REALITIES

GRASSROOTS MILITARISM IN ARKANSAS: C-130 Transport Plane
Arkansas is comparatively small as a military-industrial state, yet militarism's economic reach can be found all around. ADG (10-1-08) has a report on the expansion of Little Rock Air Force Base ("the largest C-130 training base in the world") to two C-130 commands. Without the C-130 there could be no US empire, which requires these huge long-distance planes to transport troops and material worldwide quickly. Economically the Pentagon sustains and expands its power by placing bases in all states to make uncritical citizens dependent upon militarized employment. Sen. Mark Pryor is proud of LRAFB and its C-130s.

Btw, in addition to the employment ploy, as reported in the same article, the Pentagon also declares the C-130 to be beneficial to the world as humanitarian transport. Of course, the State Dept. and other civilian agencies should be doing that work. Or the Department of Peace we ought to have. For humanitarianism can be a cover for military intervention. Essential to military intervention is the airlift (and sea) infra-structure. The now more than 900 military bases function in a wide transport network in order to move troops and material into combat zones. The C-130 is the workhorse of empire.

MEDIA REPORTING

ADG 9-12-08, “Senate Passes Big Defense Bill”. This short article on p. 2 deserves PAGE ONE coverage, but it is p. 2, short, and between articles on DC gun restrictions and David Pryor and the CPB Board. On p. 3 appears an article on soldiers in Iraq killed in a helicopter crash. Within this diluting and distracting mix, the enormous, militarizing war budget is sugar-coated as “defense” and taken for granted by ADG as routine news. Consequently, the editors see no connection between the war budget p. 2 and the deaths of our soldiers in Iraq p. 3. They died because the US government sent them to an illegal war for oil, funded uncritically by our Dem/Repub Congress, and passively accepted by our “watchdog” (toothless and blind) mainstream press and the gulled and/or militarized public. Yet two days later, so confused are our mainstream media, ADG published Edward Wasserman’s “When Will the Media Show Spine?” about the bloated military spending and the radical concentration of executive power.

RUNNING OUT OF SPACE FOR WAR CEMETERIES
TMN (10-3-08): Fayetteville National Cemetery has spent $200,000 and needs $1.4 million more for 23 pieces of property and 15 more “if we have the money.” Why? For our perpetual illegal wars--at least 43 illegal interventions since WWII according to William Blum. “National cemeteries across the country have entered a panic mode as they run out of space,” reports the newspaper. The cemetery began with the Civil War and its major expansion began in 1989.
WARRIORS
Half the nation supports McCain in September 2008, and McCain supports Pres. Bush’s militarism. In NAT (8-13-08), Bill Underwood, prominent Fayetteville businessman, expressed his strong support for militarism: “...if we had a nation consisting of millions of highly trained young men that could be called upon to go to war to defend our country, that demand to actually go to war would probably never occur. The deterrent would be so great that no foreign nation would ever dare test it.” Defend our country? But what nation has threatened us? Rather, it is the US that has threatened and invaded other nations. Our administrations are the danger to the world, as the people of the world recognize. We used nuclear bombs on civilian cities; no other nation has. We invaded... etc. (Read Rogue State and Killing Hope.) Mr Underwood concludes by assuring us he “would never want to see [his seven grandsons] go to war and be in harm’s way.” Except, except when our leaders call to invade yet another country.

SURVEILLANCE
In Lowell. John Henley Jr. “Lowell Puts ‘Eye in Sky’: City Council Approves Request for Security Camera on Tower.” TMN (7-16-07). Police and city officials will “be able to look down on residents with a camera mounted atop an antenna...for security purposes.” The city attorney Tom Kieklak cautioned the Council to go slowly “‘to ensure we are protecting the Fourth Amendment privacy rights of our citizens.’” The article reveals how pervasive down to the grassroots level has become officials’ desire to watch the citizens and smooth it over with cant. The FBI, CIA, NSA, President do it, so why not the mayor of Lowell? [Those of you familiar with Orwell’s 1984 may wish to remind the media.]

RESISTANCE ?
CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT?
Ark. 2nd District Rep. Vic Snyder will chair the reconstituted House Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee. The Republicans abolished it 12 years ago. Snyder described as “abysmal” congressional monitoring of the military over the past 12 years. Consequently weak to nonexistent oversight of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and of the Pentagon contributed to the catastrophes of recent US foreign policy. TMN 7-2-07, 8A. Now, is Snyder our military watchdog? Or is he, like the mainstream media, spineless?

REAL RESISTANCE
The mainstream media are full of reports about war heroes. Let us learn about peace heroes: Dorothy Day, Jeannette Rankin, A. J. Muste, Sojourner Truth, Thomas Merton, Colman McCarthy, Martin Luther King Jr. Tell your children about them. Ask your children’s or grandchildren’s teachers if they tell about them. Read Walter Wink’s Peace Is the Way, Great Peacemakers by Beller and Chase, Miles’ Peace: 50 Years of Protest, Cultures of Peace by Elise Boulding. Ask librarians to include these books and the many similar books about peacemakers, who know a war budget when they see one.
OMNI SEeks a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with liberty and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, an earth restored. Grassroots nonviolence, world peace, human rights, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship protecting species and the earth. These are OMNI's ideals. Read our brochure and our newsletters, attend our steering committee, become an active member of one or more of our committees, participate in our dozens of activities to see how these broad goals are realized in action. There is nothing vague about building a culture of peace, it just takes people.

**Senator Lincoln** (202) 224-4843 Fax: (202) 228-1371.

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