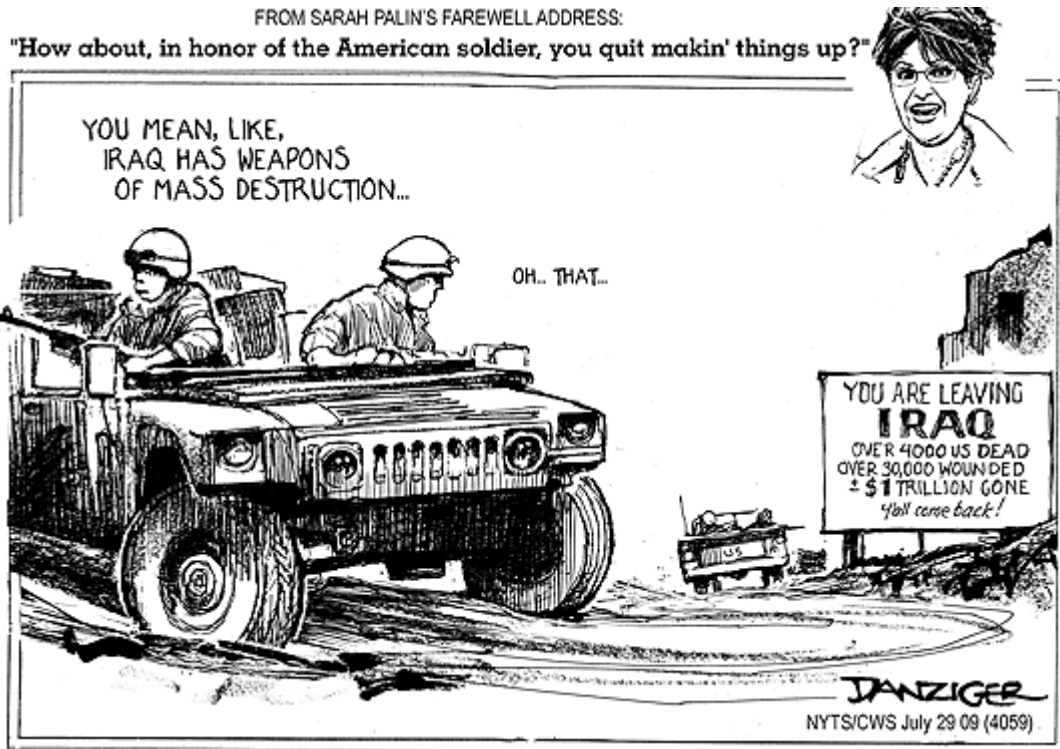


GI SPECIAL 7H3:



Haditha Point Of View: "The U.S. Army Attracts Bombs Like Garbage Attracts Rats" "Every Time They Enter The Town, Something Bad Happens"

August 3, 2009 By Nada Bakri, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpt]

On Sunday, a car bomb exploded in a busy market in Haditha, in the western, majority-Sunni province of Anbar, killing at least six people and wounding 21. On Friday, a string of attacks on Shiite mosques in Baghdad killed 29 people.

Haditha residents blamed the attack on U.S. soldiers who, they said, were patrolling in the town two hours before the bombing. U.S. troops withdrew from urban areas before a June 30 deadline and now carry out joint missions with the Iraqi army.

“The U.S. Army attracts bombs like garbage attracts rats,” said Khalil Ahmad, who owns a store in the market where the bomb blew up.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

July 30 (Reuters) & July 31 (Reuters) & Aug 3 (KUNA) & Reuters

Insurgents killed two traffic policemen in separate incidents in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad on Wednesday, police said.

A roadside bomb killed one policeman and wounded two others south of Mosul on Wednesday, police said.

Baghdad - Two policemen were killed Friday by a bomb targeting their patrol in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, according to a police source.

Three were killed on Monday during a blast of a booby-trapped car in Al-Anbar province, western Iraq. The car exploded at a checkpoint at the entrance of Al-Saklawi town near Al-Falouja. The attack killed three and injured other police officers.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed one soldier and wounded two others in western Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed one soldier and wounded two others in western Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded one policeman just south of Mosul on Sunday, police said.

An Iraqi soldier was wounded in a gun attack in central Mosul on Sunday, police said.

Militants opened fire on an Iraqi army patrol, wounding one soldier in eastern Mosul on Sunday, police said.

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

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

ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Army soldiers walk through a sandstorm at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Baqouba Iraq, Saturday, July 4, 2009. (AP Photo/ Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

3 U.S. Soldiers Killed In Wardak Province

August 2, 2009 By Paul Tait, Reuters & New York Times

A statement by NATO-led foreign forces said a patrol in Wardak Province was hit by a roadside bomb in the east on Sunday and was then attacked with small-arms fire. The three troops were killed during the engagement with unidentified insurgents, NATO said.

U.S. military spokeswoman Lieutenant Commander Christine Sidenstricker identified the three as American.

Two Canadian Soldiers Killed In Zhari, Another Wounded

August 2, 2009 CEFCOM NR-09.021

OTTAWA— Two Canadian soldiers were killed and one injured when an improvised explosive device detonated near a patrol in the Zhari District. The incident occurred approximately 15 kilometres west of Kandahar City at around 3:20 p.m., Kandahar time, on 1 August, 2009.

Killed in action was Corporal Christian Bobbitt from 5e Régiment du génie de combat serving as a member of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment Battle Group based in Valcartier, Quebec. The next of kin for the second soldier killed has been notified; however, they have asked for more time to inform other family members. Until such time, the name of the second soldier will not be released.

The injured member was evacuated by helicopter to the Role 3 Multi-National Medical Facility at the Kandahar Airfield and is in stable condition. The identity of the injured member will not be released.

South Knox Soldier Killed In Afghanistan



Fitzgibbon

August 3, 2009 By J.J. Stambaugh, Knoxville News Sentinel

A South Knoxville teenager was one of three U.S. Army soldiers killed Saturday while fighting in Afghanistan, his family said.

Pvt. Patrick Fitzgibbon, 19, who grew up in the Vestal neighborhood of South Knoxville, died in an ambush, according to relatives.

The former South-Doyle High School student left behind a fiancée, his parents, four brothers and one sister.

“He joined the Army to stand for his country,” said his oldest brother, 21-year-old John Fitzgibbon. “That’s the only reason he did it. He loved doing what he did.”

As friends and family gathered at his father's house Sunday, the deceased soldier's youngest siblings played in the front yard while older relatives passed around photographs.

They remembered him as a lighthearted troublemaker who dealt with the painful divorce of his parents the way he dealt with most things — with irreverence and laughter.

"If you were laughing, it was because of Patrick. ... He was a good kid. He died too young," John Fitzgibbon said.

The exuberant youth was particularly fond of skateboarding and making short comedy films that he posted on the Internet, he said.

"He wouldn't want you to mourn over him," he said. "He wants you to celebrate the love. ... If you were sad, he'd do anything to make you smile."

Patrick Fitzgibbon dropped out of South-Doyle High School last year but earned his GED and enlisted in the Army. He left basic training in April and deployed to Afghanistan the following month, his family said. Fitzgibbon was motivated by patriotism and a desire to follow in the footsteps of a cousin who'd also joined the Army, they said. His cousin is currently serving in Iraq but is expected to accompany Fitzgibbon's body home.

Fitzgibbon was engaged to 17-year-old Angel Reno, whom he met at South-Doyle, they said. She declined to comment.

Fitzgibbon's father, Donald Fitzgibbon, said he was notified in person of his son's death about 6 a.m. Sunday. His family was given only sparse information: His unit had been ambushed Saturday and he was killed by a roadside bomb after dismounting from a M-2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

Since his deployment, Patrick Fitzgibbon had stayed in regular contact with his fiance and family. The only days he didn't call, in fact, were days when he was deployed on a mission like the one that ultimately claimed his life.

"He'd always told me that he wasn't going in the Army, that he was going to stay with me forever," his father recalled.

Funeral arrangements weren't complete Sunday.

Mississippi Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

August 3, 2009 The Associated Press

GULFPORT, Miss. -- Army Staff Sgt. Johnny Roosevelt Polk has died from the wounds he suffered while serving in Afghanistan.

The military said Polk, a 39-year-old Gulfport native, died July 31 in a hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. A photo of his flag-draped casket at Dover Air Force Base, Del., was released by The Associated Press.

An Army representative delivered the news in person to his former wife, Ethel Polk, and their 17-year-old daughter, Mary Gardner, in Texas on Friday.

Services will be held at Fort Hood, Texas. Polk will be returned to Gulfport for burial.

Polk was a football standout at Harrison Central High School and a volunteer firefighter at the North Gulfport Fire Station.

Fort Collins Native Hurt In Afghanistan

August 3, 2009 BY HALLIE WOODS, The Coloradoan

Quick actions by squad members saved the life of a 2003 Fort Collins High School graduate who lost both legs after stepping on a bomb during a patrol in Afghanistan.

Jesse Cottle, 24, a U.S. Marine and a Fort Collins native, was patrolling in Afghanistan as part of an explosive ordnance disposal team in mid-July when he stepped on an undetected improvised explosive device.

Though Cottle lost both legs above the knee, his mother, Peg Cottle, said her son might have died had it not been for the squad members who were with him that day. Team members include: Sgt. Kevein Brown, Sgt. Patrick Hilty and Woody Ender, medic.

"They really saved his life," Cottle said in a telephone interview from the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. "They reacted instantly and got tourniquets and did everything instantly."

Though the area where Cottle was badly injured had been cleared by a metal detector, the bomb did not have any metal components, his mother said.

Cottle had been in Afghanistan for about five months and had been working in the explosive ordnance disposal division of the Marines for about two years. Before that, he had worked in the communications branch and completed three tours in Iraq in the six years he had been serving in the armed forces.

"I think he has always had a strong patriotic sense about him," Peg Cottle said. "His dad was a Marine, and he just loved everything about the Marines. It was scary (when he decided), but I was very proud."

Growing up, Cottle attended Shepardson Elementary School and Leshar Junior High School. He loved sports, especially football and was always active, his mother said.

But Cottle has an artistic side when it comes to music and still plays the piano.

"He's pretty amazing," she said. He won't play for a long time but then can just sit down and play, she said, adding he enjoys playing "Lady Madonna" and "Clair de Lune."

Cottle started showing interest in joining the Marines in high school, something his mom said was the right move for him.

“All of the service guys are giant steps ahead of everyone of their age group, and they always will be for their whole lives because of their experiences,” she said. “When you see your son graduate from boot camp and he is really a man at that point, you really realize what an amazing person he has become.”

Cottle has undergone six surgeries since he was injured in mid-July and was reunited with his parents, Dave and Peg Cottle, and younger brother, Matthew Cottle, last week at the hospital in Maryland.

After an unspecified amount of time at the Naval Hospital, he will be transported to another service hospital for rehabilitation.

Through it all, he has remained positive and has even done his best to help his friends and family adjust to his injury.

“He’s got an amazing attitude; he really is an amazing person,” Peg Cottle said. “He knows it’s time to go forward from here.”

Danish Soldier Seriously Wounded In Helmand

08/03/09 Hærens Operative Kommando

A Danish soldier from Charlie Company, 1 deling (Hold 7), was Saturday at afternoon seriously injured when he was hit by an improvised explosive device near the camp Armadillo in Afghanistan’s Helmand province.

Arrogant Fools From U.S.A. Make War On Poppy Farmers; Their Expertise Is Recruiting Afghans To Kill U.S. Soldiers: DEA Puke Says “These Poor Farmers Are Going To Get Stepped On. But

It's A Pain That Has To Be Endured For The Good Of The Masses" So, "By October, There Were Taliban Checkpoints"

August 3, 2009 RUKMINI CALLIMACHI, Associated Press Writer

SHAHRAN, Afghanistan (AP)

For as long as anyone can remember, there was no need for paper money in this remote corner of the Hindu Kush. The common currency was what grew in everyone's backyard — opium.

When children felt like buying candy, they ran into their father's fields and returned with a few grams of opium folded inside a leaf. Their mothers collected it in plastic bags, trading 18 grams for a meter of fabric or two liters of cooking oil. Even a visit to the barbershop could be settled in opium.

But the economy of this village sputtered to a halt last year when the government began aggressively enforcing a ban on opium production.

Villagers were not allowed to plant their only cash crop. Now shops are empty and farmers are in debt, as entire communities spiral into poverty.

In areas of the country under Taliban control, opium production is going strong. In government-held areas such as Shahrhan, it has gone down drastically, but at the cost of the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of people.

Their anger is imperiling government support in one of the few areas of the country that has resisted the Taliban's advance.

"Now we don't even have 10 Afghanis (\$0.25) to give our children to buy bubble gum," says opium farmer Abdul Hay. "Before they would go into the field and collect the money themselves."

Under intense international pressure, the government redoubled its effort to crack down on opium farmers.

By last year, the number of acres planted with poppy had dropped by a fifth, yet the Taliban's finances remained largely untouched. Ninety-eight percent of Afghanistan's opium is now grown in just seven of the country's 34 provinces — all areas under partial or total Taliban control.

Opium was so entrenched in Badakshan province, where Shahrhan is located, that it is said Marco Polo sampled it when he passed through in the 13th century. Until recently,

the sloping mountain faces were awash with pink, purple and magenta poppies, nodding in the wind.

But in the past year, poppy production has gone down 95 percent.

The villagers here held a meeting and decided two years ago not to plant opium, after government radio messages warned that poppy fields would be destroyed and opium growers jailed.

Posters distributed throughout the area showed a man with his hands bound by the stem of the opium poppy.

The villagers say they did as the government told them, and planted their fields with wheat, barley, mustard and melons.

But these crops need more care than the tough opium poppy, which will bloom with little water or fertilizer.

Most of the wheat fields yielded little because the farmers couldn't afford to fertilize the land.

Even where yields were decent, farmers say they could have earned between two and 10 times more by planting the same land with opium.

"See this mustard? It can take care of my family for one month," says 25-year-old farmer Abdul Saboor, pulling up a shoot of the green plant and snapping it open with his teeth. "When we planted opium in this same plot, it took care of all our expenses for an entire year."

The hole in the economy is swallowing up the community, from the farmer to the turbaned shopkeepers whose scales used for weighing opium now sit idle.

Every month, shopkeeper Abdul Ahmed used to bring \$20,000 worth of goods to sell in the bazaar. It's been four months since his last truckload, and he has only sold \$1,000.

Ahmed is one of 40 traders left; there used to be 400.

"We open in the morning and go back at night. No money comes in. No one buys anything," says Ahmed.

"There is no money left in this village. Opium is the only income we had."

Villagers say desperation is pushing hundreds to immigrate to neighboring Iran, where they work as day laborers.

Farmers throughout the region are also sinking deeply into debt. They borrow money to buy staples such as rice and oil, which they used to buy with opium. They also take loans to buy seeds and fertilizer and to rent donkeys to take the wheat to market — an expense opium did not bring because all the local shops accepted it as legal tender.

On a hill flanking the highway in Argu District, a four-hour drive southeast of here, a thin farmer is bent over cutting wheat with a hand-held sickle. Abdul Mahin says he is several hundred dollars in debt to the man who sold him fertilizer.

“If we plant two bags of wheat, then we’ll have just enough money to buy the seeds to plant another two bags of wheat,” says the gray-bearded farmer.

“We’re going backwards. Of course we’re angry at the government.”

A small number of farmers in other towns are planting opium despite the ban. Most are seeing their fields destroyed, as government agents intensify patrols.

Farmer Abdulhamid, 55, says he has only rain-fed land, and none of it is irrigated. So he can’t grow wheat and barley with much success.

Unless the government helps, he says, he will have to plant opium again.

“We are getting poorer day by day,” says Abdulhamid, in the village of Pengani. “What should I do? Kill my children so that I don’t have to feed them?”

When farmers were asked to stop planting, they were promised help from the government.

Badakshan is set to receive \$1,000 for each hectare (roughly 2½ acres) of land freed of poppies — some \$10 million this year. It’s being used to build three clinics and three schools, pave a major road and rebuild six fallen bridges.

Farmers say a distant clinic or bridge is not going to feed their children.

But counternarcotics experts and government officials respond that the opium ban is necessary.

“These poor farmers are going to get stepped on and get hurt in this effort,” says former Drug Enforcement Agency official Doug Wankel, who organized the U.S. counternarcotics effort here in 2003.

“But it’s a pain that has to be endured for the good of the masses.”

Yet the poverty created by getting rid of opium may be stoking terrorism.

Nangahar — which became poppy free last year and is held up as an example of government control — has seen a rapid increase in extremism, according to a field study by David Mansfield, counternarcotics consultant for the U.N. and the World Bank.

By April last year, the province rescinded agreements to limit the movement of anti-government groups on its border with Pakistan.

By July, these groups were believed to have set up bases in four districts next to Pakistan. By September, they were attacking government buildings. And by October, there were Taliban checkpoints.

Also, the crackdown in the country's far north is unlikely to stop the flow of opium and money to the Taliban in the south.

In Zabul poppy production grew by 45 percent last year.

Poppy fields in Taliban areas are so dangerous that eradication teams comb them for bombs before trying to destroy them. Last year 78 government agents were killed trying to destroy fields in the south.

By contrast, the worst they faced in Badakshan was crying farmers.

Zainuddin, the head security officer for Darayim district in Badakshan, says he feels awful every time he uproots a poppy field.

"Sometimes I cry as I am hitting the poppies," says Zainuddin, who like many Afghans goes by a single name. "Because I know these are poor people and I am taking away the only thing they have."

Over the past month, dozens of fields have been destroyed in the mountains of Badakshan.

Nasrullah, a 35-year-old farmer, planted three small plots of white-and-violet poppies inside a hill of wheat, hoping the taller crop would hide the illegal blossoms.

He stood in silence on a recent morning as nine police officers crossed a small gulch and climbed the hill. They assaulted his crop, hitting the flowers with long sticks until they fell to the ground. He put his face in his hands.

"I didn't plant this for my own pleasure," he says. "I planted this so that my family could eat. All the rest of this is worth nothing," he says, waving at the wheat.

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/)

Resistance Action



A police car is seen after a roadside bomb attack in the western city of Herat August 3, 2009. The district police chief was seriously wounded. REUTERS/Mohammad Shioab

Aug 1 (Reuters) & Aug 3 (Reuters) & ABC News & The Associated Press

An official at the police office, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the matter, said five rockets were fired in Kabul's Sector 9, which is close to the international airport.

A convoy carrying campaigners working for President Hamid Karzai was ambushed five times in the Moqur district of southeastern Ghazni province, said Fazel Ahmad, the head of Karzai's campaign office in Ghazni. One guard was killed. Two people, including Juma Gul, a candidate for provincial elections, were wounded, he said.

A roadside bomb killed three policemen in the Dare Ghorri district of northern Baghlan province, said senior officer Samuddin Kakar.

A roadside bomb killed two Afghan soldiers and wounded two more in Sangin district of Helmand province on Sunday, the Defence Ministry said.

A roadside bomb killed at least 12 people, including two policemen and wounded 26 in the western Afghan city of Herat, a security official said.

A bomb targeting police has exploded in the heart of Afghanistan's western city of Herat. The district police chief was seriously wounded, security commander for Herat, General Esmatullah Alizai, said. General Alizai told reporters the blast was caused by a bomb planted in a roadside rubbish bin. "It exploded as the convoy of district police passed by," he said.

**UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH;
ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army soldier returns fire on a Taliban position as their base Camp Restrepo comes under attack in the Korengal Valley of Afghanistan's Kunar Province on Friday May 8, 2009. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

TROOP NEWS

**British Soldier Refuses To Go
Back To Afghanistan War:
'Both Sides Are Just Grinding
Each Other Down'
'We Are Not Helping Anybody, And I
Think The Mission Will Fail'**

'Far From Improving Afghan Lives It Is Bringing Death And Devastation To Their Country'



AWOL: Glenton, 27, supported by his wife Claire, faces two years in jail after deserting the British Army when he became disillusioned with its reasons for being in Afghanistan.

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

30th July 2009 By Tom Kelly, Daily Mail

A soldier who deserted the Army in protest at the Afghanistan war today handed a letter to Downing Street calling for British troops to return home.

Lance Corporal Joe Glenton, of the Royal Logistics Corps, faces two years in jail after refusing to return to the conflict.

The married 27-year-old said the seven months he spent in the warzone had made him realise British soldiers had become a 'tool of American policy'.

He is still haunted by the memory of moving the coffins of the 14 British servicemen who died in the RAF Nimrod crash in September 2006.

'They were stacked up on a fork lift truck and we had to hump them around into the medical centre,' he said.

'It really brought home the senselessness of it home. It was clear it had become a war or attrition.

'Both sides are just grinding each other down. We are not helping anybody, and I think the mission will fail.'

The former caterer joined the Army in 2004 seeking adventure and because he believed in the war.

'At that point I thought we were doing something right, something that would make a difference, and I wanted to be part of it.'

'But after I went out in 2006 I realised that there was something seriously wrong with the war.'

'We were never really told what was going on, and the aims of our campaign seemed to switch all the time.'

'First they said we were in Afghanistan to put an end to the opium crop, then that it was to rebuild infrastructure, then it was about bringing democracy.'

'None of this really seems to have happened.'

He was based at Kandahar airport, which was behind the frontline, but frequently came under attack from mortars and rockets.

'It came as a real shock. Our politicians said we were going in to help the Afghans, but they kept attacking us.'

'We were all asking ourselves, why are they doing this?'

Glenton, from York, went AWOL in 2007 after returning from the war to escape being sent back to the war.

He handed himself in earlier this year and now faces a charge of desertion at a court martial next week

He said he felt obliged to speak out against the conflict despite the risk of damaging morale.

'I know I volunteered to join the army, but it's not right to just follow blindly,' he said.

'I feel there is something fundamentally wrong with this campaign.

'I'm doing what I feel I am obliged to do as a citizen and a soldier to stand up and say my peace.

'I think it has become part of the problem rather than the solution.'

He was accompanied by his 32-year-old wife Clare, a trainee lawyer, as he handed his letter to Gordon Brown through the gates of 10 Downing St.

The letter said: 'The war in Afghanistan is not reducing the terrorist risk.

'Far from improving Afghan lives it is bringing death and devastation to their country. Britain has no business there.'

MORE:

**“I Loved The Army, But I Had Lost My
Faith In The Structure, The
Government And The Cause”
[Statement By Lance Corporal Joe
Glenton, The Royal Logistics Corps]**

30 July 2009 Interviewed by Alexandra Topping, Guardian News and Media

I was sent to Afghanistan in 2006 and from the start it was very challenging, it's a very hard place to be posted.

There was so much confusion about why we were there, whether it was to get rid of the poppy fields, or for national security.

It seemed to change all the time.

I saw repatriations all the time and it just grinds you down.

The Nimrod crash (in which 14 men died when an RAF Nimrod exploded over Afghanistan on 2 September 2006) is one of my enduring memories.

I was one of the drivers and I can remember just going up and down the road in a JCB spending a whole afternoon humping coffins around, two at a time, on a forklift truck. Some people can shrug it off, and maybe I did at the time, but it is the type of thing that keeps coming back.

They weren't even combat deaths, it was just the futility of it.

While I was there millions of bullets passed through my hands. I can't account for where those bullets went. We were supplying more and more, and I didn't know where they were going. It haunts me.

When I came back after my first tour I just couldn't see what we had given to the country. I felt ashamed. They were dark days.

When I joined the army I was lean, green and keen. I was proud of being a soldier. But now, as a serving officer, I want my feelings to be known.

I want the government to consider the welfare of the guys out there, and the welfare of the Afghan people. People are suffering and it shouldn't be allowed.

When I came back from Afghanistan in 2007 I was promoted and redeployed in the UK. I wasn't supposed to be going back originally, because it would have been in breach of harmony guidelines (under which soldiers should not spend more than more 13 months within a three-year period on tour).

But then we were told we would be going back. And I just couldn't go back. It was an incredibly difficult thing to do, I loved the army, but I had lost my faith in the structure, the government and the cause.

I went to south-east Asia, I just needed to escape. I was dealing with it very badly, drinking a lot. Depression is a word that gets bandied about easily, but I wasn't very happy, that's for sure. I was trying to find space to sort myself out, trying to drown it with drink.

I wasn't in contact with any of the lads, which was hard because it is like you lose your support group. I didn't want to incriminate them. You get into trouble if you have information about someone who has absconded and I didn't want to put anyone in that position. I've spoken to some of them since, they have been supportive. They said 'What happened to you? We didn't expect this from you.' But I told them I had to do what I had to do.

I went to Australia after a few months. I thought all the time the army would catch up. But I met my wife and she was my rock. She helped persuade me to call the awol hotline. It was hard but I had to do it.

We came back in May and I thought I would be nobbled at customs. But no one was there, so I handed myself in to my unit. I'm pending court martial now and face up to two years in prison.

It's scary stuff and I'm tempted to head for the hills but I believe I have something to say, something to contribute, so I will just crack on with it.

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

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



The body of Army specialist Israel Candelaria Mejias at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, April 7, 2009. Army specialist Mejias from San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico was killed while serving in Iraq. REUTERS/Tim Shaffer

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**

August 3, 1913: Horrible Anniversary The Wheatland Massacre

Carl Bunin Peace History July 30-Aug 5

Four died in the Wheatland riots when police fired into a crowd of California Hop pickers trying to organize (with the help of the IWW, or Industrial Workers of the World) at the Durst Ranch in Wheatland, California.

Hundreds of workers — whites, Mexicans, and Filipinos — lay down their tools because of terrible working conditions, low wages, and an almost complete lack of sanitation and decent housing.

August 4, 1964: Lying Lyndon Johnson Fakes The USA Into Escalation In Vietnam [Gee, He Wasn't A "Neo-Con" Either, So Knock Off The Stale Bullshit About Bush Inventing Evil U.S. Imperial Wars]

Carl Bunin Peace History July 30-Aug 5

A second attack on U.S. naval ships in Vietnam's Gulf of Tonkin was reported by the Pentagon. But there was no such activity reported by the task force commander in the Gulf, Captain John J. Herrick.

One of the Navy pilots flying overhead that night was squadron commander James Stockdale, later held as a POW by the North Vietnamese for more than seven years, and Ross Perot's vice presidential candidate in 1992.

"I had the best seat in the house to watch that event," recalled Stockdale, "and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets — there were no PT boats there.... There was nothing there but black water and American firepower."

Nearly three decades later, during the Gulf War, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Sydney Schanberg warned journalists not to forget "our unquestioning chorus of agreeability when Lyndon Johnson bamboozled us with his fabrication of the Gulf of Tonkin incident

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**“Obama’s Unerring Theme Has
Been America’s Right To Rule
And Order The World”
But “Credible Polls Have Long
Confirmed That More Than Two-
Thirds Of Americans Hold
Progressive Views”
“Sure, They Disappear From View
Now And Then, But They Are Like
Seeds Beneath The Snow”
“What Is Most Extraordinary About The
United States Today Is The Rejection
And Defiance Of The All-Pervasive
Historical And Contemporary
Propaganda Of The Invisible
Government”**

July 27, 2009 By John Pilger, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

From his early political days, Obama’s unerring theme has been not "change," the slogan of his presidential campaign, but America’s right to rule and order the world.

Of the United States, he says, "we lead the world in battling immediate evils and promoting the ultimate good...We must lead by building a 21st-century military to ensure the security of our people and advance the security of all people."

And: "At moments of great peril in the past century, our leaders ensured that America, by deed and by example, led and lifted the world, that we stood and fought for the freedoms sought by billions of people beyond their borders."

Since 1945, by deed and by example, the U.S. has overthrown 50 governments, including democracies, crushed some 30 liberation movements, and supported tyrannies from Egypt to Guatemala (see William Blum's histories).

Bombing is as American as apple pie.

Having stacked his government with warmongers, Wall Street cronies and polluters from the Bush and Clinton eras, the 45th president is merely upholding tradition.

The hearts and minds farce I witnessed in Vietnam is today repeated in villages in Afghanistan and, by proxy, Pakistan, which are Obama's wars.

My guess is that a populism will emerge in the next few years, igniting a powerful force that lies beneath America's surface, and which has a proud past.

It cannot be predicted which way it will go. However, from such an authentic grassroots Americanism came women's suffrage, the eight-hour day, graduated income tax and public ownership. In the late 19th century, the populists were betrayed by leaders who urged them to compromise and merge with the Democratic Party. In the Obama era, the familiarity of this resonates.

What is most extraordinary about the United States today is the rejection and defiance, in so many attitudes, of the all-pervasive historical and contemporary propaganda of the "invisible government."

Credible polls have long confirmed that more than two-thirds of Americans hold progressive views.

A majority wants the government to care for those who cannot care for themselves. They would pay higher taxes to guarantee health care for everyone.

They want complete nuclear disarmament; 72 percent want the U.S. to end its colonial wars; and so on.

They are informed, subversive, even "anti-American."

I once asked a friend, the great American war correspondent and humanitarian Martha Gellhorn, to explain the term to me.

"I'll tell you what 'anti-American' is," she said.

It's what governments and their vested interests call those who honor America by objecting to war and the theft of resources and believing in all of humanity.

There are millions of these anti-Americans in the United States.

They are ordinary people who belong to no elite and who judge their government in moral terms, though they would call it common decency.

They are not vain.

They are the people with a wakeful conscience, the best of America's citizens.
They can be counted on.

They were in the South with the civil rights movement, ending slavery.

They were in the streets, demanding an end to the wars in Asia.

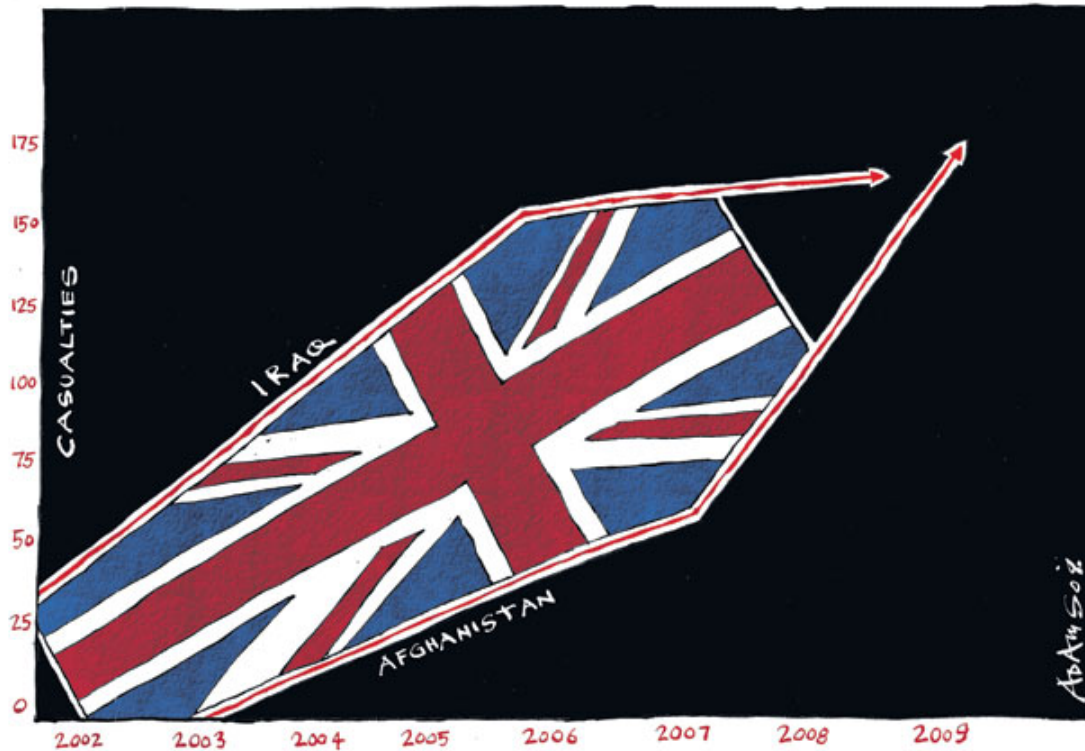
Sure, they disappear from view now and then, but they are like seeds beneath the snow.

I would say they are truly exceptional.

The View From London: Prime Minister Brown Contemplates His New Empire #1



#2



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

Obama Names Thursday “Drink A Beer With Someone Who Arrested You Day”

July 28, 2009 The Borowitz Report

In an effort to foster better understanding between police and the people they have recently handcuffed in their own homes, President Barack Obama today named this Thursday “Drink a Beer With Someone Who Arrested You Day.”

Explaining his decision, the President told reporters, “When tempers run a little high, there’s one thing that always helps people think a little more rationally: beer.”

The President said he hoped that his proclamation would result in thousands of friendly get-togethers around the country between police officers and the innocent people they recently arrested.

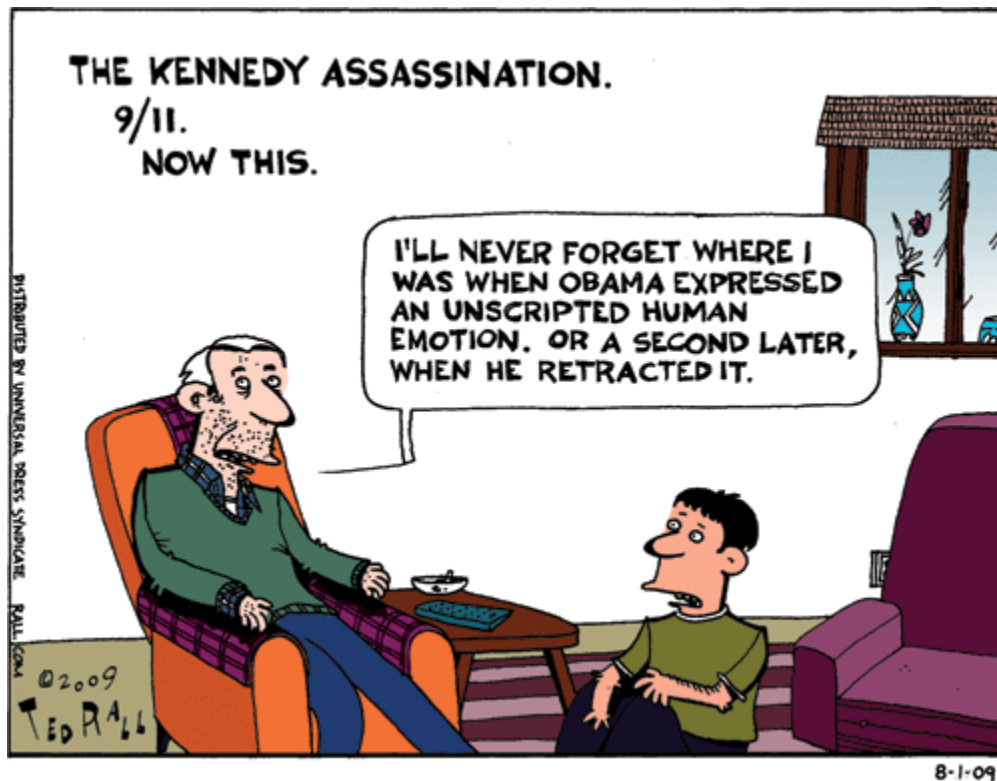
“I’m hoping, for example, that Mischa Barton will have a tall and foamy with the cops who removed her from her home,” he said, adding, “which, let me be clear, they did not act stupidly in doing.”

For members of minority communities who have not been arrested recently, Mr. Obama had these reassuring words: "The week's still young."

In other news, police in the Michael Jackson case searched Larry King's house.

Former NFL star Michael Vick said he had "nothing to do with" the death of the Taco Bell Chihuahua.

A man sued CNN after recognizing his ass in stock footage about obesity.



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

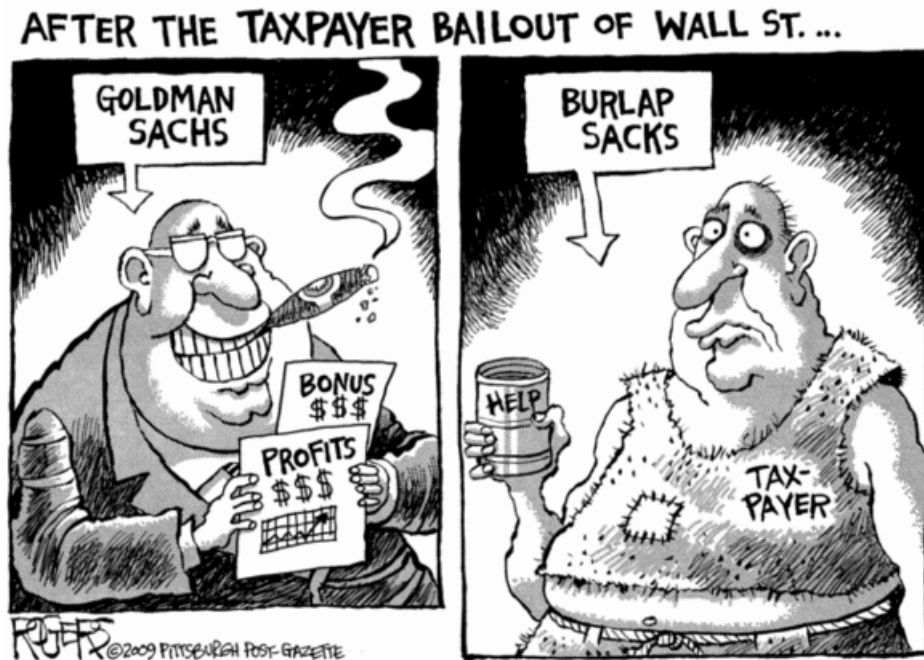
**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

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CLASS WAR REPORTS



Chinese Workers Kill Executive Announcing Layoffs By New Owners Of Steel Factory; Sale To New Owners Cancelled

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran. He writes: "It's only a matter of time before the American Workers and Retirees will snap too. Dennis"]

July 27, 2009 By SKY CANAVES, The Wall St. Journal

BEIJING -- More than a thousand steel workers in China's northeast staged an at-times violent protest against the planned takeover of their state-run employer and a group of them killed a top executive at the private company that was to acquire it, Chinese state-run media reported.

Workers from Tonghua Iron & Steel Group in Jilin province, upset over job losses expected from the takeover, beat to death Chen Guojun, a manager from Beijing-based Jianlong Group who had been sent to Tonghua to oversee the merger, the Xinhua news agency reported early Monday.

Some of the protesters blocked roads and threw bricks at police who tried to intervene to save Mr. Chen, Xinhua said, citing the provincial government. The protesters numbered "more than 1,000," Xinhua said.

A separate report Monday in China Daily, a state-run English-language newspaper, said there were some 3,000 protesters in all.

Some of them attacked Mr. Chen after he informed workers that Tonghua Iron & Steel's work force would be cut to 5,000 from about 30,000, the report said, citing a local police officer.

Workers were particularly distraught because they had expected to benefit from rising steel prices, it said.

After the violence, which took place Friday evening, Tonghua Iron & Steel issued a notice on local television informing its employees and their families that the provincial government had decided to ask Jianlong to shelve its acquisition plans and withdraw from further involvement in Tonghua's restructuring.

Sizable protests happen frequently in China, where people have few effective legal means for addressing grievances.

On Saturday, two local officials were removed from their posts in the Hubei province city of Shishou for "mishandling" a protest of hundreds of people last month, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy, a Hong Kong-based group, in a report over the weekend said as many as 30,000 people took part in the protest, and that 100 people were injured.

None of the figures in the group's report or in state media reports could be independently verified.

The information center said protesters complained that they hadn't been consulted about the takeover plan.

The information center, founded in 1993 by a mainland Chinese dissident, collects reports of human-rights violations and protests from informants across China.

A representative of the community management office in a Tonghua neighborhood where many steelworkers live said Friday's protests had been "a really big thing, and most of the residents know about it."

A government official in the district where Tonghua Iron & Steel is situated referred questions on Sunday to other departments, where calls went unanswered.

Local police declined to comment.



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