OMNI NEWSLETTER ON AFGHANISTAN and PAKISTAN #7 (see Iraq Newsletters for related materials), November 21, 2010, WE, THE PEOPLE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE, Of, BY, and For the People. Edited by Dick Bennett. (This Newsletter was not sent directly to the members, but was placed in OMNI’s website and in Dick’s Blog.) (#1 Feb. 18, 2008; #2 Jan. 2009, “25 Reasons for Leaving Afghanistan”; #3 Oct. 4, 2009; #4 April 12, 2010; #5 July 27, 2010; #6 October 8, 2010)

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US MILITARY NOT LEAVING AFGHANISTAN EVEN BY 2014?
NATO, US Differ Over Leaving Afghanistan in 2014

Alan Clendenning and Julie Pace, Associated Press

Excerpt: "Later, a senior Obama administration official said the US had not committed to ending its combat mission in Afghanistan at the end of 2014. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss internal administration discussions."

https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12c6cbe2a0a36866

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CONTINUE THE DEMONSTRATIONS TO REMEMBER AND PROTEST THE START OF THE AFGHAN WAR OCTOBER 2001

International Days of Action calling for ceasefire, negotiations, and withdrawal of all US and NATO troops. www.warresisters.org

ART: MEMORIAL TO THE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES OF THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

More than 40 artists from around the world contributed their vision of war and peace as a memorial to the victims. WINDOWS AND MIRRORS is a traveling exhibit of 45 panels, each 4’ by 6’. To find the site nearest to us contact www.AFSC.org
War’s Hidden Death Toll: After Service, Veteran Deaths & Suicides Surge

As of this month, over 5,700 American soldiers have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. That count does not include those veterans who commit suicide or die from war-related issues after returning home from military service. Well, a new investigation into California veterans and active service members reveals that three times as many veterans are dying soon after returning home than those being killed in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. According to the report published in the Bay Citizen and the New York Times, more than 1,000 California veterans under 35 died between 2005 and 2008. For more go to: Soldier Suicides


Related stories
- "Operation Recovery": On 9th Anniversary of Afghan War, Veteran-Led Campaign Seeks to End Deployment of Traumatized Soldiers
- With Military Suicides on the Rise, Parents of Two Soldiers Who Took Their Own Lives Say Obama’s Words Ring Hollow
- "I Have No Regret to Anybody in the Military. This Is Clearly a Failure of Our Government"—Iraq War Vet Dan Choi Discharged Under "Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell"

PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS AND SUICIDES

MAINSTREAM MEDIA
reported the dismissal of Gen. McChrystal and the WikiLeaks release of classified documents. But the revelations “were mostly seen as opportunities to shore up support for the current Afghanistan policy rather than to debate it.”

FILM
“THE TILLMAN STORY.” Rev. Mother Jones (Nov. Dec. 2010). Story of the search for the truth behind Pat’s death in Afghanistan in 2004, which was hushed up far up the chain of command.

WHY DO THE PEOPLE OF THE US ACCEPT PERMANENT WAR? WHY ARE SO MANY SILENT?
One writer suggests they are bored with the wars. “Like a reality show that’s gone on too long, it ceases to shock, shame, or even interest.” (Gary Younge, “Forgetting Afghanistan,” The Nation, Nov. 8, 2010). But can that be, when violence attracts millions to dozens of TV shows? In Afghanistan, Staff Sgt. Calvin Gibbs, full of hatred for the Afghan “savages,” allegedly ordered murder of civilians, and then posed with his fellow soldiers with the corpses. Back in February a raid killed two pregnant women, a teenage girl, and a police commander, all innocent of any crime. And just after Christmas last year eight teens and preteens in Kunar province were murdered by execution-style. Plenty of reality there. So the people of the US are bored with war violence but not TV violence? In a September poll, when asked “what the most important problems facing the country are, just 3 percent mentioned Afghanistan.” They are bored? Or do they want to forget that their leaders and they themselves supported the war? A Crusade for Security against the Vicious Muslims! Only one Representative, Barbara Lee, voted against it. And then bin Laden was never arrested. The Afghan killed have been literally countless because so many were never counted, and now US killed have doubled under Obama. So the public are silent because ashamed? Are they? Or because their fundamental commitment to the myth of US war and empire has been shown to be so mistaken? The US is not so perfect that no matter how many crimes it commits against the vulnerable of the world the results will be benign? US leaders and populace rejected alternatives to the horrific brutality of invading and occupying a third-world country, without achieving democracy or security? Barbara Lee was right? If not boredom or shame, why are the majority silent?

END OF AFGHANISTAN NEWSLETTER #7 November 21, 2010

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Wars and Warming: Reducing the Footprints
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