

# EMPIRE STRIKES AGAIN



The world divided into U.S. military commands (Source: U.S. Department of Defense)

## The Black Light on the Hill: White House Foreign Policy Hypocrisy

by Donald Gutierrez

*He may be an SOB and a dictator, but he is our SOB...*

—Robert Simmons, former CIA officer

America is the “city on the hill,” the light to a benighted world, a country whose statesmen proclaim that America abominates torture, that it has always stood for freedom, liberty, decency, and so on. One all too frequently hears these self-admiring nationalistic clichés uttered by politicians, media commentators, editorialists, and historians, and can conclude only three things: either these publicly conspicuous individuals are ignorant of America’s foreign policy and history; aren’t, and therefore are lying to win popularity, office and its retention, or acceptance by the powers that

be; or have been deluded by the myths about the uniqueness and excellence that most societies and their ruling class manufacture about themselves to maintain social coherence and domination.

Yet, if one looks at the record of our government’s behavior abroad, it should be painfully clear that our government representatives—particularly our Presidents and their Cabinets—have often behaved criminally in policies pursued abroad. As writers, analysts, numerous international and national Truth Commissions, and organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have thoroughly and cogently shown, Washington has committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide,

assassinations, massacres, and torture in other countries. Through the overt and covert encouragement of “our SOB” dictators, they have done so either directly (Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Panama, Nicaragua, Grenada, Pakistan) and/or indirectly (Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, Argentina, Indonesia, Lebanon, South Africa, East Timor, Cambodia) with an astounding force of money, ordnance, intelligence, communications equipment and technology. The extent and depth of misery, grief, agony, and excruciating, lingering dying and violent death the White House has brought about is colossal.

### Saddam

For years the American public had been told by their political leaders how horrible a monster Saddam Hussein was as a motivation to remove him from power. When all the arguments for removing Saddam were proven to be false, wrong, and dishonest, the myth-making machine in the

(See HYPOCRISY on page 2)

## Troop surge speech short on facts, long on fear

President Barack Obama, in announcing the latest American troop surge in an occupied foreign country, claimed that America doesn’t seek global hegemony: “For unlike the great powers of old, we have not sought world domination. Our union was founded in resistance to oppression. We do not seek to occupy other nations.”

But the facts belie his assertions. According to the Centre for Research on Globalisation, the U.S. has military bases in 63 countries with an underlying land surface of 30 million acres. These sites “include a total of 845,441 different buildings and equipments.” According to official Pentagon data, in 2005 there were 737 bases on foreign lands. There are more than 255,000 U.S. military troops deployed across the world.

Obama also attempted to

rekindle the fear that his predecessor employed so successfully to advance his agenda: “[T]he American people were viciously attacked from Afghanistan, and remain a target for those same extremists who are plotting along its border. To abandon this area now... [would] create an unacceptable risk of additional attacks on our homeland and our allies.”

His opening statements set the tone: “[I]t is important to recall why America and our allies were compelled to fight a war in Afghanistan in the first place.... On September 11, 2001, 19 men hijacked four airplanes and used them to murder nearly 3,000 people.... They took the lives of innocent men, women and children....”

The President failed to mention that none of the alleged perpetrators of the September 11 attacks was from Afghanistan—or Pakistan or Iraq—and that the invasion in October of 2001 was illegal under international law.



Peace activist led away during protest of President Obama’s West Point announcement of further escalation in Afghanistan

**Inside:** exclusive interview with Gitmo lawyer Frank Goldsmith; articles by Penny Coleman, Dahlia Wasfi, John Pilger...poems, cartoons...

## Hypocrisy

(Continued from page 1)

White House/Pentagon Inner Sanctum produced its final argument: bringing Democracy to Iraq (and to the “unstable” and undemocratic Mideast) and thus the need to remove The Tyrant.

The neo-con position always seemed to circle back to Saddam Hussein and to the murderousness of his regime. But in the past half century alone there have been other leaders, rulers, and dictators just as bad, if not considerably worse, than Saddam. Washington has not just tolerated but supported, encouraged, financed, and even created these dictators. The regimes in power were both worse than Saddam and fully supported by American presidents through the CIA and other agencies covertly and illegally. The staggering hypocrisy of our government should be fully exposed and its

moral arguments for attacking a sovereign nation like Iraq—and now Iran?—shown up for the massive international crime it really is.

### Torture

Historian and critic Noam Chomsky writes, “Hideous torture has become standard practice in the U.S. client fascist states... horrendous details of torture are documented by many thousands of human beings in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Indonesia, U.S.-Occupied South Vietnam up to 1975, Iran, and in quite a few other U.S. client states...much of the electronic and other torture gear is U.S. supplied, and great numbers of client state police and military interrogators are U.S. trained.”

The United States School of the Americas (now euphemistically titled the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security

Cooperation) provides vivid examples of the deliberateness of Washington’s foreign policy being oriented towards proxy methods of terror carried out by Third-World governments obligated to Washington and American corporate power. The SOA, first located in Panama, then later at Ft. Benning, Georgia, is a school for torturers. Latin American military and police officers are taught, among other things, how to torture by American military instructors.

Torture consequently became the quintessence of state terrorism policy in a number of Latin American countries. Innumerable dictators and despots, as well as military and civilian personnel, ordered or carried out acts of torture that would be unthinkable to the average American as something his own government would permit, let alone finance, encourage, and administer—and often observe or occasionally even participate in.

### SOB Suharto

Countless other examples of White House participation in fascist regimes are prevalent in modern world history. In Indonesia, during the Sukarno ouster and Suharto takeover, up to ten million Indonesians, many of them apolitical peasants, were slaughtered by the faction fully supported and virtually directed by the White House. General Suharto, “our SOB” from 1965 on for several decades, continued his war crimes in East Timor into the 1990s and had to be restrained and finally replaced by the Clinton Administration. The list of “He’s an SOB but he’s our SOB” seems almost endless.

### Central America

Closer to home, starting with Human-Rights abuses in Central America, according to a United-Nations-selected Truth Commission, more than 22,000 complaints were reported of serious human-rights abuses between 1980 and 1991 in El Salvador alone. The United States had close ties with the Salvadoran institutional torturers. Salvadoran military personnel involved in



torturing Salvadorans claimed to have learned their ABCs of “depth questioning” from the SOA in Panama. Salvadoran security forces worked closely with the CIA and the U.S. military in the deceptively termed “counter-insurgency operations.” In Guatemala, a School-

commodating to corporations like United Fruit whose monopolistic interests were threatened by Guatemalan political leaders like Jacobo Arbenz and dissidents striving to free the country’s economy from Washington’s control.

### Chile

Further south, President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger instituted a secret policy to destroy a democratic Chile and its democratically elected President, Salvador Allende. They brought terror and horror to the country by undermining the economy and supporting its military foes with money and weapons and by helping General Augusto Pinochet take over the country. Eventually, the White House ordered CIA involvement in overturning the Allende government. The military and the security force then tortured tens of thousands of Chileans and at least 20,000 Chileans fled the country. Washington, far from disapproving of this criminal conduct, affirmed and supported it. Kissinger, in a 1976 “Memo of Conversation,” said that the United States was sympathetic to Pinochet’s government and thus to its usurpation of Allende’s legal government.

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The staggering hypocrisy of our government should be fully exposed and its moral arguments for attacking a sovereign nation like Iraq shown up for the massive international crime it really is.

of-the-Americas graduate, General Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas, was responsible for the death of thousands of Guatemalans. Another Guatemalan jefe, Hector Gramajo Morales, Guatemala’s Defense Minister in the 1980s, imposed a “humanitarian” policy that would “provide development for 70% of the population while we kill 30%.” From 1953 to 1990, over 200,000 Guatemalans were murdered by the country’s repressive regimes. This genocide was supported by Washington because these regimes were ac-

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## In The Service To This Empire

by Fred Nagle

There is this assumption that we have served and get the right to have our say. But I never really bought this argument. I never served anyone or anything noble or worthy during my two years of active duty. I was never proud of what I did. Of course, there were vets who actually did serve: in Vietnam, in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Served in combat. They served the most dangerous, heavily armed, and relentless of the world’s military empires, the empire if the imperial United States of America.

These vets were trained as killers,  
in the service to this empire.

These vets went in with the best intentions only to be disillusioned,  
in the service to this empire.

They were wounded, and they came back crippled.

They were poisoned by agent orange and depleted uranium,  
in the service to this empire.

They saw their buddies wounded and killed.

They saw women and children burned beyond recognition,  
in the service to this empire.

They saw their visions of humanity, of a just world, destroyed,  
in the service to this empire.

They came away with stories they couldn’t tell,

They came back homeless, they came back violent,

They came back ashamed, in search of their place in the human race,  
all in the service to this empire.

US vets have served, given everything they could possible give,  
all in the service to this empire.

If there is a false god, a golden calf, for Americans in the 21st century, it is the glory of this empire, bought with the blood of our own sons and daughters, bought with the lives of so many millions in the occupied territories of Latin America and the Middle East. It is service to the empire that must be exposed and resisted. It is service to the empire that must stopped by this nation’s citizens if we ever hope to establish our country among the righteous and just nations of the world.

# We Are All War Criminals

by Dahlia Wasfi

November 24, 2009—Our nation is still recovering from the November 5, 2009, shootings at Ft. Hood in Killeen, Texas. We are waiting for some sense of normalcy to return after such a shocking event. How unbelievable it is for this tragedy to occur; after all, our occupations had been going so well until this point. Just ask the Iraqi people. Wait, scratch that. Okay, ask the Afghan people. Never mind. Just ask U.S. veterans. Oh boy. If we ask the people who are living the horrors, then maybe what happened at Ft. Hood isn't so shocking at all. What is surprising is that we haven't seen more of the same.

In the first ten months of 2009, ten soldiers based at Ft. Hood killed themselves; that was the second-highest for the nation, behind the sixteen suicides at Kentucky's Ft. Campbell. In January 2009 alone, twenty-four soldiers across the country killed themselves.

"This is terrifying," an Army official said. "We do not know what is going on." Well, let me help you out, random Army

**Army official, when you issue illegal orders for people to go commit atrocities overseas and they fail to refuse said orders, you end up with people in trouble, people with PTSD.**

official, when you issue illegal orders for people to go commit atrocities overseas (because that's the best word to sum up what's happening in Iraq and Afghanistan), and they fail to refuse said orders in compliance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice, you end up with people in trouble, people with PTSD.

Some of them turn their trauma inward, self-destructing and committing suicide. Some of them express their trauma outward, committing homicide. One report documents former Pfc. Johnathon Klinker, 22, who was sentenced to 40 years in prison for killing his 7-week-old daughter, Nicolette, in October 2006. Another report tells of the murder spree by three Iraq veterans at Ft. Carson, which included the death of a 19-year-old nursing student who was stabbed six times after the trio ran her over with their car in October 2007. And now, you have Major Nidal Hasan, who may have been experiencing secondary PTSD (not to mention degradation by his brothers-in-arms for his ethnicity and religion). THAT is what is going on; it's all connected to our illegal occupations.

We hear reports now that the military is not taking care of its soldiers. According to allegations from clinical

psychiatrist Dr. Kernan Manion—who believes he was dismissed for his complaints—Marines at Camp Lejeune are getting poor care for their PTSD. And it's not much better in the Army, according to veteran, Sgt. Chuck Luther, who was discharged after twelve years of service with a "personality disorder" instead of being diagnosed with and receiving benefits for PTSD.

Here's what I want to know: WHY ARE WE SURPRISED? Do we not know how this story ends, with a quarter of the homeless population on America's streets comprised of veterans? Do we not recognize the brutality and dehumanization—of recruits and the "enemy" (whatever the flavor of the month is)—that is the foundation of basic training? Do we really think the military and government are going to one day take care of the U.S. armed forces, when they send them overseas

to die for corporate profit? I wouldn't put my dog's welfare in the hands of an Army drill sergeant; Americans are handing over their flesh and blood to them. Yes, there is a recession and jobs are scarce, but the military is made up of less than 1% of the U.S. population. There are a whole lot of people who are struggling economically and not choosing to enlist. We are in some serious denial here.

But the denial isn't just a civilian disorder. As Luther describes on his website, he "was deployed to Taji, Iraq from October 2006 to July 2007. Sgt. Luther unknowingly suffered PTSD after living in the combat environment." He was "living" in the combat environment. How innocent that sounds. Under further probing, Luther describes "Violence breeds violence. I was trained to be very violent in combat as a scout ... we killed or detained Iraqis before anyone else got there." Before there could be any witnesses to your crimes.

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# Normalizing the Crime of the Century

by John Pilger

December 09, 2009—I tried to contact Mark Higson the other day only to learn he had died nine years ago. He was just 40, an honorable man. We met soon after he had resigned from the Foreign Office in 1991 and I asked him if the government knew that Hawk fighter-bombers sold to Indonesia were being used against civilians in East Timor.

"Everyone knows," he said, "except parliament and the public."

"And the media?"

"The media—the big names—have been invited

to King Charles Street (the Foreign Office) and flattered and briefed with lies. They are no trouble."

As Iraq desk officer at the Foreign Office, he had drafted letters for ministers reassuring MPs and the public that the British Government was not arming Saddam Hussein. "This was a downright lie," he said. "I couldn't bear it."

Giving evidence before the arms-to-Iraq enquiry, Higson was the only British official commended by Lord Justice Scott for telling the truth. The price he paid was the loss of his health and marriage and constant surveillance by spooks. He ended up living on benefits in a Birmingham bedsitter where he suffered a seizure, struck his head and died alone. Whistleblowers are often heroes; he was one.

He came to mind when I saw a picture in the paper of another Foreign Office official, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, who was Tony Blair's ambassador to the United Nations in the build-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. More than anyone, it was Sir Jeremy who tried every trick to find a UN cover for the bloodbath to come. Indeed, this was his boast to the Chilcot enquiry on 27 November, where he described the invasion as

"legal but of questionable legitimacy." How clever. In the picture he wore a smirk.



Under international law, "questionable legitimacy" does not exist. An attack on a sovereign state is a crime. This was made clear by Britain's chief law officer, Attorney General Peter Goldsmith, before his arm was twisted, and by the Foreign Office's own legal advisers and subsequently by the secretary-general of the United Nations.

**The invasion of Iraq is the crime of the 21st century. During 17 years of assault on a defenseless civilian population, more people have died in Iraq than during the peak years of the slave trade.**

The invasion is the crime of the 21st century. During 17 years of assault on a defenseless civilian population, veiled with weasel monikers like "sanctions" and "no fly zones" and "building democracy," more people have died in Iraq than during the peak years of the slave trade. Set that against Sir Jeremy's skin-saving revisionism about American "noises" that were "decidedly unhelpful to what I was trying to do [at the UN] in New York". Moreover, "I myself warned the Foreign Office ... that I might have to consider my own position ...."

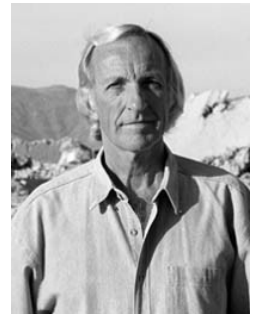
It wasn't me, gov.

The purpose of the Chilcot inquiry is to normalize an epic crime by providing enough of a theatre of guilt to satisfy the media so that the only issue that matters, that of prosecution, is never raised. When he appears in January, Blair will play this part to odious perfection, dutifully absorbing the hisses and boos. All "inquiries" into state crimes are neutered in this way. In 1996, Lord Justice Scott's arms-to-Iraq report obfuscated the crimes his investigations and voluminous evidence had revealed.

At that time, I interviewed Tim Laxton, who had attended every day of the inquiry as auditor of companies taken over by MI6 and other secret agencies as vehicles for the illegal arms trade with Saddam Hussein. Had there been a full and open criminal investigation, Laxton told me, "hundreds" would have faced prosecution. "They would include," he said, "top political figures, very senior civil servants from right throughout Whitehall ... the top echelon of government."

That is why Chilcot is advised by the likes of Sir Martin Gilbert, who compared Blair with Churchill and Roosevelt. That is why the inquiry will not demand the release of documents

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## KOREA

# Massacre at No Gun Ri

by Bruce K. Gagnon

October 14, 2009— Yesterday I spent most of the day visiting the site of the U.S. Army 7th Cavalry Regiment's massacre of more than 225 innocent Korean civilians on July 26, 1950 at No Gun Ri during the Korean War.

In the days before July 26, 1950 the North Korean Army was pushing U.S. military forces southward. The U.S. Army ordered two villages of peasant farmers in the No Gun Ri area to evacuate. They were taken by the U.S. military to a nearby railroad track and ordered to walk along it. At one point the 500 to 600 refugees were instructed to bunch up and sit on the tracks. Two U.S. military aircraft then circled overhead and dropped 7 or 8 bombs on their heads.

This story was told to me yesterday by a 72-year-old woman, Yang Kae-suk, who was 13 years old at the time of the attack. Her father was carrying her grandmother on his back. The body of her grandmother was never found as body parts flew in every direction.

Her other family members tried to hide near a tree and her mother was severely wounded. A bomb fragment hit Yang in the back of the head and her left eyeball blew out of the socket and she tossed it on the ground.

Soon 7th Cavalry soldiers began firing their rifles at the

defenseless crowd and they hid for cover under a nearby train tunnel. For the next four days and three nights the people inside the tunnels were fired on from four different directions by the U.S. soldiers who had them surrounded. U.S. planes reappeared and strafed them with machine gun fire. More people, who were crammed inside the tunnels, were killed as they tried to sneak out for water or tried to escape. Some number did escape the madness that surrounded them.

Finally in the dark of night the Army's 7th Cavalry withdrew as the North Korean Army advanced. Then early on the fourth morning the North Koreans told the people they were free.

This was not the first time the 7th Cavalry had been associated with a mass slaughter of civilians. The regiment perpetrated the Wounded Knee Massacre in South Dakota on December 29, 1890, at the end of the Indian Wars.

Yang's mother was in terrible need of medical care but there was none available. Maggots had begun to appear inside her wounds. Her father



Depiction of No Gun Ri massacre

made medicines from the rye seed and bandages from the persimmon tree that grows abundantly in the area. Her mother was to survive.

For many years the No Gun Ri massacre remained a U.S. Army secret as the successive right-wing govern-

at No Gun Ri. They created the "Committee for Unveiling Truth about the No Gun Ri Massacre" and finally helped force the creation of a joint South Korea-U.S. investigation. (The U.S. for a long time tried to downplay the size of the killing field.) The final report conservatively ac-

knowledged the deaths of 228 people and the tunnel where people hid was surveyed and all bullet damage was marked to show the places where U.S. troops had fired on the tunnel. At both

ends of the tunnel there are now triangles (showing where bullets still remain embedded in the concrete) and circles (where bullets created marks).

I asked Yang how she felt today about the U.S. military. She said she could never go to school because of her missing eye. Today she grows grapes and persimmons in the small farming village where she lives. "War should not be," she told me.

To this day there has been no financial compensation to the victims or their families. About 50 survivors of the No Gun Ri massacre are still alive.

Chung Koo Do is the Director of the No Gun Ri Institute for Peace Studies and is dedicated to ensuring that the memory of the massacre is not lost and that justice prevails. His mother was a survivor of the

slaughter by the 7th Cavalry. He told me that there were over 500 incidents of killing of civilians during the war but No Gun Ri was the only case investigated by a joint South Korean-U.S. government team. After the No Gun Ri investigation, the U.S. said it would not look into any other cases.

2010 will be the 60th anniversary of No Gun Ri. Chung told me his organization is planning to sponsor several important events to commemorate the massacre. He hopes that U.S. soldiers who were involved in the Korean War will come for the events and he particularly hopes that Veterans for Peace in the U.S. will send a delegation to Korea during this time. He asked me to help them make that possible and I told him I would do my best.

Chung pointed out with great pride the large area surrounding the No Gun Ri massacre site that will become a peace park. The South Korean government is now building a peace museum, educational facilities, and memorials. The survivors, and their descendants, are determined to keep the memory of No Gun Ri in the forefront of international peace movement efforts.

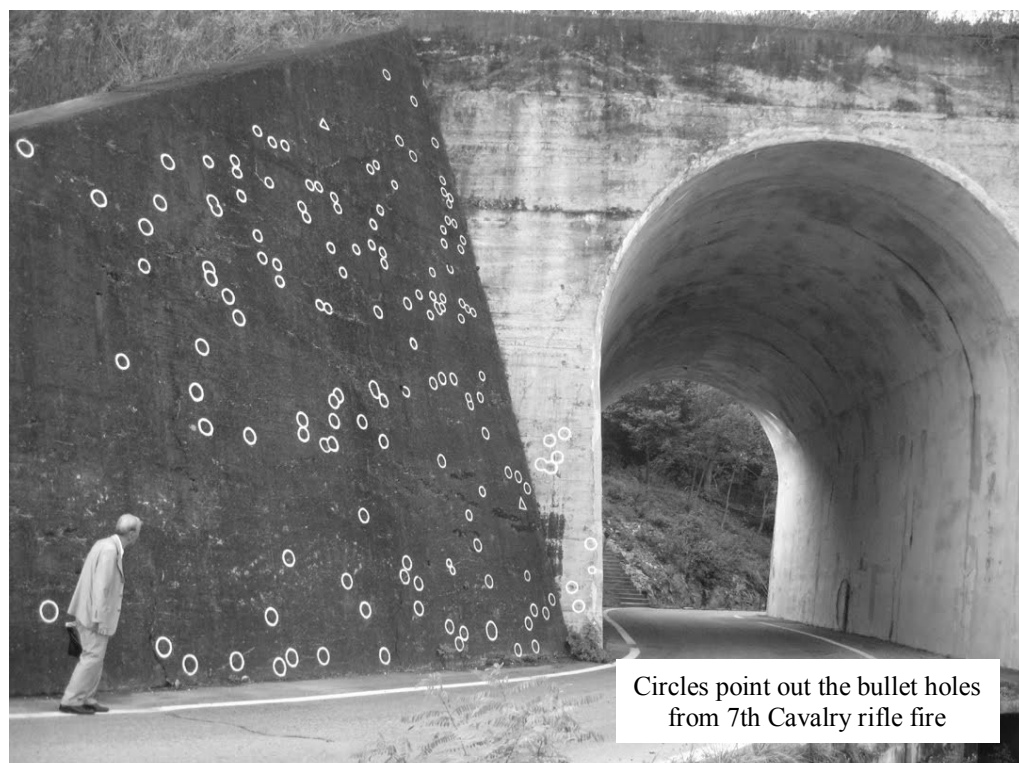
It is a sad moment in history that should be remembered by all of us.

*Bruce K. Gagnon is Coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space <http://www.space4peace.org>, <http://space4peace.blogspot.com> (Blog)*

A BBC documentary, "Kill 'em All," revealed that field commanders were ordered to kill all civilians who got in the way.

ments in South Korea, under the control of the U.S., kept a lid on the story. But then in 1999 the Associated Press broke the story and the BBC followed with a documentary (entitled "Kill 'em All") a few years later. This film reveals orders coming from the highest levels of the Army instructing the field commanders to kill all civilians who got in the way.

Over the years the survivors and their supporters had been trying to bring justice to those who were killed or wounded



Circles point out the bullet holes from 7th Cavalry rifle fire

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**The War Crimes Times**

# Does Military Service Turn Young Men into Sexual Predators?

by Penny Coleman

Every day, for four years as a West Point cadet, Tara Krause lived and worked alongside the men who had gang-raped her.

Still, she managed to graduate in 1982. She served as a field artillery officer during the Cold War and was attached to the 518th Military Intelligence Brigade during the Gulf War. In what she calls "an act of incredible self-destruction," she married a three-tour Vietnam vet in 1985 and, for the next eight years, lived "the private hell of his PTSD."

"Suicidal behavior, violence and degradation were common threads of daily life," she told me. She survived only because when he put his gun to her head one day, it finally gave her the courage to flee. "Like Lot's wife," she says, she struggles not to look back.

It's been almost 30 years since the rape, and Krause says she still "dance (s) the crushing daily struggle" of her own PTSD: "The nightmares, panic attacks, flashbacks, cold sweats, suicidal thoughts, zoning out, numbing all emotion and desperately avoiding triggers (reminders)—I have become a prisoner in my own home."

Krause is rated 70 percent disabled by the Veteran's Administration and has been in treatment at the Long Beach [CA] VA for the past six years.

For all the work she has done to heal her own injuries, she still has no answer for the question: "How do you get a group of Southern white teenagers, all of whom were Eagle Scouts, class presidents, scholars and athletes, to be capable of raping a classmate?"

The question deserves an answer, and not a simplistic one. A 2003 survey of female veterans from Vietnam through the Gulf War found that almost 8 in 10 had been sexually harassed during their military service, and 30 percent had been raped.

Yet for decades, in spite of

the terrible numbers, the military has managed with astonishing success to get away with responding to grievances like Krause's with silence, or denial, or by blaming "a few bad apples." But when individual soldiers take the blame, the system gets off the hook.

And it can be shown that the patterns of military sex crimes are old and widespread—for generations, military service has transformed large numbers of American boys into sexual predators.

So it seems reasonable to ask if perhaps there is something about military culture or training or experience that can be identified as causative, and then, perhaps, changed.

The correlation is difficult to dismiss. The majority of veterans behind bars today are there for a very specific type of crime: violence against women and children. That fact has held true since the first Bureau of Justice Statistics

**In 1944, French women were raped by their American liberators at three times the rate of civilian women in the U.S.**

(BJS) surveys of veteran populations in the nation's prisons in 1981, and there is evidence that those surveys only identified a much older problem.

The orgy of demonization, however, that both fueled and justified the disgraceful neglect of veterans in the aftermath of Vietnam makes this an especially fraught issue to take on.

But—without making any excuses for behaviors that cause irreparable harm to those who are victimized—there is little hope of change unless the tacit complicity of military institutions and culture is acknowledged. And that complicity most certainly did not begin recently.

World War II is remembered as a crucible and a coming-of-age ritual for the baby-faced boys it turned first into men and then into the "greatest generation."



The butchery, the civilian atrocities, the summary executions, the appalling racism and the breakdown of hundreds of thousands of soldiers have been largely erased from communal memory. And so have the rapes perpetrated by American soldiers on our female enemies and allies alike.

In August and September 1944, when the fighting eased, French women were raped by their American liberators at three times the rate of civilian women in the U.S. And during the final drive through Germany in March and April 1945, more than 900 German women were raped by American soldiers, causing Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to issue a directive to Army commanders expressing his "grave concern" and instructing that speedy and appropriate punishments be administered.

According to Madeline Morris, the Duke University law professor and military historian who uncovered that lurid fragment of history, those numbers are almost certainly on the low side.

"Rape is particularly likely to have been undercounted because it is less serious than murder," Morris explains, "it is reputedly the most underreported violent crime, even in the domestic context, and it was perpetrated in the ETO

(European Theater of Operations) almost exclusively against non-Americans."

Those women, especially German women, could not easily have found the courage—or the opportunity—to file complaints.

The memories of rape brought home by World War II soldiers surely changed their lives forever.

"What does rape do to the rapist?" is a question Krause has struggled with for 20 years. "Somewhere out there is that Rotarian, happy grandfather, son-done-good, solid citizen. Does he block it out, does he remember, does he feel a shred of guilt? Is it truly done

with impunity?"

It is important to note that during World

War II, according to Morris' research, patterns of violent crime in the United States' civilian population underwent sharp changes as well.

"While civilian murder and non-negligent manslaughter rates decreased 7.5 percent from prewar rates, aggravated assault rates increased substantially (19.9 percent), and forcible-rape rates increased dramatically (by more than 27 percent) above the prewar average."

Similarly, since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began, BJS statistics show a 42 percent increase in reported domestic violence and a 25 percent increase in the reported incidence of rape and sexual assault.

Except for simple assault, which increased by 3 percent, the incidence of every other crime surveyed—including violent crimes overall—decreased, but once again, mirroring Morris' World War II data, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault showed daunting increases.

The first BJS survey of incarcerated veterans found that two-thirds of those veterans had been convicted of rape

**Is there is something about military culture or training or experience that can be identified as causative?**

or sexual assault. In military prisons

as well, the report noted, "sexual assault was the most common offense for which inmates were held ... accounting for nearly a full third of all military prisoners."

That chilling aspect of soldiers' criminal behavior held true in subsequent BJS surveys.

In 2000, veterans in state and federal prisons and local jails were twice as likely as non-veterans to be sentenced

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## Predators

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for a violent sexual crime. In the 2004 survey, 1 in 4 veterans in prison were sex offenders (1 in 3 in military prisons), compared to 1 in 10 incarcerated non-veterans.

Chris Mumola, author of the two most recent BJS reports, points out that "when sex crimes are excluded, the violent-offense incarceration rate of non-veterans is actually greater than the incarceration rate of veterans for all other offenses combined (651 per 100,000 versus 630 per 100,000)."

In fact, when sex crimes are excluded, adult male veterans are over 40 percent less likely to be in prison for a violent crime than their non-veteran counterparts. The same holds true for property crimes, drugs and public disorder—the rates are much higher for adult men without military experience.

"The one notable exception to this pattern," Mumola says, "is sex assaults, including rape."

The Veterans' Health Administration has adopted the term military sexual trauma (MST) to refer to severe or threatening forms of sexual harassment and sexual assault sustained in military service.

Their records for 2007 show that 22.2 percent of female veterans and 1.3 percent of male vets (from all eras) who used the agency's health

services screened positive for MST. That represents a daunting increase of about 65 percent for both men and women over the agency's 2003 data.

And the small percentage of men is somewhat misleading; the 2007 percentages translate into 45,564 women

A culture [the military] that encourages violence and misogyny attracts a disproportionate number of sexually violent men: half of male recruits enlist to escape abusive families, a history that is often predictive of an abuser.

and 47,719 men whose injuries forced them to acknowledge their victimization and to seek help from the VA.

Some of that increase can perhaps be attributed to a 2005 congressional directive requiring the VA to improve its rate of screening returning soldiers for MST, but given that almost 90 percent of veterans don't (or can't) use VA health care services, it seems safe to assume that the actual numbers are considerably higher.

Those are just the numbers for veterans.

In 2008, the Pentagon received more than 2,900 sexual assault reports involving active-duty service members. That represents a 9 percent increase from 2007, a 26 percent increase in combat zones. Almost a third of those reports involved rape, and more than half involved aggravated sexual assault.

In a dazzling display of

unapologetic spin, the increase was called "encouraging," an indication of more reports rather than more assaults. It offered no evidence to back up that interpretation, save that the department "encourages greater reporting to hold offenders accountable for this crime."

That seems an unlikely incentive given that only 10 percent of the 2008 complaints led to a court-martial (compared to a civilian rate of 40 percent). The rest received minor punishments, almost half were dismissed, and the report acknowledged that 90 percent of sexual assaults in the military aren't reported at all.

Rape occurs almost twice as frequently in the military as it does among civilians, especially in wartime.

When a 2008 House Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee subpoenaed Kaye Whitley, director of the DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), to explain what the department was doing to stop the escalating sexual violence in the military, her boss, Michael Dominguez, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, ordered her not to appear.

Only after the department was threatened with a contempt citation was Whitley made available to the c o m -

mittee. She then sought to reassure the members that DoD is conducting a "crusade against sexual assault," and itemized all of the heroic measures the agency was planning to implement in the very near future—efforts that somehow, despite explicit directives and deadlines from Congress, the



agency had not managed to launch at the time.

Tia Christopher, women veterans coordinator at Swords to Plowshares in San Francisco, holds Dominguez, not Whitley, responsible for flouting congressional directives.

"I heard him claim that the reason sexual assaults are so high in the military right now is the hip-hop influence. I don't need to spell out why I found that so offensive. I fault Dominguez for not recognizing that it is a leadership issue."

Christopher loves the military and calls it "a really beautiful machine" when it is working correctly. But she is a rape survivor, and she feels doubly betrayed by her superi-

The military reflects the general American culture: A society that romanticizes its warriors, demonizes its veterans and devalues its women.

ors in the Navy. "They can respond to other situations, why not to sexual assault?"

Christopher was 18 when she joined the Navy, training to be a cryptologist. The night she was raped, she had been drinking.

"Underage drinking," she notes, "is a big issue in the military. It gets you an Article 15, and it's 100 percent guaranteed that you will be prosecuted for collateral misconduct. It is far more likely that you will get in trouble for collateral misconduct [from drinking alcohol] than for raping some-

one. So I destroyed all the evidence. I bleached my sheets and scrubbed myself up and didn't come forward until two weeks later. I wanted to keep my military career, and I thought I could just get through it.

"But I saw him every day. I mustered with him. He would follow me into the chow hall and sit across from me while I ate. I stopped eating, couldn't concentrate, started failing my courses. And I started having flashbacks, hallucinating. I thought I saw him everywhere."

Christopher finally realized she needed help, but the female petty officer she first spoke to got her chief involved and, as the report went up the chain of command, her nightmare just got bigger.

"In my case, there were witnesses. They heard my head hit the wall in the barracks room, but they were drinking [underage], too."

Her commanding officer promised them all immunity if they agreed to testify on her behalf, and then reneged on the deal.

"It ended up that they all got in trouble, and [her rapist] got off." (In 2006, Christopher's attacker was expelled from the military for another rape.)

"The last few months that I was in the service, I was assigned to X Division, mopping the stairs, cleaning the heads, picking hair out of the drains. It was my job to vacuum the different chief's offices, and

(See PREDATORS on page 7)



(PREDATOR from page 6)

these sleazeballs would say things like, 'Hey, Christopher, bend over when you're sweeping.' Or, 'Hey Christopher, let me see them titties.' When you come forward about a rape, basically you are just a slut."

Christopher left the military in 2001, and it took her a long time to get her life back together. She still has panic attacks, flashbacks, trouble sleeping. But, with help from a women's psychotherapy group at the Seattle VA, and the rich support from sympathetic colleagues at Swords to Plowshares, she has developed a lot of coping skills.

After seven years, and some good therapy, she feels strong enough to manage her advocacy and policy work.

"I've testified before the California State Legislature, and I was invited to testify before Congress. I speak out about MST as much as I do so other women don't have to. This is not just my job. There is no way I would ever give my clients to the media. I remember what it was like, being fresh out of the service and going through that trauma."

Lisa Pellerin, who has facilitated sex-offender programs for the New York State Department of Corrections for six years, believes that "everyone has the potential to be a sex offender. It depends on how they have been conditioned. When they are in the military, supporting the brotherhood is the most important thing. Soldiers do what they feel they have to do because they don't want to be seen as weak or unable to perform.

"Sexual abuse has always been about power and control. If you are exposed and desensitized to certain sexual behaviors, they become normalized."

One of the most basic conditioning strategies military training uses to destabilize a recruit's inherent disinclination to kill is the inculcation of a dehumanized enemy. Soldiers are taught that "we" are the good

guys; "they" are the "others." "They" are easier to kill because they are not us. They are also easier to despise. "Others"—the nips, the gooks, the hajis—come and go, but ever reliable and constant is "the girl."

Even in this new 20 percent female military, misogynist marching rhymes (aka jodies) are still used, and drill instructors still shame recruits with taunts of pussy or sissy, faggot or girl. Patty McCann, who signed up with the Illinois National Guard when she was 17 and deployed to Iraq when she was 20, still feels betrayed when she remembers her drill sergeant yelling, "Does your pussy hurt?" and "Do you need a tampon?"

A culture that encourages violence and misogyny, says Helen Benedict, attracts a disproportionate number of sexually violent men: half of male recruits enlist to escape abusive families, a history that is often predictive of an abuser.

But whatever attracts them, and wherever they come from, this is about a system plagued by rot, and not about a few bad apples. American veterans embody the inevitable, predictable blowback from that rotten system.

It is both unjust and disingenuous to focus on what our soldiers have become without talking about what we have become: A society that romanticizes its warriors, demonizes its veterans and devalues its women.

"Did I serve my full enlistment?" Christopher says. "No. But that's because some shit-bag sailor who shouldn't have been wearing the uniform came into my life. Why is that my issue?"

"This is a leadership issue."

*Penny Coleman is the widow of a Vietnam veteran who took his own life after coming home. Her book Flashback: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Suicide and the Lessons of War was released on Memorial Day 2006. Her Web site is <http://www.flashbackhome.com/> This article first appeared on AlterNet.*

## VIETNAM Air Drop

by Stephen Hunter

This is the first in a series of several accounts of war crimes I either took part in or witnessed while in Vietnam from early 1967 to late 1968. I am a (former) Marine Staff Sergeant who worked as an aircraft electrician, and when flying, an aerial machine gunner.

I was still a relatively FNG [new guy] and was flying as a passenger in a CH-53, from another squadron than my own. My squadron, HMM-362 flew UH-34s. The "53," as we called them, was capable of carrying very large and heavy payloads.

I don't remember where I was going that day. I was just a passenger, wide-eyed and enthralled with the new experience of flying in a "53" and the still-new-to-me combat atmosphere. Everyone was armed, including me. There were several passengers and about three crew members in the cabin. The pilot and copilot were in the cockpit.

In addition to the passengers, they were also transporting prisoners, Viet Cong POWs. They were barefooted, wore three-quarter length, dirty black trousers, dingy, worn ragged white shirts and black blindfolds. They had been bound in



a balled-up sitting position with a stick behind their knees and inside their elbows. The prisoners' wrists were bound together in front of their knees. Being completely immobile, to move them, two people would pick them up using the ends of the stick as handles and pitched them around like a sack of potatoes. It must have been brutal for the prisoners. The handlers thought it was fun to brutalize these less-than-human enemies.

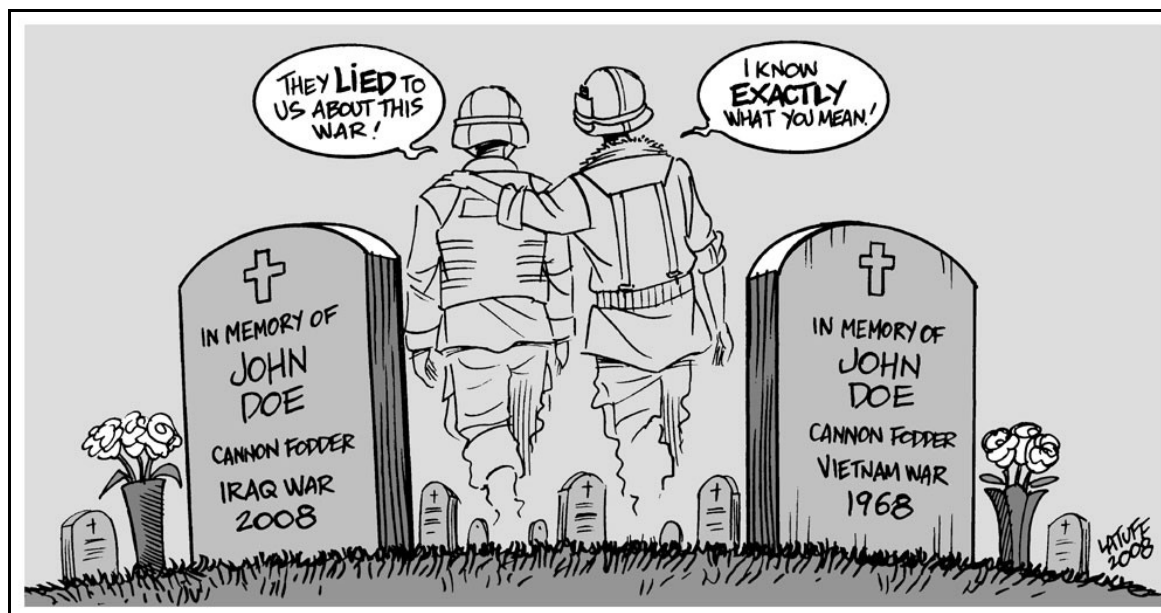
One of the crew members dragged a prisoner onto the tail ramp that raised and lowered hydraulically. The prisoner was blindfolded and didn't know where he was being taken—until they removed his blindfold. He was precariously teetering on the edge of the ramp. I estimate that we were flying between 1,000 and 2,000 feet up. The crew member used his controls and lowered and raised the ramp to watch

the prisoner shake with fear of falling out.

After a few minutes of teasing him, mocking him and laughing at the terrified look on his face, the ramp was slowly lowered enough so that the prisoner eventually tumbled out... I did not get up from my seat to watch the fall. Some people did. I still shudder having witnessed this first hand.

I wanted to do something about it, to say something to stop it. In my gut, I knew it was wrong. Humans are not born to exhibit this kind of inhumane behavior, we are taught to do it. My rank was far too low to add any clout to anything I could say or do. I knew better than to say something to stop the mental torture and eventual death because I could be killed for talking. Regretfully, this did happen and apparently all was well—at that time. I also suspect that everyone else who witnessed that act that day has the same nightmarish flashbacks I do.

*Stephen Hunter, a former Marine Staff Sergeant, is now a member of Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 in Gainesville, FL.*



# WCT Exclusive: Interview with Frank Goldsmith, Guantanamo Detainee Attorney

War Crimes Times editor, Clare Hanrahan met with Frank Goldsmith on December 1, 2009.

*WCT: At a recent meeting of Western North Carolina Stop Torture Now! Committee in Asheville, you stated: "We have not seen any discernable difference between this administration and Bush—despite campaign rhetoric, zero difference." There is "No discernable difference?" Do you think Obama will close Guantanamo as he promised?*

FG: I'm not sure there is a discernable difference, though [Obama] did set up the Inter-agency Review Task Force that has cleared for release some [Guantanamo detainees]. I'm not sure that's a big difference because Bush has released far more than Obama has without the Task Force. As to whether he should close Guantanamo, that's not really the point, in my opinion, unless he closes any facility where we purport to detain people indefinitely without charge. That's just un-American and illegal under the Geneva Conventions.

*WCT: So efforts to close Guantanamo need to be part of a larger effort?*

FG: I think a lot of people tend to think that closing Guantanamo is somehow the answer to the problem—that it is just an inherently bad place, and if you close it all will be solved. But if you close it, and simply send the men who are there to some other prison, somewhere in the world, either here in the U.S. or Bagram [Afghanistan], or some other place, nothing has changed; In fact I think it has worsened for them. Guantanamo is not the absolutely worst prison one can be in. I have been in a lot of prisons and I have certainly seen some that were a lot worse than Guantanamo. Guantanamo is a symbol. It stands for a place where we have detained people and held them for years without any charges, and in most cases

without any evidence. And that is what has to be stopped. ... If you simply close that base in Cuba you haven't solved anything, unless you take care of the fundamental problem of our abuse of the power to detain people.

*WCT: Isn't that similar to efforts to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas [WHINSEC]? SOA is such a potent symbol of the abuses of U.S. Foreign policy in Latin America that the people clamor for it to be shut down. The torture training that occurred there may not continue at the same level as in the past, and decades of public scrutiny forced the Army to change the name and to offer a few courses in human rights to try and put a friendly face on the place. Yet the*

**If you simply close that base in Cuba you haven't solved anything, unless you take care of the fundamental problem of our abuse of the power to detain people.**

*SOA is a symbol of horrific abuses of military power.*

FG: That's a very good analogy. The same thing, I think. The overt torture that was going on in Guantanamo—the waterboarding and everything—has long since ceased, probably since 2003, when there was some light shed on those "enhanced interrogation techniques." There are still some very unpleasant things that go on down there, I think, but not as extreme as people think when they hear the word torture.

*WCT: How many Guantanamo prisoners have you represented?*

FG: We've had five altogether. ... For the two we have left, who are still there, we have filed habeas corpus petitions in federal court in the District of Columbia.

*WCT: Currently you represent two Afghan men held since 2002 and 2003*

*at Guantanamo—Sharifullah and Khairullah Khairkhwa. How did these men come under U.S. custody?*

FG: I should preface this discussion about specific clients by saying there is a very restrictive and onerous Protective Order entered by the Federal District Court in D.C. You have to agree when representing [Guantanamo detainees] that you will abide by this Protective Order. It provides that all of the information, other than what is in the public record about the men, is classified and can only be reviewed at what's called the Secure Facility just outside of Washington, D.C. in Crystal City. That's where all of the attorneys, no matter where they are in the country, have to come to work on their cases. We are restricted from revealing, even to our clients, anything that is classified. For example, we can't tell our clients what evidence the government has on them, if they have anything at all. You can imagine how difficult that makes it to represent them. Anything that our clients tell us in Guantanamo is classified as well, so we can't reveal that, not only to anybody else, but the government actually seizes our notes that we take from our interviews and submits them to what's called a Privilege Review Team. And if we want to have those notes sent to us they have to undergo a declassification process. It's really a Kafkaesque world in a lot of ways. For that reason, I have to be careful about what I say in any kind of public forum, or private forum for that matter, about the specific allegations about these men. I can tell you what is publicly known in Sharifullah's case. He was a member of the Afghan National Army. In fact, he had returned from his family's exile in Pakistan. They left because of disgust with the Taliban. He and his brother came back to fight the Taliban, and did so. After the fall of Taliban in 2002, [Sharifullah] and his brother both joined the Afghan army. He was at a base in Jalalabad visiting his brother when he was arrested and accused of participating in a plot to plant IEDs,



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improvised explosive devices, which he said he did not do. He steadfastly denied his guilt.

*WCT: He was arrested by the American Army?*

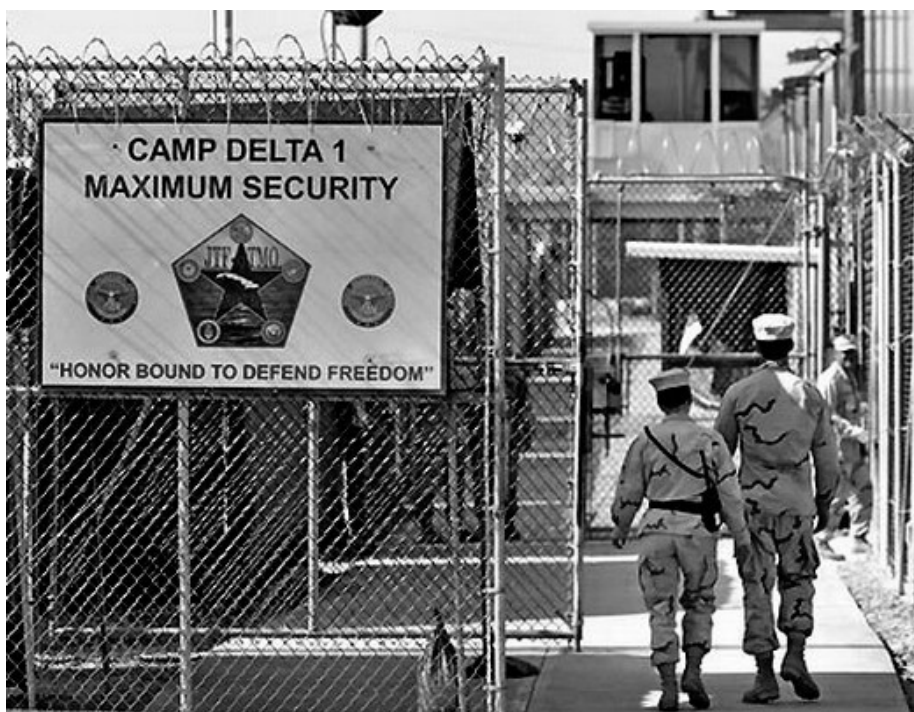
FG: He was arrested by the Special Forces, working with some elements of the Afghan Army. I will tell you that if I could reveal it all I would love to be able to do so because I don't think the government has any evidence, any credible evidence, that Sharifullah participated in any plot to plant IEDs. I think he's innocent. I can tell you that much. I just can't tell you specific evidence they claim to have and what our specific rebuttal to that is.

*WCT: Well, that leads to my question of who makes up this "Privilege Review Team?"*

FG: It's a military team. I don't know who actually assigns people to it. There is supposed to be, under the Protective Order, a firewall, if you will, between the Privilege Review Team and the government prosecutors. When they read the notes to clear them, they are not supposed to turn over anything or

(Continued on next page)





reveal anything to the prosecutors. They say, basically, “Trust us.” But I don’t know whether that trust is well founded or not.

*WCT: Is this part of the military justice system, or is it a development as a result of the so-called “war on terror”?*

FG: I don’t know that its part of the war on terror. It’s part of the Protective Order scheme. It’s not really part of the standard military justice system. It’s not to be found in the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and not in the court martial system. We never had that when I was in the Army litigating courts martial. I defended a lot of people in courts martial. We didn’t have Privilege Review Teams. They didn’t have a need to—everything my client told me in the brig was confidential. Nobody got to see my notes. I got to see what the government’s evidence was. I got to show it to my client. There was none of this classification stuff.

*WCT: How did you become involved as a defender of Guantanamo prisoners?*

FG: The Center for Constitutional Rights in New York was recruiting attorneys to take [Guantanamo detainee] cases pro bono. My friend in Winston-Salem, attorney Hoppy (Robert M.) Elliott, signed up... At a legal conference in Asheville he asked if I would join him in representing a Guantanamo detainee. That was in 2007. He hadn’t done anything on the cases yet, so we started together. His law partner, Griff (J. Griffin) Morgan, has also joined us and is currently representing these men.

*WCT: We have a friend at the Center for Constitutional Rights, the legal director Bill Quigley, who has for many years defended human rights activists prosecuted for civil disobedience at the U.S. Army School of Americas. You’re in good hands up there.*

FG: It’s a good organization.

*WCT: During the Viet Nam war, you were an infantry lieutenant?*

FG: I was commissioned as an infantry lieutenant in 1967, but I didn’t actually get sent to Viet Nam. I transferred into the JAG Corps after going to law school [Juris Doctor, 1970, UNC Chapel Hill]. ...I was not a combat veteran of Viet Nam.

*WCT: You were a scholar of international law at the Université de Montpellier in France, and then served as a captain in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps from 1970 to 1972. How did these experiences inform your current work as a defender of civil liberties and of the rights of prisoners at Guantanamo?*

FG: (Laughter) I hesitate to call myself a scholar in anything—especially international law, but I’ve always been very interested in that subject. ...When I went into the Army after law school one of the duties that I was assigned was to teach recruits war crimes law. This was just after the My Lai massacre with Lt. William Calley, so as part of its efforts to put a better face on its activities, the Army began requiring recruits and their commanders to endure a lecture on the Hague and Geneva Conventions and the law of war. I was asked to teach that, and so I studied up....The army, actually to its credit, had some very good textbooks and manuals. FM 27-10 is called the Law of Land Warfare, an Army Field Manual, it’s actually a widely respected treatise on the law of war—surprising coming from the Army, but it is.

*WCT: Is it still in use?*

FG: It is. The basic edition was written in 1956, that’s the one that I used and it was revised in 1976, but only very slightly. It’s still the same fundamental text.

*WCT: So in teaching those recruits in the aftermath of My Lai, were they receptive? Did they take this into war with them?*

FG: I don’t know that they took anything much of what I said to them into combat. My supposition was that these guys were told they had to go to this lecture; I am cynical enough to think that they were probably also told by their first sergeants and their captains, “Okay, you’ve heard that, but this is not really how we do things.” I don’t know, frankly, if that kind of lecture did a lot of good, but I did try to instill in each soldier that I taught the idea that he had the duty—not just the right, but the duty—to disobey an order to commit a war crime, an order that was illegal under the judgment at Nuremberg. I wanted to be sure that everybody heard me say that and somewhere a soldier may be told to do

**I did try to instill in each soldier that I taught the idea that he had the duty—not just the right, but the duty—to disobey an order to commit a war crime.**

something that he would recognize was unlawful and he would refuse to do it. That was my hope.

*WCT: The JAG Corps, from what I have read, has a tradition of independent military courts, grounded in the Geneva Conventions. In Alfred McCoy’s book, A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror, he calls these military lawyers “the most effective bulwark of opposition to the [Bush Administration] policies of tacit torture, endless incarceration and drumhead justice.” Do you agree?*

FG: I think that’s an apt observation. It also squares with what my experience was. I do think the JAG Corps is a bit of a bulwark against military excess from within the Army. I witnessed that when I defended a soldier, actually a Marine, who refused to arm an airplane off the coast of Viet Nam. His court martial was held at Camp Lejeune and I was tasked to defend him at the request of his civilian lawyer. ...We had a young Marine JAGC captain as the military law judge. There was, I think, a lot of command pressure to convict this guy, but he didn’t. He acquitted him. It’s just one

example of the independence the JAGC officers have shown.

*WCT: Reports show that when Alberto Gonzales and John Yoo were manipulating the legal opinions to allow torture, there were strong objections by JAGs within the military. Are JAGC officers defending Guantanamo prisoners?*

FG: Specifically in Guantanamo, there are some very courageous officers out there who have been assigned to defend these detainees and who have embraced that duty wholeheartedly and enthusiastically and, I am sure, to the chagrin of their superiors. ...There are certainly some career JAGC officers that tow the administration line, but there is certainly a lot of independence.

*WCT: How many persons are still held at Guantanamo and how many attorneys defend them? Are most compensated?*

FG: As of today’s newspaper [Dec. 1] there are something like 211 detainees left. ... and hundreds of lawyers are involved. Very few are compensated. The exception would be several public defenders around the country representing detainees. They get paid for their work. Also, the Kuwaiti government, I think, felt the duty to protect their own so they hired lawyers from a prestigious firm to protect their citizens, and those lawyers get paid very well. The rest of us, by far most of the cases, the lawyers are doing it pro bono and paying their own way and paying their own expenses. Some are from very large firms, where that is not so much of a burden, and some are from very small firms, like ours, where it is.

*WCT: How much longer do you anticipate these men will have to endure pre-trial detention?*

FG: I am optimistic. ...We had close to 800 people there at one time who the administration called the “worst of the worst.” They were all supposed to be hardened terrorists that could not be freed. Well, over 500 were freed by Bush during his regime without any court order, any process, just the realization

(See INTERVIEW on page 10)



## Interview

(Continued from page 9)

that they made a mistake and they could send these people back.

WCT: No reparation?

FG: No. The other two avenues, other than just pure executive decision, are habeas corpus, which is what we have presently pending on both our clients, and something set up under the Obama Administration called the Inter-Agency Review Task Force, or the Guantanamo Review Task Force... composed of representatives from the DOD and DOJ and various agencies. They review each detainee's case and decide if he can be released. We have prepared petitions to that task force for both of our clients. I am really optimistic that, at least in Sharifullah's case, there should be a good likelihood they will let him go if they look at the evidence they have. I think that should also be the case with Khairullah Khairkwa. He was a political official of the Taliban government, he was acting Interior Minister and governor of Herat province. He says, and this is public record, that's all he was. He was a political official. He had no military role. I think it is clear under international law that you can't seize and hold indefinitely non-military members of an opposition government. We haven't done that in other wars unless they had some war crimes role. The government has to prove that Khairkwa gave orders or somehow engaged in activities against the United States and coalition forces and that he was not simply a political official.

WCT: I recently read about Navy lawyer Lt. Cmdr. Charles Swift who took the Guantanamo case of Osama bin Laden's driver to the U.S. Supreme Court — and won. He was denied a promotion "about two weeks after" the Supreme Court sided against the White House. Are you aware of other Guantanamo defense attorneys who may have experienced sanctions?

FG: I think [the military lawyers] are a courageous bunch. I don't think this is going to be viewed as a crowning achieve-

ment in their military careers by the military. I wouldn't be surprised if they perhaps suffer some repercussions. There is a Col. Stephen Abramson who sat on a number of Combat Status Review tribunals. He gave an affidavit of how they were ordered to do "do-overs," if the findings were not to the [Bush] administration's liking, if they found there was no basis for the men to be held.

WCT: They are under some pressure?

FG: Absolutely.

WCT: When the Habeas Corpus rights of Guantanamo prisoners were restored in June 2008, did this restore due process rights to these prisoners?

FG: Yes. I think habeas corpus does. It is an ancient writ ... the government has the burden of proof to prove it has the right to detain people. We had to fight for each of these due process rights. We have the

**The U.S. has a history of war crimes....It is such a gross and blatant departure from the rule of law that the people who were behind those practices should be prosecuted.**

right to a certain amount of discovery about what the government has—which the government has fought us about. And by the way, in fact even the Obama administration continues to fight us about. For example, the right of a detainee to be able to see his own statements if they are in a classified document. The Obama administration has fought us on that but federal judges have ruled for us ... But the Obama administration continues to say that we can't tell detainees what evidence there is against them. These litigation positions have not changed from Bush to Obama.

WCT: I understand that to date 31 prisoners have successfully challenged in U.S. Courts the basis of their detention, while just eight prisoners have lost their habeas petition?

FG: That's correct. There have been 39 cases so far who have proceeded through the habeas system to what we call merits hearings...a hearing before the

judge on the merits of the case, on whether the government has a right to detain him or not. Of those 39, I think it is pretty astounding that the government has lost 31 of the 39. ... Again, it's not the "worst of the worst." In one case, the evidence of the government was described by the federal judge as "gossamer thin." That was the phrase he used. It's not that the government has won resounding victories, even in the eight cases where it has been able to win the right to continue to hold these people. It's not that they've proven they are extremely dangerous. Some decisions by the federal judges are almost mocking of the government's evidence.

WCT: In October 2009 President Obama signed into law the Military Commissions Act of 2009. This amended the Bush-era Military Commissions Act, called by one writer "a second-class system of justice designed to obtain quick convictions." One sentence in the revised Act states: "Defense counsel in military commission cases, particularly in capital cases... should be fully resourced." How might this change things for you and your clients?

FG: That won't make any difference to me, though it is a good idea to be fully resourced. [Military Commissions] are for people the government alleges have committed war crimes and are to be prosecuted for some violation of the laws of war. I don't expect either of my clients to be charged with a war crime. Neither has been charged with any crime. They are there under the purported power of the executive to hold people indefinitely as so-called "enemy combatants."

WCT: The so-called "unitary executive" idea?

FG: Yes. Executive authority.

WCT: The Military Commissions Act of 2009 changes the nomenclature of prisoners from "enemy combatants" to "alien unprivileged enemy belligerent." What is that about?

FG: (Laughter) Well, that's a complex subject. First of all, "enemy combatant" is really not a term that is used in international law. It is nowhere to be found in

the Geneva Conventions or in the Army Field Manual. It's just something Bush made up, and his cronies. I don't care whether you create a synonym for that or not. ...There is a term "unprivileged combatant." Maybe this is an effort to bring the thinking a little closer to the mainstream of international law. ...a combatant is somebody under the Convention who has the privilege of engaging in warfare. So if that person is captured they are to be treated as a POW, as a member of the military. A civilian is entitled to protection under the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention. The Bush administration's fallacy—and I hope we don't see this under the Obama administration—is that those people, civilians who took up arms, fell into some kind of black hole where they were not covered by any of the Geneva Conventions and therefore we didn't have to give them any of the rights afforded to either POWs or civilian detainees, or anybody else under the Geneva Conventions. It is absolutely clear that to the extent these Guantanamo detainees are covered by the Geneva Conventions, we have violated their rights. [These rights are] too numerous to go through now, but they have the right, first of all, have always had the right under the Conventions, for a determination of status, whether they are properly a POW or properly a civilian.

WCT: So just by naming a group of people "enemy combatants," a made-up term, we denied their rights, and now this new synonym, "alien unprivileged enemy belligerent," aren't we creating a two-tiered system of justice and codifying the second-class status of so-called aliens?

FG: We can codify it all we want but that is not going to alter the fact that the Geneva Conventions still apply.



WCT: What actions can be taken by U.S. citizens to compel our government to uphold American and international standards and the rule of law?

FG: I think we need to continue to petition our Congress and representatives to not yield to the hysteria. We need to give them some support, for example, that there would be no reason to fear relocating people to the U.S. if Guantanamo is closed. I would advocate that we abide by the rule of law...also I think there is room for advocacy to prosecute people for war crimes, if war crimes have been committed. And I think they have.

WCT: Yes, they have. The U.N. Convention against Torture, ratified by the U.S., prohibits the deportation of any person to a nation where he or she might face torture. U.S. criminal laws make it a felony punishable by up to twenty years in prison for any U.S. official to conspire to torture a person abroad. Do you anticipate that those responsible will be held accountable? People like John Yoo, Alberto Gonzales...

FG: Jay Bybee—there are a number of them—William Haynes. Do I anticipate it? No. Do I think it would be justified? Yeah, I do....The U.S. has a history of war crimes....I think it is simply beyond dispute that that we have engaged in torture, and we have written documentation of it, we have the purported written justification for it from the memos that you have alluded to. ...It is such a gross and blatant departure from the rule of law that the people who were behind those practices should be prosecuted.

Clare Hanrahan is an Asheville, NC, author and activist, an associate member of VFP 099, a lead organizer with WRL Asheville Chapter, and a contributing editor to the War Crimes Times. Contact Clare at [wrlasheville@gmail.com](mailto:wrlasheville@gmail.com).

## Obama Steps Up Killer Drone Raids Despite Deaths of Civilians

by Sherwood Ross

Since taking office, President Obama has sanctioned at least 41 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) drone strikes in Pakistan that have killed between 326 and 538 people, many of them, critics say, “innocent bystanders, including children,” according to reliable reports. The drone is a remotely controlled, unmanned aircraft.

“Even if a precise account is elusive,” writes Jane Mayer in the October 26th the *New Yorker*, “the outlines are clear: the CIA has joined the Pakistani intelligence service in an aggressive campaign to eradicate local and foreign militants, who have taken refuge in some of the most inaccessible parts of the country.”

Based on a study just completed by the non-profit, New America Foundation, “The number of drone strikes has risen dramatically since Obama became President,” Mayer reports.

In fact, the first two strikes took place on January 23, the President’s third day in office and the second of these hit the wrong house, that of a pro-government tribal leader that killed his entire family, including three children, one just five years of age.

At any time, the CIA apparently has “multiple drones flying over Pakistan, scouting

for targets,” the magazine reports. So many Predators and its more heavily armed companion, the Reaper, are being purchased that defense manufacturer General Atomics Aeronautical Systems can hardly make them fast enough. The Air Force is said to possess 200.

Mayer writes, “The embrace of the Predator program has occurred with remarkably little public discussion, given that it represents a radically new and geographically unbounded use of state-sanctioned lethal force.” Today, Mayer writes, “there is no longer any doubt that targeted killing has become official U.S. policy.” And according to Gary Solis, who teaches at Georgetown University’s Law Center, nobody in the government calls it assassination: “Not only would we have expressed abhorrence of such a policy a few years ago; we did.”

David Kilcullen, a counter-insurgency warfare authority has suggested the drone attacks have backfired. As he told the *New Yorker*, “Every one of these dead non-combatants represents an alienated family, a new revenge feud, and more recruits for a militant movement that has grown exponentially even as drone strikes have increased.”

And because of the CIA program’s secrecy, Mayer writes, “there is no visible system of accountability in place, despite the fact that the agency has killed many civilians inside a politically fragile, nuclear-armed country with which the U.S. is not at war.”

It is the military’s version of



the drone assaults that operates in Afghanistan and Iraq, while the CIA’s drones hunt terror suspects in countries where U.S. troops are not based and is “aimed at terror suspects around the world,” Mayer writes. The CIA effort was launched by Obama’s predecessor, and a former aide to President George W. Bush says Obama has left nearly all the key personnel in place.

Running the CIA program is a team of operators that handle Predator flights off runways in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Once aloft, the Predators are passed over to controllers at CIA headquarters in Langley, VA, who maneuver joysticks and monitor events from a live video feed from the drone’s camera.

The magazine article reports the government plans to commission “hundreds more” of the

drones, including “new generations of tiny ‘nano’ drones, which can fly after their prey like a killer bee through an open window.”

*Sherwood Ross is a Miami-based writer who formerly worked for the Chicago Daily News and other major dailies. Reach him at sherwoodross10@gmail.com.*

## Veterans in Oregon Protest Death by Remote Control

by Tim King Salem-News.com

(HOOD RIVER, Ore.)—Anti-war Veterans and other activists who gathered for a special event on November 13 say the new form of warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq involves death being delivered by remote control from thousands of miles away.

Gordon Sturrock, co-founder of VeteransAgainstTorture.com, believes this death-from-beyond concept removes all signs of humanity from the process. He says for the pro-war set, “It is a new form of justice; it’s a trial by Hellfire missile, quick and cheap. No need for expensive time consuming trials. No risk at all to American lives.”

“Being a ‘suspect’, or sitting next to one, is all the reason needed to murder anyone our government has designated as a terrorist.” He says the killing will become as easy, “as a push button video game.”

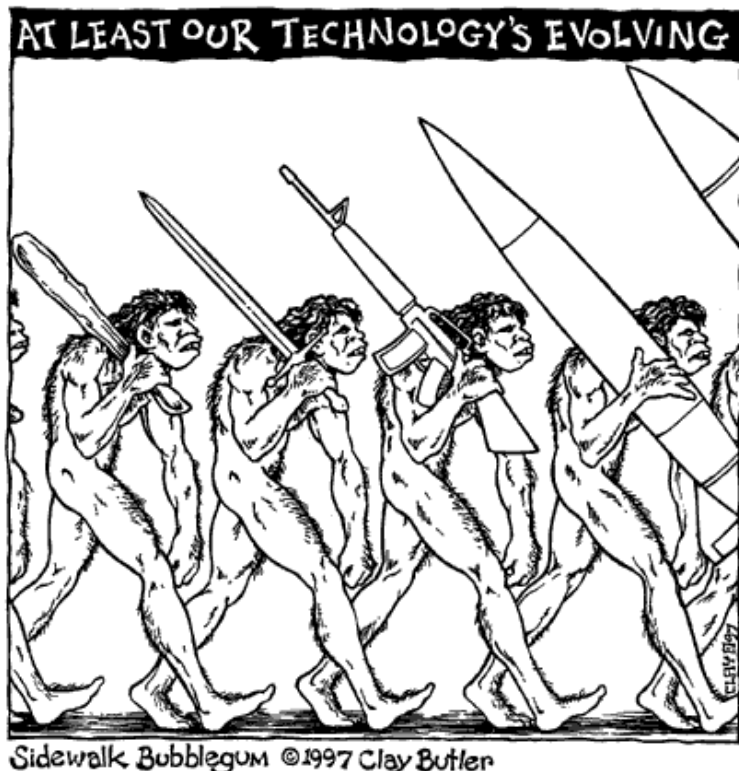
Sturrock says the current generation is already desensitized to violence by years of exposure to violent video games and obscenely violent TV shows. He believes that there is a plan to greatly escalate this new form of warfare and death by proxy.

“Our military shouldn’t have any problem finding volunteers to ‘serve’ their county, and a large financial bonus offered by military recruiters for your child’s commitment to military service will ensure a steady stream of young people,” Sturrock said.

“It will be highly profitable for some Oregon businesses like InSitu who are gearing up to produce more surveillance drones. This is just a manufacturing hop, skip and a jump from producing the much larger armed versions which shoot a variety of extremely deadly weapons. Is it a stretch to think this could happen?”

InSitu got it’s start designing drones to track schools of fish. Now they are designing drones to track humans. Sturrock and other peace advocates say they don’t want to see this happen. They are calling on concerned citizens from all over the United States to become aware of this new trend of war referred to as, “death by remote control.”

*Tim King is a former U.S. Marine who serves as Salem-News.com’s Executive News Editor. Reach Tim at newsroom@salem-news.com.*



### The Cubicle Soldier

We are concerned about a 10% increased risk for cancer if we eat too much red meat or drink too much wine

And undoubtedly, processed meats are harmful because of the nitrosamines

But I wonder what the risk is or percentage of survival, for someone at a family reunion or wedding in rural Afghanistan

And mistakenly targeted by one of our young soldiers, sitting down before his video, and chosen because he was an expert at games

And unseen, firing a missile from a Predator or Reaper robotic drone thousands of miles away—

—Thomas Krampf

# Breaking Our Addiction to War

by S. Brian Willson

December 15, 2009: I am sick of being anti-war. Are wars inevitable? War crimes? If we really don't want wars, it behooves us to get serious about understanding their causes, and choose to radically address them. Otherwise, what's the point? Feeling a "rush" with like-minded folks at political actions only perpetuates our addiction to anti-war rallies, which do nothing to stop wars from occurring.

The inarticulate presidency of George Bush II successfully unmasked the U.S. empire for everyone to see in its gruesome glory—laying bare all the lies, sordid details, and egregious consequences of unfettered greed. Then the "hopium" associated with Obama's election served as a soothing tranquilizer, quieting the movement, at least for a time. Yet, no matter who is in power, wars continue *ad nauseum*. To learn why, we must examine the vertical/hierarchical, patriarchal, political-economic system to which we humans have adapted over millennia.

First, let's look at U.S. history. The record reveals a chronic, depressing pattern of war making—550 direct military interventions since 1799

in more than 100 countries. More than 300 of these have occurred since World War II, including the bombing of 28 countries. In addition, the U.S. has conducted thousands of covert interventions, mostly in "Third World" countries.

The longer view: Since the advent of "civilization" around 3500 BC (55 centuries ago), there have been 14,600 recorded "decisive wars," not counting thousands of smaller, "indecisive" ones, according to the Norwegian Academy of Sciences. This coincides with development of writing and emergence of patriarchal, hierarchical kingdoms, most of which later became empires. The rulers of these kingdoms gained power by manipulating surplus that had grown out of the agricultural revolution. Another coincidence with the advent of civilization is a notable increase in findings of human remains for which the cause of death has been attributed to warfare injuries. Archaeologists have found little if any evidence of systemic warfare prior to this time.

War scholar Quincy Wright documents 3,000 recorded "battles" since 1500 AD which involved casualties

**The U.S., with 4.6 % of the world's population devours more than 30% of the globe's resources. This is ecologically unsustainable and immoral.**

**Our personal addiction to consumer goods, fed by the myth that our material well-being derives from our American "exceptionalism" enables our dreadful wars—imperial projects to assure, at gunpoint, continuation of our American Way Of Life.**

of at least 1,000 in land battles, and 500 in naval ones, with an additional quarter million "hostile encounters." The U.S. Army alone engaged in over 9,000 "battles and skirmishes" between 1775 and 1900, most against Native Americans; and the U.S. Navy engaged in over 1,100 additional encounters.

Efforts to prevent wars are also well established. Historical sociologist Jacques Novicow documented more than 8,000 treaties for peace between 1500 BC and 1860 AD.

Modern efforts to impose accountability for war behavior include The Hague and Geneva Conventions, the United Nations Charter, and the Nuremberg Principles. The 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact renounced war altogether. Since the 1950s, the U.S. Army Field Manual adopted provisions of international law, absolutely prohibiting targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure. It has done little, if anything, to retard murder of civilians.

Attempting to understand this chronic pattern of human carnage, scholars such as Lewis Mumford, Thomas Berry, Marija Gimbutus, Riane Eisler, and James Hillman chronicle the record of more than five millennia of the four patriarchal establishments: classical empires, ecclesiastical institutions, nation-states, and modern corporations. All four can be described as male-dominated,

vertical hierarchies dependent for their functioning on strict obedience from their population base.

"Civilization" is marked by a dramatic shift from long-standing, decentralized, horizontal, matriarchal societies, to centralized, vertical/class-oriented, patriarchal societies, in which obedience to a king was required, and slave

labor utilized to construct massive projects like tombs, irrigation, and grain storage systems. Class and stratification ripped people from their historical roots as autonomous beings living in small cooperative tribal groups. This separation of people from their intimate connections with the earth produced deep insecurity, anxiety, and fear in the psyche, and ecopsychologists such as Chellis Glendinning and Theodore Roszak suggest that such fragmentation created a traumatic primordial breach. Being forced to live and work in a class system generally leads to a feeling of lack of self worth. People will avoid this shame at any cost, often by adopting "defense mechanisms" such as projecting demonization onto others "below," and/or deference of authentic autonomous freedoms to belief in authority structures and adoption of their accompanying mythologies and ideologies.

For 300 generations civilization has required obedience. This has become a cultural habit enabling each of us to successfully adapt to our non-indigenous culture. Observers such as Etienne De La Boetie have discovered that virtually all vertical power quickly becomes ego-tyrannical, inherent in concentration of political, social, and economic power—whether achieved through elections (such as the USA), force of arms, or inheritance. Method of rule is essentially the same—achieving mass consent through either fear or propaganda/myth. Barbara Tuchman describes the historical folly of ego-maniacs at war in her 1984 book, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam*.

In essence, by being conditioned to obey the laws and mores of modern society dictated and shaped by vertical political-economic systems, we have been living contrary to our authentic nature as cooperative beings capable of self-governance in small communities without authority from above. In addition, in the West, with but 20 percent of the world's population, we have materially benefited from 500 years of colonial exploitation at the expense of the remaining 80 percent. This is not only immoral, it is ecologically unsustainable. In the U.S., with but 4.6 percent of the world's population, our insatiable consumption devours more than 30 percent of the globe's resources. Habits of obedience to our system have historically been reinforced by our personal addiction to consumer goods, fed by the myth that our material well-being derives from our "exceptionalism" as U.S. Americans. Our allegiance to this myth and our addiction to its benefits are what enable those dreadful wars—these are nothing more than imperial projects to assure, at gunpoint, continuation of our American Way Of Life, not to mention endless profits for the "emperor" and his entourage.

In summary, we are addicted to war because we are addicted to a materialist way of life, which requires obedience to an infrastructure of imperialism that enables business as usual. That it is totally unsustainable is only now being realized.

The prescription: Re-discover the eco-consciousness that already resides in our visceral genetic memory outside our brains. Choosing to live with less stuff in locally sufficient, food producing and simple tool making/artisan cultures can be joyful, and pockets of such revivalist cultures are cropping up in many places as people strive to re-establish their local autonomy. We are coming full circle—those we exterminated because we deemed them "savage," were in fact authentic. We are the savages and now must turn to the authentics to help in our healing.

*Brian Willson is an activist and essayist with degrees in Sociology, Criminology, and Law who commanded an experimental Air Force combat security ranger-type unit in Viet Nam. His philosophy of sacred interconnectedness with all life is summed up: "We are not worth more, they are not worth less."*



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1993 Clay Butler

Malachi Ritscher self-immolated on November 3, 2006 to protest invasion of Iraq.

### Chicago Millennium Flame

They say if there were a slight increase  
or decrease in gravity

A star would either refuse to adhere  
or inversely, would collapse into a blind sullen mass  
affecting its light

But Malachi Ritscher probably didn't have time to know this  
when in protest against the war, he burned himself alive  
at Kennedy and the Ohio Street Exit

He only left a note saying, "In my silence, I can no longer willingly  
offer my consent to your crimes."

Immolating him, the critical mass at the center of his soul  
burning even more brightly.

—Thomas Krampf

## Rally Against Torture Outside Condoleezza Rice's Speaking Tour

by Bob Heberle

Minnesota activists staged an anti-torture rally on November 8 in St. Louis Park, Minnesota as the Beth El Synagogue hosted Condoleezza Rice as the main speaker at a fundraiser. As National Security Adviser in the Bush administration, Rice is believed to be the first White House official to approve torture of "enemy combatants" in 2002. Rice is known to have delivered the Administration's approval for torture to the CIA, saying "It's your baby. Go do it."

Although it's not known what Rice herself was paid for the appearance, her going rate is \$100,000 to \$150,000 per appearance. Guests at Beth-El paid from \$50 to \$1200 to hear Rice's speech with the higher tickets entitling the donor to a private dinner with her following her talk.

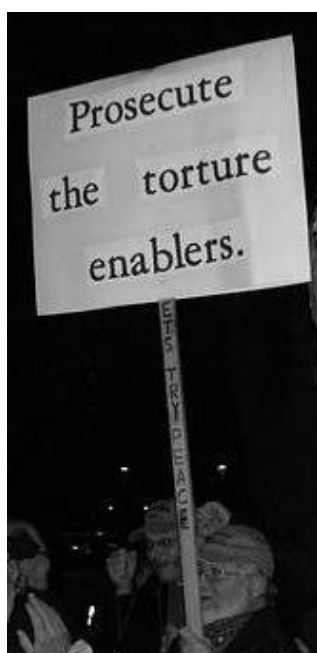
More than ten members of Veterans for Peace (VFP) along with over 135 anti-torture activists and dismayed Beth El congregants gathered on the sidewalk for a candlelight vigil, remembering the victims of U.S.-sponsored torture. They chanted "Shame on Condi," "Torture is not Kosher," read statements of Guantanamo detainees, and waved signs that called for Condoleezza Rice's arrest for violating federal laws against torture.

Demonstrators handed out letters calling for Rice's arrest and questioning by the FBI. A letter notifying the local FBI and United States Attorney had been delivered a few days prior to her appearance to provide a basis for Rice to be charged with violation of the domestic torture statutes.

Rice received three standing ovations from the Synagogue audience during her speech about bringing democracy to the Mid-east, the threat posed by a nuclear Iran,

and criticism of the Goldstone Report finding that war crimes were committed by Israelis and Palestinians during the bombing of Gaza earlier this year. The "unscripted Q & A" session was disappointing as the emcee avoided the many hard questions the demonstrators had prepared and did not include one question about the issue of torture. VFP's Chapter 27 President Larry Johnson had paid to attend so that he could ask a question but he was never given the chance.

Tackling Torture at the Top, a sub group of the Minnesota anti-war group, Women Against Military Madness organized the event with endorsement from the local VFP. T3 can be contacted at [tacklingtorture@gmail.com](mailto:tacklingtorture@gmail.com).



**TACKLE TORTURE AT THE TOP!**  
ANTI-TORTURE RALLY OUTSIDE CONDOLEEZZA RICE SPEECH  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH, 2009 AT 5:15PM  
OUTSIDE BETH EL SYNAGOGUE, 5224 W. 26TH ST., ST. LOUIS PARK, MN



**W.A.M.M.** Women Against Military Madness  
MORE INFO FROM [WORLDWIDEWAMM.ORG](http://WORLDWIDEWAMM.ORG) • 612-827-5364

## War Criminals

(Continued from page 3)

From the Bible, Galatians VI (King James Version), "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Yes, Luther is suffering now. And only he and his fellow scouts know the misery and

These crimes are committed in all of our names. We load the weapons; the soldiers and Marines do our dirty work.

pain they brought to who knows how many families who did nothing to us. If you break into someone's home, it is not "self-defense" to attack the people who live there. It is assault and battery. It is terrorism. It is murder. Power of pride? I don't think so.

And because these crimes are committed in all of our names, we are all the war criminals. We load the weapons; the soldiers and Marines do our dirty work. November 5, 2009, was sort of a "take your family to work" day at Ft. Hood. Military families got to see first-hand the environment where their loved ones earn a paycheck. All of us had a brief glimpse into the horrors that we visit on Iraqi and Afghani families everyday.

But we were lucky, for it wasn't quite the same. The victims weren't raped before they were murdered; their bodies were not set on fire after their last breaths were taken. The victims' children were not tied up while their fathers were detained before they were shot. Ft. Hood soldiers were not stacked into naked pyramids and tortured to death, nor were there families killed in their homes by airstrikes. That is the reality of occupation, and none of us are without blood on our hands—civilian or military. American soldiers and Marines are not guiltier than the rest of us, but they sure as hell aren't any more innocent. If we want the madness to stop, we all must stop the madness.

*Dr. Dahlia Wasfi is an activist and speaker, currently working on a book. She supports the rapid redeployment of all overseas American military personnel back to the U.S., specifically to the offices of Goldman Sachs, AIG, and the Federal Reserve, where they should remain until they receive the benefits they were promised. Her website is [www.liberatethis.com](http://www.liberatethis.com).*

## War Crime

(Continued from page 3)

that would illuminate the role of the entire Blair gang, notably Blair's 2003 cabinet, long silent. Who remembers the threat of the thug-gish Geoff Hoon, Blair's "defense secretary," to use nuclear weapons against Iraq?

In February, Jack Straw, one of Blair's principal accomplices, the man who let the mass murderer General Pinochet escape justice and the current "justice secretary," overruled the Information Commissioner who had ordered the government to publish Cabinet minutes during the period Lord Goldsmith was pressured into changing his judgment that the invasion was illegal. How they fear exposure, and worse.

"[The invasion] was made far easier given the role of useful idiot played by much of the mainstream media in the U.S. and Britain."

—Scott Ritter

The media has granted itself immunity. On 27 November, Scott Ritter, the former UN chief weapons inspector, wrote that the invasion "was made far easier given the role of useful idiot played by much of the mainstream media in the U.S. and Britain." More than four years before the invasion, Ritter, in interviews with myself and others, left not a shred of doubt that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction had been disabled, yet he was made a non-person. In 2002, when the Bush/Blair lies were in full echo across the media, the *Guardian* and *Observer* mentioned Iraq in more than 3,000 articles, of which 49 referred to Ritter and his truth that could have saved thousands of lives.

What has changed? On 30 November, the *Independent* published a pristine piece of propaganda from its embedded man in Afghanistan. "Troops fear defeat at home," said the headline. Britain, said the report, "is at serious risk of losing its way in Afghanistan because rising defeatism at home is demoralizing the troops on the front line, military commanders have warned." In fact, public disgust with the disaster in Afghanistan is mirrored among many serving troops and their families; and this frightens the warmongers. So "defeatism" and "demoralizing the troops" are added to the weasel lexicon. Good try. Unfortunately, like Iraq, Afghanistan is a crime. Period.

*John Pilger is a world-renowned journalist, author and documentary filmmaker, who began his career in 1958 in his homeland, Australia, before moving to London in the 1960s. He regards eye-witness as the essence of good journalism. He has been a foreign correspondent and a front-line war reporter, beginning with the Vietnam war in 1967. He is an impassioned critic of foreign military and economic adventures by Western governments.*

## Hypocrisy

(Continued from page 2)

### Argentina

Washington's support for Argentinean state terrorism under Generals Viola and Galtieri was also substantial and exposed countless numbers of people to the agonies of state terrorism. Again, one witnesses the White-House pattern—not only offering support and affirmation of violently suppressive right-wing forces but also sizable increases in American funding and the arming and training of military and police in illegally imposed dictatorial regimes. This was a regime in Argentina that, among other atrocities, brutalized Argentinean Jews (who comprised ten percent of its victims) and dropped its tortured victims into the Atlantic Ocean from planes. Such diabolical treatment did not prevent President Reagan from receiving one of the generals who had helped implement Argentinean state terrorism—General Roberto Viola—with high honor. Washington's policy of supporting such anti-Communist regimes friendly to American corporate investments was consistent with traditional American foreign policy going back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### South Africa

Washington's foreign-policy hypocrisy was also flagrantly criminal in South Africa, supporting racist administrations and promoting ethnic cleansing, genocide, and war crimes. In 1986 140,000 children died because of South Africa's "total strategy," a war campaign designed to destabilize Black African populations in and adjoining South Africa. Almost nine million people were displaced by that "Strategy." Washington knew that Apartheid South Africa was developing chemical and bacteriological warfare materials. Moreover, South Africa's Weapons-of-Mass-Destruction program would not have been possible without foreign aid from the United States. Those materials included cholera, anthrax, chemical poisoning, and other deadly germs. Apparently, it was all right then (and remains so now) if an ally such as Israel develops WMDs. But if a nation less receptive to the needs of American corporations and the

Pentagon's global strategy might have WMDs, they are automatically transformed into a terrorist-rogue state by a wave of the Washington wand.

### Indonesia

Washington's policy in Indonesia further instances the country's participation in globally illegal and criminal war crimes. The White House and State Department were involved in the 1965 massacre, amounting by some estimates to almost ten million Indonesians, by supplying arms, money, detailed "enemies" lists, communications technology, and training and even the

When a whole string of American presidents are viewed as condoning or encouraging war crimes, it gives American political leadership an appearance that is shocking in its Realpolitik ruthlessness.

air support of the Seventh Fleet to the anti-Sukarno rebels. Secretary of State Dean Rusk approved the massacres. American Ambassador to Indonesia Marshall Green brutally referred to it as a "cleanup" and Rusk insisted the massacres be continued. Historian Gabriel Kolko states that Washington "was an accessory to the state terrorism in Indonesia" and called it "one of the most barbaric acts of humanity in a century...and ranks as a war crime of the same types as those the Nazis perpetrated." These strong words suggest a terrifying darkness at the core of America's political soul.

### Communist Threat?

What is behind all this proxy—and direct—violence committed by Washington abroad? Why has it supported dictator-monsters worse than Saddam Hussein, then set Saddam up as, in effect, one of the worst political villains of modern times, ridiculously compared by some hysterical pundits even to Hitler? The numerous right-wing regimes supported by Washington before the Gulf Wars were of course seen as noble bulwarks against the alleged global threat of global communism. While Soviet Communism could be considered a threat to global Capitalist interests and investments and unquestionably embodied a totalitarian social order, transforming it into a threat to

American democracy or Western values is easily seen as mostly a sham in view of Washington's full-scale support of anti-democratic values embodied in the extremely bloody regimes of the Pinochets, Amins, Suhartos, Rios Montts and the rest. It is still not understood by the general public that many nationalistic movements of liberation in "Third-World" countries were deliberately misidentified as Communist in order to undercut the drive to reconfigure severely impoverished societies run by elites friendly to and supported by Washing-

ton. What is shocking is the global breadth and extremes of violence to which the White House would go to preserve commercial, corporate demands virtually anywhere that assets to be possessed exist.

### Liberation?

The Washington pretense of liberating Panama from Noriega (or Iraq from Hussein) is hardly worth serious attention as an ethical rationale. Indonesia, however, is far more atrocious because of the astounding scale of violence and Washington's deep involvement in that violence. The "liberation" of Indonesia from the democratically elected and independent Sukarno to the ruthless despotic General Suharto meant the opening of vast natural resources and a cheap labor population to Western corporate exploitation. This story of freedom for Capitalist exploitation is not well known or honestly presented to the American public. Less familiar is the sheer hypocritical brutality involved. For if that realization dawned on enough Americans, one would think it would, or at least should, have lead to huge street demonstrations of protest.

### Disconnect?

The men and women behind these actions are either extremely cruel or totally abstracted from the concrete human, bodily consequences of

their atrociously violent plans. Perhaps, however, it's the same thing: lack of compassion towards, and fear of the alienated other or the unknown, represent the failure of the mind to imagine or feel what should be the inalienable flesh-and-blood reality of other human beings. This is what the San Francisco poet Kenneth Rexroth called "the holiness of the real," by which he also meant the holiness of the other's individuated being.

### The Buck Stops Here

As for plausible deniability, modern political executive institutions are so complex and multi-layered that a President could pretend he didn't know what was going on in regard to criminal behavior. The overriding consideration regarding an event—such as the overthrowing of another nation's government in a country the United States is not at war with—is whether the President or his close advisors *should* have known. It is easy and cheap for Presidents to urge the myth of the Free World or to urge ignorance of egregious misconduct by one of a President's countless agencies. But Presidents must take responsibility for the results and consequences of their foreign policies. If those policy consequences involve war crimes, genocide, torture or an illegal war, they must be held fully accountable legally, including not only impeachment but imprisonment.

Noam Chomsky has stated that "If the facts were faced, and

international law and elementary morality were operative, thousands of U.S. politicians and military planners would be regarded as candidates for Nuremberg-type trials." Leaders of victorious nations who commit war crimes are not likely to be thrown into prison or executed, although their condemnation by representative world legal institutions might bear significant symbolic and thus repercussive value, even within the criminal leader's own nation. It is easy to see how Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld (and now Obama) have been grossly in violation of the moral norms of political leadership. But when a whole string of American presidents from Eisenhower on are viewed as in one way or another condoning or covertly encouraging war crimes abroad, it gives the character of American political leadership an entirely different moral appearance, one that, hidden behind the successful cover of plausible deniability, is shocking in its Realpolitik ruthlessness. Instead of naming statues and airports and freeways and public buildings after these men, we should label them felons and at the very least imprison them in print.

*Don Gutierrez, professor emeritus of English from Western New Mexico University, devotes research and writing to issues of social justice and human rights abuses (or what he calls political or state torture).*



# Current Traumatic Stress Disorder in Gaza

by Will Covert

November, 2009—I've just returned from a nine day visit to Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. After spending just three days talking with survivors of the recent war on Gaza—folks who have lost family members and friends to a ruthless massacre perpetrated on a hopelessly trapped and powerless people—plus visiting the sites and seeing with my own eyes



the devastation inflicted by a harsh and brutal occupier, I found myself shutting down emotionally and psychologically. To protect myself, I needed to insulate myself from the pain, frustration, and anger of the people of Gaza, not to mention my own pain, frustration, and anger with my fellow countrymen who not only support this madness, but fund it as well—and to the tune of \$30 billion plus per year.

Now that I have returned to New Mexico I am beginning to adjust back into a familiar world. However, that world will never be the same again. Once a person knows a thing that person cannot “not” know that thing.

These then are the horrors that the population of Gaza must labor under, day in and day out. They are literally prisoners on their own land and their imprisonment is enforced through a brutal and illegal occupation accompanied by an immoral and illegal blockade.

They are constantly haunted by the question ever present in the heart and minds of all of Gaza, "When will the next attack on Gaza take place?" Not, "Will there be another attack on Gaza?" but

People in Gaza are not suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. “Post” denotes past tense and suggests over and done with. Such is not the case in Gaza. The stress is ongoing, constant and ever present in the here and now. And through their trauma the people of Gaza, in their pain, frustration and anger cry out to the world, "How is it you can sit idly by and allow these crimes against humanity to continue? Have you no compassion? Have you no soul? Have you no heart?"

Won't you please join with me to break the silence surrounding the illegal, immoral and criminal siege, blockade and occupation of Gaza. Speaking up and speaking out against illegal, immoral and criminal acts does not make a person anti-Semitic, anti-Israeli, anti-Jewish or even anti-Zionist, just courageous in this day and age! —WC

"When will the next attack occur?" It is a question ever present but rarely voiced in Gaza as if to give voice to the question out loud might cause it to happen again...soon...today!

As children play (not only for the sake of play but to



avoid their reality) and the people of Gaza busy themselves with their daily chores the implications of the question permeates and haunts every aspect of life in Gaza as it hangs thick in the air. . . and still they wait and wait some more. What else can they do?

It is an impossible situation for the people of Gaza. The occupiers will not allow them to leave the open air prison and, on the other hand, there is nowhere to hide, to feel safe in Gaza. It is an Israeli imposed physical, emotional and psychological ball and



Photos: Child of the occupation; Mosque minaret used for F16 target practice; F16 destruction.

chain. And when the Israeli Defense Forces (a misnomer if ever there were one) attack it must be like shooting fish in a fish bowl for them. Of course they call them "surgical strikes" as if it somehow makes the event more humane and clinical. It makes it all appear a whole lot neater unless, that is, you happen to be the person left with the clean up in the aftermath.

I am seriously thinking of returning to the West Bank and to Gaza for Christmas and New Years this year. Assuming I can raise the necessary funds to make the trip. It certainly seems like the Christian thing to do . . .

*Will Covert traveled to Gaza with the Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility delegation. He is a member of Veterans For Peace in Albuquerque, NM.*

**Dr. Ezzeldeen Abu al-Aish**, a Palestinian doctor who trained in Israel, whose three daughters (22-year-old Bisan, 15-year-old Mayer, and 14-year-old Aya) and a niece (14-year-old Nour Abu al-Aish) were killed by an Israel Defense Forces shell on January 16, 2009: *...it will follow me the whole of my life. And I will do my best, this memory, to be changed into positive actions, to establish a foundation under their name for only girls, to empower girls and women, who will achieve and seal, these girls, the dreams of my daughters.*

## Dreams of my Daughters

If I were the Palestinian gynecologist whose two daughters and niece were slaughtered by an Israeli bomb in Gaza recently, this would be

my way of telling you of suffering outraged. What did these beautiful girls do to harm Israel? All innocent. All on the thin edge of the moment,

opening their future, meeting life more than halfway, in love with hope, dreaming of becoming a doctor, a teacher, a musician. Here

on this very splash of blood lie torn notebooks, a comb, a towel and a kerchief to cover an all-too-fragile brain-case.

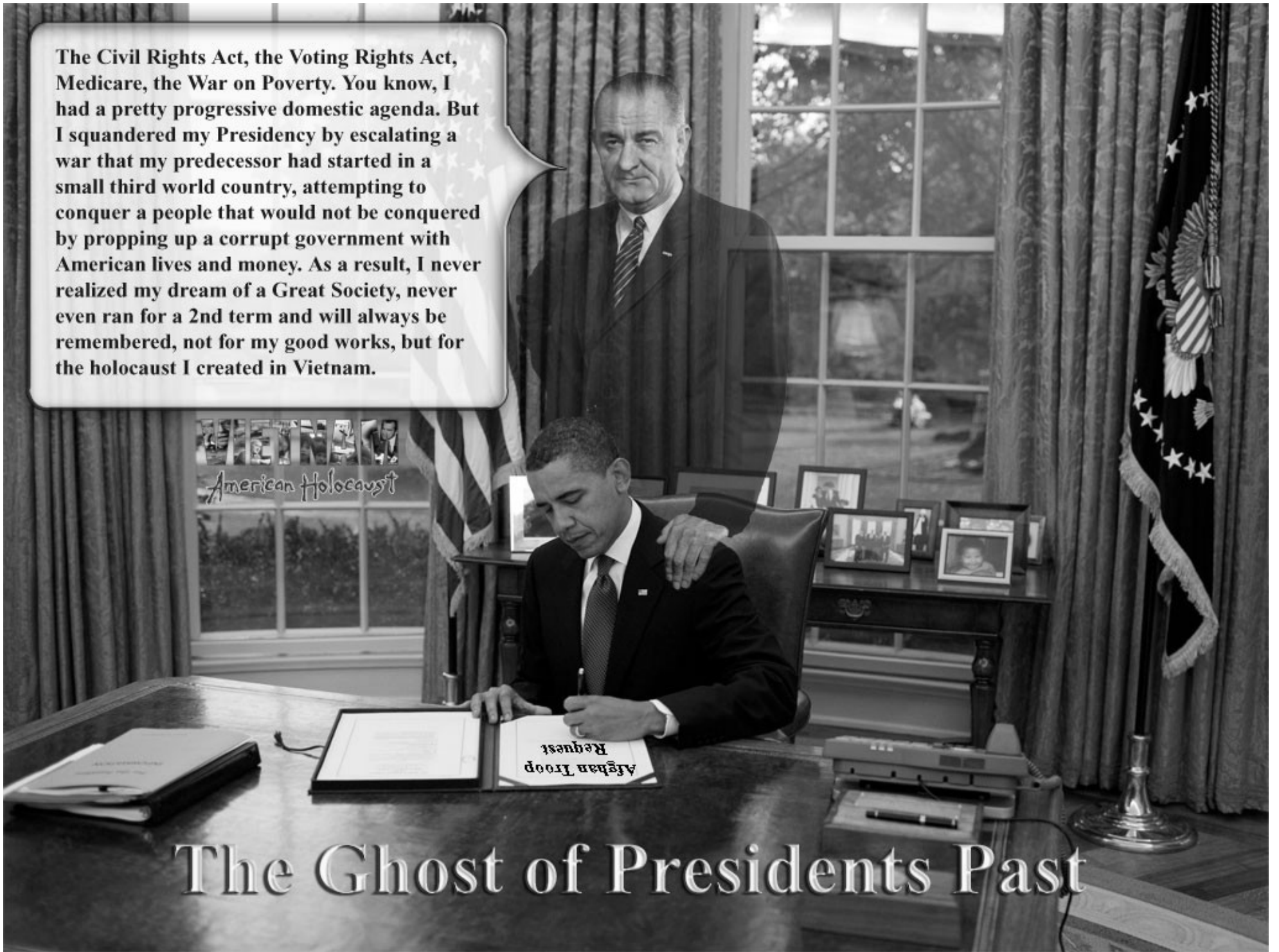
God protect them in heaven as I could not protect them in hell. Give me the strength to believe—not in peace, for that word has now

lost all its meaning—but that a more human race will spring from the loins of other girls by some miracle salvaged

from such ruinous assaults, such soul-consuming hatreds. My lovely girls are gone. Can I revive my will to trust once more?

—Jean Gerard (In honor of Dr. Ezzeldeen Abu Al-Aish)





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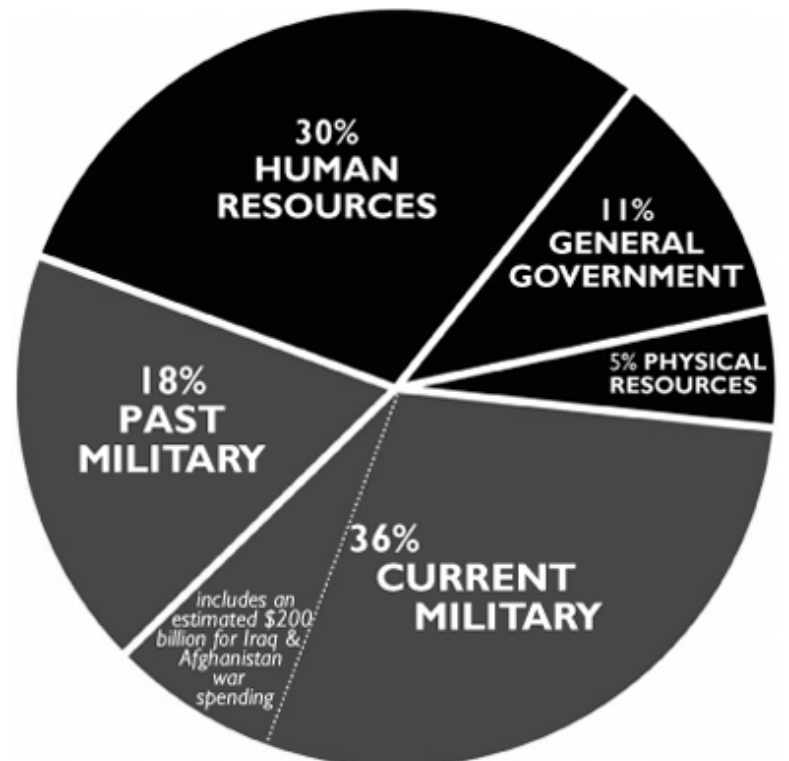
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