

GI SPECIAL 7H21:

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



Aug. 19, 2009: U.S. Soldier from 10th Mountain Division covering one of the wounded as a helicopter lands to evacuate the injured after their armored vehicle hit an improvised explosive device in the Tangi Valley of Afghanistan's Wardak Province. (AP Photo/David Goldman)

Hippie Wigs On Bald Heads

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

From: Dennis Serdel

To: GI Special
Sent: August 22, 2009
Subject: Hippie Wigs On Bald Heads

Hippie Wigs On Bald Heads

**Where did the Peace Movement go
the ones who flooded Washington DC
filled the streets of San Francisco
with actions all over the USA
Are you now waiting for Obama
to end the Wars or watching
the enhanced DVD with extra footage
of the LSD drug big party at Woodstock
while the Soldiers were stranded
in the jungle as Country Joe sings
his song and makes a career
that lasts for a lifetime
Today Joan Baez says she won't sing
We Shall Overcome anymore
because it's canned labeled and
is meaningless now
and she's a millionaire
Why is the Peace Movement silent
have you given up the good fight
or do you still think Obama
will end both of the Wars "responsibly"
Don't you know Peace Movement
you are Not doing your job
the American Government War Lords
have beaten you down like putting a
penny on a railroad track
like damming a river into a small creek
you are Not busting any dams
opening any fences for
the young protesters to walk through
There was No difference
between LBJ and Nixon
and there is No difference
between Bush W and Obama
He talks to the VFW Veterans For War
with John Birchers with guns
standing outside in Arizona
We need three hundred Woodstock
thousands young people now
as Obama talks all of the time
about winning the Afghanistan War**

while leaving Soldiers in Iraq
in permanent bases
Where are you ANSWER or
United For Peace and Justice
or any of the others
Did you think you could
Vote away the Wars and
sit back now in your easy chairs
while the Soldiers are stranded
overseas getting wounded dying
because Peace Movement Organizers
are lazy & have blood on their hands
Why don't you do your job
because the War Organizers
are transforming our Country
into a War Culture and are winning
by doing their jobs
like they are supposed to do
While the peace people majority
are waiting for Leadership
to fight back and fill a
Woodstock size void and more
against the Wars

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]

DENNIS SERDEL:

Shipped to Vietnam in November 1967.

Returned home in October 1968 to Kalamazoo, Michigan.

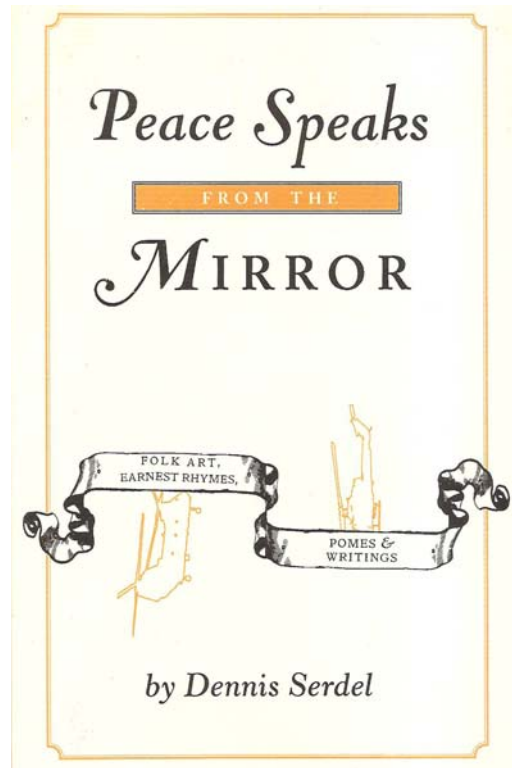
Joined Veterans For Peace in January 1990.

Joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War when Iraq and Afghanistan War started.

Books are \$15 Post Paid:

Check or Money Order Payable to Dennis Serdel

Dennis Serdel
339 Oakwood Lane
Perry,
Michigan 48872



Walt Whitman
Carl Sandburg
Allan Ginsberg
Dennis Serdel

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 917.677.8057

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**Happy Talk = Lying Bullshit:
Iraq: 9,036 IEDs In 2008**

Afghanistan: 3,594 IEDs In 2008

August 8, 2009 By Alexandra Zavis, L.A. Times [Excerpts]

Roadside bombs in Afghanistan are more likely to injure and kill U.S.-led forces than the ones planted in Iraq, even though the weapons manufactured by Afghan insurgents are more rudimentary, military figures show.

The bomb force recorded 3,594 devices used in Afghanistan in 2008, more than twice the number in 2007.

The United States already has poured billions of dollars into the effort in Iraq, where the number of bomb attacks against American-led forces peaked at more than 2,500 a month in the summer of 2007.

Last year, there were 9,036 incidents, according to the military's anti-bomb task force.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Mississippi Sgt. Killed In Kunar Province



Army Sgt. Matthew L. Ingram of Pearl, Miss., died Aug. 21, 2009, in Kunar Province when a bomb went off near his vehicle and his unit came under small-arms fire. The 25-year-old Ingram was assigned to Fort Carson's 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The military says Ingram was serving his second tour of duty and had been in Afghanistan since May. His first tour was in Iraq from August 2004 to July 2005. (AP Photo/DOD)

One U.S. And Two Estonian Soldiers Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan

24 August 2009 AP & AKI

Three NATO troops - two from Estonia and one from the United States - have been killed in attacks in southern Afghanistan, the latest casualties in a particularly bloody summer, authorities say.

The American service member died in an insurgent attack, the US military said without providing details.

It was the 37th death for the US military in Afghanistan since the beginning of August, a month that has seen a jump in attacks and violence as the country prepared for its second-ever direct presidential election last week.

In a separate statement, NATO said two other international troops were killed in a bomb blast in the south. NATO did not provide their nationalities, but Estonia's Defence Ministry said that two of its soldiers died after their unit stumbled on a roadside bomb in the southern Helmand province.

Their killings took the total of Estonian soldiers killed in Afghanistan to six.

An Italian military vehicle struck a roadside bomb in the western Afghan province of Farah late Sunday but no-one was injured in the attack. Major Marco Amoriello, spokesman for the Italian contingent in neighbouring Herat province, said that the bomb exploded while Italian soldiers were on patrol with the Afghan military.

The Italian soldiers included paratroopers of the 187th regiment Folgore and members of the Italian armed forces 1st regiment.

“Insurgent Attacks Increased By 60 Per Cent During October 2008 To April 2009 Alone”

August 10, 2009 by Michael Evans, Times [UK]

“The insurgents may have lost virtually every tactical clash, but they have expanded their areas of influence from a presence in some 30 of Afghanistan's 364 districts in 2003 to

one in some 160 districts by the end of 2008, while insurgent attacks increased by 60 per cent during October 2008 to April 2009 alone.

No Shit? Commanders Say U.S. Troops “Pushed Past Their Limit By Taliban Rebels”

August 23, 2009 By HELENE COOPER, The New York Times

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — American military commanders with the NATO mission in Afghanistan told President Obama’s chief envoy to the region this weekend that they did not have enough troops to do their job, pushed past their limit by Taliban rebels who operate across borders.

The commanders emphasized problems in southern Afghanistan, where Taliban insurgents continue to bombard towns and villages with rockets despite a new influx of American troops, and in eastern Afghanistan, where the father-and-son-led Haqqani network of militants has become the main source of attacks against American troops and their Afghan allies.

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



U.S. 3rd Marines as they battle Taliban fighters near Now Zad in Afghanistan’s Helmand province, June 20, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



3rd Marines patrol to the village of Khwaja Jamal in Afghanistan's Helmand province June 28, 2009. (AP Photo/ David Guttenfelder)



5th Marines move through farm fields after landing by helicopter in an overnight night air assault near the Taliban stronghold of Nawa in Afghanistan's Helmand province July 2, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)



United States Marines from 2nd MEB, 2nd MEF, climb up on a rooftop to use it as an observation point while on a mission to clear the town of Dahaneh of Taliban insurgents, Aug. 13, 2009, in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

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

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

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: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

TROOP NEWS

**NO MORE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**



The casket of Cpl. Benjamin Stephen Kopp of the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Aug. 7, 2009 at Arlington National Cemetery. Kopp, of Rosemount, Minn., was wounded during combat operations in Afghanistan and later died of his injuries. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

**IVAW Convention Demands “The
Immediate And Unconditional
Withdrawal Of All Occupying Forces
In Afghanistan And Reparations For
The Afghan People, And Support
(For) All Troops And Veterans
Working Toward Those Ends”**

“It Feels Like We Are Creating More Enemies”



[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York Labor Against The War and Military Project, who sent this in.]

August 23, 2009 By Kevin Dougherty, Stars and Stripes [Excerpts]

With the U.S. military presence in Iraq expected to end by 2011, an organization of current and former servicemembers opposed to the war there is widening its mandate to include Afghanistan.

At its annual convention in College Park, Md., earlier this month, members of Iraq Veterans Against the War vigorously debated what the group's stance should be on Afghanistan, according to some participants. Opposition to the war quietly became official policy earlier this year following an online membership poll.

“A decision has been made in terms of our position, which is we are against it,” said Jose Vasquez, executive director of IVAW and co-founder of the New York City chapter.

With that, leaders are “working out the way forward.”

Since its founding in 2004, the IVAW has focused almost exclusively on Iraq, though members have been free to speak out for or against the war in Afghanistan. The organization, which has a national office in Philadelphia, estimates its membership to be at least 1,700, with roughly one-quarter of its members still in uniform. Most members, active duty or not, have not deployed to Afghanistan, said Devon Read, a former Marine who wrote and introduced the resolution at the convention.

As is the case with Iraq, the existing IVAW resolution advocates “the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all occupying forces in Afghanistan and reparations for the Afghan people, and support (for) all troops and veterans working toward those ends.”

Additionally, the IVAW supports full benefits and adequate health care for all servicemembers returning from Afghanistan or Iraq.

For now, the effort to develop a strategic approach to opposing the war in Afghanistan is being addressed at the local level. Among the most active on this front is the Los Angeles chapter, which Read heads. The L.A. chapter sponsors forums at which clips of a new documentary, "Rethink Afghanistan," are aired and discussed.

The meetings are intended to generate public and political support for IVAW's position, which is that the continued presence of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan is hurting, not helping matters.

Read, who initially backed the war in Afghanistan, characterized his endorsement as "blind support," a view that has changed over the past year.

"To me," Read said, "it feels like we are creating more enemies."

**“Juneman Was Apparently
Despondent Over Imminent
Redeployment To Iraq With The
Guard, His Family Has Said”
“He Apparently Received No Follow-
Up Care By VA Staff”
“Juneman Hanged Himself At His Home
In Pullman After Being Released From
Inpatient Suicide Watch At The Spokane
VA”**

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,538th time, there is no enemy in Iraq or Afghanistan.]

[Their citizens and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started these wars of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't tell the truth: U.S. Imperial wars are about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback is overdue. T]

August 10, 2009 Spokesman-Review [Excerpts]

The VA's Office of Medical Investigations discovered that from July 2007 through the first week of July 2008, at least 22 veterans in the Spokane VA service area killed themselves, and 15 of them had contact with the medical center.

Spokane VA had previously reported nine suicides and 34 attempted suicides in that time period. All of them had some contact with the medical center.

The inspectors' report was released late last week by the Veterans Health Administration to Spokane resident Steve Senescall, after a year spent trying to find out more about the death of his son, Lucas Senescall.

The young man's body was found hanging in his Spokane home a few hours after he sought psychiatric help at the Spokane VA.

Although the report was completed on Feb. 4, Senescall did not receive it until late Thursday, hours after The Spokesman-Review called VA headquarters and the office of U.S. Sen. Patty Murray with inquiries about the father's efforts to obtain the information.

On July 7, 2008, Steve Senescall accompanied his son -- who had a history of mental illness, including a previous suicide attempt -- to the medical center's psychiatric ward, where Lucas was seen by Dr. William L. Brown.

Rather than admit Lucas, Senescall said, the psychiatrist had the veteran make an appointment for an office visit in two weeks.

"I want to know why, when he was rocking back and forth in his chair with his hands over his mouth to keep from crying, he sent him home," Senescall said.

Senescall's suicide was the 15th in a little more than 12 months by a veteran who had at least some contact with the Spokane medical center.

The report identifies each veteran only by a number. Nevertheless, details provided in several cases closely match the circumstances of veterans who have previously been identified by The Spokesman-Review.

References to Veteran 1 match what is known about Senescall.

The report concludes that VA staff should have attempted to interview him alone and should have offered him hospitalization.

"The medical center should peer review the care provided to Veteran 1 and appropriate actions should be taken based on the findings," the report said.

Helman declined to say whether any disciplinary action has been taken as a result of any of the suicides. "Reviews were done and appropriate actions were taken," Helman said.

The description of Veteran 2 matches the case of Richard Kinsey Young, a 35-year-old Navy veteran who killed himself in April 2008 after a 16-month struggle with back pain and depression.

“This ... veteran did not appear to have a well-coordinated pain management plan to assist ... with intractable pain until a few days before death,” the report states.

Two of the veterans who killed themselves were Iraq or Afghanistan veterans, including Spc. Timothy Juneman, a 25-year-old National Guardsman and former Stryker Brigade Soldier who was injured in a roadside explosion in Iraq.

Juneman hanged himself at his home in Pullman, where he was taking classes at Washington State University after being released from inpatient suicide watch at the Spokane VA in January 2008.

He apparently received no follow-up care by VA staff.

Brown was the psychiatrist who released Juneman.

In records obtained by Juneman before his death, Brown wrote that Juneman was apparently despondent over imminent redeployment to Iraq with the Guard, his family has said.

Because of privacy laws, the VA was unable to notify the Department of Defense about the medical condition of “active veterans” such as Guard and Reserve members.

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.

“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”

-- Camille Desmoulins

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

Mike Hastie

U.S. Army Medic

Vietnam 1970-71

December 13, 2004

The Radio

“This August 24th, Remember Jeremy King”



[From: GI SPECIAL 5H19: 8.24.07]

07/25/2007 by Justin C. Cliburn
[Iraq Veterans Against The War] [www.ivaw.org]
Branch of service: Army National Guard of the United States (ARNG)
Unit: 1st Battalion 158th FA Oklahoma ARNG
Rank: SPC
Home: Lawton, Oklahoma
Served in: LSA Anaconda: MSR Patrol, one month. Camp Liberty, Baghdad: PSD/IP
Training, ten and a half months.

When I was in Mrs. Riner's junior English class at MacArthur high school, we were required to read a short story titled "The Radio."

The premise was simple. A couple in the 1930s were given a special radio that allowed them to hear all their neighbors' conversations. At first they were elated, but, ultimately, they were haunted by the miracle of their ability. They could hear all the horrors of society that usually go unnoticed or are covered up and sterilized . . . and they couldn't turn it off.

They couldn't change the channel.

It took seven years, but I eventually went back to that story in my head and felt their horror.

August 24th, 2006 was a routine day for my squad in Baghdad. We had gone to Traffic Headquarters and I had gotten to visit with Ali. Business taken care of, we started to make the familiar trek back to Camp Liberty.

It was a hot day, over 120 degrees, and I stood up just a little higher than usual with my sleeves unbuttoned to let the air circulated inside my body armor and clothing. It had been a good day.

Back on Route Irish, we were on the home stretch when the call came out over the radio:

"Eagle Dustoff, Eagle Dustoff, this is Red Knight 7* over"
"This is Eagle Dustoff, over"
"Eagle Dustoff, I need MEDEVAC; my gunner has been shot by a sniper."

The voice went on to recite the nine line MEDEVAC report and I marveled at how cool, calm, and collected he sounded. My squad leader plotted the grid coordinates and found that this had occurred only a couple blocks away from one of our two main destinations on Market Road.

“Cliburn, go ahead and get down; someone might be aiming at your melon right now”, CPT Ray said. Sergeant Bruesch concurred and I sat down, listening intently to the radio transmissions that I couldn’t turn off if I wanted to.

Five minutes in, the voice on the radio was losing his cool.

“Have they left yet?! He’s losing a lot of blood; we need that chopper now!”

In the background, you could hear other soldiers yelling, screaming, trying to find anyway to save their friend’s life. At one point, I swear I heard the man gurgle.

Ten minutes in, the voice on the radio was furious.

“Where’s that fucking chopper!? We’re losing him! He’s not fucking breathing! Where the fuck are you!?”

Every minute to minute and a half the voice was back on the radio demanding to know what the hold up was. Every minute to minute and a half the other voice on the radio, a young woman’s voice, tried to reassure him that the chopper was the way from Taji. She was beginning to tire herself; I could hear it in her voice. She was just as frustrated as he was.

All the while, there I sat.

Sitting in the gunners hatch, listening life’s little horrors with no way to turn the channel.

No one in the truck was speaking.

The music was on, but no one heard it. There was just an eerie silence.

All I heard was the radio transmissions; I watched as the landscape passed me by in slow motion.

I didn’t hear wind noise or car horns or gunfire or my own thoughts. I was only accompanied by the silence of the world passing me by, interrupted only by the screams of the voice on the radio.

At this point, I was as frustrated as I had been all year. Where the fuck was that goddamn chopper and why was it taking so long?! What if it were me?

Would I be waiting that long? Would this pathetic exchange be included in the newscast if the guy dies?

I was angry, upset, frustrated, and anticipating the next transmission in this macabre play by play account. Forget about TNT, HBO, and Law and Order: THIS was drama. This was heart wrenching.

Seconds seemed like hours; minutes seemed like days.

Finally, after several more non-productive transmissions where Eagle Dustoff attempted to reassure the voice, after twenty minutes and a few more frantic, screaming transmissions by the voice, the man's voice was calm again.

"Eagle Dustoff, cancel the chopper. He's dead."

. . . and that was that. The voice had gone from being the model for the consummate soldier (cool, calm, collected, professional) to the more human screams and frantic pleading for help to solemn resignation.

Now, the voice was quiet.

"Eagle Dustoff: requesting recovery team. We can't drive this vehicle back; we need someone to come get the vehicle and body. Over."

"Do you have casualty's information?"

"Yes. SGT King, over."

I sat in that gunners sling in a fit of rage that I couldn't let out.

I had to be a soldier; I had to keep my cool.

We all did.

I was so angry, I still am, about being an unwilling voyeur, forced to listen to the gruesome play by play of another soldier's life and death.

We had been told that the insurgency was in its last throes, that they were just a bunch of dead enders. No, not this day.

Today, SGT King was in his last throes, and I was there to listen to the whole thing, whether I liked it or not.

A soldier's death isn't anything like the movies. There was no patriotic music; there was no feeling of purpose. It's just . . . death.

I wasn't there physically; I didn't see him, but I was there.

Any sane person would have wanted to turn the channel. No one wants to hear the screams of a man losing his friend, but I couldn't turn it off. We were required to monitor that channel.

Either way, it didn't take long to become emotionally invested in it; was he going to make it? I hung on every word until I got the final, sobering news.

My truck was the only one in the convoy monitoring that net. When we got back to base, no else had heard it, and SSG Bruesch, CPT Ray, and I didn't discuss it. I don't think we ever did.

A few days later, I felt like I had to find out more about his soldier. I felt like I had lost a friend, yet I didn't know anything but his name and rank.

Looking back on it, I should have just let it go, but I didn't. Using the miracle of the Internet, I found out all I needed to know about the young man.

SGT Jeremy E. King was 23 years old. He was from Idaho, where he played high school football. He had joined the army to get out of Idaho and see the world.

He was one year younger than I was, and he was dead. He sounded like any of a number of teammates I played high school football with.

I've replayed that scene in my head more times than I'd ever want since that day.

I don't believe in fate or karma or any type of pre-destined events, but I often wonder what made that sniper hole up on North Market Road instead of South Market Road, where I often found myself.

I was fortunate enough in my time there to never have to call in MEDEVAC.

I didn't bury any of my comrades, but I will always remember what it was like listening to the miracle of modern communications, the radio, and for the first time in my life being terrified, much like the couple in the story over eighty long years ago.

This August 24th, remember Jeremy King:



Jeremy King

Wednesday, August 30 2006 @ 04:20 AM EDT

Contributed by: River97

Views: 621

Star Telegram -- KILLEEN, Texas - A Fort Hood soldier from Idaho has died in Iraq of injuries sustained when troops came under fire during combat, the Department of Defense said Friday.

Sgt. Jeremy E. King, 23, of Meridian died Thursday in Baghdad.

He was assigned to the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood.



Noble Anniversary:
August 25, 1969
The Rebellion Of Company A;
“One Of Hundreds Of Mutinies
Among Troops During The War”



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

Carl Bunin, Peace History Aug 20-26

Company A of the 3rd Battalion the 196th Light Brigade refused to advance further into the Songchang Valley of Vietnam after five days of heavy casualties; their number had been reduced from 150 to 60.

This was one of hundreds of mutinies among troops during the war.

“He (President Nixon) is also carrying on the battle in the belief, or pretense, that the South Vietnamese will really be able to defend their country and our democratic objectives (sic) when we withdraw, and even his own generals don't believe the South Vietnamese will do it.”

James Reston in the New York Times

Episode Four: Broken Soldier Available Now:



From: Displaced Films

To: GI Special

Sent: August 24, 2009

Subject: This is Where We Take Our Stand--Episode 4 Now Live! Spread the word

Episode Four of the ground breaking web series, This is Where We Take Our Stand, is now live at <http://www.thisiswherewetakeourstand.com>.

“Broken Soldier” tells the story of the Iraq Veterans Against the War members' struggle to bring hundreds of veterans to Washington, DC, to tell their stories and reveal the true nature of these occupations.

If you've watched the first three episodes, you won't want to miss this one.

And if you haven't, WATCH THEM.

This is Where We Take Our Stand is a series that can and should help push the debate about these wars back on to the table.

Experience the series, send this email to everyone you know, and spread the word!

Broken Soldier:

Why are so many veterans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan psychologically damaged? Is it the natural trauma of war, or the product of military whose mission is to occupy and suppress the civilian population?

Zollie Goodman recounts the racism against Iraqis imbued in his unit, while Kris Goldsmith reveals the hatred that finally made him a “broken soldier,” caught in the endless web of the Veterans Administration. And the parents of Jeffrey Lucey mourn their son, one of thousands who could no longer live with what he had become.

This is Where We Take Our Stand, the series that tells the riveting and timely story of the hundreds of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who testified at last year's Winter Soldier investigation, continues today.

Watch episode four, tell friends, forward this email, spread the word and fan the debate. These stories must be heard.

Episode Five: This is Not Human Nature will launch September 7, 2009.

Episode Six: No Longer a Monster will launch September 20, 2009.

SPREAD THE LINK, MARK YOUR CALENDAR, STAY TUNED!

**ADD US ON:
TWITTER
FACEBOOK
“SHARE” US:**

WWW.THISISWHEREWETAKEOURSTAND.COM

Where's The Debate?

Are we watching passively while Barack Obama carries out the same policies as George W. Bush?

When an American bombing raid this May killed over two hundred civilians in a village in Afghanistan, it was met with a deafening silence.

When Obama's promised “withdrawal” from Iraq leaves 130,000 troops there for at least two more years and 50,000 permanently, it's hailed as an end to the occupation. And who is demanding to know just what the mission really is when 30,000 more troops are sent to Afghanistan?

Where's the debate?

In March of 2008, two hundred and fifty veterans and active duty soldiers marked the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq by gathering in Washington, DC, to testify from

their own experience about the nature of the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. It was chilling, horrifying, and challenging for all who witnessed it. Against tremendous odds, they brought the voices of the veterans themselves into the debate.

That was then. This is now.

Today, we present to you **This is Where We Take Our Stand**, the inside story of those three days and the courageous men and women who testified. And we present this story today, told in six episodes, because we believe it is as relevant now as it was one year ago. Maybe more.

Here is our challenge to you: Watch the series; spread it far and wide; and ask yourself is this about the past, or the present and future. Then add your voice.

If you are a veteran or active duty, present your own testimony. If you are not, but you are still a living, breathing member of the human race, then do whatever you can to join and fan the flames of debate.

- Displaced Films and Northern Light Productions

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



**First Black President Of The
American Empire:
“House Slaves Like Powell, Rice, And
Obama Have Been ‘Skinnin’ And
Grinnin’ For A Long Time”
“Barack Obama Rises To Tasks
Demanded Of Him By The Warlords Of
The Empire”**



30 July 2009 New Statesman

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, The Military Project.]

They believe that if a man allowed to rise within the ranks of the imperial order is black, that the system is more just. The experience of Colin Powell’s miserable lies at the UN six years ago taught them nothing. The brutal farce led by the U.S. State Department under the tutelage of the mercenary Condoleezza Rice taught them nothing.

April 15, 2009 By Michael Hureau Perez, Black Agenda Report. [Excerpts]

Black Agenda Report columnist Michael Hureau Perez is a writer, musician and teacher who lives in southwest Seattle, Washington. He is a longtime contributor to small and alternative presses around the country and performs his work frequently.

The name on the door, and the family in the White House has changed. We have a president who speaks in complete, grammatically correct sentences. But with more than 800 US military bases around the planet, and spending more on things military than the other 95% of the globe's population combined, America is the same old arrogant bully.

Dr. King once said that a nation which spends more on things military than on human uplift is doomed.

If he were alive today he might add, no matter the skin color of its leaders.

The man who laughs has not yet heard the terrible news.---Bertolt Brecht

President Obama has now been to Baghdad and the great white way of U.S. leftism is busy choking up over the footage of the Prez with “our troops.”

For those of you out there who don't understand what an imperialist doggie the new president is just yet, here he is in living color, boots on, Clint Eastwood bravado at the ready.

If you are still “feeling” Obama, you must accept the fact that this man went into Baghdad, waded through the wreckage from a civil war our U.S. foreign policy deliberately created, and grins Kool-aid smiles when asked about the agony this “civilization” we live with has caused.

According to the president, this mayhem he celebrates is “success beyond our wildest dreams.”

Why, not even Meyer Lansky could have put that better.

One point two million people dead, four million displaced, the infrastructure of an autonomous people destroyed.

Four thousand U.S. troops dead.

Thousands more troops maimed physically and psychically.

Billions and billions more dollars to be spent on an ongoing, residual occupation that has no purpose or moral base other than the sheer exercise of raw, naked power, the crime for which people were convicted at Nuremburg.

The imperial project is pursued regardless of how the waste of material resource affects our people here in the United States in a time of great economic crisis.

We're told there's not enough jobs, there's not enough money to fund the further education of people who need jobs. There's not enough money for public health. There's not enough resource for mental health. Housing is in short supply while undersold housing stands vacant and tent cities abound.

But there's enough money for the corporate software military establishment, the bankers and arms manufacturers who profit off of this bloody empire, these software barons of international piracy.

This piracy that runs the world, this piracy that wants to roar with outrage at the teeny, tiny gaggle of piracy off the coast of Somalia, wants to steal, and kill, and maim and irradiate both children and veterans with depleted uranium shell casings, and lecture the

world on responsibility and morality. And we let them do it. We let them get away with it. In the words of Dalton Trumbo, in the introduction to his classic Johnny Got His Gun, instead of vomiting, we reach for the toast.

Barack Obama says it's time for the Iraqi people to take responsibility for their future. Barack Obama does this as leader of the United States, which has gone out of its way to destroy any autonomous future Iraq was inching towards for itself.

In taking such a stance, he has joined a violent, arrogant and Eurocentric chorus led by war criminals like the Clinton and Bush dynasties.

Barack Obama knows full well that the U.S. conducted this atrocity for no reason apart from imperial venture, and at this moment, he declares it to have been a sacrifice made for the honor of our so-called civilization.

Barack Obama Rises To Tasks Demanded Of Him By The Warlords Of The Empire

Barack Obama rises to tasks demanded of him by the Warlords of the Empire, their eyes glinting with the malicious demand of the self-satisfied mercenary that their victim rise to the moment and assume responsibility for a bloodying that the victim never asked for.

This is success beyond their wildest dreams. This is the world that capitalism wants to have.

2600 years after the defeat of Greek democracy by the Spartans, the democratic impulse which western capital claims to defend can't find its ass with both hands in the great capitalist center. Five centuries after the early days of the capitalist system, with no global threat that compels the development of an imperial order, western capital still chooses imperialism.

Western capital chooses imperialism over its own financial solvency. Western capital chooses imperialism over the tattered remnants of its own democratic integrity.

We're dealing with spoiled children with high tech toys of destruction, and it is time for any anti-war movement worth a damn in this country to begin to figure out how we can make the political culture that exists in this country learn to live with the rest of the world, whatever it costs the imperial order to forfeit the empire, and whatever it costs we who speak out in opposition to that order.

We have to pledge, as the Declaration of Independence put it so eloquently, "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." We have to form a new independent political movement, based in the organizations that still exist at the behest of the working class majority in this country and their allies among critical and revolutionary thinking entrepreneurs, a movement that is willing to fight, and even die if necessary, in a battle for the revolutionary promise of democracy.

For all the flowery rhetoric of themselves or their charming Golden Child in the White House, the Obamians are not up to this needful task.

You can tell because many of them are shocked at Obama's decision to defend the CIA's right to spy on the people of this country.

The Obamians feel "betrayed."

The truth is that they lied to themselves about who Obama and the "democrats" are, and many of them are lying still.

They believe that if a man allowed to rise within the ranks of the imperial order is black, that the system is more just.

The experience of Colin Powell's miserable lies at the UN six years ago taught them nothing. The brutal farce led by the U.S. State Department under the tutelage of the mercenary Condoleezza Rice taught them nothing.

House Slaves Like Powell, Rice, And Obama Have Been "Skinnin' And Grinnin' For A Long Time

The hard cold fact is that house slaves are allowed a larger role in the global plantation that the imperial order forces upon the so-called "underdeveloped world," and house slaves like Powell, Rice, and Obama have been "skinnin' and grinnin' for a long time.

Many more will be outed as the struggle against the imperial order takes larger shape.

The question of anti-imperialism is decisive in this political battle in the United States and internationally. The question of anti-imperialism is decisive, because it is the question of race and class writ large.

Capital will not forego the so-called rights of the nations at the center of the world's economy to live at the expense of those at the bottom of the world economy, most of whom are impoverished and exhausted peoples of color.

Capital cannot and will not exist without imperialism.

And the dreams of the so-called anti-war movement in this country, the geniuses at MoveOn, the deluded individuals at United for Peace and Justice, who believe that Obama offers "a different approach to imperialism," and the Center for American Progress, all of these people believe they can ride the tiger's back.

They will wind up on the inside of the beast.

No wild thing ever voluntarily cuts its claws.

The rest of the world knows.

The imperial leadership of the United States is sowing the dragon's teeth of global terror. It may claim otherwise, but its actions belie its words.

People in Pakistan, who at this moment are evading President Obama's Predator drone attacks; people of Iran, who have seen Barack Obama's current "good cop, bad cop" routine come from many a U.S. president; people on the Gaza Strip, who watched family members die as the president-elect solemnly declared during the Israeli siege that "there is only one president at a time."

But, oh, as the poet said, the shark has pearly teeth, dear.

And they're there for all to see.

**“The American Empire Has Not
Altered Under Barack Obama”
“It Kills As Brutally And
Indiscriminately In Iraq, Afghanistan
And Pakistan As It Did Under George
W. Bush”
“We Must Become As Militant As Those
Who Are Seeking Our Enslavement”**

Aug 10, 2009 By Chris Hedges, Truthdig [Excerpts]

The American empire has not altered under Barack Obama.

It kills as brutally and indiscriminately in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan as it did under George W. Bush.

It steals from the U.S. treasury to enrich the corporate elite as rapaciously. It will not give us universal health care, abolish the Bush secrecy laws, end torture or "extraordinary rendition," restore habeas corpus or halt the warrantless wiretapping and monitoring of citizens.

It will not push through significant environmental reform, regulate Wall Street or end our relationship with private contractors that provide mercenary armies to fight our imperial wars and produce useless and costly weapons systems.

Our last hope is to step outside of the two-party system and build movements that defy the Democrats and the Republicans.

Our task is to build movements that can act as a counterweight to the corporate rape of America.

We must articulate and stand behind a viable and uncompromising socialism, one that is firmly and unequivocally on the side of working men and women.

We must give up the self-delusion that we can influence the power elite from the inside.

We must become as militant as those who are seeking our enslavement.

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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