.

Black people need to roar out their anger at such treatment, lift up their voices and demand change.

Anyone counseling a less militant approach is counseling self-defeat.

As of mid-2008, there were 4,777 black men imprisoned in America for every 100,000 black men in the population. By comparison, there were only 727 white male inmates per 100,000 white men.

While whites use illegal drugs at substantially higher percentages than blacks, black men are sent to prison on drug charges at 13 times the rate of white men.

Most whites do not want to hear about racial problems, and President Obama would rather walk through fire than spend his time dealing with them.

We're never going to have a serious national conversation about race.

So that leaves it up to ordinary black Americans to rant and to rave, to demonstrate and to lobby, to march and confront and to sue and generally do whatever is necessary to stop a continuing and deeply racist criminal justice outrage.

MORE:

“Henry Louis Gates Was Busted For Being BWAH--Black While At Home” Obama, “In A Moment Of Sheer Gutlessness” Backs Down And Concedes That Maybe “Gates Overreacted”



July 27, 2009 Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

OF ALL the Black people in America they could arrest to put the lie, once and for all, to the absurd notion that the United States has conquered the “race question,” the Cambridge, Mass., police force made a revealing choice.

Harvard professor and African American intellectual luminary Henry Louis Gates was busted for being BWAH--Black While At Home. Or was it BWOB--Black While Opening Your Back Door?

Whichever, it only confirmed what most African Americans already knew--that whether or not Barack Obama is president, racism is alive and well in the U.S.

But the U.S. political establishment, from right to left, only exposed its ignorance about the question of race in the Obama era.

As soon as news of Gates' arrest emerged--he was cuffed and led away by officers who responded to a neighbor's call that "two Black men with backpacks" were trying to get in the back door of Gates' home, and was arrested inside, after he had shown ID to the cops--cable TV commentators jumped to the defense of police, suggesting that the already world-famous Gates was only speaking out about being racially profiled to get publicity.

The uproar hit top volume after Obama replied to a question about the arrest at a press conference. Obama was roundly denounced, not only by conservatives but liberals, for giving his opinion--the most "controversial" point of which was to say that racial profiling by law enforcement is an established fact--without "knowing the full story."

The pressure was too much for the president of the United States. Obama backed down and apologized personally to the Cambridge officer who arrested Gates.

For its part, the Fraternal Order of Police demanded an apology from Obama for referring to the arresting officers as stupid. Conservatives correctly sense that Obama is loath to enter into any discussion about race that doesn't involve a public admonition of the Black poor, so they attacked--calculating correctly that Obama, in a moment of sheer gutlessness, would back down and concede that maybe "Gates overreacted."

MORE:

Boston Cop Who Called Gates A "Banana-Eating Jungle Monkey" Says He's Not A Racist



July 30, 2009 BOSTON, Massachusetts (CNN)

The Boston police officer who sent a mass e-mail in which he compared Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. to a "banana-eating jungle monkey" has apologized, saying he's not a racist.

Officer Justin Barrett, 36, told a Boston television station Wednesday night that he was sorry about the e-mail, a copy of which he also sent to The Boston Globe.

Barrett was suspended from his military duties as captain in the Army National Guard and placed on administrative leave from the Boston Police Department pending the outcome of a termination hearing.

In his fiery e-mail, which he sent to some fellow Guard members as well as the newspaper, Barrett vented about a July 22 Globe column about Gates' arrest.

In Barrett's e-mail, which was posted on a Boston television station's Web site, he declared that if he had "been the officer he verbally assaulted like a banana-eating jungle monkey, I would have sprayed him in the face with OC (oleorosin capsicum, or pepper spray) deserving of his belligerent non-compliance."

Barrett used the "banana-eating jungle monkey" phrase three times referring to Gates.

Strikes Rock South Africa: "Workers Are Expected To Cut Their Living Standards Because Of The Economic Crisis While The People They Work For Are Earning Huge Salaries"

JULY 29, 2009 By SARAH CHILDRESS, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

Jacob Zuma, just short of three months into his presidency, faces resistance from a major constituency that helped to bring him to power, underscoring the challenges he faces amid South Africa's first postapartheid recession.

Tens of thousands of municipal workers struck for a second day this week, disrupting services in Johannesburg, South Africa's commercial hub. That strike follows one by chemical workers and a weeklong one earlier in the month by construction workers building projects for next year's World Cup.

Mr. Zuma's die-hard supporters from South Africa's poor townships have taken to the streets, saying they are fed up watching their families endure the cold South African winter in flimsy shacks.

Mr. Zuma's humble background and emphasis on helping the needy won him fiercely loyal support among the poor and the country's powerful unions. On the campaign trail, he promised jobs and better public housing.

One costly strike was averted late on Tuesday, when the National Union of Mineworkers said it agreed on a wage increase for its workers in the gold and coal mining sectors, some of South Africa's major economic drivers.

But union leaders say the poor are growing impatient.

"There is undoubtedly an element of frustration because of the stark inequality in South African society," said Patrick Craven, the national spokesman for the Congress of South African Trade Unions, or Cosatu, the powerful trade federation.

"Workers are expected to cut their living standards because of the economic crisis while the people they work for are earning huge salaries."

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

RECEIVED

Rape

From: H
To: GI Special
Sent: July 27, 2009
Subject: response to article

You had an article up in the Special that said one in three women are raped in the military.

The problem is not just in the military though.

I was just talking with a psychologist and the new statistics indicate that one out of every three females in this country are sexually molested even before adulthood.

The problem is that we have a lot of sick bastards in this society and women here are treated like animals.



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