

“Exposing
the True Costs
of War”

The War Crimes Times

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TRILLIONS FOR IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN DOMESTIC SPENDING FREEZE . . .

Even Lost Wars Make Corporations Rich

by Chris Hedges

Power does not rest with the electorate. It does not reside with either of the two major political parties. It is not represented by the press. It is not arbitrated by a judiciary that protects us from predators. Power rests with corporations. And corporations gain very lucrative profits from war, even wars we have no chance of winning. All polite appeals to the formal systems of power will not end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must physically obstruct the war machine or accept a role as its accomplice.

The moratorium on anti-war protests in 2004 was designed to help elect the Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. John Kerry. It was a foolish and humiliating concession. Kerry snapped to salute like a windup doll when he was nominated. He talked endlessly about victory in Iraq. He assured the country that he would not have withdrawn from Fallujah. And by the time George W. Bush was elected for another term the anti-war movement had lost its momentum. The effort to return Congress to Democratic control in 2006 and end the war in Iraq became another sad lesson in incredulity. The Democratic Party, once in the majority, funded and expanded the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. And Barack Obama in 2008 proved to be yet another advertising gimmick for the corporate and military elite. All our efforts to work within the political process to stop these wars have been abject and miserable failures. And

(Continued on page 4)

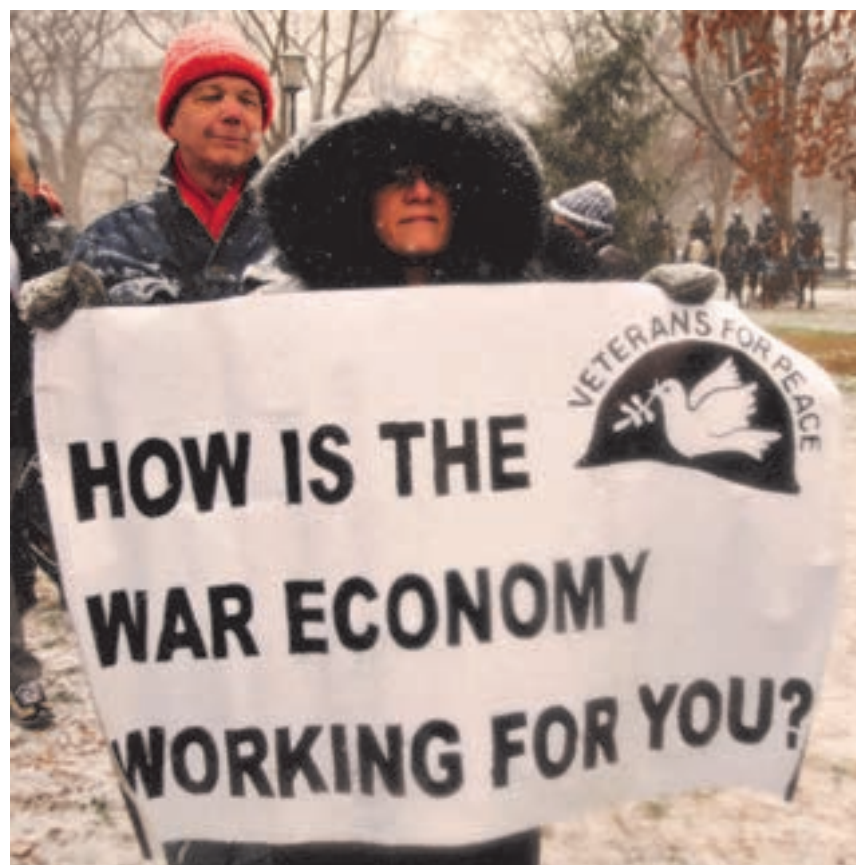
IRAQ 8 years of occupation — 20 years of war 1991-2011: The Iraqi People Have Suffered Enough

by Michael T. McPhearson

Twenty years ago this month [January 2011] I sat in the vast wilderness of the Arabian Desert as a Captain in the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division waiting to invade Iraq. I remember wondering how many of us would die, how many would return home scarred, broken. Would I ever see my wife and five year old son again? I never imagined U.S. troops would still be fighting there eleven years into the next century. Today when most people think of Iraq they think of the 2003 invasion, justified as the appropriate response to the September 11 terrorist attacks. People think March 20 will mark eight years of U.S. war on Iraq; this is far from the reality.

In December 2003, as part of a peace delegation of military families and veterans, I visited Baghdad and sat with an Iraqi human rights activist who spoke the truth as many Iraqis see it. The man, who appeared to be in his late fifties, told us through an interpreter that “...all the Iraqi suffering is because of the Americans.” He explained that Saddam Hussein’s Baath party cronies, who came to power via a 1968 coup after a failed 1963 attempt, boasted of having U.S. help. He went on to remind us of the first invasion and the following decade of Iraqi suffering under U.S. led economic sanctions. He ended his comments citing the March 2003 invasion and ongoing occupation mounted by the U.S. to remove a dictator that the U.S. helped put

(See IRAQ on page 22)



Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate and former Chief Economist of the World Bank, and Linda Bilmes, an expert in U.S. budgeting and public finance, have estimated the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan: “Our calculations are based on conservative assumptions. They are conceptually simple, even if occasionally technically complicated. A \$3 trillion figure for the total cost strikes us as judicious, and probably errs on the low side. Needless to say, this number represents the cost only to the United States. It does not reflect the enormous cost to the rest of the world, or to Iraq.”

President Barack Obama announcing his 2012 budget proposal: “I’ve called for a freeze on annual domestic spending over the next five years.”

How’s the War Economy Working for You?

Photo above by Ellen Davidson:
Linda LeTendre brings message to the White House on December 16, 2010

INSIDE: War & Economy — pages 2-16, including articles by Ralph Nader, Gareth Porter, Bill Quigley, David Swanson, Andrew Bacevich, and Leonard C. Goodman; Ray McGovern on “America’s Stay-at-Home Ex-President” — page 17; Military rape — page 19; and much more...

Civil Resistance at the White House on the 8th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq — see pages 22 & 23.

This is but one aspect of the costs to one California city of the occupation of Iraq

How is the War Economy Working for Your Community?

Out of Pocket: Costs of War Passed Directly to City and County

by Rowland Lane Anderson

When the federal government takes our employees, should they be responsible for the cost to our community?

In 2009, when I ran for Santa Barbara City Council, I was present for budget discussions where Police Chief Cam Sanchez explained that one of the difficulties of the previous years was the cost of unfunded federal mandates that applied upon the activation and deployment of reservists and National Guard who are part of the city's police force. He had up to four cops out at a time! City Attorney Steve Wiley outlined for me the mandates and associated costs: The city is required to hold the positions open, causing overtime for the remaining officers. Also, the rules mandate pension continuity (so, no savings there). Additionally, the city pays a salary differential so that a private will not lose the house he bought as a city police officer.

The mandates and differential apply to all city, county, and agency employees (Metropolitan Transit District, etc.), not just cops.

When I tried to get real numbers from the city, I got the following from Human Resources Manager Barbara Barker:

This is in response to your email of October 24, 2010.

Between September 2001 and November 2009, we had nine employees who received our military pay differential for a total of \$194,944 or an average of \$21,660 per employee on military leave.

As you know the City Council approved a policy whereby the City would pay the difference between an employee's City pay and their military pay in order to keep their salaries whole while on military

leave. We have not had any employees utilize this policy since November 2009. Information related to benefits, retirement, and overtime caused because a coworker is on military leave is not something that we track and as such is not readily available.

Note that this is only the salary differential, not the more expensive pension obligation, overtime, etc. I asked the county for the same information. Again, the only information I could get was

about the differential. This was the response from the county, emailed by then-CEO Mike Brown, which he cc'd to the supes and other county staffers:

For those employees whose units are activated or individual employees who are activated we do pay the difference between their military pay and what they were making here if their military pay is less and we do preserve their retirement. For the first years of the Iraq War we sometimes had as many as 12 gone at one time but this eased down over time and I don't know if there are any gone now. Our policy says we will cover up to 30 months. In the big picture it wasn't a lot of money. Not all activated employees who went received it because their military

rank caused their pay to be higher than their County pay. It would take some historical research to see what we paid. Given the sensitivity of this issue and before we act, I believe it would be proper for the Board to direct staff to conduct such research and prepare a report by a majority vote in a public session.

As you can see, the city and county did not calculate or even address the cost of providing pension continuity. I got more complete numbers from Santa Monica. On October 6, 2009, City Councilmember Kevin McKeown wrote me back as follows:

I already (in 2007) had the City of Santa Monica Finance Department calculate the cost of the first four years of the war in Iraq, just to the City—and that came out to between \$145 and \$153.2 million. It included things other than direct federalization of employees, but clearly any jurisdiction could perform the same calculations.

The next day, in response to my further inquiries, McKeown wrote,

Not only can you share my earlier and more generic numbers on the TOTAL cost to our community of the war, attached please find a spreadsheet that is very specific about the payroll cost of the federalization of Santa Monica city employees in the most recently completed fiscal year. Over half a million dollars out of the payroll budget of just one small city of about 90,000!

I cannot see why the city and county would not be able to give real numbers such as Santa Monica has. Overtime worked to cover for positions held vacant due to deployments should be fairly straightforward. Calculating pension costs would be more complicated but not more complicated than other calculations that city finance makes.

One thing is perfectly clear in all this: There is a lot of money involved. I've consulted with a retired attorney who has experience in federal courts about suing to recover these costs. His initial appraisal was that the path of least resistance would be to

seek a court's "declaration of the responsibility of the federal government to reimburse, rather than a suit for dollars of reimbursement or for a decree forbidding uncompensated deployment."

Meanwhile, the Santa Barbara Public Library's Central and Eastside branches are closed Mondays, as of mid-2010, in order to save \$288,964 annually, including the cost of salaries, utilities, and supplies. And the Evening Lap Swim at Los Baños Pool is closed for the winter, to save the city \$10,800.

Rowland Lane Anderson is a member of Veterans For Peace Chapter 54, among other veterans' organizations.

The City paid the difference between an employee's City pay and their military pay—an average of \$21,660 per employee. This is only the salary differential, not the more expensive pension obligation, overtime, etc.

The War Crimes Times is a project of Veterans For Peace



(www.VeteransForPeace.org)

a nonprofit, national organization of veterans working together for peace and justice through nonviolence.

War Crimes Times provides information on war crimes and war criminals, the need to hold war criminals accountable, the many costs of war, and the effects of our war culture on our national character. Our contributors include journalists, legal experts, poets, artists, and veterans speaking from experience. While their views may not always be entirely consistent with the mission of Veterans For Peace, their topics address the concerns of *War Crimes Times*.

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Contact: **editor@WarCrimesTimes.org**

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How Is The War Economy Working For You?

The beginning of a campaign—apocalyptic Detroit and the 2010 U.S. Social Forum

by John Amidon

Unnerving, surreal, and apocalyptic are my impressions of Detroit after sleeping in a vacant lot across the street from two grand old hotels, the Ed-dystone and Parkview, both now cannibalized by a city which is eating itself.

Michael McPhearson had called for a veteran's encampment at the 2010 U.S. Social Forum. That fell through but Elliot Adams, Sandy Kelson, and Michael decided to spend the night in this empty lot. Reluctantly I stayed too, although somewhat paranoid about sleeping in this strange and dying wasteland of a once prosperous and thriving city.

Ghosts and shadows stared down at us as the sun set and the homeless wandered along, some now living in the abandoned hotels. Night came and I fell asleep uneasily after scanning the building for snipers only to awaken

America cities are slowly dying largely due to the misuse of our resources and the incomprehensible and mind-numbing expenditures of taxpayer money on our empire's wars and occupations.

several times and stare at the forsaken skyline, at buildings with windows broken or completely removed, and at a street light spilling shrouds of light unevenly across the deepening night.

Apocalypse—"a place of total destruction...a revelation of the future"—and Detroit. My eyes had been shocked open.

This was an American city and all across America cities were slowly dying largely due to the misuse of our resources and the incomprehensible and mind-numbing expenditures of taxpayer money on our empire's wars and occupations.

The next day, we gratefully accepted Mike Ferner and Sue Carter's gracious offer to host us at their home in Toledo, about an hour's drive south. I slept well that night, far more relaxed in this secure setting and mellowed by the humorous exchanges of our group and the communal strawberry daiquiris skillfully and lovingly blended by Leah Bolger.

The following morning I woke up and told the group I had a good idea. Everyone looked at me and asked, "What is it?"

"Let's hang a large banner on one of the gutted high rise buildings in Detroit. It will ask/say, 'How is the War Economy Working for You?' and have the VFP logo."

And then the first of many miracles happened. This group of fine and dedicated dissidents unanimously agreed this was a good idea; Elliot, Leah, Sandy, Mike, Michael, and I all agreed! Truly this was a miraculous and transcendent moment.

Once back at the Social Forum, Elliot designed the initial banner, and materials were given to us by the Backbone Campaign and the Ruckus Society: vinyl, a projector

to project the image for tracing, and paint. Elliot, Sandy, and I began to work. Later we would be joined by the others who were facilitating workshops at the social forum. By the day's end, our first banner was finished.

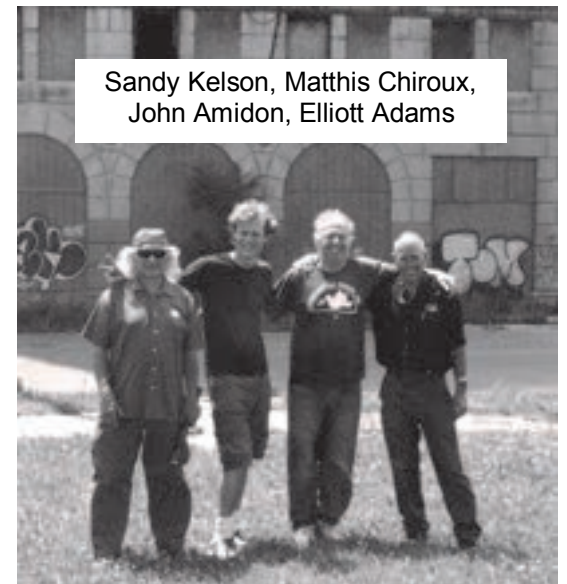
The following day we scouted the city and determined the Ed-dystone Hotel was a good location for the initial banner drop and press conference. Mike Ferner artfully composed a press release and we were underway. Elliot also recruited Matthis Chiroux who became the fourth member of our inside-the-building team. Leah conducted an articulate press conference. Michael recorded an eloquent and succinct video which we posted on YouTube.

Although this team was an impromptu gathering, the action went off without a hitch thanks to each member contributing and executing an important and needed skill. But special thanks needs to go to Elliot Adams for his skillful, hands-on leadership in directing and executing the banner drop.

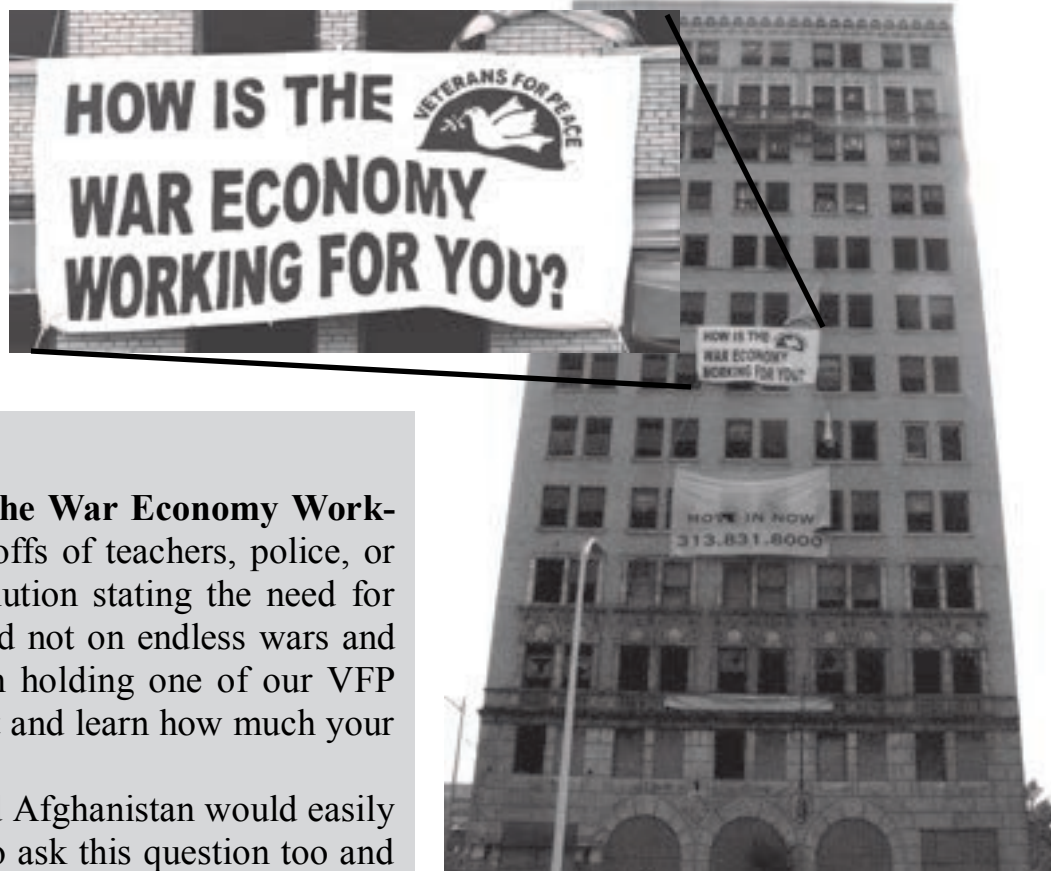
VFP members who viewed the video strongly resonated with our message. It was time to connect the war to the economy—in fact, making this connection was long overdue!

"How Is The War Economy Working For You?" is now a national campaign

Sandy Kelson, Matthis Chiroux, John Amidon, Elliott Adams



Leah Bolger



Detroit's Eddystone Hotel, listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, was designed by Louis Kemper and built in 1924. It's been abandoned since the late 1990s.

What You Can Do

Wherever you live, begin asking the question: "How Is The War Economy Working For You?" Connect it to local concerns such as layoffs of teachers, police, or state workers. Ask your local government to pass a resolution stating the need for fiscal resources to be spent on human needs at home—and not on endless wars and occupation. Sometimes simply joining in a demonstration holding one of our VFP lawns signs is enough. Go to the National Priorities Project and learn how much your city, country, or state has spent on the wars.

Show how taxpayer money spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan would easily cover your state's deficit. Encourage other organizations to ask this question too and encourage them to do so. There are as many possibilities as your willingness to take action will allow. *See the Detroit video; get yard signs, buttons, and bumper stickers; and learn more at www.wareconomy.org.*

Even Lost Wars Make Corporations Rich

(Continued from page 1)

while we wasted our time, tens of thousands of Iraqi, Afghan and Pakistani civilians, as well as U.S. soldiers and Marines, were traumatized, maimed, and killed.

Either you are against war or you are not. Either you use your bodies to defy the war makers and weapons manufacturers until the wars end or you do not. Either you have the dignity and strength of character to denounce those who ridicule or ignore your core moral beliefs—including Obama—or you do not. Either you stand for something or you do not. And because so many in the anti-war movement proved to be weak and naive in 2004, 2006, and 2008, we will have to start over. This time we must build an anti-war movement that will hold fast. We must defy the entire system. We must acknowledge that it is not our job to help Democrats win elections. The Democratic Party has amply proved, by its failure to stand up for working men and women, its slavishness to Wall Street and its refusal to end these wars, that it cannot be trusted. We must trust only ourselves. And we must disrupt the system. The next chance, in case you missed the last one, to protest these wars will come Saturday, March 19, the eighth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Street demonstrations are scheduled in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. You can find details on www.answercoalition.org/national/index.html.

We are spending, much of it through the accumulation of debt, nearly a trillion dollars a year to pay for these wars. We drive up the deficits to wage war while we have more than 30 million people unemployed, some 40 million people living in poverty and tens of millions more in a category euphemistically called “near poverty.” The profits of weapons manufacturers and private contractors have quadrupled since the invasion of Afghanistan. But the cost for corporate greed has been chronic and long-term unemployment and underemployment, and the slashing of federal and state services. The corporations, no matter how badly the wars are going, make huge profits from the conflicts.

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Designated “free speech” zone with very few people in it.
(Photo credit: www.flickr.com/photos/josh)

They have no interest in turning off their money-making machine. Let Iraqis die. Let Afghans die. Let Pakistanis die. Let our own die. And the mandarins in Congress and the White House, along with their court jesters on the television news shows, cynically “feel our pain” and sell us out for bundles of corporate cash.

Michael Prysner, a veteran of the Iraq War and one of the co-founders of March Forward!, gets it. His group is one of those organizing the March 19 protests. Prysner joined the Army out of high school in June 2001. He was part of the Iraq invasion force. He worked during the war in Iraq tracking targets and calling in airstrikes and artillery barrages. He took part in nighttime raids on Iraqi homes. He worked as an interrogator. He did ground surveillance missions and protected convoys. He left the Army in 2005, disgusted by the war and the lies told to sustain it. He has been involved since leaving the military in anti-recruiting drives at high schools and street protests. He was arrested with 130 others in front of the White House during the Dec. 16 anti-war protest organized by Veterans for Peace.

“I believed going into the war that we were there to help the Iraqi people and find weapons of mass destruction,” he said when we spoke a few days ago. “But it quickly became clear that these two reasons for the war were absolutely false. If you mentioned weapons of mass destruction to intelligence officers they would laugh at you. It was not even part of the mission to look for these things. If it was part of the mission I would have known because I

was part of the only intelligence company in the north of the country. I thought that maybe we were there to help the Iraqi people, but all I saw when I was there was Iraqis brutalized and their living conditions deteriorate drastically. Iraqis would tell me we were worse than Saddam. I soon realized there was a different purpose for the war, that we were putting in place a permanent military occupation. It was my firsthand experience during my deployment that showed me the reality of the Iraq War and led me to begin to question

Iraqis would tell me we were worse than Saddam.

—Mike Prysner



Soldier patrols Halabja, Iraq. Buried in the village cemetery are many victims of the 1988 chemical weapons attack, ordered by Saddam Hussein.
(Photo by Sgt. Sean Kimmons, February 23, 2005)

U.S. foreign policy. I began to wonder what U.S. foreign policy as a whole was about. I saw that Iraq was a microcosm. The U.S. military is used to conquer countries for the rich, to seize markets, land, resources and labor for Wall Street. This is what drives U.S. foreign policy.”

“When Obama was elected in 2008, the majority of the country had turned against the Iraq War,” he said. “You could not be a Democrat running for office without giving lip service to being against the Iraq War. The reason people were against the war is because there was a constant, senseless death of U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians. It was a squandering of our resources. This has not changed, despite the rebranding of the occupation. U.S. soldiers are still being killed, wounded and psychologically traumatized, especially those on their third, fourth, and fifth deployment who were traumatized in previous deployments and are being re-traumatized. There were two U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq a few days ago. The reasons that led people to oppose the war in 2003 are still in effect. All that has changed is that the U.S. has been able to recruit enough Iraqis to put in the forefront and take the brunt of the combat operations—with U.S. soldiers a few steps behind. U.S. soldiers are still involved in combat. One of our members [of March Forward!], who joined our group about a month ago, is in Iraq now. He told me yesterday that he was hit harder than he has ever been hit on his nine months of deployment. Combat is still a reality. People are still being killed and maimed.”

“The war is still going on,” he lamented. “It is still bad for U.S. soldiers, and Iraq is completely destroyed.

(Continued from page 4)

It is a catastrophe for the Iraqi people. To call this current operation 'New Dawn,' like this is a new day for the Iraqi people, ignores the fact that Iraqis have no electricity, live with constant violence, have no functioning government, have occupying forces still in their country, and suffer rampant birth defects from the depleted uranium and other things. Iraq's 'New Dawn' is a horror. It will remain that way until Iraq is given justice, which is a complete and immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces and heavy reparations paid to that country."

Iraq, despite the brutality of Saddam Hussein, was a prosperous country with a highly educated middle class before the war. Its infrastructure was modern and efficient. Iraqis enjoyed a high standard of living. The country did not lack modern conveniences. Things worked. And being in Iraq, as I often was when I covered the Middle East for the *New York Times*, while unnerving because of state repression, was never a hardship. Since our occupation, the country has tumbled into dysfunction. Factories, hospitals, power plants, phone service, sewage systems, and electrical grids do not work. Iraqis, if they are lucky, get three hours of electricity a day. Try this in 110-degree heat. Poverty is endemic. More than a million Iraqi civilians have been killed. Nearly 5 million have been displaced from their homes or are refugees. The Mercer Quality of Living survey last year ranked Baghdad last among cities—the least livable on the planet. Iraq, which once controlled its own oil, has been forced to turn its oil concessions over to foreign corporations. That is what we have bequeathed to Iraq—violence, misery, and theft.

It is not as if the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have popular support. The latest CNN/Opinion Research Corp. poll shows that 63 percent of the American public opposes U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. And the level of discontent over the war in Iraq is even higher. Yet we continue to accept the duplicity of bankrupt liberal institutions and a corrupt political process that year after year betrays us. Public opinion is on our side. We should mobilize it to fight back. When I and the other protesters were arrested outside the White House on December 16, several of the police officers who had been deployed as military members to Afghanistan or

Vast amounts of wealth, which we create, are poured into these wars and the military while people here are facing increasing hardship.

—Mike Prysner



We drive up the deficits to wage war while we have more than 30 million people unemployed, some 40 million people living in poverty and tens of millions more in a category euphemistically called "near poverty." The profits of weapons manufacturers and private contractors have quadrupled since the invasion of Afghanistan.

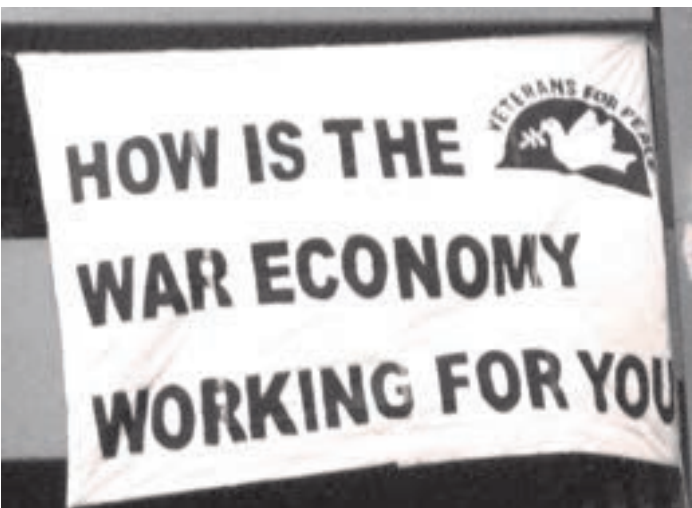
Iraq muttered to veterans as they handcuffed them that they were right about the wars. The anti-war sentiment is widespread, and we must find the courage to make it heard.

"All these people join the military because there is an abysmal job market and tuition rates are skyrocketing," Prysner said. "Many young people are cut off from a college education. People are funneled into the military so they can make a living, have a home, health care, take care of their children, and have an education. If a fraction of the money spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan was used to meet human needs, kids would be able to go to college at affordable rates. We would be able to create jobs for young people when they get out of high school. Vast amounts of wealth, which we create, are poured into these wars and the military while people here are facing increasing hardship. We have to demand and fight for change, not ask for it."

"We supposedly elected the most progressive president we have seen in a long time and the Democrats took control of the House and the Senate, but the wars have only expanded and intensified," Prysner said. "The wars are now going into other countries, especially Pakistan and Yemen. The Democrats had a filibuster-proof majority in Congress. We had a seemingly progressive president. But all we got was more war, more military spending, more bombing of innocent people abroad, and more U.S. troops coming home in coffins. This should eradicate and shatter the idea that convincing the Democrats to be on our side will accomplish anything. Left to its own devices, Washington will continue its war drive. It will continue to dominate these countries and use them for staging grounds to invade other countries. There has been no real change in our foreign policy. If we are hurting the Democrats at this point, then fine. We need to build an independent political movement that is outside of the Establishment. This is the only way we have ever won real victories in our history."

Chris Hedges is a senior fellow at The Nation Institute. His newest book is Death of the Liberal Class.

This article is reprinted with the author's permission. It first appeared at Truthdig.com.



U.S. house prices 'hitting new lows'

— (*BBC News 01/25/2011*) House prices in many U.S. cities hit new post-bubble lows in November, according to a widely-followed market survey. Prices have been declining across the country since last summer, following the expiry in April of a home-

buyer tax credit that temporarily boosted sales. **2010 sets U.S. home foreclosure record** — (*World Socialist Web Site 01/14/2011*) U.S. home foreclosures hit a new record in 2010, as millions of families faced a disastrous combination of joblessness, falling wages, and plunging home values. The latest foreclosure figures, released Thursday by Realtytrac.com, come amidst a bout of negative economic statistics that underscore the depth of the social crisis. Approximately 2.8 million properties had foreclosure actions taken against them in 2010, about 1 in 45 U.S. households in all and an increase of 2 percent over 2009. The number of properties repossessed by banks jumped 14 percent, to over one million.

Wall Street Bankers Take in Record \$135 Billion in Compensation

— (*Wall Street Journal 02/02/2011*) In 2010, total compensation and benefits at publicly traded Wall Street banks and securities firms hit a record of \$135 billion, according to an analysis by the *Wall Street Journal*. The total is up 5.7% from \$128 billion in combined compensation and benefits by the same companies in 2009. **43 Million Americans Now Receiving Food Stamps, a 14% Increase**

— (*Democracy Now! 02/03/2011*) The number of Americans on food stamps continues to increase, as 43.6 million people relied on food stamps in November. The number of people receiving food stamps has jumped by 14 percent over the past year. In Washington, D.C., and Mississippi, more than one-fifth of residents receive food stamps. **Lockheed Martin profit up 19% in 4th quarter**

— (*The Washington Post 01/28/2011*) Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor, reported Thursday that its fourth-quarter profit grew nearly 19 percent, aided by the sale of one unit and increased revenue in its electronic systems group. The Bethesda-based company reported earnings of \$983 million (\$2.73 per share) in the three-month period, up from \$827 million (\$2.17) in the same period a year earlier. Quarterly revenue grew slightly, to \$12.79 billion.

General Dynamics Q4 Profit Increases (*RTTNews 01/26/2011*) — Defense contractor General Dynamics Corp. (GD: News) Wednesday reported an increase in fourth-quarter profit, helped by an 8.9 percent growth in sales and improved margins. Sales increased across all of the company's segments. For the fourth quarter, the Falls Church, Virginia-based company's net earnings increased to \$729 million or \$1.91 per share from \$614 million or \$1.57 per share in the previous year.

MLK Injustice Index 2011: Racism, Materialism, and Militarism in the U.S.

by Bill Quigley

Dr. Martin Luther King sought peace and justice in the material world, for real people. That means our demands must be based on material reality, and our struggle guided by a careful review of the facts. Here are some facts to act upon, in the course of changing our world.

We as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values... when machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

— Martin Luther King, Jr. April 4, 1967

As we remember the courage and hope of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we must not forget that he spoke out and worked against the injustices of our nation, particularly those of racism, materialism, and militarism. Indeed that is what made him so hated and so dangerous when he was alive.

We have achievements to celebrate: the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”; the release of San Suu Kyi in Burma; the enactment of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights by the NY legislature that extends important labor rights to 200,000 nannies and housekeepers; the victories of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers; and the exposure of secret U.S. and other country machinations by Wikileaks, among others.

There has been progress in dismembering the laws of segregation which divided our country. We must celebrate the successes that many struggled to achieve. However, as we celebrate those victories let us not lose sight of the challenges still facing this country.

Here are some of the facts about racism, materialism, and militarism in the U.S. which we should reflect on as we decide how best to carry on the radical struggle for justice of Dr. King. [For each fact, the author provides a brief cite to the sources at his blog: <http://blackagenda.com/?q=blog/43>.]

Let us renew our commitment to the radical revolution of values for which Dr. King gave his life as we turn to the realities of current life.

Racism: Health, Housing, Income, and Jobs

Health. Infants born to black women are 1.5 to 3 times more likely to die than infants born to women of all other races or ethnicities. Black men and women are much more likely to die of heart disease and stroke than their white counterparts. Hypertension is by far most prevalent among non-Hispanic blacks (42% vs. 29% among whites). Uninsured persons are only about half as likely to have hypertension under control as those with insurance.

Twenty-five percent of black workers and

forty-three percent of Hispanic workers do not have health insurance, compared to fifteen percent of white workers according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Overall, sixteen percent of all whites, twenty-one percent of blacks and thirty-two percent of Hispanics do not have health insurance.

Housing. In cities with large African American populations, black segregation looks pretty much the same as it did 40 years ago; Hispanic segregation is on the rise.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the crisis in subprime mortgages in minority neighborhoods was not the result of riskier lending spurred by the Community Reinvestment Act or a decline in underwriting standards.

The top 25 hedge fund managers were paid, on average, more than \$1 billion each in 2009.

There are 43 million people in the U.S. living under the official poverty line.

Military spending has increased by \$661 billion (75%) since the year 2000—which represents about \$2100 for every person in the U.S.

Even with similar qualities (credit profiles, down payment ratios, personal characteristics, and residential locations) African Americans were more likely to receive subprime loans. Similarly blacks and Hispanics were significantly more likely than whites to receive loans with unfavorable terms such as prepayment penalties. The result: from 1993 to 2000, the share of subprime mortgages going to households in minority neighborhoods rose from 2 to 18 percent.

Because predatory lenders could efficiently target entire minority neighborhoods with subprime mortgages, the practice affected larger numbers of people than it would have if they had been more geographically spread out. In true layman’s terms, it was like “shooting fish in a barrel.”

Segregated neighborhoods just made it too easy to engage large numbers of people in this devastating scheme and this multiplied the effect of the crisis.

Black middle class families have been stripped of more wealth by the real estate and foreclosure crisis than any single event in U.S. history. Due entirely to subprime loans, black borrowers are expected to lose between \$71 billion and \$92 billion.

Income and Jobs. Median household income for white families is \$51,861, for black families it is \$32,584, and for Hispanic families it is \$38,039.



The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) is on pace to deport about 400,000 people this fiscal year, more under the current administration than any before.

The overall unemployment rate among whites is 8.5% and among blacks it is 15.8%. For white teenagers the unemployment rate is 22% and among blacks it is 44%.

Materialism: Inequality and Poverty

The top 25 hedge fund managers were paid, on average, more than \$1 billion each in 2009.

Between 2002 and 2007, 65 percent of all income growth in the U.S. went to the top 1 percent of the population; that top 1 percent also held a larger share of income than any time since 1928, according to economists Emmanuel Saez and Thomas Piketty.

There are 43 million people in the U.S. living under the official poverty line. While there are more white people living in poverty (18 million) than black (10 million) or Hispanic (12 million) poor, the poverty rate for whites of 12% is significantly less than the 26% rate for blacks and the 25% rate for Hispanics.

The bottom 20% of the U.S. population have negative wealth, they owe more than the value of all their assets. From 20 to 40th percentile, the next 20% of the population, average about \$5,000 in wealth. The middle 20%, from the 40 to 60th percentile, own \$65,000 in assets. The next highest 20%, the 60 to 80th percentile, are worth about \$208,000. From 80 to 90th, the average wealth is \$477,000. From 90 to 95th, the wealth is \$908,000 in assets. From 95 to 99th is \$2,734,000 in wealth assets. And the top 1%? \$13,977,000 in average wealth.

Since the economic recession started, there has been a 25% rise in the number of people “doubling up” in housing by moving in with others, there has been a rise in the number of homeless families, and in not one of the 50 states can a person working full-time at one minimum wage job afford a two bedroom apartment for his or her family.

Militarism: Troops, Expenditures and Arms Sales

The U.S. reports it has 1.4 million people in active military service in 143 countries around the world. The top places for U.S. military are: Afghanistan (105,900), Iraq (96,200), Germany (53,951), and Japan (34,385).

There are an additional 819,000 people in the Reserve and National Guard and another 709,000 civilian personnel.

The U.S. spent \$774 billion directly on its military budget in 2010. The Department of Defense budget

(See INJUSTICE on page 7)



How's the war economy working for you?**Good Profits and 'The Good War'**

by Leonard C. Goodman

Now in its tenth year, the war in Afghanistan is the longest in U.S. history. And as the war drags on, the situation goes from bad to worse: 2010 is the most violent year on record. The Taliban, who were largely defeated in December 2001, now control about 80 percent of the country. In the meantime, we are propping up a government in Kabul that is predatory and corrupt. We are spending about \$100 billion a year to wage war in one of the poorest countries on earth. Yet our president, who assured us during the campaign that he was opposed to "dumb wars," has re-committed America to this fight for at least four more years. Afghanistan, we are told, is the "good war." The "bad war" was in Iraq.

It is certainly true that for some Americans, Afghanistan has been a good

war. My extended family owns a share of a major defense contractor. Many times I have asked: Why can't this great technology company shift gears to become a leader in high-speed rail or other green technologies that might some day

There is no business more profitable than war.

save our economy or even the planet? Answer: There is no business more profitable than war. The corporation's board of directors continues to hire ex-generals and well-connected lobbyists to make sure that the lucrative contracts keep pouring in. The company's profits have tripled since 9/11.

Less well understood is the role of defense contractors in promoting policies that benefit their industry by making the world a more dangerous place. It takes more than direct political donations and revolving door lobbyists to gin up public support for foolish wars. So

defense contractors contribute to think tanks that lend the veneer of scholarship and credibility to the bad policies they push.

Corporate-funded think tanks like Project for a New American Century, the National Institute for Public Policy, the Center for a New American Security, and the Center

for Security Policy have helped sell us such turkeys as preemptive war, Star Wars and regime change in Iraq, while at the same time working to defeat any policies which might reduce the demand

Dumb wars are the best ones because they create more problems than they solve, assuring future sales of weapons and services.

for new weapons systems, such as the START nuclear arms reduction treaty.

For the defense industry, dumb wars are the best ones because they create more problems than they solve, assuring future sales of weapons and services. A great example of this bad policy propaganda machine in action occurred in the winter of 2002, when the Taliban had been defeated in Afghanistan and there was a chance to install a credible government. Then the defense industry helped fund the campaign to convince Americans they needed to divert resources from Afghanistan to launch a preemptive strike against Iraq. Eight years later, Afghanistan is in utter chaos, yet think tank scholars assure us that we can still "win" the war as long as we pursue Gen. David Petraeus' counter-insurgency strategy.

When defense contractors guide defense policy, the public interest is not served. Their interests are antithetical.

By law, corporate boards have a fiduciary duty to maximize the returns to their shareholders. Most board members of defense firms are rational and charitable in their personal affairs. Yet, when they sit in boardrooms, they cannot legally support policies that might make the world safer because those would be bad for business.

From the vantage of the boardroom of a defense contractor, the Afghan war is a good war. It destabilized much of the Middle East and southern Asia, including nuclear-armed Pakistan. It has created tens of thousands of new enemies for the United States—people who had no beef with us until we invaded their country and killed their relatives. Most of our new enemies are too poor to pose any immediate threat. But they will be targets for recruitment into terror groups, thus assuring future dangers, more war, and unsustainable levels of military spending.

Many, including George Washington and Dwight Eisenhower, have warned of the danger to republican liberty posed by massive standing armies and unchecked military spending. One of the most eloquent scholars on this topic, Chalmers Johnson, passed away in November. Johnson warned of the inherent instability of a political system that seeks to combine domestic democracy and foreign imperialism. The final volume of his seminal treatise on militarism is titled, *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*. If his analysis is correct, we have no time to waste.

Leonard Goodman is a Chicago criminal defense lawyer and Adjunct Professor of Law at DePaul University.

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**Injustice: Racism, Materialism and Militarism***(Continued from page 6)*

was over \$660 billion, counting the special expenditures for Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The Department of Veterans Affairs was \$114 billion for 2010.

The U.S. spends much more on its military than any other country in the world. Military spending has increased by \$661 billion (75%) since the year 2000—which represents about \$2100 for every person in the U.S. Excluding expenditures for veterans, the U.S. military budget in 2009 was over \$660 billion. In second place globally was China at about \$100 billion. France was third at \$63 billion, the UK next with \$58 billion and Russia in 5th place spending \$53 billion. In fact the U.S. spends more on military than the rest of the top 10 countries in the world put together.

The U.S. also leads the world in the sale of lethal weapons to others, selling about one of every three weapons worldwide. The USA's major clients are South Korea, Israel, and United Arab Emirates.

The U.S. continues to hold 174 people in indefinite and illegal detention in Guantanamo despite global calls for closure. Thirty eight of those still being held have won their habeas corpus petitions in front of federal judges but still have not been freed.

The U.S. continues to launch remote-controlled unmanned predator drones into Pakistan, a country we are not even at war with. In 2010, U.S. drones struck Pakistan 118 times killing many civilians.

The number of deaths in the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are difficult to calculate since the U.S. only counts U.S. deaths. The U.S. reports 1,277 U.S. military have died in Afghanistan and 4,427 died in Iraq. The Iraq Body Count estimates between 99,357 and 108,475 civilians have died in violence associated with the war in Iraq.

Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz estimates that the total cost of the Iraq war to the U.S. is

more than \$3 trillion. For this estimate he calculated the actual military costs, the cost of treating and compensating disabled veterans, a \$10 increase in the price of oil (the increase in the price of oil went from \$25 a barrel when the U.S. invaded Iraq to as high as \$140 a barrel in 2008), the increase in the federal debt, and the borrowing that it demanded.

Conclusion

As we celebrate the life of Dr. King, let us realize the challenges that still face those who seek a world of justice and peace. He showed us that anger at injustice can be combined with courage to create real hope for a better world. Let us address the injustices of continuing racism, materialism, and militarism with the courage and hope that Dr. King displayed in his brief life.

Bill Quigley is Legal Director at the Center for Constitutional Rights and a law professor at Loyola University New Orleans. He can be reached at quigley77@gmail.com.

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On Monday, February 7, President Obama went to speak to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to try to improve relations between his administration and the nation's largest business-interest lobby

Why Did the President Cross the Road?

by David Swanson

To kneel before the corporate throne of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. And here's what he had to say there on Monday.

President Obama again stressed that he wanted to freeze non-war/military spending well into the next president's tenure:

That's why I've proposed that we freeze annual domestic spending for the next five years. Understand what this means. This would reduce the deficit by more than \$400 billion over the next decade, and bring this spending—domestic discretionary spending—down to the lowest share of our economy since Eisenhower was president. That was a long time ago.

President Obama again pretended that Social Security is breaking a budget that it is not in any way a part of, and that Social Security is in trouble. (In reality the damage he did to it a few months back could be repaired and more by simply requiring people with large incomes to pay in at the same rate as people with small ones):

Because the driving force on our deficits are entitlements spending. And that's going to require both parties to work together, because those are some tough problems that we're going to have to solve. And I am eager to work with both parties and with the Chamber to take additional steps across the budget to put our nation on a sounder fiscal footing.

Which branch of the government is the Chamber exactly? I need one of those Constitutional refreshers that Congress attaches to bills now. And how can the Chamber support, i.e. destroy, Social Security or Medicare or Medicaid if it is not a branch of government?

Obama avoided, at least for a while, the topic of spending on that majority of the budget that goes to the military and wars, and which he has proposed not to

freeze. There were more important matters to attend to first. Such as lowering corporate taxes (who knew there still were any?):

Now, another barrier government can remove—and I hear a lot about this from many of you—is a burdensome corporate tax code with one of the highest rates in the world. You know how it goes: because of various loopholes and carve-outs that have built up over the years, some industries pay an average rate that is four or five times higher than others. Companies are taxed heavily for making investments with equity, yet the tax code actually pays companies to invest using leverage. As a result, you've got too many companies ending up making decisions based on what their tax director says instead of what their engineer designs or what their factories produce. And that puts our entire economy at a disadvantage. We need something smarter, something simpler, something fairer. That's why I want to lower the corporate rate and eliminate these loopholes to pay for it, so that it doesn't add a dime to our deficit. And I'm asking for your help in this fight. I think it can be done.

And removing regulations:

Which brings me to the last barriers we're trying to remove, and those are outdated and unnecessary regulations. I've ordered a government-wide review, and if there are rules on the books that are needlessly stifling job creation and economic growth, we will fix them. Already we're dramatically cutting down on the paperwork that saddles businesses with huge administrative costs. We're improving the way FDA evaluates things like medical devices, to get innovative and life-saving treatments to market faster. And the EPA, based on the need for further scientific analysis, delayed the green-house gas permitting rules for biomass.

Obama threw in praise for regulations along with his promise to reduce them. And then he came, in a roundabout way, to the topic of war:

...the United States could cut its military budget (just the Department of so-called Defense, not counting the hundreds of billions spent through other departments) by 85% and still easily be the most expensive military on the planet. Taking the DOD down to merely three times the expense of China's military (the world's next largest) would mean cutting it by 55%. Taking it down to twice China's military would mean cutting it by 70%.

—David Swanson,
“Public Says Cut Pentagon,
Obama Says Increase It”

And I'm reminded, toward the end of the 1930s, amidst the Depression, the looming prospect of war, FDR, President Roosevelt, realized he would need to form a new partnership with business if we were going to become what he would later call the 'arsenal of democracy.' And as you can imagine, the relationship between the President and business leaders during the course of the Depression had been rocky at times. They'd grown somewhat fractured by the New Deal.

Somewhat fractured? Yes, I suppose an attempted coup qualifies. The funny thing is, though, that FDR did not propose any of the remedies laid out above. He did, however, spend tons and tons of public dollars on the military.

Some, like the head of GM, hadn't previously known the President, and if anything had seen him as an adversary. But he gathered his family and he explained that he was going to head up what would become the War Production Board. . . . And in the years that followed, automobile factories converted to making planes and tanks. And corset factories made grenade belts. A toy company made compasses. A pinball machine maker turned out shells. 1941 would see the greatest expansion of manufacturing in the history of America. And not only did this help us win the war; it led to millions of new jobs and helped produce the great American middle class.

Never mind that investing in peaceful jobs would have produced more and better paying jobs. Obama's pretense that investing in war saved the economy illustrates where he is headed. If he wanted jobs he could invest in green energy or infrastructure or education and produce many more jobs with a broader impact on the whole economy. Instead he wants to turn plowshares into swords. He wants to push the war economy to the breaking point.

Obama could have walked a block east and visited the AFL-CIO, which would have gone right along with his agenda. But he didn't want to. He doesn't want unions interfering in the Chamber's winning of the future. He doesn't, in other words, want a middle class. He wants to be liked by the boys at the Chamber. He may even aspire to running the place someday. That vision might be characterized by some people as embodying the audacity of hope. I have other words for it.

David Swanson is the author of War Is A Lie.



MR. FISH



Time to Topple Corporate Dictators

by Ralph Nader

The 18-day, non-violent Egyptian protests for freedom raise the question: Is America next? Were Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine around, they would likely say, “What are we waiting for?” They would be appalled by the concentration of economic and political power in such a few hands. Remember how often these two men warned about concentrated power.

Our Declaration of Independence (1776) listed grievances against King George III. A good number of them could have been made against “King” George W. Bush, who not only brushed aside Congressional war-making authority under the Constitution, but plunged the nation—through lies—into extended illegal wars which he conducted in violation of international law. Even conservative legal scholars such as Republicans Bruce Fein and former Judge Andrew Napolitano believe he and Dick Cheney still should be prosecuted for war and other related crimes. The conservative American Bar Association sent George W. Bush three “white papers” in 2005-2006 that documented his distinct violations of the Constitution he had sworn to uphold.

Here at home, the political system is a two-party dictatorship whose gerrymandering results in most electoral districts being one-party fiefdoms. The two Parties block the freedom of third parties and independent candidates to have equal access to the ballots and to the debates. Another barrier to competitive democratic elections is big money, largely commercial in source, which marminates most politicians in cowardliness and sinecurism.

Our legislative and executive branches, at the federal and state levels, can fairly be called corporate regimes. This is corporatism where government is controlled by private economic power. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt called this grip “fascism” in a formal message to Congress in 1938.

Corporatism shuts out the people and opens governmental largesse paid for by taxpayers to insatiable corporations.

Notice how each decade the bailouts, subsidies, handouts, giveaways, and tax escapes for big business grow larger. The word “trillions” is increasingly used, as in the magnitude of the rescue by Washington of the Wall Street crooks and speculators who looted the peoples’ pensions and savings.

It is not as if these giant companies demonstrate any gratitude to the people who save them again and again. Instead, U.S. companies are fast quitting the country in which they were chartered and prospered. These corporations, which were built on the backs of American workers, are shipping millions of jobs and whole industries to repressive foreign regimes abroad, such as China.

Over 70 percent of Americans in a September 2000 *Business Week* poll said corporations had “too much control over their lives.” It’s gotten worse with the last decade’s corporate corruption and crime wave.

Wal-Mart imports over \$20 billion a year in products from sweatshops in China. About a million Wal-Mart workers make under \$10.50 per hour before deductions—many in the \$8 an hour range. While Wal-Mart’s CEO makes about \$11,000 an hour plus benefits and perks.

While the deficit-financed wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been destroying those nations, our public works here crumble for lack of repairs.

This scenario has metastasized through the economy. One in three workers in the U.S. makes Wal-Mart level wages. Fifty million people have no health insurance and every year about 45,000 die because they cannot afford diagnosis or treatment. Child poverty is climbing as household income falls. Unemployment and underemployment are near 20% levels. The federal minimum wage, adjusted for inflation since 1968, would be \$10.00 per hour now. Instead, it is \$7.25.

Yet one percent of

the richest Americans have financial wealth equivalent to the bottom ninety-five percent of the people. Corporate profits and compensation of corporate bosses are at record levels. While companies, excluding financial firms, are sitting on two trillion dollars in cash.

On February 7, President Obama showed us where the power is by walking across Lafayette Park from the White House to the headquarters of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Before a large audience of CEOs, he pleaded for them to invest more in jobs in America. Imagine: CEOs of pampered, privileged mega-companies often on welfare and in trouble with the law sitting there while the President curtsied.

With Bill Clinton in the 1990s, corporate lobbies tightened their grip on our country by greasing through Congress both NAFTA and the World Trade Organization agreements that subordinated our sovereignty and workers to the global government of corporations.

All this adds to the growing sense of powerlessness by the citizenry. They experience hundreds of thousands of preventable deaths and many more injuries every year in the workplace, the environment, and the marketplace. Massive budgets and technologies do not go to reduce these costly casualties; instead, they go to the big business of exaggerated security threats.

While the ObamaBush deficit-financed wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been destroying those nations, our public works

here, such as mass transit, schools, and clinics, crumble for lack of repairs. Foreclosures keep rising.

The debt servitude of consumers is stripping them of control of their own money as fine print contracts, credit ratings, and credit scores tighten the noose on family budgets.

Half of democracy is showing up. Too many Americans, despairingly, are not “showing up” at the polls, at rallies, marches, courtrooms, or city council meetings. If “We The People” want to reassert our proper constitutional sovereignty over our country—we can start by amassing ourselves in public squares and around the giant buildings of our rulers.

In a country that has so many problems it doesn’t deserve, and so many solutions that it doesn’t apply, all things are possible when people begin

If “We The People” want to reassert our proper constitutional sovereignty over our country—we can start by amassing ourselves in public squares.

looking at themselves for the necessary power to produce a just society.

Ralph Nader is a consumer advocate and former presidential candidate. If you are interested in sponsoring him to speak in your community contact speaking@nader.org.

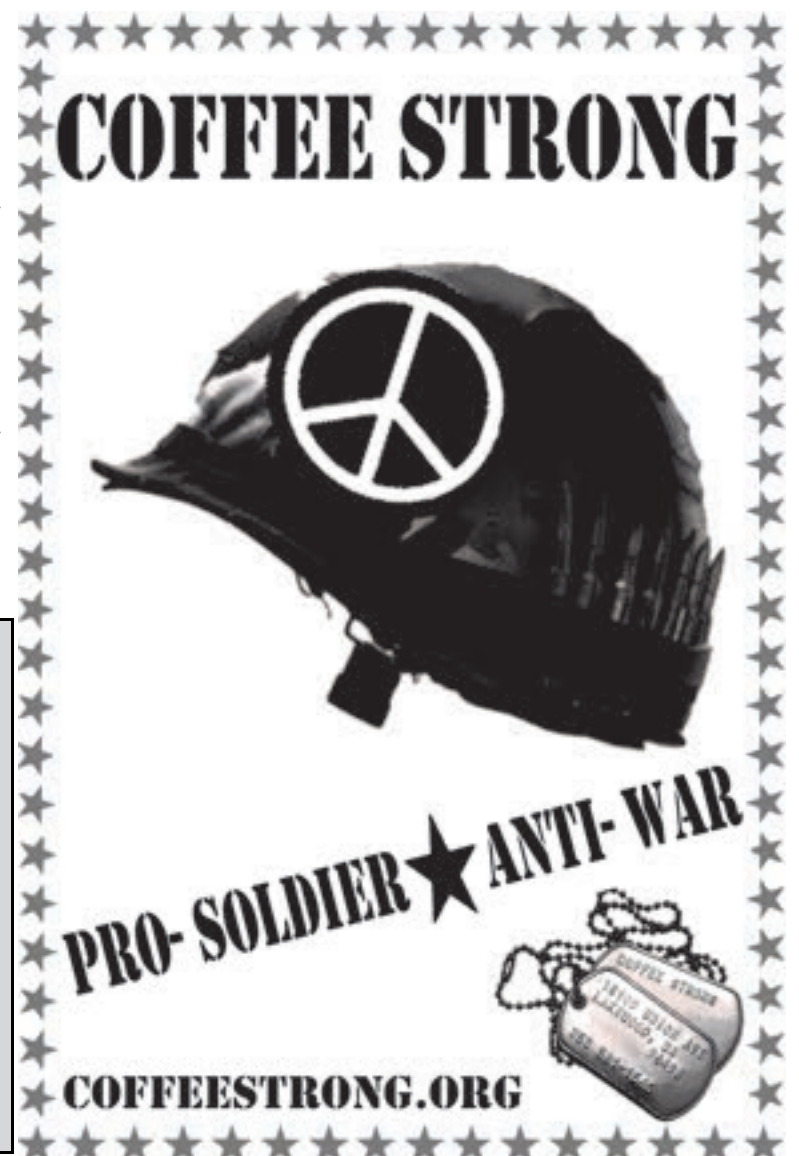
Ralph Nader will speak at the rally on March 19 at 12:00 pm, Lafayette Park prior to the veteran-led civil resistance at the White House.

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The *War Crimes Times* Team



From Military-Industrial Complex to Permanent War State

by Gareth Porter

Fifty years after Dwight D. Eisenhower's January 17, 1961 speech on the "military-industrial complex," that threat has morphed into a far more powerful and sinister force than Eisenhower could have imagined. It has become a "Permanent War State," with the power to keep the United States at war continuously for the indefinite future.



Between George H.W. Bush's Gulf War and George W. Bush's Iraq invasion, U.S. planes flew an annual average of 8,000 sorties in the "no fly zones" the United States had declared over most of Iraq.

But despite their seeming invulnerability, the vested interests behind U.S. militarism have been seriously shaken twice in the past four decades by some combination of public revulsion against a major war, opposition to high military spending, serious concern about the budget deficit and a change in perception of the external threat. Today, the Permanent War State faces the first three of those dangers to its power simultaneously—and in a larger context of the worst economic crisis since the great depression.

Eisenhower warned of the "potential" for the "disastrous rise of misplaced power."

When Eisenhower warned in this farewell address of the "potential" for the "disastrous rise of misplaced power," he was referring to the danger that militarist interests would gain control over the country's national security policy. The only reason it didn't happen on Ike's watch is that he stood up to the military and its allies.

The Air Force and the Army were so unhappy with his "New Look" military policy that they each waged political campaigns against it. The Army demanded that Ike reverse his budget cuts and beef up conventional forces. The Air Force twice fabricated intelligence to support its claim that the Soviet Union was rapidly overtaking the United States in strategic striking power—first in bombers, later in ballistic missiles.

But Ike defied both services, reducing Army manpower by 44 percent from its 1953 level and refusing to order a crash program for bombers or for missiles. He also rejected military recommendations for war in Indochina, bombing attacks on China, and an ultimatum to the Soviet Union.

After Eisenhower, it became clear that the alliance of militarist interests included not only the military services and their industrial clients

but civilian officials in the Pentagon, the CIA's Directorate of Operations, top officials at the State Department, and the White House national security adviser. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, that militarist alliance succeeded in pushing the White House into a war in Vietnam, despite the reluctance of both presidents, as documented in my book *Perils of Dominance*.

But just when the power of the militarist alliance seemed unstoppable in the late 1960s, the public turned decisively against the Vietnam War, and a long period of public pressure to reduce

military spending began.

As a result, military manpower was reduced to below even the Eisenhower era levels.

For more than a decade the alliance of militarist interests was effectively constrained from advocating a more aggressive military posture.

Even during the Reagan era, after a temporary surge in military spending, popular fear of Soviet Union melted away in response to the rise of Gorbachev, just as the burgeoning federal budget deficit was becoming yet another threat to militarist bloc. As it became clear that the Cold War was drawing to a close, the militarist interests faced the likely loss of much of their power and resources.

But in mid-1990 they got an unexpected break when Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait. George H. W. Bush—a key figure in the militarist complex as former CIA Director—seized the opportunity to launch a war that would end the "Vietnam syndrome." The Bush administration turned a popular clear-cut military victory in the 1991 Gulf War into a rationale for further use of military force in the Middle East. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney's 1992 military strategy for the next decade said, "We must be prepared to act decisively in the Middle East/Persian Gulf region as we did in Operations Desert



Shield and Desert Storm if our vital interests are threatened anew."

The Bush administration pressured the Saudis and other Arab regimes in the Gulf to allow longer-term bases for the U.S. Air Force, and over the next eight years, U.S. planes flew an annual average of 8,000 sorties in the "no fly zones" the United States had declared over most of Iraq, drawing frequent anti-aircraft fire.

The United States was already in a de facto state of war with Iraq well before George W. Bush's presidency.

The 9/11 attacks were the biggest single boon to the militarist alliance. The Bush administration exploited the climate of fear to railroad the country into a war of aggression against Iraq. The underlying strategy, approved by the military leadership after 9/11, was to use Iraq as a base from which to wage a campaign of regime change in a long list of countries.

That fateful decision only spurred recruitment and greater activism by al Qaeda and other jihadist groups, which expanded into Iraq and other countries.

Instead of reversing the ill-considered use of military force, however, the same coalition of officials pushed for an even more militarized approach to jihadism. Over the next few years, it gained unprecedented power over resources and policy at home and further extended its reach abroad:

The Pentagon embraced the idea of the "long war"—a twenty-year strategy envisioning deployment of U.S. troops in dozens of countries, and the Army adopted the idea of "the era of persistent warfare" as its rationale for more budgetary resources.



Military police keep back Vietnam War protesters during their sit-in on October 21, 1967, at the Mall Entrance to the Pentagon. (National Archives photo)

(Continued from previous page)

* The Special Operations Forces, which operate in almost complete secrecy, obtained extraordinary authority to track down and kill or capture al Qaeda suspects not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in many more countries.

* The CIA sought and obtained virtually unlimited freedom to carry out drone strikes in secrecy and without any meaningful oversight by Congress.

* The Pentagon embraced the idea of the “long war”—a twenty-year strategy envisioning deployment of U.S. troops in dozens of countries, and the Army adopted the idea of “the era

of persistent warfare” as its rationale for more budgetary resources.

* The military budget doubled from 1998 to 2008 in the biggest explosion of military spending since the early 1950s—and now accounts for 56 percent of discretionary federal spending.

* The military leadership used its political clout to ensure that U.S. forces would continue to fight in Afghanistan indefinitely, even after the premises of its strategy were shown to have been false.

Those moves have completed the process of creating a “Permanent War State”—a set of institutions with the authority to



U.S. Special Forces soldier with MK 12 sniper rifle in Rawah, Iraq —Sept. 7, 2007.
(U.S. Navy photo)

The Special Operations Forces, which operate in almost complete secrecy, obtained extraordinary authority to track down and kill or capture al Qaeda suspects not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in many more countries.



Light-enhanced, night vision photography showing Special Operations Forces Soldiers conducting night missions near Amarah, Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.
(U.S. Navy photo)

wage largely secret wars across a vast expanse of the globe for the indefinite future.

But the power of this new state formation is still subject to the same political dynamics that have threatened militarist interests twice before: popular antipathy to a major war, broad demands for reduced military spending, and the necessity to reduce the Federal budget deficit and debt.

The percentage of Americans who believe the war in Afghanistan is not worth fighting has now reached 60 percent for the first time. And as the crisis over the federal debt reaches its climax, the swollen defense budget should bear the brunt of deep budget cuts.

As early as 2005, a Pew Research Center survey found that, when respondents were given the opportunity to express a preference for budget cuts by major accounts, they opted to

reduce military spending by 31 percent. In another survey by the Pew Center a year ago, 76 percent of respondents, frustrated by the continued failure of the U.S. economy, wanted the United States to put top priority in its domestic problems.

The only thing missing from this picture is a grassroots political movement organized specifically to demand an end to the Permanent War State. Such a movement could establish firm legal restraints on the institutions that threaten American Democratic institutions through a massive educational and lobbying effort. This is the right historical moment to harness the latent anti-militarist sentiment in the country to a conscious strategy for political change.

Gareth Porter is an investigative historian and journalist on U.S. national security policy. Dr. Porter's latest book is Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the Road to War in Vietnam.

He will appear with Ray McGovern, Michael Prysner, Brock McIntosh, Conor Curran, and Josh Steiber in "Speaking Truth to Power," April 9, Asheville, NC.

Scholars and activists from throughout the Southeast and as far away as Boston gathered at Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C. Jan. 14-16 at the call of Chuck Fager of Quaker House in Fayetteville. They came to mark the 50th anniversary of Dwight Eisenhower's prophetic farewell speech that warned of the corrupting influence of the Military Industrial Complex.

About 140 persons shared information on the current and devastating circumstances of our militarized state and nation, and offered our perspectives on ways out of decades of corporate-military-academic and media collusion in creating a permanent war economy.

Speaker Stephen Soldz, director of the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis and president of Psychologists for Social Responsibility, addressed the grievous complicity of the American Psychological Association in U.S. interrogations and torture. Christian Stalberg, of North Carolina's Blackwater/Xe Watch, gave a chilling account of the for-profit corporate war lords deployed globally at U.S. taxpayer expense. Mia Austin-Scoggins, of the Eisenhower chapter of Veterans for Peace, spoke of the tragic extra causalities of U.S. wars borne by veterans, families, and society, a seldom acknowledged toll that persists for generations. Emma Pluta, A counselor working with PTSD survivors, led a workshop on the issue with John Heuer of N.C. Peace Action.

The idea of “War Christianity” was discussed, as well as what apocalyptic Biblical images can teach us about our current war economy. David LaMotte, of North Carolina

Ike was Right!

MIC@50: An Ominous Prophecy Fulfilled

by Clare Hanrahan

Longtime activist and multi-issue organizer Mandy Carter, of the National Black Justice Coalition, spoke of the work of civil rights strategist Bayard Rustin, and her efforts to bring more awareness to Rustin's legacy.

There was a brief visit from the legendary General Smedley Darlington Butler, reciting from his book, *War is a Racket*. The Quaker general was introduced by a living relative and elder peace activist Mariah Darlington.

Coleman Smith and Clare Hanrahan, organizers with the New South Network of War Resisters, made a historical presentation on Civil Resistance at Southeastern nuclear power, weapons, and waste sites and of the increasing dangers of the nuclear complex in the region.

After the success of the MIC@50 conference at Guilford, Chuck Fager is speaking with others, including the Charlottesville Center for Peace & Justice, who are planning a similar conference in Virginia in September.

Clare Hanrahan is a member of VFP Chapter 099, a member of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, and an organizer with New South Network of War Resisters, and a contributing editor for the War Crimes Times.

Council of Churches, led a workshop on active peacemaking, and Judith LeBlanc, of New Priorities Network and the national director of Peace Action, spoke about the economics of war and moving money from the Pentagon back into critical community needs.

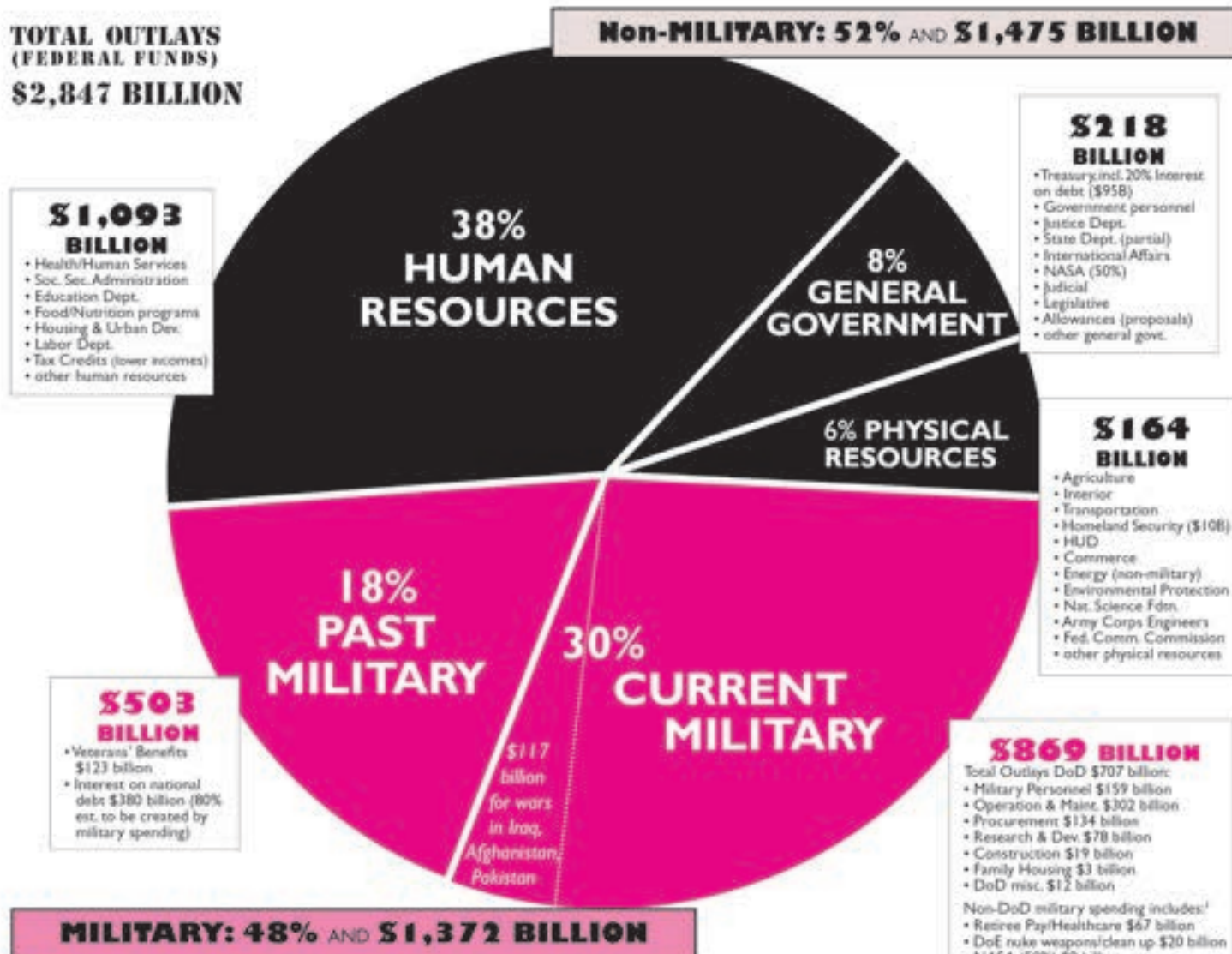
How the War Ec

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in a final sense a theft from

WHERE YOUR INCOME TAX MONEY REALLY GOES

U.S. FEDERAL BUDGET 2012 FISCAL YEAR

TOTAL OUTLAYS (FEDERAL FUNDS) \$2,847 BILLION



HOW THESE FIGURES WERE DETERMINED

“Current military” includes Dept. of Defense (\$707 billion) and the military portion from other departments as noted in current military box above (\$162 billion). “Past military” represents veterans’ benefits plus 80% of the interest on the debt.⁶ For further explanation, please go to www.warresisters.org.

These figures are from an analysis of detailed tables in the *Analytical Perspectives* book of the *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2012*. The figures are federal funds, which do not include trust funds — such as Social Security — that are raised and spent separately from income taxes. What you pay (or don’t pay) by April 18, 2011, goes to the federal funds portion of the budget. The government practice of combining Trust and Federal funds began during the Vietnam War, thus making the human needs portion of the

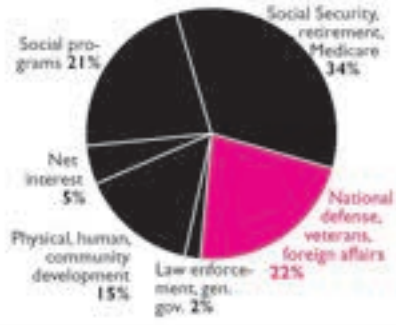
budget seem larger and the military portion smaller.

⁶Analysts differ on how much of the debt stems from the military; other groups estimate 30% to 60%. We use 80% because we believe if there had been no military spending most (if not all) of the national debt would have been eliminated.

The Government's Deception

The pie chart (right) is the government view of the budget. This is a distortion of how our income tax dollars are spent because it includes Trust Funds (e.g., Social Security), and the expenses of past military spending are not distinguished from nonmilitary spending. For a more accurate representation of how your Federal income tax dollar is really spent, see the large graph.

Source: 1040 Forms and Instructions 2010, Federal Outlays for FY 2009



WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE 339 Lafayette Street • NY, NY 10012 • 212-228-0450 • www.warresisters.org



Afghan National Army soldiers stand

[The] Pentagon has already training the Afghan military to pay \$11.6 billion this year in 2012...



Messaging in Madison on

Wisconsin is facing a 137 million that's 137 troops. If Obama b gave the savings to Wisconsin solved!



Homeless veteran in Ne

Each year, more than 3 million ness, including 1.3 million child —National Law Center

On any given night, between 1 are homeless.

—Natio

Economy Works

those who hunger and are not fed—those who are cold and are not clothed.—Dwight Eisenhower, 1953



Military Police Brigade in formation.

invested \$20 billion in and police and is prepared and possibly \$12.8 billion —Tom Engelhardt



February 19 (photo: Greg Skog)

million dollar budget deficit— brought home 137 troops and in, that problem would be —Cindy Sheehan



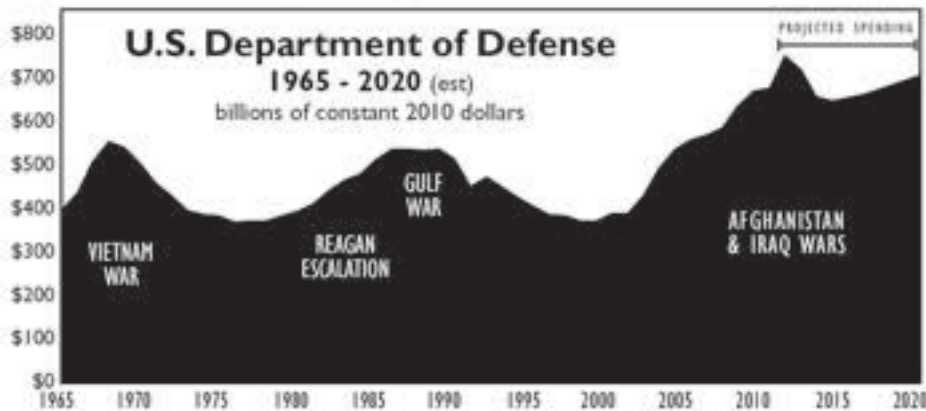
New York (photo: JMSuarez)

people experience homelessness.

on Homelessness and Poverty 30,000 and 200,000 veterans

onal Coalition for the Homeless

THE PERMANENT WAR ECONOMY



source: U.S. Dept. of Defense, National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2011, Table 6-11—DoD Outlays by Appropriation; Budget of the United States for FY 2012: Analytical Perspectives, Table 33-1—Federal Programs by Agency and Account

While local governments cut teachers, firefighters, senior centers, and other essential services, military contractors are laughing all the way to the bank. On Jan. 17, 2011, media attention was given to the 50th anniversary of former President and General Dwight D. Eisenhower's warning that "we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." Today Congress is part of that complex, with money and staff flowing back and forth between Congressional offices and corporations.

Ready for a change? See below and take action!

CAMPAIGNS

- New Priorities Network** (national) newprioritiesnetwork.org
- True Cost of War** (national) mfso.org
- Healthcare Not Warfare** (national) pdamerica.org/get-active/healthcare-not-warfare-campaign
- CODE PINK: Bring Our War \$\$ Home** (national), codepink.org
- Campaign to Bring Our War \$\$ Home (ME)** bringourwardollarshome.org
- Bring the \$Billion\$ Home** (Seattle) wwfor.org
- Peace Economy Project** (St. Louis) peaceeconomyproject.org
- 25 Percent Solution** (Boston) 25percentsoolution.com
- Campaign for Smart Security** (PA) smartsecuritypa.org
- 25 Teachers' Salaries** (CA) 25teachersalaries.org
- Our Funds** (MD) ourfunds.org
- Global Day of Action on Military Spending** (international), demilitarize.org

... or start your own campaign!

source: defundwar.org

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Leaflet** with this flyer now, on Tax Day — **April 18, 2011** — and in the months before a new budget is passed in October.
- **Write elected officials and local newspapers.** Send them copies of this flyer. Demand that the Pentagon budget be slashed.
- **Protest with your money!** Sign up at wartaxboycott.org. Refuse to pay all or part of your federal income tax. Whatever you choose to refuse—\$1, \$10, or a percentage—send a letter to elected officials and tell them why. Though illegal, thousands of people openly participate in this form of protest. Contact us for information or referral to a counselor near you. Contribute resisted tax money to organizations that support the common good.
- Watch **Death & Taxes**, a 30-min. film featuring war tax resisters from across the country. Online at nwrcc.org/deathandtaxes.php.
- For more about **refusing to pay for war**, contact the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215, (800) 269-7464, nwrcc.org. Support the Peace Tax Fund bill: peacetaxfund.org.
- **Support military personnel who refuse to fight** in Iraq and Afghanistan. For more information see ivaw.org or girightshotline.org. Call the GI Rights Hotline if you are in the military and need help: (877) 447-4487.

RESOURCES

- Additional copies of this leaflet are available for 10¢ each (1-199), 7¢ each (200 - 499), 6¢ each (500+) plus 20% postage or call for exact amount.
- For sample brochures and resources on war tax resistance, send a self-addressed stamped (61¢) envelope to War Resisters League at the New York address below.
- **War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military**, 144-page handbook with history, methods and resources. \$15 plus \$4.95 priority mail; \$3 media mail.

LOCAL CONTACT:

If no group is listed, check for a WRL chapter on the website below, or start your own. Contact WRL for more information.

Looking for Tax Day Actions in your town?
Contact: National War Tax Resistance
Coordinating Committee: 1-800-269-7464

Publication of Tax Pie Chart in *War Crimes Times* was sponsored by
WRL Asheville & WNC War Tax Resisters

War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012
Tel (212) 228-0450
Fax (212) 228-6193
wrl@warresisters.org
www.warresisters.org

“The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — not to mention the Pentagon’s voracious appetite for expensive weapons systems — have been a gold mine for the Big Five.”

- 1 Lockheed Martin
- 2 General Dynamics
- 3 Raytheon
- 4 Northrop-Grumman
- 5 Boeing

“From Pentagon, a Boy Rating on Contractors,” Joe Nocera, *New York Times*, Feb. 11, 2011

“[O]ur analysis suggests that there is no battlefield solution to terrorism.”

“How Terrorist Groups End,” Rand Corp. (rand.org), 2008

“Together we must learn how to compose differences, not with arms, but with intellect and decent purpose.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower (Jan. 17, 1961)

Cow Most Sacred: Why Military Spending Remains Untouchable

by Andrew J. Bacevich

In defense circles, “cutting” the Pentagon budget has once again become a topic of conversation. Americans should not confuse that talk with reality. Any cuts exacted will at most reduce the rate of growth. The essential facts remain: U.S. military outlays today equal that of every other nation on the planet combined, a situation without precedent in modern history.

The Pentagon presently spends more in constant dollars than it did at any time during the Cold War—this despite the absence of anything remotely approximating what national security experts like to call a “peer competitor.” Evil Empire? It exists only in the fevered imaginations of those who quiver at the prospect of China adding a rust-bucket Russian aircraft carrier to its fleet or who take seriously the ravings of radical Islamists promising from deep inside their caves to unite the Umma in a new caliphate.

What are Americans getting for their money? Sadly, not much. Despite extraordinary expenditures (not to mention exertions and sacrifices by U.S. forces), the return on investment is, to be generous, unimpressive. The chief lesson to emerge from the battlefields

of the post-9/11 era is this: the Pentagon possesses next to no ability to translate “military supremacy” into meaningful victory.

Washington knows how to start wars and how to prolong them, but is clueless when it comes to ending them. Iraq, the latest addition to the roster of America’s forgotten wars, stands as exhibit A. Each bomb that blows up in Baghdad or some other Iraqi city, splattering blood all over the streets, testifies to the manifest absurdity of judging “the surge” as the epic feat of arms celebrated by the Petraeus lobby.

The problems are strategic as well as operational. Old Cold-War-era expectations that projecting U.S. power will enhance American clout and standing no longer apply, especially in the Islamic world. There, American military activities are instead fostering instability and inciting anti-Americanism. For Exhibit B, see the deepening morass that Washington refers to as AfPak or the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater of operations.

Add to that the mountain of evidence showing that Pentagon, Inc. is a miserably managed enterprise: hide-bound, bloated, slow-moving, and prone to wasting resources on a prodigious scale—nowhere more so than in weapons procurement and the outsourcing of previously military functions to “contractors.” When it comes to national security, effectiveness (what works) should rightly take precedence over efficiency (at what cost?) as the overriding measure of merit. Yet beyond a certain level, inefficiency undermines effectiveness, with the Pentagon stubbornly and habitually exceeding that level. By comparison, Detroit’s much-maligned Big Three offer models of well-run enterprises.

Impregnable Defenses

All of this takes place against the backdrop of mounting problems at home: stubbornly high unemployment, trillion-dollar federal deficits, massive and mounting debt, and domestic needs like education, infrastructure, and employment crying out for attention.

Yet the defense budget—a misnomer since for Pentagon, Inc. defense per se figures as an afterthought—remains a sacred cow. Why is that?

The answer lies first in understanding the defenses arrayed around that cow to

Pentagon, Inc. Oh, the nostalgia of it all! As Nick Turse reminds us in his book *The Complex: How the Military Invades Our Everyday Lives*, when the media went after the Pentagon in the 1980s for outrageous spending, at stake was “a \$7,600 coffee pot, \$9,600 Allen wrenches, and—the most famous pork barrel item of them all—those \$640 toilet seats.” Same in the 1990s with the \$2,187 the Department of Defense doled out for a C-17 door hinge otherwise purchasable for \$31, the \$5.41 screw thread inserts worth 29 cents, and the \$75.60 screw sets priced in the ordinary world at 57 cents.

Weren’t those the good old days? Now, few take out after the DoD for such minor peccadillos, not when a \$75.60 screw set looks like a bargain-basement deal compared to a Pentagon that has already invested \$20 billion in training the Afghan military and police and is prepared to pay \$11.6 billion this year and possibly \$12.8 billion in 2012 for more of the same; or to an intelligence outfit, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, that doesn’t hesitate to sink \$1.8 billion into an all-new headquarters complex in Virginia for its 16,000 employees and its estimated black budget of \$5 billion; or to the close to \$200 million that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has, according to a McClatchy News investigation, sunk into construction projects in Afghanistan that “have failed, face serious delays, or resulted in subpar work”; or to a Department of Homeland Security that thought it a brilliant idea to fund an “emergency operations center” in Poynette, Wisconsin (population 2,266) to the tune of \$1 million; or to General David Petraeus who, in 2008 as Iraq War commander, invested \$1 million in turning a dried-up lake in Baghdad into an Iraqi water park to win a few extra hearts and minds. (Within two years, thanks in part to neighborhood power cuts, the lake had dried up again and the park was a desolate wreck.)

Where, in fact, are those Allen wrenches now that we need them, now that Congress has insisted that an alternate second engine (being built by Lockheed Martin) should be kept in production for the staggeringly costly, ever-delayed F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which already has an engine (being built by Pratt & Whitney)? Even the Pentagon doesn’t want that second multi-billion dollar engine built, the White House has denounced it, but Lockheed is still being paid. All of this, and so much more, should be shocking waste at a moment when Camden, New Jersey, the nation’s “second most dangerous” city, has just laid off nearly half its police force and almost a third of its firefighters. But few here even blink.

Sacred cow? Somehow it seems like the perfect term for the U.S. national security budget. Let Andrew Bacevich, author most recently of the must-read bestseller, *Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War*.

—Tom Engelhardt

(This and Andrew Bacevich’s article reprinted with permission from www.TomDispatch.com — “A regular antidote to the mainstream media”)

strove to perpetuate) this atmosphere of crisis to justify their existence, status, prerogatives, and budgetary claims. In addition, a permanent arms industry arose, which soon became a major source of jobs and corporate profits. Politicians of both parties were quick to identify the advantages of aligning with this “military-industrial complex,” as President Eisenhower described it.

Allied with (and feeding off of) this vast apparatus that transformed tax dollars into appropriations, corporate profits, campaign contributions, and votes was an intellectual axis of sorts—government-supported laboratories, university research institutes, publications, think tanks, and lobbying firms

ensure that it remains untouched and untouchable. Exemplifying what the military likes to call a “defense in depth,” that protective shield consists of four distinct but mutually supporting layers.

Institutional Self-Interest: Victory in World War II produced not peace, but an atmosphere of permanent national security crisis. As never before in U.S. history, threats to the nation’s existence seemed omnipresent, an attitude first born in the late 1940s that still persists today. In Washington, fear—partly genuine, partly contrived—triggered a powerful response.

One result was the emergence of the national security state, an array of institutions that depended on (and therefore

Each bomb that blows up in an Iraqi city, splattering blood all over the streets, testifies to the manifest absurdity...



Workers repair a home damaged by a bomb blast in Taza, Iraq, in 2009. This is one of 150 homes that the UN provided funds to repair.



(many staffed by former or would-be senior officials)—devoted to identifying (or conjuring up) ostensible national security challenges and alarms, always assumed to be serious and getting worse, and then devising responses to them.

The upshot: within Washington, the voices carrying weight in any national security “debate” all share a predisposition for sustaining very high levels of military spending for reasons having increasingly little to do with the well-being of the country.

Strategic Inertia: In a 1948 State Department document, diplomat George F. Kennan offered this observation: “We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population.” The challenge facing American policymakers, he continued, was “to devise a pattern of relationships that will permit us to maintain this disparity.” Here we have a description of American purposes that is far more candid than all of the rhetoric about promoting freedom and democracy, seeking world peace, or exercising global leadership.

The end of World War II found the United States in a spectacularly privileged position. Not for nothing do Americans remember the immediate postwar era as a Golden Age of middle-class prosperity. Policymakers since Kennan's time have sought to preserve that globally privileged position. The effort has been a largely futile one.

By 1950 at the latest, those policymakers (with Kennan by then a notable dissenter) had concluded that the possession and deployment of military power held the key to preserving America's exalted status. The presence of U.S. forces abroad and a demonstrated willingness to intervene, whether overtly or covertly, just about anywhere on the planet would promote stability, ensure U.S. access to markets and resources, and generally serve to enhance the country's influence in the eyes of friend and foe alike—this was the idea, at least.

In postwar Europe and postwar Japan, this formula achieved considerable success. Elsewhere—notably in Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, and (especially after 1980) in the so-called Greater Middle East—it either produced mixed results or failed catastrophically. Certainly, the events of the post-9/11 era provide little reason to believe that this presence/power-projection paradigm will provide an antidote to the threat posed by violent anti-Western jihadism. If anything, adherence to it is exacerbating the problem by creating ever greater anti-American animus.

One might think that the manifest shortcomings of the presence/power-projection approach—trillions expended in Iraq for what?—might stimulate present-day Washington to pose some first-order questions about basic U.S. national security strategy. A certain amount of introspection would seem to be called for. Could, for example, the effort to sustain what remains of America's privileged status benefit from another approach?

Yet there are few indications that our political leaders, the senior-most echelons of the officer corps, or those who shape opinion outside of government are capable of seriously entertaining any such debate. Whether through ignorance, arrogance, or a lack of imagination, the pre-existing strategic paradigm stubbornly persists; so, too, as if by default do the high levels of military spending that the strategy entails.

Cultural Dissonance: The rise of the Tea Party movement should disabuse any American of the thought that the cleavages produced by the “culture wars” have healed. The cultural upheaval touched off by the 1960s and centered on Vietnam remains unfinished business in this country.

The voices carrying weight in Washington all share a predisposition for sustaining very high levels of military spending—which has little to do with the well-being of the country.



Lt. Gen. Stephen M. Speakes discusses ground combat vehicle options.

Among other things, the sixties destroyed an American consensus, forged during World War II, about the meaning of patriotism. During the so-called Good War, love of country implied, even required, deference to the state, shown most clearly in the willingness of individuals to accept the government's authority to mandate military service. GI's, the vast majority of them draftees, were the embodiment of American patriotism, risking life and limb to defend the country.

The GI of World War II had been an American Everyman. Those soldiers both represented and reflected the values of the nation from which they came (a perception affirmed by the ironic fact that the military adhered to prevailing standards of racial segregation). It was “our army” because that army was “us.”

With Vietnam, things became more complicated. The war's supporters argued that the World War II tradition still applied: patriotism required deference to the commands of the state. Opponents of the war, especially those facing the prospect of conscription, insisted otherwise. They revived the distinction, formulated a generation earlier by the radical journalist Randolph Bourne, that distinguished between the country and the state. Real patriots, the ones who most truly loved their country, were those who opposed state policies they regarded as misguided, illegal, or immoral.

In many respects, the soldiers who fought the Vietnam War found themselves caught uncomfortably in the center of this dispute. Was the soldier who died in Vietnam a martyr, a tragic figure, or a sap? Who deserved greater admiration: the soldier who fought bravely and uncomplainingly or the one who served and then turned against the war? Or was the war resister—the one who never served at all—the real hero?

War's end left these matters disconcertingly unresolved. President Richard Nixon's 1971

decision to kill the draft in favor of an All-Volunteer Force, predicated on the notion that the country might be better served with a military that was no longer “us,” only complicated things further. So, too, did the trends in American politics where bona fide war heroes (George H.W. Bush, Bob Dole, John Kerry, and John McCain) routinely lost to opponents whose military credentials were non-existent or exceedingly slight (Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama), yet who demonstrated once in office a remarkable propensity for expending American blood (none belonging to members of their own families) in places like Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. It was all more than a little unseemly.

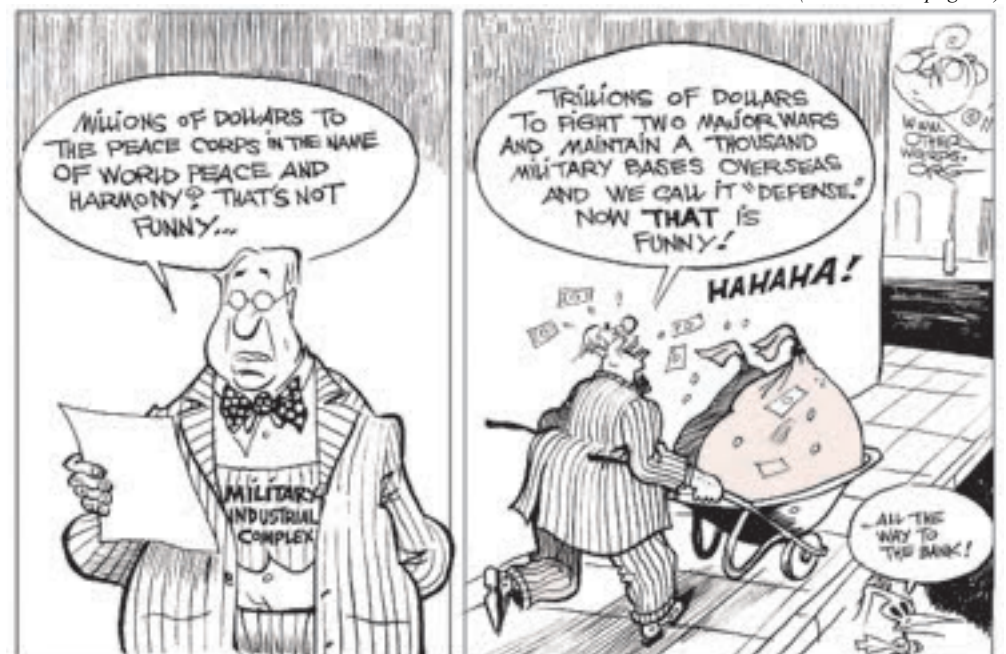
Patriotism, once a simple concept, had become both confusing and contentious. What obligations, if any, did patriotism impose? And if the answer was none—the option Americans seemed increasingly to prefer—then was patriotism itself still a viable proposition?

Wanting to answer that question in the affirmative—to distract attention from the fact that patriotism had become little more than an excuse for fireworks displays and taking the occasional day off from work—people and politicians alike found a way to do so by exalting those Americans actually choosing to serve in uniform. The thinking went this way: soldiers offer living proof that America is a place still worth dying for, that patriotism (at least in some quarters) remains alive and well; by common consent, therefore, soldiers are the nation's “best,” committed to “something bigger than self” in a land otherwise increasingly absorbed in pursuing a material and narcissistic definition of self-fulfillment.

In effect, soldiers offer much-needed assurance that old-fashioned values still survive, even if confined to a small and unrepresentative segment of American society. Rather than Everyman, today's warrior has ascended to the status of icon, deemed morally superior to the nation for which he or she fights, the repository of virtues that prop up, however precariously, the nation's increasingly sketchy claim to singularity.

Politically, therefore, “supporting the troops” has become a categorical imperative across the political spectrum. In theory, such support might find expression in a determination to protect those troops from abuse, and so translate into wariness about committing soldiers to unnecessary or unnecessarily costly wars. In practice, however, “supporting the troops” has found expression in an insistence upon providing the Pentagon with open-ended drawing rights on the nation's treasury, thereby creating massive barriers to any proposal to affect more than symbolic reductions in military spending.

(Continued on page 16)



A Veteran in America: Trying to Find the Way Home

by Susan Galleymore

Jason Moon's mother tells him that as a young child he loved writing songs and that during long car trips he'd share his songs with her. Today, he's writing songs again. But for more than five years following his return from a year-long tour of duty in Iraq, he could barely write a line.

Moon deployed to Talil Airbase with the Wisconsin National Guard in 2003. In March 2008 he was ready to testify at the four-day long Winter Soldier hearings held in Silver Spring, Maryland. His would be one of more than 200 eyewitness accounts of injustices perpetrated by U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. He planned to tell of direct orders to “run over any children that got in the way of military vehicles.”

Moon's three-year-old son, Dylan, looked like the Iraqi children and the order was as shocking to Moon then as it would be the Americans who heard it later.

“People accused me of lying...or said our unit was a bad apple.”

Nowadays there are countless assertions of this order being carried out.

“Recently I heard that our unit was even involved in one such event and that the Civil Affairs unit went to the parents of the girl who'd been killed and, at gunpoint, forced them to sign off on accepting \$200 for her death.”

Moon broke down the day before he was to present his testimony. Instead of attending the hearing, he checked himself into a hospital where he shuffled around “without shoelaces in my shoes.”

This suicide watch was the beginning of a long—and continuing—journey searching for a life Moon feels is worth living.

“My question is: How do they [the military and the population it serves] expect people to be in an environment where violence and killing is encouraged, accepted, and often rewarded, then, when we come home and respond with the same mentality, we're put in prison? The juxtaposition of these two worlds as a soldier tries to readjust and tries to deal with the results of what he or she was asked to do”—that which was okay there and then and is not okay here and now—“can make a veteran feel crazy.”

Deployed troops long to return home. Yet, “When we come back it is not so wonderful after all. Since such a small percentage of our population understands—or wants to understand—the real issues [associated with war] troops and veterans must deal with alone.”

The isolation only increases as civil society pays attention, not to the ongoing wars and the plight of the troops who fight them, but to the latest news crisis, the economy, political corruption, unemployment, bankrupt state and city

budgets, turmoil in Egypt spreading to other countries....

All the while, U.S. troops continue to deploy—some have served as many as six deployments—and veterans continue to confront their demons long after their military service ends.

What makes Moon's story especially poignant is his relationship to his son. The growing boy saw his father as a hero with whom he wanted to play the game of “good guys versus bad guys.”

It was excruciating. The boy was too young for lectures about the gritty realities of war. His father told him, gently, that even the “bad guys” have mothers, are sons like he is, and that “people don't come back to life after they're killed.”

But Moon's body had its own way of surviving the pressure: it shut down. “When my son wanted to play war I became as tired as if I'd been drugged and I'd fall asleep.”

Later, when they played together, “I'd find myself telling my 7-year-old how to flank a fighting position, or how to do



Dylan and Dadda reunion in 2005

covering fire, or correcting his battle strategies!”

There is a parallel in Jason Moon's experiences as a father and as a veteran. For explaining war to a child is like explaining the deep effects of war to an adult who has never experienced war. Neither has the capacity to understand how troops are trained to kill. Neither imagines the horrors combat troops see every day. Neither grasps how war affects human beings. Neither really wants to understand.

Only those who know war know the pleasure—and the pain—of returning home where the vast majority of fellow citizens care nothing for one's extraordinary experiences.

Despite centuries of war, there is no successful strategy that helps veterans reintegrate into a comfortably ignorant, binary world.

Many veterans like Jason Moon live day-to-day as they continue internal dialogs about the worthiness of their lives. But Moon is writing songs and playing music again. Lyrics from the album title:

*The child inside me
long dead and gone
somewhere between
lost and alone
trying to find my way home...*

Moon's first CD in a decade describes his journey. It is a sign of hope, not only for the songwriter but also for the homeless veterans with whom Moon works. Moreover, proceeds from sales benefit this work. (Listen to three cuts from his CD in a recent Raising Sand Radio interview: www.raisingandradio.org).

Susan Galleymore is author of *Long Time Passing: Mothers Speak about War and Terror*, host and producer of *Raising Sand Radio*, and a former “military mom” and GI Rights counselor. Contact her at susan@raisingandradio.org.

(COW MOST SACRED continued from page 15)

Misremembered History: The duopoly of American politics no longer allows for a principled anti-interventionist position. Both parties are war parties. They differ mainly in the rationale they devise to argue for interventionism. The Republicans tout liberty; the Democrats emphasize human rights. The results tend to be the same: a penchant for activism that sustains a never-ending demand for high levels of military outlays.

American politics once nourished a lively anti-interventionist tradition. Leading proponents included luminaries such as George Washington and John Quincy Adams. That tradition found its basis not in principled pacifism, a position that has never attracted widespread support in this country, but in pragmatic realism. What happened to that realist tradition? Simply put, World War II killed it—or at least discredited it. In the intense and divisive debate that occurred in 1939-1941, the anti-interventionists lost, their cause thereafter tarred with the label “isolationism.”

The passage of time has transformed World War II from a massive tragedy into a morality tale, one that casts opponents of intervention as blackguards. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the debate over how the United States should respond to some ostensible threat—Iraq in 2003, Iran today—replays the debate finally ended by the events of December 7, 1941. To express skepticism about the necessity and prudence of using military power is to invite the charge of being an appeaser or an isolationist. Few politicians or individuals aspiring to power will risk the consequences of being tagged with that label.

In this sense, American politics remains stuck in the 1930s—always discovering a new Hitler, always privileging Churchillian rhetoric—even though the circumstances in which we live today bear scant resemblance to that earlier time. There was only one Hitler and he's long dead. As for Churchill, his achievements and legacy are far more mixed than his battalions of defenders are willing to acknowledge. And if any one figure deserves particular credit for demolishing Hitler's Reich and winning World War II, it's Josef Stalin, a dictator as vile and murderous as Hitler himself.

Until Americans accept these facts, until they come to a more nuanced view of World War II that takes fully into account the political and moral implications of the U.S. alliance with the Soviet Union and the U.S. campaign of obliteration bombing directed against Germany and Japan, the mythic version of “the Good War” will continue to provide glib justifications for continuing to dodge that perennial question: How much is enough?

Like concentric security barriers arrayed around the Pentagon, these four factors—institutional self-interest, strategic inertia, cultural dissonance, and misremembered history—insulate the military budget from serious scrutiny. For advocates of a militarized approach to policy, they provide invaluable assets, to be defended at all costs.

Andrew J. Bacevich is professor of history and international relations at Boston University. His most recent book is Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War.

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America's Stay-at-Home Ex-President

by Ray McGovern

As the news broke on Saturday [February 5] that former President George W. Bush had abruptly canceled his scheduled appearance in Geneva to avoid the risk of arrest on a torture complaint, my first thought was: How humiliating, not only for Bush but, by extension, for all Americans!

However, those who might have expected Bush to be down in the mouth and sulk about the embarrassment were disabused of that notion as the TV cameras caught him and Condoleezza Rice—his former national security adviser and Secretary of State—in seats of honor at Sunday's Super Bowl in Dallas.

Doomed to become America's first better-stay-at-home former president, Bush could still take consolation in getting scarce tickets to big sports events—he also attended high-profile Texas Rangers baseball games last year—and he can expect to hear some folks cheer for him, so long as he stays in Texas.

I imagined myself with advanced training in the intelligence collection technique called speed lip-reading, enabling me to decipher from the TV screen what Condi Rice might be saying to her beloved mentor:

Not to worry, Mr. President, as I told those upstart students at Stanford when they kept asking about waterboarding, "By definition, if it was authorized by the President, it did not violate our obligations under the Convention Against Torture." Period. End of story.

Remember, Mr. President, it was Richard Nixon who pronounced the principle of presidential impunity in his famous statement to interviewer David Frost, "When the president does it, that means it's not illegal."

Oh, the pardon? Well, you're right. Nixon did need to be pardoned, but no worries for you on that score. What luck that we were able to get Obama and Eric Holder to agree to ride shotgun for us, if anyone summoned the temerity to bring charges against us for torture.

And, you can always use the perfect squelch—the one you used so effectively in talking about waterboarding in that TV interview with Matt Lauer on November 8. You remember, you countered by saying, "The lawyer said it was legal." As a last resort, we can always blame it on Al Gonzales and the gaggle of lawyers who gave us legal cover.

Your reply to Lauer was masterful. Glad we rehearsed that one so thoroughly. Just keep remembering not to say that you told the lawyers what you wanted them to say. Then we're home free.

Speaking of home free, as Ollie North once said, "Is this a great country, or what?" Sure is nice not to

have to worry, at least here at home, about anyone holding us accountable for what you called "alternative procedures" for interrogation; or for my asking George Tenet to orchestrate demonstrations of those procedures every couple of weeks in the White House Situation Room.

By the way, we just got a thoughtful thank-you note from George Tenet, who must be the most grateful of all ex-CIA directors. He wanted to remind us of an important anniversary coming up. No, besides Ronald Reagan's birthday.

You may recall that it was on February 7, 2002, that you signed that action memorandum saying the U.S. did not have to abide by the Geneva Conventions in how we treat al Qaeda or Taliban prisoners.

Tenet says that he and his boys know they owe you big time for putting down in writing the protection that made them comfortable going to the dark side.

I sure wish that other countries would simply read that carefully worded memo. Then, they might become as understanding as Obama and stop hinting that we are in some legal jeopardy.

Staying safe at home is nice, but I really miss traveling abroad. I'm about to forfeit thousands of frequent flyer miles.

Anyhow, I must remind you, Mr. President, you're not the only one grounded for fear of being detained abroad. I can't tell you how many speaking offers in Europe and elsewhere I've had to turn down.

It's hard, embarrassing even, but you are right to decide to err on the side of caution. That way you are sure to avoid confrontations not only with the local gendarmerie, but also with people like those ubiquitous, obnoxious women from Code Pink who seem to spring up from nowhere with handcuffs.

Ubiquitous? Oh, that means they seem to be everywhere. Obnoxious you know, yes?

A recent Secret Service bulletin said some of them are even on Tahrir Square helping to give our friend



"Candidate for The Hague"
(image by Galehr)

They hate his freedom

Bush Fears Travel Abroad

The former leader of the free world is not so free in the world.

On February 5, Reuters reported that former President George W. Bush canceled a visit to Switzerland due to the risk of legal action against him for alleged torture: "[P]ressure has been building on the Swiss government to arrest him and open a criminal investigation if he enters the Alpine country. Criminal complaints against Bush alleging torture have been lodged in Geneva, court officials say. Human rights groups said they had intended to submit a 2,500-page case against Bush in the Swiss city on Monday for alleged mistreatment of suspected militants at Guantanamo Bay, the U.S. naval base in Cuba where captives from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other fronts in the so-called War on Terror were interned."

Mubarak a hard time. And remember how they went around to bookstores and libraries last fall, putting your excellent book in the fiction or crime sections?

Code Pink is now doing the same thing with Rumsfeld's book, and even inserting a bookmark that says: "WARNING: This Book's Author is a War Criminal." Heh, heh, poetic justice for Rumsfeld. Serves him right; I'm told that he has a bunch of nasty things to say about the rest of us.

I'm afraid Rumsfeld may catch more flak than you did in promoting your own book. Remember how those Code Pink activists challenged him the first time he came out of hiding in May 2009 and showed up at the White House Stenographers, sorry, Correspondents Dinner?

I've also been thinking of the very close call Rumsfeld had in Paris in October 2007, when he had to make a mad dash for the airport, upon learning that someone (I think the Center for Constitutional Rights was behind it) had filed a Convention Against Torture complaint against him with the Paris Prosecutor.

I mean, if I had my way, I'd tell Tenet's friends at Langley to round up the lot of them—Code Pink, Center for Constitutional Rights, whatever—and drop them off at one of the old black sites.

I tell you I'd do it, if we were still in power. All I'd need, of course, would be the President's okay, preferably in writing—like that action memo of February 7, 2002.

Don't much care for Rumsfeld, but glad he beat the gendarmes onto the plane and is now, like us, safe at home. That could have been a terrible precedent. Luckily, you avoided that kind of scene by canceling out of Geneva.

"Canceling out of Geneva." Has a familiar ring. That's essentially what your February 2002 memo did, canceling the Geneva Conventions on treatment of detainees. That's how you authorized what followed, how you made it legal.

End of imaginary lip-reading of Condoleezza Rice's Super Bowl conversations with George W. Bush.

Now Dead Serious

Bush's February 7, 2002, memo, which was released by then-White House counsel Alberto Gonzales to deflect early reports about abuse of detainees, turned out to be the smoking gun on Bush's torture policies.

(Continued on page 18)

In the land of the free and the home of the brave

McGovern Manhandled

He shows that at least the brave part is still valid.

On February 18, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave a major address calling for Internet freedom around the world. As Clinton condemned the Egyptian and Iranian governments for arresting and beating protesters, 71-year-old former U.S. Army and CIA officer Ray McGovern was violently ejected from the audience and arrested after he stood up and turned his back in a silent protest of America's foreign policy.

Veterans For Peace demands apology from Clinton.

Learn more at veteransforpeace.org.

(Photos show cuts and bruises suffered by McGovern. Handcuffs dug into his wrist and caused profuse bleeding.)



When Soldiers Say 'No!' – from the Middle East to America's Mid-West

by Nadya Williams

This winter has been momentous in the annals of “People’s Power”—certainly the seminal force in the inspiring uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and beyond. But military defiance and refusal to crush these protests—both from the rank-and-file soldier and even at the officer level—has played a critical role in those revolts that have succeeded.

Such is the role that will hopefully grow ever larger among the 150,000 U.S. troops now occupying Afghanistan and Iraq. From not volunteering in the first place to refusing first deployment—or “stop loss” redeployment—to the war zones, from going AWOL to demanding non-combat duty, from laying down arms in-country to seeking conscientious objector status and physical or psychological deferrals, American military personnel are also saying no to being instruments of violence in unjust conflicts.

The out-right revolt, or at least passive non-compliance, of American GIs during the Vietnam War is legendary—

General, your tank is a powerful vehicle. It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men. But it has one defect: it needs a driver.

—Bertolt Brecht

with an estimate of a staggering half a million over the 10-year-long conflict actively resisting, or just plain opting out.

The splendid 2005 documentary film *Sir, No Sir* shows us the hidden history of past American counterparts in our Southeast Asia war to the many senior Egyptian tank commanders of the Third Army who were seen tearing off their headsets over which they had received orders to attack the crowds in Cairo’s Tahrir Square. Since it is “easier” to kill strangers than your own people, it is perhaps even more significant that American soldiers of the 1960s and ‘70s refused to kill foreigners—Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians—thousands of miles from home, while many in Arab armies are now simply refusing to kill their own citizens on their own soil. The brutal “success” of Libya’s despot has been in his use of foreign mercenaries to

bomb and strafe rebellious civilians. However, according to the *New York Times* as of this writing, stories are emerging of Libyan soldiers and police defecting en masse to the rebels, and turning their guns on the mercenaries.

Soldiers saying “No” in our Mid-West? This is the hoped-for resistance to come from our National Guard if Wisconsin’s Governor Walker delivers on his threat to call out troops to quell protests and strikes by public sector workers there. Here’s what March Forward!, an organization of veterans and active-duty service members opposed to U.S. wars and occupations, said recently in an open letter to the Wisconsin National Guard:

Your governor is preparing to use you to smash the right of your family, friends and neighbors to peacefully demonstrate. Those protesting are from the same neighborhoods and communities we all come from. We know why most of us joined the military: for a job, access to health care, and the ability to go to college. That is the very same reason why over 100,000 people in your state have risen up in protest—for jobs, decent benefits, and education. Those rights are under attack. Hundreds of thousands of Wisconsin families are at risk. There is an economic crisis there, just like the rest of the country. And like his counterparts in the rest of the country, the Governor of Wisconsin wants to make working families shoulder the cost instead of cutting into the pockets of the wealthiest 1 percent. We have nothing in common with Walker and his millionaire buddies.



Photo credit: Muhammad Saladin Nusair

Just like in Egypt, the young vets of March Forward! are appealing to the National Guard to:

Stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the students, teachers, and working families who are courageously fighting for their lives, not against them! They are not our enemies; our enemies are the ones pulling the strings from corporate boardrooms. It is your right to enter the history books as heroes who stood with your community, not as thugs for big business.

The people of Egypt “get it.” A recent sign held up in Tahrir Square reads: “Egypt Supports Wisconsin Workers—One World, One Pain.”

Under penalty of court martial, imprisonment, and even execution, men and women in uniform have set some of the most noble examples of human courage. From imperial wars of occupation to civil wars to revolutions, ordinary soldiers have drawn the line: from South Africa to Palestine/Israel, from the USSR/Russia to France, from the Philippines to Lebanon, and in countless other conflicts. Perhaps the time has come for civilians and soldiers to “defect” together.

Nadya Williams is a WCT contributing editor. See simosir.com & marchforward.org

(Continued from page 17)

In it, Bush wrote: “I determine that com-

mon Article 3 of Geneva does not apply to either al Qaeda or Taliban detainees.”

Article 3, which is common to the other Geneva conventions on prisoners of war, bans “torture [and] outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.” The conventions permit no country to unilaterally exclude anyone from Geneva protections.

But Bush did so, while hiding the substance of his memo behind words that Gonzales thought would make Bush look kindly. Bush’s memo said detainees should be treated “humanely” and “in a manner consistent with the principles of Geneva,” but added the caveat, “to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity.”

In other words, Bush and his high command could decide whether “humane” treatment would be granted or not. If they saw a “military necessity” for, say, waterboarding somebody 183 times, then they could so order.

That, of course, is not what Geneva demands; there is no way to square this circle. Bush’s memorandum violated international law, creating the giant loophole through which Rumsfeld and Tenet drove the Mack truck of torture.

After a lengthy investigation, the Senate Armed Services Committee concluded in December 2008 that it was President Bush himself who, by the Executive Memorandum of February 7, 2002, “opened the door” to the abuse that ensued. Here is Conclusion Number One of the committee report:

Bush Stays Home

“Following the President’s determination, techniques such as waterboarding, nudity, and stress positions ... were authorized for use in interrogations of detainees in U.S. custody.”

The direct result was torture and sometimes murder of detainees at Guantanamo in Cuba, Abu Ghraib in Iraq, and Bagram in Afghanistan. One chilling phrase used by young soldiers describing treatment of detainees at Guantanamo was “rape by instrumentality.”

When Congress attempted to draft legislation prohibiting such abuses, Bush’s White House lawyers objected citing their worry that such legislation might subject practitioners to prosecution under state and federal criminal statutes.

You may remember that one of the Bush administration’s favorite slogans was that evildoers must be “brought to justice.” Now, the world will be watching to see whether the evildoers of the Bush administration meet justice in the months and years to come.

Meanwhile, Bush, Rice, the lawyers, and the hands-on “practitioners” of torture had best stay close to home. After all, some countries might not think that it’s such a “quaint” idea to enforce international law. They might even believe in the old American principle that “no man is above the law.”

Ray McGovern is an ecumenical Catholic working with Tell the Word, a publishing arm of the Church of the Saviour in inner-city Washington. He spent almost 30 years as a CIA analyst and Army infantry/intelligence officer and is co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS).

U.S. Ensures Gadhafi Mercenaries War Crimes Prosecution Immunity

by Jason Ditz,

www.Antiwar.com, February 27, 2011—The UN Security Council unanimously passed broad sanctions on the nearly ousted Gadhafi regime in Libya, but in a bizarre twist the council also granted broad immunity from war crimes prosecution for the mercenaries responsible for many of the bloodiest massacres against the pro-democracy protesters. The sanctions call on the International Criminal Court to investigate top Libyan officials for their roles in crimes against humanity at the Hague, but the U.S. insisted that an additional clause be inserted that would forbid the ICC from prosecution of people from non-ICC member nations.

The move appears to have centered on long-standing U.S. hostility to the ICC, and the Bush Administration’s concerns that it could be used to prosecute U.S. soldiers and officials over war crimes. It is particularly bizarre in this case, however, because there is no indication any U.S. citizen is involved at all in the Libyan massacres, and the U.S. apparently threatened to kill the entire resolution if the immunity clause wasn’t inserted.

Now that the clause is in place and publicized, it will be doubly concerning to see how the mercenaries react in their violent crackdowns, knowing that the U.S. has their back with blanket immunity for whatever crimes they commit.

17 Veterans Sue Pentagon for Indifference to Military Rapes

by Ryan Abbott

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (CN)—Seventeen veterans, male and female, claim they were raped, sexually assaulted or harassed on active duty while officials turned a blind eye to the crimes and even promoted the assailants. “After plaintiffs and other victims reported the crimes against them, they were retaliated against, drummed out of the services, or, in some tragic cases, killed,” the veterans say.

The veteran-plaintiffs say Defense Secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates “failed to investi-

3,230 sexual assaults and rapes in the military were reported in 2009, up from 2,947 in 2006.

gate rapes and sexual assaults, prosecute perpetrators, provide an adequate judicial system as required by the Uniform Military Justice Act, and abide by congressional deadlines to implement congressionally ordered institutional reforms to stop rapes and other sexual assaults.”



Women in the military

The veterans say that military leaders “ran institutions in which perpetrators were promoted and where military personnel openly mocked and flouted the modest congressionally mandated institutional reforms. Defendants ran institutions in which plaintiffs

”After plaintiffs and other victims reported the crimes against them, they were retaliated against, drummed out of the services, or, in some tragic cases, killed.”

and other victims were openly subjected to retaliation, were encouraged to refrain from reporting rapes and sexual assaults in a manner that would have permitted prosecution, and were ordered to keep quiet and refrain from telling anyone about the criminal acts of their work colleagues.”

The 42-page complaint relates grisly tales of sexual assault. One Coast Guard Seaman says her superior officer spit in her face, threatened to kill her and “then began to break into her room at night, stand over her bed and masturbate.”

She says she had to sleep with a knife under her pillow to defend herself.

She says the officer eventually raped her, but was allowed to plead guilty only to hitting her and was punished with a minor loss of pay and restriction to base for 30 days.

A member of the Air National Guard says she was assaulted by a co-worker while on active duty in Iraq.

She says her co-worker “pushed [the plaintiff] up against the left side of the wall, took his right hand and pulled [her] pants and underwear down, and then used his hand to rub her vagina. He simultaneously ground his penis against [her], and talked about how much he was enjoying the assault.”

She says her attacker was only told to stay away from her, and she was given a lecture by a base chaplain, who told her that 96 percent of sexual assaults occur when drinking is involved, though she had not been drinking when she was attacked.

A male plaintiff with a Russian surname says he was raped during his service with the Army in 2009.

He says that during basic training his colleagues told him “We’ll send you back to Russia split in half, you commie faggot,” and “Now you champagne socialist faggot from New York gonna get what you deserve.”

He says “his Command laughed at him” when he reported the rape.

“Rather than properly investigate the matter, Command instead forced [the plaintiff] to sign a typed statement on

May 19, 2009, stating—falsely—that he was a ‘practicing homosexual.’ Command then used the statement to discharge [the plaintiff] under the ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ policy,” he says.

More instances of ambivalence from higher-ups are detailed in the complaint, including a Marine sergeant who simply made a Marine lieutenant apologize to a plaintiff after the lieutenant “shoved his fingers up [the plaintiff’s] anus until they penetrated him.”

This man says his fellow Marines told him “that reporting the sexual abuse would ruin his career because ‘bad things happen to those who rock the boat.’”

The veteran-plaintiffs say 3,230 sexual assaults and rapes in the military were reported in 2009, up from 2,947 such reports in 2006.

“After plaintiffs and other victims reported the crimes against them, they were retaliated against, drummed out of the services, or, in some tragic cases, killed,” the plaintiffs say. They claim that a female



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld resigns. Bush nominates Robert Gates

Marine “was murdered and buried in a shallow fire pit” in a servicemember’s back yard for reporting a rape.

Rumsfeld and Gates “failed to investigate rapes and sexual assaults, prosecute perpetrators, provide an adequate judicial system as required by the Uniform Military Justice Act...”

“After plaintiffs and other victims reported the crimes, Command forced them to salute and otherwise show ‘respect’ for their rapists. Plaintiffs were forced to live and work alongside their rapists, and some were put under their direct command,” they say.

The complaint adds that the Pentagon refuses to report conviction rates from courts martial, and “destroys evidence gathered during forensic examination after only one year from its collection date if the victim has chosen to use the restricted reporting system.”

The veterans say Gates and Rumsfeld “repeatedly and systematically violated plaintiffs’ constitutional rights.” They seek compensatory damages.

“Rapes and sexual assaults continue to occur at increasing rates because the top leadership—namely, the defendants—failed to challenge the misogynistic military culture that prevented the various programs from being fully implemented,” the veterans say.

They are represented by Susan Burke of Washington, D.C.

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The view of women as sexual prey rather than as responsible adults has always been part of military culture. Women today are indispensable to the military. Nevertheless, one woman soldier observed: “There are only three things the guys let you be if you’re a girl in the military—a bitch, a ho, or a dyke.” Not all military men see women soldiers this way, but too many do. The hostility is shown by undermining women’s authority, denying promotions, denigrating their work, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape.

—Helen Benedict,
The Lonely Soldier: The Private War of Women Serving in Iraq

Are we content to be an 'anti-war' movement—or a peace movement in name only?

We'd better get our minds right!

Imagine a peace movement that is part of a larger democracy movement!

by Mike Ferner (adapted from his 2009 speech to the Veterans For Peace convention)

In Paul Newman's 1967 classic, *Cool Hand Luke*, the prison boss in the gray suit, played memorably by Strother Martin, repeatedly tells Luke to "get your mind right." What turned out to be literally a grave warning for Luke happens to be exactly what we need to hear today.

We are now witnessing a crippled economy, sweeping foreclosures, widespread unemployment, millions without medical benefits, wars that now exceed a trillion dollars and have killed over a million people.

It's a fair question to ask of peace activists, Should we be concerned with issues that go so far beyond opposing war? I believe the answer is "yes," because war and our economic calamities are not only connected, one is the dominant cause of all the others, and peace activists and peace organizations, such as Veterans For Peace, are well positioned to make this argument.

I'd like to open a discussion on something even more fundamental than war and economic calamity. As is true so many times when talking about fundamentals, we can refer to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The same year *Cool Hand Luke* played in theaters, Dr. King spoke at Riverside Church in New York, giving what many believe was his greatest speech, "Beyond Vietnam." In it, he called the United States "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today."

Time magazine called King's speech "demagogic slander that sounded like a script for Radio Hanoi."

But every word in King's speech was true—and timeless. Here are a couple gems:

"...what we are submitting our troops to is not simply the brutalizing process that goes on in any war... We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for (our soldiers) must know after a short period there, that none of the things we claim to be fighting for are really involved."

"Americans, who calculate so carefully... military victory, do not realize that in the process they are incurring deep psychological and political defeat."

Then, 42 years ago, he spoke words that could've been addressed to us here today:

"This war is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this... reality we will find ourselves organizing clergy-and-laymen-concerned committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala... Cambodia... South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life..."

My daughter brought this home to me right after the invasion of Iraq, when she said, "This is my generation's war, just like Vietnam was yours, isn't it?"

So here we are, organizing another generation of anti-war committees, attending rallies without end. It's still necessary. We'll keep doing it, but I'm sick of it. I'm tired of being that Veterans for Peace guy who makes history dance at another rally by revealing what Smedley Butler had to say. I long for the time when peace activists are focused on creating a peaceful world through the use of practical nonviolence skills, not just reacting in opposition to yet another war.

Chris Hedges wrote "War is a force that gives us meaning." Could it also be true that anti-war is a force that gives us meaning? If we are content to be an anti-war movement or peace movement in name only, we'll have work that will give us plenty of meaning for this generation, our children's generation, and the one after that if the planet is still breathing.

No, what we need is a peace movement that is true to our chant in the streets: "No justice, no peace!" Peace with justice means stopping the few from making policy for the many; from robbing us blind; denying our right to health care; destroying Earth's life support systems; as well as sending us to war.

Peace with justice needs a foundation. That foundation is democracy. Not democracy "as advertised on TV," or bandied about during elections, but the real thing. We must govern ourselves, for we have seen what happens when we don't.

Imagine a peace movement that is part of a larger democracy movement. We talk about "outreach" to other groups. We talk about defunding the war to fund human needs. But brothers and sisters, what is our vision? Stopping the F-22 or trading an aircraft carrier for a housing program? It has to be more than that! What we need is to govern ourselves so we can create the kind of life we have an indisputable, inalienable right to.

But we aren't going to gain the power needed to govern ourselves if we expend our precious time toiling in an isolated peace movement that merely wants to get our troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan, just as we won't become self-governing with an environmental movement that aims only for more solar panels and cars with better mileage.

We need to get our minds right so we can see ourselves not as mere workers and consumers but as human beings with an absolute right to define what kind of life we need—and then take it!

We need to create a culture of democracy from the bottom-up, to replace our culture of death. We need to change our government from what it is today—a huge roadblock, guarded round the clock by greed and private interests—into a vehicle that nourishes the public interest; that helps us express our love for each other and our planet.

I believe there is a hunger for self-governance and democracy in America and that hunger is the fundamental link between the peace movement and every other movement working to address human needs.

I don't need to remind you of war's real cost. We can't even identify all the categories into which we pour war's staggering sums. Less than 5% of what we've spent in Iraq and Afghanistan would pay the tuition of every student



Strother Martin as the Captain in *Cool Hand Luke*

attending public university this year in the U.S. Beyond dollars, we know war's human toll on individuals, families and whole communities is as impossible to quantify as the heartache of a single loved one; as impossible to calculate as the multiples of misery endured by those under our bombs.

If we experienced casualties in our country comparable to those just in Iraq it would mean that every person in Baltimore, Boston, Dallas, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seattle would be dead. Every. Single. Person. Everyone in Delaware, Idaho, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, and Oregon: wounded. Every. Single. Person. The entire populations of Ohio and New Jersey: homeless. Everyone in Michigan, Indiana, and Kentucky: refugees in Canada or Mexico.

What's astounding is that so many insist this kind of madness is practical, is realistic...and yet would look at the bottom line of the Veterans For Peace mission statement, "To abolish war as an instrument of national policy" and say "Now, that's crazy!"

How can this be? Well, think how much we pay this system every year to produce this culture of death, and then define it as normal, in fact as the only way to live unless we want to freeze to death in the dark. There is one good thing about all this—when we realize what a constant, herculean effort the system must make to construct such a massive delusion and maintain it in the face of everything rational, we can sense how fragile the empire really is. If you doubt that, recall the statues of Lenin toppling all across Russia in 1990, when just two years before such a thing was unthinkable.

And so we've come full circle, back to Strother Martin's demand to get your mind right! We can either do that, or stand dumbfounded on the side of the road, waiting in awe for the Imperial Oz to give us direction.

What we see today is not the only way forward. War is not an unavoidable absolute. Human beings decide to create injustice, to promote empire, to whip up public fears. But we know human beings can make different decisions. We can create better outcomes. We can build a just society. We can create a culture of democracy. We can abolish war. We can, and we are!

But remember this other passage from that great speech of King's. "We may cry out desperately for time to pause...but time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residue of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words, 'too late.'"

Sisters and brothers, let us begin.

Mike Ferner is past president of Veterans For Peace

Letters

Proud Granddaughter

The following is one paragraph from an essay my granddaughter Zaidie wrote about me for her English class.

Not only does he travel, but he is also a strong activist for Veterans for Peace. This means that he regularly protests military operations, such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He recently sent us a video of a protest outside the White House. My family and I had a great time watching him get arrested. Most kids would think I am crazy for admiring this, but it makes me swell with pride. He has shown me how to stand up for myself, and what I believe in. One simple act and my grandfather was able to teach me an important lesson, even though he wasn't present when I learned it. Many teenagers my age say they are proud of their grandparents, but not many have stories like mine. My grandfather has played a huge role in my life, and I am very thankful for everything he has done for me.

Kenneth Mayers
Santa Fe, NM

Disgruntled Reader

Thanks for putting out the *War Crimes Times*. As is usually the case, you only hear from the disgruntled. Here it is: In the summer '10 issue, you refer [in a caption for a photo from the 1958 film] to the novel by Irwin Shaw as a movie. Too often (the way I feel) great novels are referred to by the derivative Hollywood stuff done for profit and never done as well as the book. There are countless examples: *War & Peace*; any of Jane Austen's novels that have been massacred in the movies; James Jones' works.

Read *The Young Lions*. It will stay with you forever.

Denny Riley
San Francisco, CA

Amazed Activist

Kudos on the Winter 2011 edition!! Two bundles arrived in time for delivery to the Military-Industrial Complex at Fifty conference at Guilford College in Greensboro, January 14-16, and plenty of time for delivery at Quantico on January 17. After the Quantico vigil, twenty of us took over the Marine Museum Mess Hall for a meeting of the National Accountability Action Network. We pushed six tables together for our meeting, which included *War Crimes Times* contributors Ray McGovern and David Swanson.

When the mess hall closed, we exited singing songs of peace, led by Medea Benjamin and Tighe Berry.

Thoughts of our next vigil at Quantico include a day long bike caravan from Mt. Vernon, highlighting George Washington's prohibition of mistreatment of detainees. Twenty riders could constitute a critical mass, slowing traffic on Route 1 with four support vehicles—two front, two back—each with a photographer and videographer, possibly following the March 19 event in DC.

I have been amazed by each issue of *WCT*, and wonder how you all can keep up the pace. But you do, and my hat's off to you.

John Heuer
Pittsboro, NC

Suggestion from Subscriber

Please let Nadya Williams know that I first heard of your paper in the AVA (Anderson Valley Advertiser) in Boonville, CA. The editor of the AVA, Bruce Anderson, mentioned the *War Crimes Times* in his column and that's how I came to send in my donation. He deserves the credit for recommending the *War Crimes Times* to his world-wide subscribers.

One suggestion: You should emphasize that if we, the taxpayers, take the *profit* out of war, there will be no more wars. When General Eisenhower left off in 1960, he warned the American people about the Military-Industrial Complex. He sounded the fire alarm, so to speak. Alas, so many people *do not want to know* about the obscenity of waging war, sacrificing the youth of the world on the altar of greed and corruption. The "Servants of the People" (our rulers) have betrayed us!

Dolores Smith Mejia
Coldwater, MI

Blessings Bestowed

Congratulations! Either *WCT* is getting better each issue or I'm gaining insight as I read each issue. I spent the last years of WWII in the Carolinas but never got to your area. God bless you for your courageous work to tell the truth.

Charles Butler
Pueblo, CO

WCT in Demand

Of the three alternative publications that I distribute, the *War Crimes Times* is the most in demand. My years of working in Nicaragua during our war against this country opened my life to truth—which is found through a combination of publications. I am pleased that North Americans are so interested in the *War Crimes Times*.

Paul Patnode
(El Nica—the Nicaraguan)
Volcano, HI

EVERYTHING!

When your governor tells you to pay more for your health care or pension or whatever, tell him you already pay for EVERYTHING! Your labor pays for your wages, your pension, your health-care, your vacation, your sick leave AND...your labor pays for the building you work in, the heat, water, gas, electricity, taxes, advertising, bribes to public officials, AND...it pays for his Cadillac, his mansion, his alimony, his world travels...your labor pays for EVERYTHING!

Tom Dooley
St. Paul, MN

ALARM

I've paid some of my dues & I'm doin' my time.
I've been busted for some victimless crime.

Corporate media only feeds you trivial crap
while Soma & toxins drip out of your tap.

Hope is the dope that leads you to dream.
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

I've heard all about high crimes & their cost;
crime is the price we pay when compassion gets lost.

Nobody can feel your pain, that's for you alone.
How deep does good go once you've been bad to the bone?

Hope is a dope that keeps you serene.
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

When we sow fear on both sides of our shore,
can we let ring our chimes of freedom anymore?

Go where we tell you, don't follow our ways,
& you'll soon discover who profits & who pays.

Hope is a rope that binds you to the machine.
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

Can you hear your neighbors' call thru the rhetorical fog
as they are dragged off to some shadowy gulag?

Your children are bedazzled, befuddled & beguiled;
when you dare to ask why you're treated like a child.

Hope is the smokescreen for corporate schemes
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

Don't believe all those stories you read & hear,
else you'll find yourself under the shadow of fear.

Hope is the dope that leads you to dream.
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

Hope is the dope that keeps you in a dream.
Wake up! Take Action! Carpe Diem!

—Ronald Harayda
USAF medic '65 to '69
producer of "VFP-TV & Radio"
for VFP Chapter 099



SAVE THE DATE
SOUTHEAST
NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION
TRAINERS' GATHERING
April 29 & 30 & May 1
Asheville, North Carolina

Friday Evening Social
All day Saturday Gathering
Sunday Summary & Closing

Peer to Peer Exchange & Skills Swap
Share Ideas and Experience, Tactics & Strategies
appropriate for Direct Action Organizing & Training
for the Southeast's unique Social, Economic, and
Environmental Justice challenges.

Contribute to the development of a Resource Guide
of Southeast Nonviolent Direct Action Trainers.

Convened by **WRL-Asheville** and
the **New South Network of War Resisters**.
Register online: info@NewSouthNetwork.org
or call 828.301.6683

The March 19, 2011 Call to Action:

This Madness Must Cease! Resist the War Machine

**by Tarak Kauff**

"Somehow this madness must cease." That's what Martin Luther King said in his famous "Beyond Vietnam" speech at Riverside Church in April 1967. It is amazing that almost 44 years later madmen are still running the asylum. Just one month ago, many of us were at the White House fence, where we were taking a stand for peace. We were opposing that same entity that King called "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world."

Violence in Iraq continues as more than 50,000 U.S. troops and mercenaries continue to occupy that war-devastated country. In Afghanistan, 850 children are dying daily, some directly from U.S. bombs, many from illness and starvation, all this, byproducts of war.

But it is not just that these wars and occupations for empire are evil; they are endemic of an insane corruption of the human condition. To sane human beings, war, not to mention permanent war, is madness. But to the madmen who control America, wars that reap massive profits are normal. Madmen do not pity the suffering, do not empathize with others' pain that they cause. Cold to the misery of others, immune to reason and conscience, they are a strange lot, these dispensers of death.

We have a president who speaks hypocrisy and lies calmly, even with a kind of absurd eloquence. Addicted to a system that glorifies power, wealth and position, he cannot respond to our pleas for peace, let alone justice.

James Connolly, the Irish socialist leader who was executed by the British in 1916, said:

It would be well to realize that the talk of 'humane methods of warfare,' of the 'rules of civilized warfare,' and all such homage to the finer sentiments of the race are hypocritical and unreal, and only intended for the consumption of stay-at-homes. There are no humane methods of warfare, there is no such thing as civilized warfare; all warfare is inhuman, all warfare is barbaric; the first blast of the bugles of war ever sounds for the time being the funeral knell of human progress. What lover of humanity

can view with anything but horror the prospect of this ruthless destruction of human life. Yet this is war: war for which all the jingoes are howling, war to which all the hopes of the world are being sacrificed, war to which a mad ruling class would plunge a mad world.

Over time, this "mad ruling class" loses the very qualities of love, kindness and empathy that make us human. These executors and guardians of an inhumane system of corporate capitalism destroy all that humanity holds dear and sacred. Those who are mad with power will never voluntarily relinquish it, nor surrender to even the most eloquent and passionate appeals. They are like drunken drivers whose license must be revoked.

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."—Frederick Douglass

The system and those in power recognize that the source of their control is a subdued, sedated, and manipulated public, a public fed lies and fantasies that can, when needed, be manipulated by fear or coercion. But as the uprisings in Tunisia and now Egypt show us, lies, fear, and coercion can be resisted.

Here in the United States, war profiteers are thriving while people are losing homes and jobs. We don't have adequate health care or decent education

for our children, and civil services are cut while the Pentagon budget grows exponentially.

During the Berkeley Free Speech Movement in 1964, Mario Savio said:

There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop.

Join veterans, many of whom have seen the madness and horror of war firsthand, as we march again to the White House, refusing to move, demanding the end of U.S. wars and occupations, as well as an end to U.S. military support and aid for oppressive right-wing client states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, and \$3 billion-plus-a-year partners in crime like Israel.

On March 19—the anniversary of the brutal invasion of Iraq, where more than a million Iraqis and almost 5,000 U.S. soldiers died with thousands more grievously injured—as the occupation of Iraq and the wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan continue unabated, Veterans For Peace is calling for increased veteran-led nonviolent civil resistance at the White House.

Tarak Kauff is a co-founder of the War Crimes times.

IRAQ — 1991-2011

(Continued from page 1)

into power. According to this Iraqi in Iraq, our nation has meddled in his country's affairs for over forty years. His feelings were confirmed by many other Iraqis I spoke with over the course of my visit.

After I left the Army in 1992, I paid little attention to U.S. activities in Iraq, although I knew that U.S. forces had never ended military operations there. Containment was the policy. Operation Southern Watch begun in August 1992 to enforce the no fly-zone over Southern Iraq did not officially end until the 2003 invasion. There were Operations Vigilant Warrior in 1994 and Desert Strike in 1996, which expanded the no fly-zone to parts of Northern Iraq. There was Operation Desert Fox, a four-day bombing campaign launched on December 16, 1998.

According to GlobalSecurity.org, between 1992 and 2001 allied pilots entered the no fly-zone over southern Iraq 153,000 times. I remember hearing about some of these actions, but rarely, and news outlets and politicians seldom discussed or questioned our Iraq policy.

Then one summer day in 2001, I was confronted by activists in New York City holding a sign reporting that half a million Iraqi children died due in part to the U.S.-led economic sanctions. This made me take notice. I began to feel some responsibility for my role in my nation's foreign policy toward Iraq, so I began to learn more. A few months later, boom; September 11 happened, and the drum beat for more war on Iraq began anew. By that time, counting from the day of my invasion, the U.S. had been dropping bombs on Iraq for 10 years.

Since then, as I mentioned, I have returned to Iraq seeking peace, my five-year-old

son grew up and like his father, served a tour waging war in Iraq, the Obama Administration declared the end of U.S. combat missions in Iraq, U.S. troop levels have been reduced to 50 thousand, and the U.S. has pledged to remove all troops by the end of this year.

Is this 20-year nightmare for the Iraqi people about to end? I don't know, but I do know that after 20 years it is time for the U.S. to leave the Iraqis alone. Do not let media spin and labels like Gulf War and Iraq War distort the truth. January 16, 2001 was the real start of our invasion of Iraq. From the time of the Baath Party coup through Bush Sr., Clinton, Bush Jr., and now Obama, U.S. policy has meant nothing but hell for the Iraqi people.

Forty years of meddling and 20 years of war is enough. We must not allow the Obama Administration to drag its feet or back out of leaving Iraq. We owe it to the Iraq people. They have suffered enough.

Michael T. McPhearson was a field artillery officer in the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division during Desert Shield /Desert Storm, also known as Gulf War I. A Newark resident, Michael is currently the Co-convenor of United for Peace and Justice and former Executive Director of Veterans For Peace.



Veterans Groups in Solidarity**Taking it to the White House — Again!****End these wars! Expose the lies! Free Bradley Manning! We demand real democracy! We demand peace!**

The imperial wars rage on. U.S. drones rain missiles down on innocents in Pakistan; hundreds of children die daily in Afghanistan because of the war; contrary to what the President says, the occupation in Iraq continues. The devastation and misery caused by the U.S. invasion of Iraq has not even begun to be addressed. The United States, rather than bringing democracy and freedom to the Iraqi people, has destroyed their country—perhaps beyond repair.



Manning revealed horrendous war crimes committed by U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, widespread torture by Iraqi authorities with full knowledge of the U.S. military, previously unknown estimates of the number of Iraqi civilians killed at U.S. military checkpoints, and the massive Iraqi civilian death toll caused by the U.S. invasion.

As veterans, we well understand and cherish the obligation of military personnel to refuse illegal orders and beyond that to prevent and expose war crimes. We know there is no excuse for following, either actively or passively, illegal orders. We understand the need for justice. Our demand is clear, straightforward, and undeniable. Bring to justice those who committed war crimes, not those who report them—who heroically refuse to be a part of state-inspired mayhem and murder.

Veterans and others will gather en masse at the White House as we did on December 16, 2010, and again refuse to move. We have three clear demands for the President. End these wars and occupations. Expose the Lies. Free Bradley Manning.

“The speeches were over. There was a mournful harmonica rendition of taps. The 500 protesters fell silent. One hundred and thirty-one men and women, many of them military veterans wearing old fatigues, formed a single, silent line. Under a heavy snowfall and to the slow beat of a drum, they walked to the White House fence. They stood there until they were arrested.”—Chris Hedges

“We have become a killer nation and our economy is addicted to endless war spending. The Congress and the White House have been taken over by the corporate oligarchy and they have drowned democracy.”
—Bruce Gagnon

If you are reading this before March 19, come to Washington. Learn more at StopTheseWars.com.

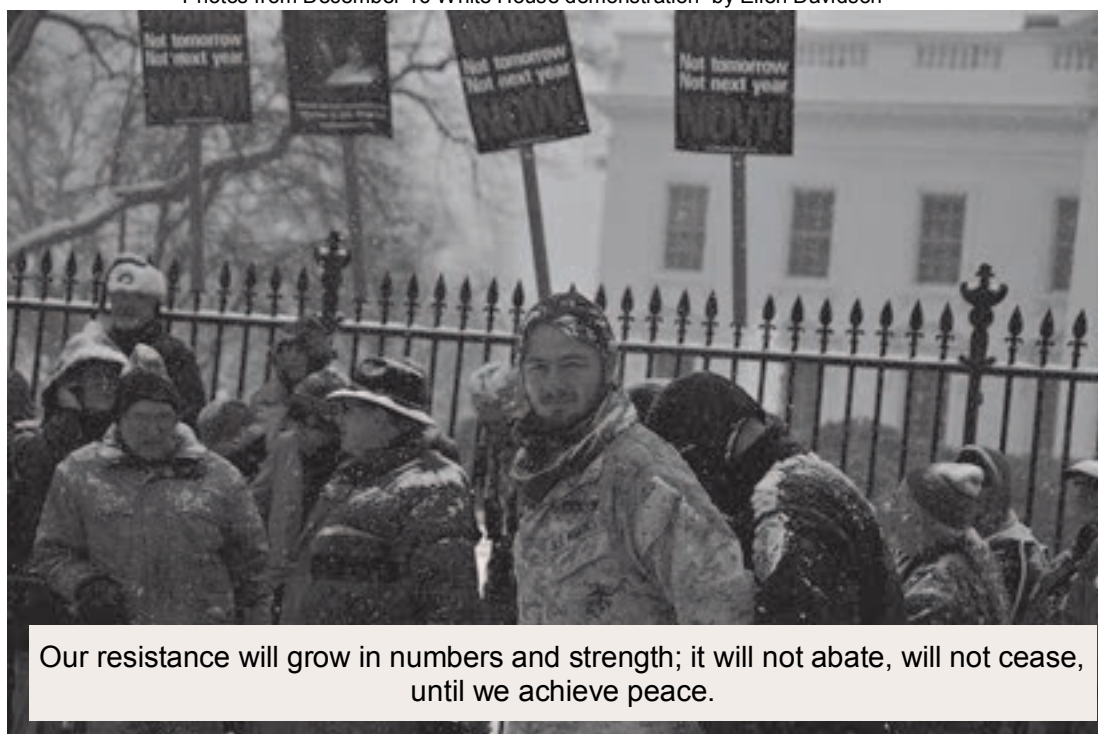
StopTheseWars.com

If you are reading this after March 19, see the photos, articles, and videos at StopTheseWars.com.

America’s corporate rulers understand that their power depends upon a subdued, sedated, and manipulated public—a public fed lies and fantasies that can, when needed, be manipulated by fear or coercion. But as the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt show us, the people can triumph over entrenched power, lies, fear, and coercion.

On March 19—the anniversary of the brutal invasion of Iraq, where over a million Iraqis and almost 5,000 U.S. soldiers died with thousands more grievously injured—as the occupation of Iraq and the wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan continue unabated, this coalition of veterans will bring the largest ever veteran-led nonviolent public civil resistance to the White House.

Photos from December 16 White House demonstration by Ellen Davidson



Our resistance will grow in numbers and strength; it will not abate, will not cease, until we achieve peace.

On March 19, 2011, a broad coalition of U.S. military veterans consisting of members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, March Forward!, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and Veterans For Peace will gather at the White House in solidarity to demand peace. The veteran-led action will be supported by a large array of activist groups including ANSWER, Fellowship of Reconciliation, CODEPINK, United for Peace and Justice, World Can’t Wait, Peace Action, and the War Resisters League.

Veterans will gather to support Bradley Manning, who should be venerated as a hero instead of being incarcerated under conditions amounting, literally (and legally) to torture. We call for an immediate end to the cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of PFC Bradley Manning during his military confinement.

Records and videos allegedly downloaded by



Economy—the management of the wealth and resources of a nation.

Above: The U.S. economy as it is;
Below: the U.S. economy as it could be.
(images by Mark Runge — mark4art.com)



I am currently serving as a member of the Icelandic parliament and I decided to volunteer to be a MP at the NATO parliamentary assembly because I felt there should be more voices of peace at the gathering of hawks. The first time I went to the assembly there was a side event on nuclear disarmament of NATO countries. I was invited to speak; instead I read this poem for them:

Horror of War

Headless bodies
burned flesh
smell of decay

A wedding band
on a slim delicate finger
Shades of memories
a future that can never be

A lonely head in a lush green field
eyes wide open
In the hollow a reflection of
untold love

Mountains of starved children
shiny bones
flesh torn off the bodies

Shocked and awed
by the images of mothers
miscarrying their unborn children

Shocked and awed
by the silent fear
countless civilians
dead dead dead

These are images
we should put in a frame
Mount them in our homes
so we never forget;
the true horror of war

—Birgitta Jonsdottir

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Adam Kokesh of IVAW, Tony Teolis of VFP (holding paper), Mike Marceau of VFP use the *War Crimes Times* to make their point at a press conference in Washington, DC on March 19, 2009.