

Military Resistance 9K8



Penn State

From: Dennis Serdel
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: November 12, 2011
Subject: Pen State by Dennis

Shock Poetry written by Dennis Serdel for Military Resistance.

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

Pen State

**There is a Veteran's Day Sale at
K-Mart today that lasts all weekend.
Veteran's Day Sales are inside the Mall**

where it is nice and warm
while outside the door a Veteran sits
in the cold today while people reluctantly
flip a nickel or a dime into his hat
just a homeless person they think.
But Veteran's Day Veteran's Infantry men
kill and are used by the government
are used like toilet paper to wipe
the blood from their hands and then they
flush down Veterans into American streets.
Veteran's Day Veterans who never
fired a shot during the war now shoot
21 gun salutes for the newspapers
and TV's while a puckered up Veteran
who never fired a shot plays taps
on his shiny brass horn then in another
town another Veteran's Day Veteran
plays bagpipes that sound like chalk
on a board that has the names of the dead.
Then another Veteran thinks this time Veteran's
Day reminds him of killing the women,
children and burning down their huts.
He can't take it anymore and shoots
himself in the head and nobody cares.
Veteran's Day Veterans are locked up
in jails and prisons to keep America safe
so that Americans who never fought in War
can enjoy a peaceful day and watch
college football games where they can
get drunk while their wives are out shopping
on Veteran's Day Sale's Day.
From a TV a singer sings about the brave
fighter jets fly over head.
It's America The Beautiful and Freedom
is Not Free while the VA Mental Hospitals
are releasing Veteran's on Veteran's Day
just because they need the room.
Some try to slip into a tent and are
turned away unknowably
at Occupation Parks.

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 email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

After Seven Year Of War For Weapons Of Mass Destruction That Did Not Exist, The Armed Forces Of The United States Bring Home A Fitting Battle Trophy Of That Effort: “The Toilet That Saddam Hussein Used While Detained” “Insurgents Remain Active, And Could Target Departing Convoys”

November 10, 2011 By ANDREW E. KRAMER, New York Times [Excerpts]

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq — For most of the war, nine gaudy palaces outside Baghdad — monuments to Saddam Hussein’s grandeur and questionable taste — served as the headquarters for the American military in Iraq.

Officers are now vacating them, and, like moving out of a long-occupied house, busy with the colossal job of sorting what to take and what to leave.

Convoys roll out daily, but not everything will fit. Hundreds of cars will be left behind. The military has weighed what items of historical or memorial value should be taken out together with the troops before Dec. 31, when the last United States soldiers are to leave. One item going with the Americans is the toilet that Saddam Hussein used while detained, bound for a military police museum in Missouri.

As the final chapter of America’s war in Iraq unfolds, the military will not reveal the exact closing date of Camp Victory because outside its walls insurgents remain active, and could target departing convoys.

“Every time you put a truck through, it is a risk,” Colonel Brooks said.

That is a reminder of the long-accepted reality here: that despite thousands of Americans lives lost and the billions in goodwill projects for Iraqis, America is also leaving behind something that is not-quite peace.

The camp's name almost becomes a question mark.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Taliban Attack U.S.-Afghan Meeting In Border District Wounding Three American Soldiers:

“Taliban Leadership Released A Statement Thursday Mocking Claims By Secretary General Of NATO Rasmussen That Taliban Attacks Had Been Declining”

“If Rasmussen And All His Allies Leave Afghanistan Completely, Then The Attacks On Them Will Reach Zero”

November 10, 2011 By ROD NORDLAND, New York Times [Excerpts]. Sangar Rahimi and Sharifullah Sahak contributed reporting from Kabul, and Farouq Jan Mangal from Khost, Afghanistan.

KABUL, Afghanistan — Taliban insurgents attacked a district government center in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday while American troops were meeting with local officials inside, wounding three American soldiers and killing three Afghan police officers, according to Afghan and American officials.

The attack was carried out by a group of 5 to 10 insurgents, some wearing explosive vests, who also took two Afghan officials hostage at the Chamkani district government building in Paktia Province, said Master Sgt. Nicholas Conner, a spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force troops in eastern Afghanistan.

The hostages included the local chief of the National Directorate of Security, the Afghan intelligence service, as well as the deputy governor of the district, he said.

It was unclear whether fighting had completely ended by nightfall, with varying accounts from officials. It was also unclear what had happened to the hostages who had been taken, but Afghan officials said no one was still being held after the fighting died down Thursday night.

A spokesman for the Taliban, Zabiullah Mujahid, reached by telephone at an undisclosed location, said that “we have taken over the district center.”

Sergeant Conner said: “Technically, I guess you could say they have control of the building at this time, just like a bank robber has control of the bank when he takes hostages.”

The attack came as the Taliban leadership released a statement on the group’s Web site on Thursday mocking claims by the secretary general of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, that Taliban attacks had been declining, and citing contrary information from “other enemy officials” that they had been increasing.

Referring to the gradual drawdown of military forces that has begun in Afghanistan, the Taliban statement read, “If Rasmussen and all his allies leave Afghanistan completely then the attacks on them will reach zero, and he can propagate the notion even more and say that the number of Taliban attacks have fallen further.”

The attack in Paktia began around 4 p.m. when one of the attackers exploded his vest at the gate of the district government compound, allowing the others to enter, officials said.

Inside, American and Afghan officials had been discussing continuing talks on a future strategic partnership agreement between their two countries, local officials said.

An American Apache helicopter responded to the scene and received heavy machine gun fire from a second team of insurgents holed up in a nearby mosque, Sergeant Conner said.

After seeking permission from Afghan officials, the helicopter fired missiles at the mosque and destroyed it. “They only engaged where they were taking fire from, and only after coordinating with the deputy governor of Paktia Province,” he said.

The district police chief, Habib Nour, was also among the wounded, according to Ruhullah Samoun, the spokesman for the provincial governor.

Chamkani district is strategically situated along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, in a rugged mountainous area that has seen a great deal of Taliban activity.

More Resistance Action



A damaged police vehicle hit by a bicycle bomb blast in the Injil district of Herat province west of Kabul, Afghanistan, Nov. 12, 2011. REUTERS/Mohammad Shoib

Nov 12: NKDC Media & AP

A bicycle bomber targeted a police van around noon in Herat, 640 km from Kabul. Three policemen were injured.

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

The Great Afghan Road Building And Money Stealing Fiasco Rolls On:

**“The U.S. Government Paid \$4 Million
To RWA, A Consortium Of Three
Afghan Contractors - Only To See It**

Pave Less Than Two-Thirds Of A Mile On A Road That's Supposed To Stretch 17.5 Miles” “U.S. And Afghan Provincial Officials Think That Two Of The Principals Absconded To New Zealand And The Netherlands, Having Pocketed Much Of The Cash”

11.10.11 By SHASHANK BENGALI, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts].
(McClatchy Newspapers special correspondent Habib Zohori contributed to this report from Kabul, Afghanistan.)

GHAZNI, Afghanistan -- Heading back from a remote section of Ghazni province in September, U.S. Navy Cmdr. Tristan Rizzi radioed his base in eastern Afghanistan and said he wanted to take a slight detour.

Rizzi had his Chinook helicopter fly over the site of a long-stalled, U.S.-financed road project on which the Afghan contractors had pledged repeatedly to resume work.

From the air, Rizzi saw a vacant site and no sign of the contractors. Once on the ground, he dialed one of them from a cellphone and asked where they were.

The contractor said they were working on the road - to which Rizzi replied, “No, you’re not.”

Two weeks later, alleging corruption and theft, U.S. officials in Ghazni terminated the \$10 million road contract, pulling the plug on a closely watched infrastructure project in this strategic province and putting themselves at odds with a powerful governor who coalition forces had hoped would be a key ally.

From 2008 to 2010, the U.S. government paid \$4 million to RWA, a consortium of three Afghan contractors - only to see it pave less than two-thirds of a mile on a road that's supposed to stretch 17.5 miles.

The contractors said the area had become too violent to work in, but U.S. and Afghan provincial officials think that two of the principals absconded to New Zealand and the Netherlands, having pocketed much of the cash.

Even before the failed road project, RWA was notorious in Ghazni because one of its principals, Ghulam Seddiq Rasouli, served jail time about three years ago after Taliban

insurgents ambushed one of his construction teams and his security guards fired back indiscriminately, killing at least one civilian, according to Afghan intelligence officials.

U.S. officials - who've awarded Rasouli multiple construction contracts - apparently were unaware of his legal difficulties.

As the U.S.-led military coalition plans to hand control of the nation's security to Afghan forces in three years, American diplomats and military officials say they're trying to clean up a contracting system in which hundreds of millions of dollars meant for reconstruction were misspent or allocated to unsavory characters, including those tied to violence against civilians or coalition forces.

But in Ghazni, those efforts carry political risks and threaten a fragile partnership with the influential governor, Musa Khan.

The project is a major priority for Khan, an Islamist who's emerging as a major power broker in eastern Afghanistan. Coalition forces have sought his help fighting Taliban insurgents in his province, situated two hours' drive south of Kabul, the country's capital, and just west of the volatile Pakistani border region.

On Oct. 23, three weeks after the road contract was canceled, Khan met with Marine Gen. John Allen, the commander of the U.S.-led International Security Assistance Force, arguing for the project to be reinstated. Diplomats who were briefed on the meeting said Allen hadn't yet made a decision.

Perhaps aware of Khan's sway, the U.S. provincial reconstruction team in Ghazni - a mix of diplomats, civilian specialists and military officers including Rizzi, the Navy commander - assembled a seven-page timeline of its dealings with the contractors to make its case for killing the contract. In it, American frustration almost leaps off the page.

The road was intended to link Qarah Bagh, an increasingly violent district south of the provincial capital, with the peaceful but isolated mountain district of Jaghori.

RWA - named for Rasouli and his partners, Zia Uddin Wardak and Zia Alifi - received the first \$1 million installment in October 2008, according to records, but seven months later it began complaining of security problems and financial hardship.

Contractors graded the length of the road but had paved only about two-thirds of a mile by mid-2010, when U.S. officials, having paid them another \$3 million, began threatening to end the project.

Almost a year passed as RWA promised to restart work, then offered to begin paving from the safer western end of the road, then said it had run out of money, then divulged that Alifi had traveled to the Netherlands with cash from the company account.

Last spring, after Rizzi's team arrived in Ghazni, the project appeared to become a target for insurgents, as workers over three months removed more than 100 roadside bombs that had been planted along the first two miles outside Qarah Bagh. In July, gunmen reportedly ambushed the crew, wounding four workers.

After several meetings with U.S. officials, RWA said in September that it had raised enough money to pave two more miles. Little work was done, however, and after insurgents attacked an Afghan National Police installation in Qarah Bagh later that month, workers never returned to the site.

U.S. officials don't dispute that violence has worsened in Ghazni; coalition fatalities this year reached their highest level of the decade-long conflict, due largely to a surge in roadside bombs. But they argue that security costs were built into the contract.

"There are many other road projects and different contracts that are just getting paved right along" in Ghazni, the U.S. official said.

Members of the Ghazni provincial council, an elected advisory board, were blunter in their criticism of the governor and the U.S.

"If he wanted the road to be built, it would have been built," said Hamida Gulistani, a council member from Qarah Bagh.

"But this is what happens when the U.S. and NATO deal directly with the governor. They never came to the provincial council or discussed this with us. Local people were ready to help provide security."

GUESS WHO'S WORRIED GUESS WHO ISN'T GUESS WHY ALL HOME NOW



US soldiers during a mission in Turkham Nangarhar, bordering Pakistan in September 2011. AFP Photo

MILITARY NEWS

**“In Every Demonstration
(Including The One In Canada)
I’ve Found A Vet To Talk To” --
“I Went And Fought For Capitalism
And That’s Why I’m Now A
Marxist”
“The Super Wealthy Elite Pretty Much
Control Our Democratic Process And
Everyone Here Is Pretty Much
Fighting For Scraps And That’s Not
Right”
“I Haven’t Had One Nightmare Since I’ve
Been Here”**

12 November 11 By Tina Dupuy, The Atlantic [Excerpts]

We’re in a coffee shop near McPherson Square, the location of Occupy DC, and Michael Patterson, 21, and I are having hot cocoa on a cold November night.

He’s wearing an Iraq Veterans Against the War sweatshirt and baggy shorts. It’s freezing outside.

“I’m from Alaska,” he offers as an explanation. He’s been sleeping in a tent in D.C. for over a month now. I’ve traveled to five Occupations in two countries. In every demonstration (including the one in Canada) I’ve found a vet to talk to:

In Zuccotti Park, Army Specialist Jerry Bordeleau, 24, was sitting next to a table of IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) literature. On his sweater were two buttons: an Iraq Campaign metal and one from the IWW. He served two tours in Iraq and now says he’s

unemployed and can't find work for over \$10 an hour. And he can't live on \$10 an hour. When I asked him why he's at Occupy Wall Street he says, "I went and fought for capitalism and that's why I'm now a Marxist."

At Occupy Baltimore, I met 21-year-old Justin Carson, who tells me he served in the Army National Guard in Iraq from 2009 until this February. His nickname is Crazy Craze. He says he has PTSD and is bipolar but won't "do pharmaceuticals." Then he told me I should look into the Illuminati since I'm writing an article.

It was a surprise to meet Iraq war vets at these protests. There are only, after all, around a million Americans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan in what was once dubbed the War on Terror.

Their presence became national news when Iraq vet and former Marine Scott Olsen's skull was fractured by a non-lethal round fired by police in Oakland in late-October. A week later in New York, around 30 vets held a solidarity march from Zuccotti Park to the Stock Exchange. They had a rally at the park afterward where Bordeleau spoke.

"This is the first major movement for social change we've seen in this country since the '70s," he said to me.

At Occupy DC, a painting of Scott Olsen in uniform is draped on the side of a tent. He's become a symbol of the Occupation Movement - he fought overseas only to be injured when exercising his "freedom" of peaceful assembly at home. His name has become a shorthand to talk about why so many vets are at Occupy Wall Street.

"There's a reason Scott Olsen got shot in the head," says Patterson, looking down at his chain-restaurant hot cocoa.

"Because he was out front."

Patterson still sports a military haircut and a bit of the Army swagger. He also has a touch of that telling hyper-awareness war vets sometimes display; he's a little twitchy, a little intense. He tells me he has PTSD and has been self-medicating with weed. He says it helps.

What's also helped is being a part of this protest movement. "This is the only peaceful solution," he says. "If this movement doesn't work, our country is not going to make it ... We're just not going to make it."

Patterson became an interrogator in Iraq straight out of high school. His mother had to sign his enlistment papers. He turned 18 in Basic. "We're an industrialized nation who's a third world country. The super wealthy elite pretty much control our democratic process and everyone here is pretty much fighting for scraps and that's not right," he says.

I ask him what was the switch for him and when. He explained that it was WikiLeaks. It was the footage of the Apache helicopter gunning down Iraqis released by WikiLeaks in April of 2010. Up to that point he had been interrogating Iraqis and using what he describes as psychological torture.

He was 10 years old when the World Trade Center was hit. He wanted to fight terrorism in Iraq.

He bought into the whole thing, he tells me. He had been looking forward to signing up ever since the 5th grade and then, suddenly, last November, he found himself watching a video of his fellow soldiers gunning down Iraqis on the street and it all changed for him.

The Apache video, to a civilian, makes war look like a video game, but to Patterson, it was the first time he saw Iraqis as real people. Random people, with children and families who care about them.

He tried to get out of the military as a conscientious objector after that. He was told it wouldn't work because he's an atheist. "So I just smoked a bunch of pot and got kicked out," he says. He was officially discharged on June 7th of this year. He went back home to Alaska, where he read about Occupy Wall Street on Reddit.

He then went to D.C. to sleep in a tent a block away from the White House.

Patterson speaks in sound bites. He's had a conversion and like those who find religion, the awakening has given him fervor.

He's witnessing: "Combat at Arms and Military Intelligence all come to the same conclusion: War is a business!"

He interrogated people who were later put to death in Iraq with no appeals process, he says. It haunts him. He didn't fulfill his contract so he's not eligible for the GI Bill.

Even if he were, he explains, he still couldn't afford to go to school without loans. He'd be wracked with debt just like so many other students who are down at their city's Occupations. "I just want to go to college and teach high school," he says.

For Patterson, like the other vets I spoke to, the Occupy Movement has provided a way to channel their outrage and their energy. Their involvement has been a plus for the movement, too, because vets are extremely helpful if you are planning a tent city in a park - they can get things done, and they are used to living in tents. It's worth noting the anti-war movement during Vietnam was given legitimacy after the vets became their voice (John Kerry for example).

But the vets themselves take solace in the act of being useful.

Or as Patterson puts it: "I haven't had one nightmare since I've been here."

Veterans Join UK Occupy Protest As St Paul's Canon Shows Support:

“It Felt We Were Basically Pawns Doing The Work Of Corporations And Big Business”

“Occupy London’s Tents Prevent New Lord Mayor From Being Anointed On Cathedral Steps For First Time In 800 Years”

12 November 2011 By Mark Townsend, Guardian News and Media Limited

When members of the Occupy camp join Remembrance Day services at St Paul’s Cathedral, their ranks will be swelled by a group of military veterans with their own list of grievances against the establishment.

At least 15 former service personnel have now pitched up [camped] outside the cathedral and at nearby Finsbury Square, many in protest over treatment of veterans or the conflicts that have burdened them with mental or physical scars.

Their presence is an indication of the evolving support base of the anti-capitalist Occupy movement, which has been endorsed by a senior figure at St Paul’s, just weeks after the protests led to the resignation of three of the cathedral’s leading clerics.

Among the veterans is Michael Brandon – known to friends as Ace – who left the army 20 years ago. He has spent the past two decades mostly homeless, during which he slipped into alcoholism and began self-harming – his wrists are criss-crossed with scar tissue where he has slashed himself with razor blades.

At the Occupy Finsbury Square site, Brandon has set up Ace Bikes, a bicycle repair business, to raise funds for the movement. The 46-year-old, like other veterans at the camp, says that he is protesting for better opportunities for their children – in Brandon’s case, for his five-year-old son, Daniel James. Brandon says an incident in Northern Ireland triggered his psychiatric problems.

“We were on patrol when a bullet whizzed by, then one of my best mates got hit in the head, it blew his brains completely out, all over me. My tunic was red. I got shot in the arm as I tried to help and pull him away. The incident changed me, I’ve never been the same since. I’ve never had any government help.”

Other veterans at the Occupy sites also claim to suffer from problems linked to their service.

Matthew Horne, 23, served in Iraq with the Scots Guards for eight months, until June 2008, and his experiences left him pondering the “futility” of war. He left the services 18

months ago, and says the Occupy movement has provided a platform to campaign for veterans who fought for a democracy but were denied support.

"I'm disgusted with the way this government deals with veterans who have left the services," he said.

Horne added that his service in southern Iraq made him wonder what they were actually fighting for.

"We were basically target practice to keep the so-called militants busy – we just kept getting bombarded while private security went around the city doing whatever. There is a confusion regarding what war is about these days: there was more private security in Basra than soldiers. It felt we were basically pawns doing the work of corporations and big business."

Horne added: "We fought for a democracy but the opposition to the war, the marches and protests, mean that even public opinion would not be enough." The canon in residence of St Paul's said that he shared the concerns of the Occupy movement. In a statement that underlined the increasingly collaborative relationship between the church and Occupy supporters, the Rt Rev Michael Colclough addressed protesters at St Paul's and urged that more must be done to share global resources.

Minutes earlier, Colclough had anointed the new head of the City of London Corporation and lord mayor, David Wootton, at the cathedral during the finale of the Lord Mayor's Show. The corporation, which has tried to evict the Occupy camp from the cathedral surrounds, remains a source of anger for protesters, who claim it is merely a lobbying arm for the City.

In a break with tradition lasting more than 800 years, the 684th lord mayor was blessed at the cathedral's south entrance instead of the steps because of the protesters' tents.

Colclough told protesters: "People have camped around the cathedral over the past three weeks expressing concern for the poor and for a better distribution of the treasures in the world. That concern is something that we share within the church." He then prayed for a "better sharing of the rich resources that we have in the world".

The move was interpreted by Occupy protesters as a blessing for them following the wrangling with St Paul's that has seen the canon, chaplain and dean all resign amid confusion and indecision over whether the church should welcome them or move them on.

The Occupy movement has promised not to disrupt Remembrance Day services. Naomi Colvin, a spokesperson, said: "On Sunday evening there will be a gathering with Iraq war veterans and speakers from the peace movement. We're not going to do that much. It will not be an overtly political weekend. We've been meeting more and more with the cathedral and the collaboration is getting closer."

St Paul's said that it was getting the help it needed to ensure its events were able to take place.

**“When I Found Out About
Coffee Strong And Iraq
Veterans Against The War, I Felt
Like, ‘Hey, This Is Okay’”**

**“The Coffeehouse Is Part Of A
Grassroots Movement Of Veterans
And Pro-GI, Anti-War Americans”**

**“After Greg Returned From
Deployment, He Felt A Growing
Anger Toward Superiors In His Chain
Of Command”**

**“You Only Have To Go On One
Deployment To See The Truth. America
Destroyed Iraq”**



Iraq War veteran Josh Simpson is a founding member of Coffee Strong, outside Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. Photo by Paul Dunn for YES! Magazine.

Nov 11, 2011 by Dean Paton; The Breakthrough 15, Winter 2012 issue of YES!
Magazine [Excerpts]

Though JBLM [Joint Base Lewis-McChord] is nominally in Starbucks country, its neighborhood coffeehouse is no ordinary caffeine bar.

Wedged between the southbound lanes of Interstate 5 and a Subway sandwich shop, Coffee Strong is run by vets and strategically positioned 300 yards from JBLM's gate. Active-duty personnel and veterans get free java and advice. Civilians patronize the shop as well, which exists mostly on donations from those who support its cause.

The coffeehouse is part of a grassroots movement of veterans and pro-GI, anti-war Americans determined to help active-duty personnel and discharged veterans receive benefits due them, get out of the military, or cope with what the U.S. government either can't or won't treat effectively: PTSD, the mental illness caused by experiencing trauma, like the horrors of war.

Jorge Gonzalez began volunteering at the coffeehouse in 2009.

He saw it as a chance to help comrades and their families, and also as a kind of self-treatment. A Specialist E-4 in the army, Gonzalez returned from Iraq in 2007.

After a couple of months, he realized he was suffering from PTSD and went to JBLM's mental health professionals.

What he experienced when he attempted to get help within the military system is not unusual.

“When I finally sought help, I was put on what I call the Army’s ‘quick fix’ program — the antidepressant Zoloft,” he says. “After that, I was seen once a month by the psychiatrist, usually for five minutes, maybe 10, and that was just to get my prescription renewed.”

Gonzalez says his doctors never discussed coping strategies. “I was depressed. I had thoughts of suicide,” he says. “But there was never really any advice from the psychiatrist, like, ‘This is what you could be doing to get better.’”

Just as frustrating, he felt his chain of command never supported his attempts to recover from PTSD. “There was no interest in pulling me away from any training,” he says. “I was always going out, coming back, getting my prescription filled.”

After a year of zero progress, Gonzalez quit taking Zoloft. Then he left the army.

He still struggles with depression and PTSD, “but now I cope with it like this: I am here at Coffee Strong trying to help soldiers and their families get the help they have been asking for.”

One dangerous practice in today's military, say Gonzalez and his Coffee Strong compatriots, is that soldiers traumatized during their time in combat zones return home suffering from PTSD, and, instead of getting the medical and psychological help they need to heal, their commanders order them back to the fighting. Those who resist are branded “sissies” or malingerers, and earn the scorn of superiors.

The activist group Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) credits this attitude with the frequent episodes of violence related to combat stress that occur at JBLM; these include some domestic crimes so shocking, like the waterboarding of a child, that they've been reported in the national media.

Coffee Strong activists point to a series of army investigations that found "systematic" shortcomings in how the army treats soldiers just back from war.

At JBLM, Gonzalez says, 50 soldiers have killed themselves since the beginning of the Iraq War, and this trend spiked in 2011—with 11 suicides from January to October.

A Pew Research Center poll released in October found that 44 percent of post-9/11 veterans say they have had difficulty adjusting to civilian life, 47 percent say they feel irritable or angry, and 37 percent say they have struggled with post-traumatic stress. One in three vets polled now says the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were not worth fighting.

None of which seems surprising to a Specialist E-4 named Greg who turned up at Coffee Strong one Saturday last September. Because he remains on active duty, he withheld his last name:

"You only have to go on one deployment to see the truth," he says. "America destroyed Iraq. When I got back, I didn't want to kill myself, but I had days where I told myself, 'If this is how I'm going to feel for the rest of my life, then I don't want to be alive.'"

After Greg returned from deployment, he felt a growing anger toward superiors in his chain of command. "I'm not a hothead or a sore person that gets in trouble," he says, "but I was literally afraid I might see them again and break a chair over their head or something."

So Greg self-referred to Family and Soldier Readiness Services at JBLM for mental health counseling.

He was shocked at the ineptness of his treatment.

"This lady is giving me handouts and telling me to take deep breaths. And I said, 'Lady, this is a big problem. When I was in Iraq, I had an officer who was crazy and vicious.' We were a couple months from going back to Iraq, and I was afraid I was going to harm this person. And she was giving me pamphlets?"

Then he heard about Coffee Strong. "I walked in one day, I sat down, it took me a long time; I tried to explain myself. Jorge was there. He said, 'I get it; I was in the infantry too.' And I knew he got it," Greg recalls, "because of what he said."

Greg followed the advice he got at Coffee Strong, and eventually found a new therapist within the Army system who gave him psychological insight and advice. He helped Greg transfer away from the superiors in his unit.

"When I found out about Coffee Strong and Iraq Veterans Against the War, I felt like, 'Hey, this is okay. There are thousands of other people that feel the way I do. There must be smarter ways we can take care of ourselves,'" Greg says.

“Talking to Coffee Strong was a huge help to me.”

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253-581-1565
<http://www.coffeestrong.org>

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly.

Whether in Afghanistan, 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 and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

**Obama Regime Traitors Stab
Troops In The Back:
“No More Funding Requested For
Housing Program Helping Service
Members Reassigned To New
Bases But Who Owed More Than
Their Homes Were Worth”
Aid For Wounded Soldiers And
Spouses Of Fallen Soldiers Will Also
Be Cut Off:**

“The Administration Didn’t Request Any New Funds For The Program For Fiscal-Year 2012”

NOVEMBER 10, 2011 By MAYA JACKSON RANDALL and ALAN ZIBEL, New York Times [Excerpts]

A program that has helped thousands of military homeowners forced to sell their houses into a flagging market is out of money and unlikely to be expanded, even as the Obama administration continues to try to fight the housing bust.

Through the 2009 fiscal stimulus, Congress expanded a 1960s housing program to service members reassigned to new bases but who owed more than their homes were worth.

The expansion also provides aid for wounded soldiers and spouses of fallen soldiers.

Under the broadened program, the federal government has provided benefits to nearly 7,000 reassigned soldiers.

The government can partially reimburse service members for their losses, covering as much as 90% of a loss if a service member was forced to move. In more than 2,500 cases, the government bought the home.

The expansion was touted by Obama administration officials, including Vice President Joe Biden and First Lady Michelle Obama, who have declared it a priority to address the unique challenges facing service members.

Now, though, the rescue program for service members is on its death bed despite ongoing housing-market turmoil in military communities.

The Defense Department’s homeowners-assistance program doesn’t officially close for reassigned service members until Sept. 30, 2012, but the program already faces a deficit. The department has paid out more than \$1.1 billion, exceeding the \$855 million approved by Congress.

In addition, there is little momentum in Washington to keep the expanded program afloat given the current focus on slashing federal spending.

Organizations that advocate for military families have urged the Obama administration to provide additional funds and expand the program so that it can help more soldiers.

But the administration didn’t request any new funds for the program for fiscal-year 2012.

Meanwhile, many military communities are struggling.

In one neighborhood near San Antonio's Lackland Air Force Base, one in eight homes received a foreclosure filing last year, according to foreclosure-listing service RealtyTrac Inc. Similarly high rates were seen near military bases in Southern California; Jacksonville, Fla.; and Dayton, Ohio.

The Defense Department has received 10,180 applications from service members who have met the existing criteria. More than 4,000 are waiting on benefits.

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

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

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.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy.
-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt**

**“I Did Not Serve My Country In
Iraq; I Served The 1%”
“My ‘Service’ Served Exxon-Mobil,
Halliburton, KBR, Blackwater, And
Other Multinational Corporations”
“We Are Here To Stand In Solidarity
With You, The People, Who Have
Been Oppressed And Exploited By
The Corporate And Political Elites Of
The World, The Bankers And The
Political Powers That Are At Their
Beck And Call”
[Veterans Day Speech At Occupy
Frankfurt, Germany]**

Veterans are standing in the front ranks of the Occupy movement because we know and feel first hand the effects of the world economic disaster that has descended on the 99%.

Nov 12, 2011 GI Café Kaiserslautern

Today, the 11/11/11 is many Holidays. In addition to it being St. Martin's Day, and the beginning of Fasching, in the United States today it is a national holiday as well. Its called Veterans Day, it takes place on the anniversary of the end of the First World War, and the supposed idea is to honor those men and women who have fought on behalf of the US government.

My name is Chris, and I am an Iraq war, Veteran.

I served in Baghdad in 2005-2006.

I am joined today by Dave, a Vietnam veteran, and others who are here to support us as we participate in another occupation. This war will not be fought with guns and bombs, but with our ideas and our will to transform and reshape the world.

This war is the war of the 99%, the vast majority of the population, standing up against 1%, the self styled elites whose control over the government and private sectors have brought them unimaginable wealth at the expense of normal people.

We are here to stand in solidarity with you, the people, who have been oppressed and exploited by the corporate and political elites of the world, the bankers and the political powers that are at their beck and call.

Let me read from a letter written by a comrade of ours, Ross Caputi, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps in Iraq: "I did not serve my country in Iraq; I served the 1%. It was on their behalf that I helped lay siege to Fallujah, helped kill thousands of civilians, helped displace hundreds of thousands of innocent people, and helped destroy an entire city.

"My 'service' served Exxon-Mobil, Halliburton, KBR, Blackwater, and other multinational corporations in Iraq. . . . I was an occupier, and now I am an #occupier."

Today the Occupy movement in the United States is being fed by the presence of veterans, from Iraq and Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, and Vietnam -- those who are known as "Veterans of the 99%" and who marched from Vietnam Veterans Plaza to the New York Stock Exchange on November 2. --Those who stood in solidarity with Iraq veteran L.Cpl. Scott Olsen who was shot and nearly killed by the police at Occupy Oakland in California. --Those Veterans for Peace who were the first to be beaten and arrested at Occupy Boston by the police of that city.

Veterans are standing in the front ranks of the Occupy movement because we know and feel first hand the effects of the world economic disaster that has descended on the 99%.

We have witnessed the privatization of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Many have returned home to find that the banks had foreclosed on our homes.

We returned home to higher unemployment rates than the general population, finding our jobs out-sourced to low wage third world nations we fought to "liberate."

We returned home to find that the government had bailed out the financial institutions with hundreds of billions of dollars, but cut benefits to veterans and conspired to deny us what is needed to help recover from the wars that were fought on their behalf.

A recent report in USA Today news cited figures from the government that in 2010 over 13,000 veterans between the ages of 18 and 30 were homeless.

In such ways the 1% says, "Thanks for your service"--to those who have bled and watched their comrades die. --To those who have committed atrocities for their profit. --To those who will carry the physical and psychological scars of pointless wars for the rest of their lives.

We say to the 1%: "We will no longer fight your wars! Instead, we stand in protest to the violence and injustice you have wrought upon the earth!"

Companies like Halliburton, KBR, General Dynamics, Fluor Daniels, Blackwater, Armour Group, Dyncorp, have made billions of dollars off of human tragedy, to pave the way for the likes of Exxon-Mobil, and Shell to take control of Iraq's oil fields.

And now there is no money to build a future?

We demand: Money for jobs and education, not for wars and occupation.

We demand an end to the influence of the US's military industrial complex and financial sector on Politicians who have been elected to serve the entire population, not just their lobbyists and campaign donors. We demand an end to the revolving door between government office, and corporate leadership. And we demand an end to our "elites" interest's being put before the interests of the general population.

We are not second class citizens, in the US veterans are treated (whether justified or not) with lip service as heroes, yet it is very clear who really gets first class treatment in the US: the 1%.

**"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**

ANNIVERSARIES

**November 13, 1933:
American Working-Class Heroes**



Carl Bunin, Peace History November 10-16

The first recorded “sit-down” strike in the U.S. was staged by workers at the Hormel Packing Company in Austin, Minnesota. The tactic worked: Hormel agreed to submit wage demands to binding arbitration.

The success of this strike reinvigorated the labor movement, which had been in decline through the 1920s.

“Four hundred men, many of them armed with clubs, sticks and rocks, crashed through the plant entrance, shattering the glass doors and sweeping the guards before them.

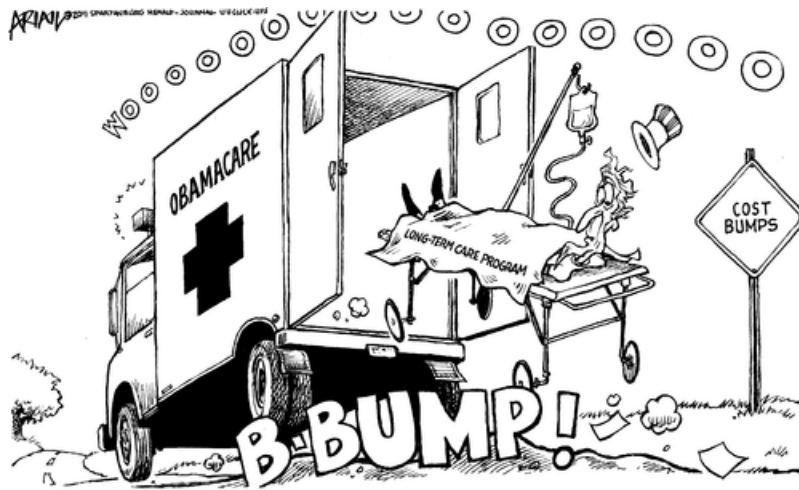
“The strikers quickly ran throughout the plant to chase out non-union workers. One . . . group crashed through the doors of a conference room where Jay Hormel and five company executives were meeting and declared “We’re taking possession. So move out!” (Larry Engelmann, “We Were the Poor -- The Hormel Strike of 1933,” Labor History, Fall, 1974.)

The tactic worked: within four days Hormel agreed to submit wage demands to binding arbitration. The success of this strike reinvigorated the labor movement, which had been in decline throughout the 1920s.

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