

## GI SPECIAL 711:

Karzai Claims Victory



**“As Someone Whose Son Was Recently Deployed To Afghanistan, I’m Heartened By Poll Numbers Indicating A Majority Of Americans Have Turned Against The War”**

# **“Funding These Wars Is Not Supporting Our Troops But Killing Them”**

## **“Bring All Our Troops Home Now”**

August 26, 2009 By LARRY SYVERSON, Washington Post. [The writer is a member of the board of Military Families Speak Out]

As someone whose son was recently deployed to Afghanistan, I'm heartened by poll numbers indicating a majority of Americans have turned against the war there (news story, Aug. 20).

President Obama has tried to frame the war in Afghanistan as a “good” war, as opposed to the “bad” war in Iraq.

It appears the American people are not buying his analogy.

Regardless of how these wars are framed, Americans do not support them.

To most Americans, both wars are bad.

The American people should demand that the president bring all our troops home now.

If he refuses, we should ask our members of Congress to defund the wars. Congress must realize that funding these wars is not supporting our troops but killing them.

LARRY SYVERSON  
Richmond, Virginia

### **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**

# Resistance Action

August 29 (Reuters) & August 30 (Reuters) & Aug 31 (Reuters)

A roadside bomb wounded three policemen when it exploded near their patrol in western **Mosul** on Sunday, police said.

Insurgents killed a government official near his office in eastern **Mosul**, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed an off-duty policeman in central **Mosul**, police said.

Insurgents attacked an Iraqi army checkpoint and wounded one soldier in western **Mosul**, police said.

Four soldiers were wounded by mortar rounds landing on an Iraqi army station in western **Mosul**, police said.

Insurgents opened fire on a police checkpoint in **Mosul**, wounding a policeman, police said.

Four soldiers were wounded by mortar rounds landing on an Iraqi army station in western **Mosul**, police said.

An attacker threw a grenade at an Iraqi police patrol, killing one policeman in northern Baghdad on Friday night, police said.

MUQTADIYA - A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol killed two policemen and wounded four others, police said.

A bomb stuck to the car of an Iraqi army soldier killed him in Baghdad's northern Adhamiya district, police said.

A sniper shot dead a policeman at a check point in western Mosul, 390 Km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded one policeman in southern Baghdad's Doura district, police said.

A bomb attached to the car of a local politician representing Interior Minister Jawad Bolani's party killed the politician, his son and another person travelling with them in Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents in a car shot and wounded an off-duty police officer driving his car in southern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, on Sunday

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

## **END THE OCCUPATIONS**

### **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

#### **Two U.S. Soldier Killed In Paktika**

August 31, 2009 New York Times & U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 669-09

The military announced that two American soldiers have been killed.

They died Aug. 29 in Paktika province, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained when they were shot by enemy forces Aug. 28 while conducting combat operations. Both soldiers were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

Killed were:

Staff Sgt. Jason S. Dahlke, 29, of Orlando, Fla.; and

Pfc. Eric W. Hario, 19, of Monroe, Mich.

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#### **Sergeant Stuart Millar And Private Kevin Elliott Of 3 SCOTS Killed In Babaji District**

1 Sep 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with sadness that the Ministry of Defence has confirmed the death of Sergeant Stuart Millar and Private Kevin Elliott of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

The soldiers were killed as a result of an explosion believed to have been caused by a rocket-propelled grenade when they were attacked by insurgents whilst patrolling on foot in Babaji District, Helmand Province on the morning of Monday 31 August 2009.

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#### **U.S. Marine Killed In Helmand**

September 01, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 672-09

Lance Cpl. David R. Hall, 31, of Elyria, Ohio, died Aug. 31 while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

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## **U.S. Soldier Killed By Logar IED**

August 31, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 667-09

Spc. Abraham S. Wheeler III, 22, of Columbia, S.C., died Aug. 28 in Logar province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his vehicle with an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Fort Drum, N.Y.

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## **Soldier, Wife Had Just Marked First Anniversary**



PELLERIN

Aug. 23, 2009 By MICHAEL COUSINEAU, New Hampshire Union Leader Staff

Justin and Chelsey Pellerin went from teenage sweethearts at Concord High to newlyweds.

The Concord couple spent their first anniversary last month thousands of miles apart because Justin, an Army specialist, was stationed in Afghanistan.

"I've never seen anyone in love so much as those two," longtime family friend Geordan Rule said yesterday. "They were inseparable -- a match made in heaven."

On Friday, Chelsey found out her 21-year-old husband had been killed the previous day in Wardak Province after an improvised explosive device detonated near the vehicle he was driving. Yesterday, his widow waited word on when his body would arrive at Concord Airport.

The Pellerins were eager to be reunited in December when Justin returned home. A Facebook message he wrote from Afghanistan said he had "nothing to look forward to except for seeing my wife again .... god i love you so much chels."

Chelsey, who turned 21 last Monday, wrote on Facebook this month that she was counting the days until she would see her husband. "A lifetime to spend my life with Justin," she wrote.

They planned early next year to move to Fort Drum, N.Y., where he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

"They were all excited to settle down and get a house and start a new life and have a family," Rule said. "Unfortunately, all we've got to remember him is pictures and all the good memories."

Josh Bisson, the best man in the couple's wedding, said he first met Justin when they were around 10. Justin hit him with a snowball. The next day, the instigator apologized.

"From then on, we were best friends," said Bisson, who lives in Goffstown.

Bisson attended school with both Justin and Chelsey.

"When they were apart, they were the two goofiest people you'll meet," he said.

"There was never a dull moment when he was around," added Rule.

Justin joined the Army in 2006, Bisson said, because "he wanted to do something good for everyone. He tried to convince everyone to join with him."

Justin, who earned his GED through the Army, "originally wanted to join to be a mechanic and work on helicopters," Bisson said.

Rule said Pellerin left on his current mission in January and was due back in the United States on Dec. 15.

Rule, who expects to become a father for the first time around Dec. 20, couldn't wait for his buddy's return.

"I was all excited for him to see my baby," he said. "We all goofed around about who would have a baby first. With him being overseas, I had the advantage."

Now, his friends will mourn his passing.

"I want him to be remembered for being the nice guy who would do anything for anybody," Bisson said.

Justin's family includes his mother, Melissa Farmer, his dad, Dale Farmer, and younger sisters, Molly and Hannah.

The U.S. Defense Department listed his hometown as Boscawen. His family now lives in Concord. Friends say Pellerin was born in Berlin.

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# **Utah Soldier Mourned By Family, Including 60 Foster Siblings: “The Situation He Found In His Most Recent Deployment In Afghanistan Was Brutal”**

08/28/2009 By Matthew D. Laplante, The Salt Lake Tribune

As a boy, Kurt Curtiss didn't understand all the tragic stories that guided dozens of children through the open door of his mother's foster home in Diamond Valley, Arizona.

All he knew was that he had plenty of brothers and sisters to play with, to fight with, and to lean on in difficult times.

Today, Curtiss' four siblings and more than 60 foster siblings are leaning on each other once again, as they try to come to terms with the 27-year-old soldier's death in Afghanistan.

Curtiss, who spent his early years in a crowded home in Arizona and moved to Salt Lake City as a teen, was killed Tuesday in a fire as his patrol responded to evacuate a hospital that had come under attack, family members said.

His death adds to the somber tally of U.S. military fatalities in the month of August. At least 46 U.S. service members - including former Brigham Young University student Cory Jenkins - have died so far this month, the most since the start of the eight-year war.

The Utahns' deaths were the first combat fatalities for the state since February, and the first deaths for Utahns in Afghanistan in more than a year, even as the latter nation has grown increasingly violent and hazardous for U.S. military members.

Curtiss had already endured hard battles.

He had done two tours of duty in Iraq and told his mother that the situation he found in his most recent deployment in Afghanistan was "brutal."

"He didn't say much more than that," said Ruth Serrano of South Ogden. "I don't know if he wasn't allowed to, or if he just didn't want to worry people. I don't know."

But Serrano said her son understood sacrifice - and not just because there were times in his childhood when all there was to eat was mutton stew and fry bread.

Curtiss was an 18-year-old Salt Lake Community College student when the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 occurred. The following day, he walked into an Army recruiter's office and signed up, Serrano said.

“He said he wanted to help protect the United States,” said Curtiss’ sister, Lynn Burr of Arizona. “He felt we were in danger and he wanted to do something to help.”

Curtiss, who leaves behind a wife, a 9-year-old son and a 6-year-old daughter in Alaska, renewed that commitment by reenlisting in the Army, even though he knew it would likely mean another combat tour of duty.

On Friday, family members were still trying to contact all of Curtiss’ foster siblings. With each new phone call, Burr said, comes new anguish.

But it also provides yet another person to lean on in this difficult time.

“We’re family,” said Burr. “And we’re all here to help each other out.”

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## **Soldier From S.A. Displayed Generosity**

08/22/2009 By Brian Chasnoff, Express-News

About one month before an improvised explosive device ended his life, Army Staff Sgt. Clayton P. Bowen offered his fellow soldiers at a remote Afghanistan outpost a parcel that made their jaws drop.

Addressed to him, the package contained a collection of heavy-duty construction tools the soldiers later would use to improve living conditions at the crude desert outpost, where plywood huts serve as sleeping quarters.

“I’ve got connections,” Bowen, 29, explained.

Earlier, the 12-year Army veteran had asked his stepfather and mother, who publish a construction industry newspaper, to print an ad asking for donations. The tools had poured in, according to Buddy and Reesa Doebbler, both 60.

“He wanted to see if there was anything he could bring into the outpost to make their lives a little more normal,” Reesa Doebbler, his mother, said Friday from the family’s North Bexar County home.

This act of generosity was one of the last in a history of such displays, relatives said.

Tuesday morning, Bowen was riding in a Humvee with four other soldiers to provide security for Afghanistan’s presidential election when it hit the IED. He and another soldier, Pfc. Morris L. Walker of Chapel Hill, N.C., were killed.

The other three soldiers suffered minor injuries, Reesa Doebbler said. “They were trying to keep the peace,” she said.

On Friday, his parents recalled with pride and sadness the determined rise and sudden death of their son, who joined the Army when he was 17 and served as a drill sergeant and a shooting instructor before he was deployed to Afghanistan in February.



"It seemed like the tougher (the job) was, the harder he went after it and the better he got," Buddy Doebbler said.

Bowen also sang for three years in the 82nd Airborne All-American Chorus, a celebrated a cappella group that brought him into the orbit of film and music stars, including Denzel Washington and Faith Hill.

Bowen sang bass and intoned chants that introduced and dismissed his fellow performers, appearing at venues around the world. That included the Arneson River Theater during Fiesta in his hometown.

"He had to be in every song, because he was the only bass," his mother said.

About three months before his death, Bowen employed his creativity in another way. Living hard at the desert outpost in Paktika province, he produced a video that he later sent home as a DVD.

It opens with Bowen, sturdily built with a shaved head and a large tribal tattoo on his right arm, addressing the camera.

"This video is to give you insight into what we've been doing out here and how we've been living," he said.

Photos follow of daily life at the outpost, showing a mortar pit, crude wooden latrines and various high-powered weapons. The words "Ready to Kick Butt!" flash over a photograph of soldiers testing rifles.

The soldiers in Bowen's unit — the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Airborne Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division — are shown in individual shots with each soldier's nickname. Bowen, who commanded the unit, was known as "The Man," arguably a more desirable handle than some of the others, including "Shakes" and "Estrogen."

But all bravado is defused at the video's conclusion, in which Bowen's sense of humor and compassion emerge.

"What we think about every day," he wrote to introduce a photo of beer in a refrigerator — a joke soon followed by the words, "We think about our family and friends" flashing onscreen, then a string of photographs of Bowen, a graduate of Churchill High School, relaxing in San Antonio with loved ones.

Bowen was set to leave the desert and return home on leave in September.

He would have been home for his 30th birthday; his mother and stepfather were planning a big party for him at the house.

Instead, his body will arrive Monday.

Visitation will be held Thursday from 5 to 8 p.m. at Porter Loring Mortuaries at 2102 N. Loop 1604 East. The funeral is scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

“He was a great kid,” Buddy Doebbler said. “He really grew up into a hell of a man, and we were really proud of him.”

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## **Two Danish Soldiers Were In A Patrol Slightly Wounded By Grenade**

29-08-2009 By Major Eric Bøttger, press officer, the Danish Battlegroup, ISAF 8

Saturday at noon, two Danish soldiers hit by fragments from an enemy grenade. The soldiers are assigned battle group's pillar of fire-detachment.

They supported their unit, part of 2nd Facilitate Opklaringseskadron on a patrol in the area southwest of the town of Gereshk.

During this patrol division came in firefight, and it was shot with grenades. One of the grenades hit the vehicle in which soldiers from the pillar of fire-detachment stayed.

The two injured were immediately treated by soldiers from the division, and they were even able to board the helicopter, which evacuated them to the field hospital at Camp Bastion.

Doctors at the field hospital is now proposing soldiers damage appears to be less severe.

The soldiers have even phoned home to their families.

No other soldiers were hit, and the group continues to accomplish its task.

<p><b>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!</b></p>
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## **Explosion Rips Through A Line Of Trucks Ferrying Fuel To Occupation Troops In Afghanistan:**

# **“15 Tankers Caught On Fire Sunday After One Truck Exploded” “It Is Just Panic Everywhere There.”**



Pakistani firefighters battle with a fire, after an explosion in Chaman, a Pakistani town along the Afghan border, Aug. 30, 2009. (AP Photo/Shah Khalid)

8.30.09 By KAY JOHNSON and ASIF SHAHZAD, Associated Press Writers

An explosion ripped through a line of trucks ferrying fuel to NATO troops in Afghanistan.

Around 15 tankers caught on fire Sunday after one truck exploded in an attack at a backed-up border crossing in southwestern Baluchistan province, threatening the supply line to international forces in Afghanistan.

Local police chief Hasan Sardar said flames and smoke were billowing into the sky Sunday night as authorities struggled to control the blaze near the Chaman border crossing in Baluchistan province in Pakistan's southwest.

“It was a big explosion under one of the oil tankers that caused other vehicles to catch fire. The fire is spreading,” Sardar told The Associated Press by phone.

“We are at the moment trying our best to control the blaze. We are not sure whether there is any human loss,” he said. “It is just panic everywhere there.”

Police officer Gul Mohammad said from the scene that a bomb was suspected. He said security officials had earlier found and defused another explosive device lying near one of the NATO tankers.

“This was another bomb, which we could not find in our earlier search, that exploded,” Mohammad told the AP.

An eyewitness, Haji Mahmood, said he saw some men in a car and two on a motorcycle spraying the vehicles with a volley of bullets before the blast.

“The two men abandoned their motorcycle and escaped in the car,” Mahmood said.

Chaman is one of two main crossing points for supplies for American and NATO troops fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The foreign troops get about 75 percent of their supplies through Pakistan.

Some 1,000 trucks, many of them NATO tankers, were backed up on the road leading to the border because the Chaman crossing had been closed for two days in a dispute between customs officials over fruit inspections, police officer Abdul Rauf said.

Afghan officials closed the border on Saturday in retaliation for lengthy inspections by Pakistani customs that were holding up Afghan trucks carrying grapes and pomegranates, he said.

Rauf said that he heard the explosion and saw at least three oil tankers, two container trucks and two dump trucks on fire.



Burned trucks, loaded with supply for foreign occupation forces fighting in Afghanistan, in Chaman, a Pakistani town along the Afghan border, Aug. 31, 2009. An explosion ripped through those trucks. (AP Photo/Shah Khalid)

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## Resistance Action



Ghazni province, south of Kabul, August 30, 2009: Five Afghan policeman were killed when a roadside bomb ripped through their military vehicle, seen above, in the Ghazni city. REUTERS/ Mustafa Andalib

Sept 1 (Reuters)

A roadside bomb hit a U.S. security firm's vehicle in the southern province of Zabul, killing an Afghan employee and wounding three, the Interior Ministry said.

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## **Rocket Fired To Protest British Convoy In Afghan 'Road Rage' Incident: "They All Got Out And Surrounded The Foreigners. Then The Foreigners Left"**

01 Sep 2009 By Ben Farmer in Kabul, Telegraph Media Group Limited

Members of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) reacted angrily when four trucks blocked the road near Camp Souter, the biggest British base in Kabul.

Witnesses said a tense standoff followed the incident until the British troops left the scene on the main road out of Kabul to the east.

A spokeswoman for Nato-led forces in the country confirmed a rocket had been fired, but said it was an accident and could not confirm the troops were British.

No one was injured and details had been passed on for an investigation by Afghan forces she said.

Mohammed Rafi, a shopkeeper near the scene said the road had been blocked when a convoy of uniformed NDS troops tried to drive into town.

He said: "There were four British trucks completely blocking the road.

He told the Evening Standard: "They had been there for 20 minutes. The Afghan forces fired an RPG into the air, then they all got out and surrounded the foreigners. Then the foreigners left."

Foreign armoured convoys fearing car bombs often drive aggressively on Afghan roads.

Convoys insist other vehicles pull over as they pass, while gunners shout and take aim at those who approach too closely.

The dominating tactics are a source of much frustration to Afghan drivers and Gen Stanley McChrystal, head of Nato-led forces, has recently offered new driving guidelines.

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## **ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW**



A Marine gets a hand up as they climb a rocky mountainside with other members from 3rd MEF to do observation over the area around the village of Dahaneh, Aug. 22, 2009, in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

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## TROOP NEWS

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



The remains of Army Pfc. Matthew E. Wildes Aug. 29, 2009 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Wildes, 18, of Hammond, La., died Aug. 27 in Afghanistan of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

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## **Number Of Dead Foreign Occupation Troops In Afghanistan Sets A New Record**

August 25, 2009 By SHARON OTTERMAN, The New York Times [Excerpts]

Four American soldiers were killed Tuesday when their patrol vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in southern Afghanistan, NATO said, making the 2009

death toll for foreign forces in Afghanistan the highest since the war began nearly eight years ago.

The latest casualties bring to 63 the number of foreign soldiers who have died in Afghanistan this month, and to 295 the death toll since January, according to the Web site [icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org), which tracks reports of deaths.

The death toll for foreign forces has risen steadily over the course of the war, from 12 in 2001 to 294 in 2008.

**American forces, which make up the largest contingent of the NATO force in Afghanistan, have also suffered the largest share of deaths, with 172 killed this year, surpassing the previous high of 155 killed in 2008.**

A total of 802 American troops have died since the war began. British forces have suffered the second highest number of deaths, with 206 killed since 2001.

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## **Number Of Dead U.S. Occupation Troops In Afghanistan Sets A New Monthly Record**

28 August 2009 Robert H. Reid, The Associated Press

Kabul - An American service member died Friday when his vehicle struck a bomb in eastern Afghanistan, making August the deadliest month for U.S. forces in the nearly eight-year war.

A brief statement by the NATO command gave few details of the blast and did not say precisely where it occurred. U.S. military spokeswoman Capt. Elizabeth Mathias said the service member who died was American.

That brought to 45 the number of U.S. service members killed this month in the Afghan war - one more than the previous monthly record, set in July.

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## **Oops: 1,200 Veterans Told They Had A Fatal Disease Due To “Coding Error”**

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: So a “coding error” gives them the excuse for messing up lives again?]



08.24.09 By P.J. DICKERSCHIED, Associated Press Writer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is looking into how many veterans received erroneous letters saying they had been diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease.

VA Spokeswoman Katie Roberts said Tuesday that all veterans who received letters by mistake will receive personal apologies, an explanation and reassurances that the letters do not confirm diagnoses of the fatal neurological disease.

Roberts says more than 1,800 letters were mailed to veterans last week informing them they may be eligible for disability benefits. She says less than a dozen veterans who received the letters in error have contacted the VA.

A veterans group estimates at least 1,200 veterans received the letters by mistake.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



**“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.**

**“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.**

**“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”**

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**“Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.”  
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**“A Majority Of Americans Now Oppose The War In Afghanistan, But The Obama Administration Is Escalating The War”**

**“The Gap Between The Public And The Foreign Policy Elite Is Not Due To The Ignorance Of The Masses, As The Elite Would Have It, But Primarily To A Different Set Of Interests And Values”**

**“It Is Not That The American People Are So Backward And Ignorant, Or Bellicose. Rather The Main Problem Is That The Public Has So Little Input Into Foreign Policy Decisions”**

**But the powerful and rigid institutional arrangements of our foreign policy establishment, the sloth and weakness among the intelligentsia, as well as the corruption from the interests of military contractors, makes it an uphill battle for common sense to prevail.**

[Thanks to Frank Millspaugh, who sent this in.]

27 August 2009 By Mark Weisbrot, Guardian News and Media [Excerpts]

Americans are famous for not paying much attention to the rest of the world, and it is often said that foreign wars are the way that we learn geography.

But most often it is not the people who have little direct experience outside their own country that are the problem, but rather the experts.

The latest polling data is making this clear once again, as a majority of Americans now oppose the war in Afghanistan, but the Obama administration is escalating the war, and his military commanders may ask for even more troops than the increase to 68,000 that the administration is planning by the end of this year.

This gap between the average American and the foreign policy elite has been around since the Vietnam war and long before.

The gap between the public and the foreign policy elite is not due to the ignorance of the masses, as the elite would have it, but primarily to a different set of interests and values.

Very few foreign policy decision-makers – just a handful of members of Congress, for example – have sons or daughters who actually fight in the wars that they decide are “wars of necessity”. The tax burden for these wars is more affordable for most foreign policy experts than it is for an American with median earnings.

And perhaps most importantly, the average American doesn't have the same interest in trying to have the US rule the world.

For the foreign policy elite, the importance of running the world – as much as it is possible – is taken as given.

Foreign economic policy is even more removed from public input than foreign policy in general, with unaccountable institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and WTO making decisions that affect the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people.

**It is this one-step-further removal from public accountability – there are no voters that these institutions have to answer to – that makes them so attractive to the elite in rich countries.**

In the current economic downturn, the IMF can use taxpayer dollars to bail out western European banks who made imprudent loans in eastern Europe, something that the contributing governments might not be able to get away with politically if it were done directly.

The average American has a moral sense that seems lacking in policy discussions here in Washington, where it is the custom to appear amoral, almost like an insect.

In 2006, when television newscasts were showing regular footage of Iraqis killed and maimed by explosions, Americans were horrified, and opposition to the war increased substantially.

It is only by keeping the ugly reality of our foreign occupations away from the public that our government can even get enough support to keep funding them.

But the powerful and rigid institutional arrangements of our foreign policy establishment, the sloth and weakness among the intelligentsia, as well as the corruption from the interests of military contractors, makes it an uphill battle for common sense to prevail.

**It is not that the American people are so backward and ignorant, or bellicose. Rather the main problem is that the public has so little input into foreign policy decisions.**

**That is what must change if we are to get away from the prospect of never-ending wars and conflicts, and from a foreign policy that continues to be one of the greatest obstacles to social and economic progress in the world.**

**Quit Whining And Pissing On  
Everybody In Sight With Your  
Condescending Bullshit About How  
Stupid & Apathetic Americans Are:  
If You Don't Spend Time In The Real World  
Reaching Out To Real Troops, You Have Nothing  
Whatsoever To Sneer At Others About. Just Shut  
The Fuck Up And Get The Fuck Out Of The Way**

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

# Love, Dad

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: March 03, 2009  
Subject: Love, Dad

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

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Love, Dad

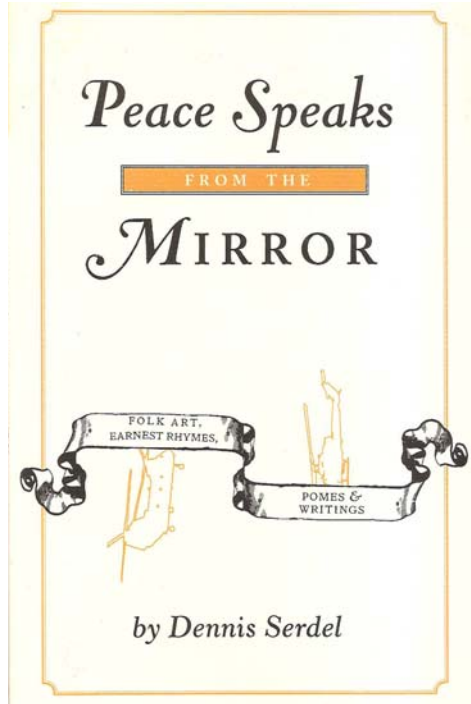
Son, we can't send you  
any packages  
like we have sent you before  
because the shop  
that I worked for for 27 years  
has just went bankrupt  
my pension money is gone  
didn't get severance pay  
after all those years  
and I would have to pay  
Cobra for health care but  
I don't have money for that  
they didn't even give me  
my vacation pay  
they gave me nothing  
nothing at all  
I took our savings and paid off  
our home but now all I get is  
unemployment checks  
and food stamps  
that will stop in months  
I don't know what I will do then,  
I'm old and nobody will hire me  
but even the young  
can't find any jobs  
Soon they will take our car  
turn off electricity  
and turn off the heat  
Son, I know you have troubles  
of your own in Iraq  
but I think you are fighting  
the wrong enemy over there  
I think all of you should come home  
fight the government  
the corporations  
and defend us from  
the bill collectors  
kill the white shirt bank criminals  
the oil company criminals  
kill all the Madoof's  
that have taken over our country  
because nothing works  
over here anymore.  
Love, Dad

**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:

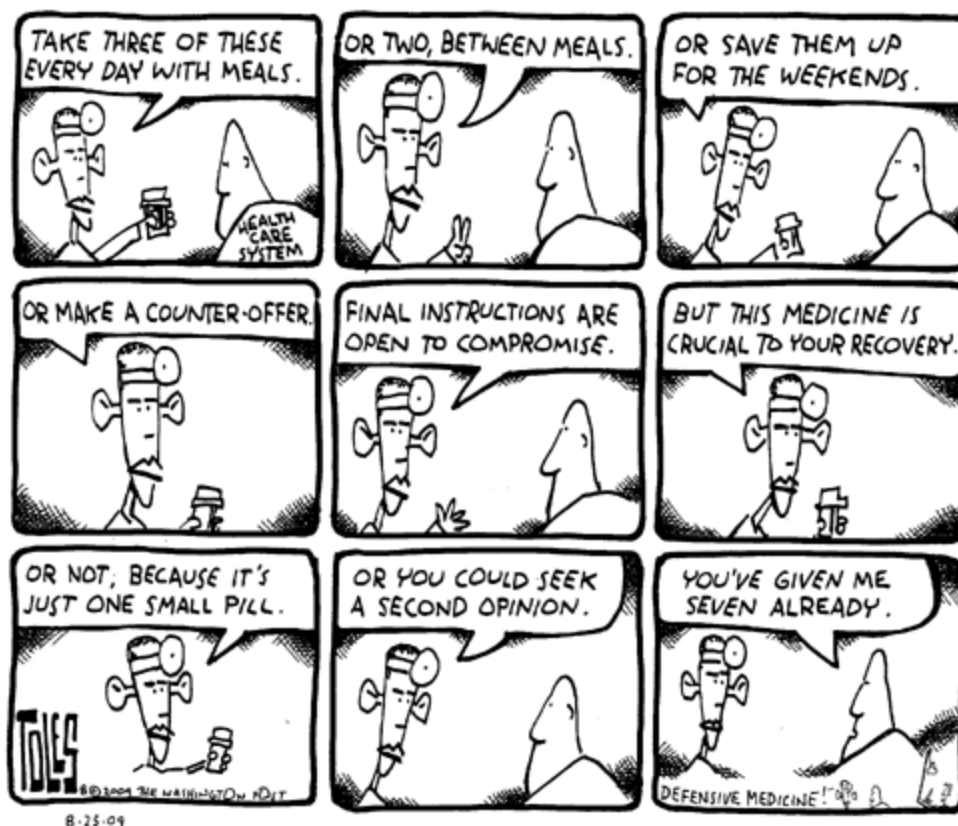
Check or Money Order Payable to Dennis Serdel

Dennis Serdel  
339 Oakwood Lane  
Perry, Michigan 48872

Walt Whitman  
Carl Sandburg  
Allan Ginsberg  
Now: Dennis Serdel

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**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**



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

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

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

**CLASS WAR REPORTS**



**While Obama Spends Endless Billions On His Imperial Wars In Iraq And Afghanistan: 1.5 Million Laid-Off Americans Will Soon Lose Jobless Benefits And Have No Way To Live**



Tim White's unemployment benefits expired in July. Even though he previously earned about \$10 per hour at a laminates factory, he says he'd take anything now. Photo: John Brecher, msnbc.com



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

Aug. 27, 2009 Kari Huus, Reporter, Msnbc.msn.com [Excerpts]

ELKHART, Ind.—

**Karen Inbody has just about three weeks to figure out Plan B.**

**The 58-year-old divorcee has been getting by on unemployment compensation since her layoff in early 2008, but she's nearly reached the end of her benefits.**

And even though she's applied for dozens of jobs, the former rental property manager has come up empty.

"I'd shovel horse poop," she says wearily. "I haven't even found one of those jobs available."

**Now, like many others whose unemployment benefits are running out, the Elkhart, Ind., native doesn't know how she's going to put food on her table and pay her mortgage.**

**Despite repeated extensions of the unemployment compensation program — up to a record 79 weeks in many states, compared to the standard 26 weeks in normal times — some 1.5 million people are expected to exhaust their benefits by year's end.**

**In the first big wave, some 540,000 are expected to fall out of the program by the end of September, according to the nonprofit National Employment Law Project.**

"Every state is going to experience a substantial increase in people exhausting their benefits," says Chris Owen, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based worker advocacy group.

"That means more people who will not be able to pay their mortgages, and who will not be able to shop and buy things. It will be a blow for the national economy, and for state and local economies."

For many in this situation, there are few obvious places to turn.

Short of qualifying for another government program, most rely on family and friends, and draw on the help of churches and nonprofits that run food pantries and assist with other emergency needs.

Elkhart resident Tim White, who was laid off from a \$10 per hour job at a laminates factory last year, saw his final unemployment check in mid-July.

Now the 42-year-old father earns \$25 a week mowing a friend's lawn — enough to cover gas for his '97 Jeep Cherokee so he can drive around to look for jobs. He says he applies anywhere they are accepting applications — McDonald's, Jiffy Lube, KFC, or Goodwill — to name just a few.

“I don’t care if it’s a minimum wage job,” he says. “It’s better than nothing.”

For lodging, White and his wife, Prima, and their 13-year-old daughter, Kelly, have been getting by with the help of a relative who lets them live rent-free. The family also started receiving food stamps worth about \$300 a month in August.

**White’s wife is in poor health and takes medications for high blood pressure, diabetes and other problems. He is tormented by the prospect she could have a medical emergency with no health insurance.**

**“Health care coverage we worry about every day,” he said.**

Dean Preheim-Bartel, executive director of Church Community Services, which operates one of the larger food pantries in Elkhart, says he’s been seeing more and more people who have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

It is one of the reasons, he believes, that in July, a record 345 new clients showed up to get free provisions for their families, compared to 179 new clients in July last year ago.

“There are a lot of people who are first timers who will readily acknowledge they have never been to a place like this -- never been to a food pantry of any kind,” he says.

Once laid-off workers exhaust their unemployment benefits, other sources of government assistance are relatively scant. TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, is available to very low-income or unemployed people with children. But the requirements are far stricter than those for unemployment compensation.

“You have to have very low wealth to get TANF benefits. So it’s not practical thing for most middle-class families,” says Gary Burtless, an economist at the Brookings Institution.

Childless people have even fewer options.

“If you have no kids, then you’re at the tender mercy of whatever state program there is,” says Burtless.

“In a lot of places, it’s just not very much money, and they can deny people benefits for a lot of reasons.”

Likewise, food stamps are generally available only to the poorest of the poor.

Despite some recent signs that the unemployment situation is improving, the odds of actually getting a new job are grim.

**Federal statistics indicate that there were more than five times as many people seeking jobs in the United States in June as there were positions available.**

In especially hard-hit areas like Elkhart, where the unemployment rate is 16.7 percent — compared to 9.4 percent nationwide — the odds against job seekers are even tougher.

Vicki McGlinsey, who was laid off last year from a printing company that served the RV industry, says she was one of 10 people who made the final round of interviews for a security position offered at Wal-Mart in July. The manager who broke the news that she wouldn't get the job told her they received more than 250 applications.

**“I myself have put in about 100 applications and résumés since February ... and have had three interview opportunities, including this one,” she says.**

**“It boggles my mind when I hear people say we just need to try harder.”**

To aid people like McGlinsey, political pressure is building for the passage of yet another extension of unemployment benefits, at least for the jobless in states hardest hit by the recession.

In early August, just before Congress left for a break, Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., introduced a bill that would provide another 13 weeks of federally funded unemployment benefits to workers in states with a three-month jobless rate over 9.5 percent — likely encompassing about 20 states.

The bill is expected to be taken up when Congress returns after Labor Day.

Opponents of an extension argue that increasing the benefit duration will simply prolong unemployment, allowing workers to get “rusty,” possibly unemployable.

Those in favor maintain that the help is essential to these individuals until the employment picture improves and that the jobless funds help stimulate the economy.

With the clock running out on her benefits, Karen Inbody is weighing her options.

She's already borrowed some money from her family, and does not want to ask for more — two of her sons are receiving unemployment benefits after being laid-off from the RV industry, and two are working reduced hours.

Inbody owes \$600 a month on her house, a simple gray bungalow on Elkhart's historic Bank Street.

She fears that without some new source of income, she will lose it.

“Sell my house, rent out my house?” she says, running through some scenarios.

**She adds wryly: “I could stand on a street corner, but those are all taken too.”**

**MORE:**

## **Who Gives A Shit About People's Unemployment Benefits Ending? Corporate Profits Are Booming!**

# **“Domestic Profits Of Financial Corporations Increased \$113.7 Billion In The First Quarter”**

July 31, 2009 Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce [Excerpts]

Corporate Profits:

**Profits from current production (corporate profits with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments) increased \$48.1 billion in the first quarter, in contrast to a decrease of \$250.3 billion in the fourth quarter.**

Current-production cash flow (net cash flow with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments) -- the internal funds available to corporations for investment -- increased \$60.4 billion in the first quarter, in contrast to a decrease of \$97.0 billion in the fourth.

Profits after tax with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments increased \$13.8 billion in the first quarter, in contrast to a decrease of \$120.1 billion in the fourth.

Domestic profits of financial corporations increased \$113.7 billion in the first quarter, in contrast to a decrease of \$178.7 billion in the fourth.

Domestic profits of nonfinancial corporations decreased \$49.0 billion in the first quarter, compared with a decrease of \$89.1 billion in the fourth.

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**RECEIVED**

## **Veterans Go On Trial In Minnesota For Anti-War Action**

From: David Harris  
To: GI Special  
Sent: August 30, 2009  
Subject: Re: GI Special 7H24: The Day The Future Happened

The August, 2008, Denver march led by IVAW was inspiring. I wish we could have been there.

It may interest you that on August 31, 2008, our small group of Vets for Peace led a similar, if smaller, march to the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, which was ultimately joined about 500 people.

We marched in silence carrying cardboard tombstones with photos of both dead and wounded American soldiers and Iraqi civilians. Some were dressed in the orange uniforms of Guantanamo Bay prisoners.

Nine of us were arrested as we crossed the barriers.

We will finally have our “day in court” in another two weeks and are pleading not guilty on the basis of our right to protest the illegality of the war in Iraq under international laws and treaties (Geneva Conventions and Nuremberg Trials).

Wish us luck.  
Sincerely,  
David Harris  
VFP CH 115  
Red Wing, MN

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## CORRECTION



This photo ran in GI Special 7H24, credited there to IVAW.

In fact, this photo was taken by John Orlando.

For more of his magnificent work capturing the soul of GI Resistance, see his website, [http://jonorlandophoto.com/?page\\_id=111](http://jonorlandophoto.com/?page_id=111)

Apologies for the error.

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