

UNDERFUNDED, UNDERMANNED, AND OVERLOADED

The U.S. Army puts out its own newspaper, The Army Times. It's not exactly a dovish publication, but they do call a spade a spade. A recent article they ran on their companion website, www.armytimes.com on October 29, 2007, should serve to enrage anybody who reads it.

Two Tampa Bay area V.A. hospitals are routinely turning away, or 'diverting,' new patients. James A. Haley V.A. Medical Center, and Bay Pines V.A. Center are the #1 and #4 busiest hospitals in the system, respectively.

Haley has turned away critical patients 27% of the time since January 1, 2006. This is equal to about 170 days. All patients, regardless of their condition get turned away 16% of the time.

Since 2000, Bay Pines has turned away more patients than any other in the system. It has diverted veterans 1,150 hours/treatment, or 13% of the time last year (http://www.armytimes.com/news/2007/10/ap_vaoverload_071028/).

District director in west-central Florida for the Blinded Veterans Association, Bill Geden states, "They're (the V.A.) underfunded, undermanned and overloaded."

Chief of Staff at Bay Pines, Dr. George Van Buskirk, says, "We'd rather send them out to a place that can take care of them than have them languish on a gurney in the hall." In one instance, a veteran suffered a fatal heart attack 200 yards from the emergency entrance.

Haley's Dr. Edward Cutolo said, "It's like putting your finger in a dike actually."

Bay Pines treated 49,800 patients in 2000, with 516,000 outpatient visits. In 2006, the numbers were 95,000 and 1.1 million.

Just as the Bay Pines and Haley Medical Center patient treatments have risen, nationally the numbers of veterans seeking help has risen as well. In 2000, the doctor-to-patient ratio for the VA was 1 to 335. In 2004 that number rose to 1 to 531 (<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/10/20/4702/>).

With an estimated 20,000 catastrophic injuries from the war already, disaster looms. No figures were provided for the already underserved female vets.

BE THE MEDIA!

State of Disunion

NUMBER OF VETERANS who experienced homelessness at some point in 2006: 495,400	NUMBER OF COLORADO VETERANS that are homeless: 1,203
TOTAL NUMBER OF VETERANS in the United States in 2005: 23,427,584	NUMBER OF ATOMIC VETERANS in the United States: 1,000,000
NUMBER OF TAX DOLLARS spent on the Iraq War to date: 467,000,000,000	NUMBER OF DOLLARS allocated to the VA annually: 73,000,000,000
MINIMUM NUMBER OF DISABLED VETS that have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan: 20,000	HALF-LIFE OF DEPLETED URANIUM: 4.5 billion
PERCENT OF HOMELESS VETERANS who suffer from mental illnesses: 45	PERCENT OF VIETNAM VETERANS who developed diagnosable PTSD: 18.7

* Sources for the State of Disunion can be found at
www.gjredpill.org

CALL TO ACTION

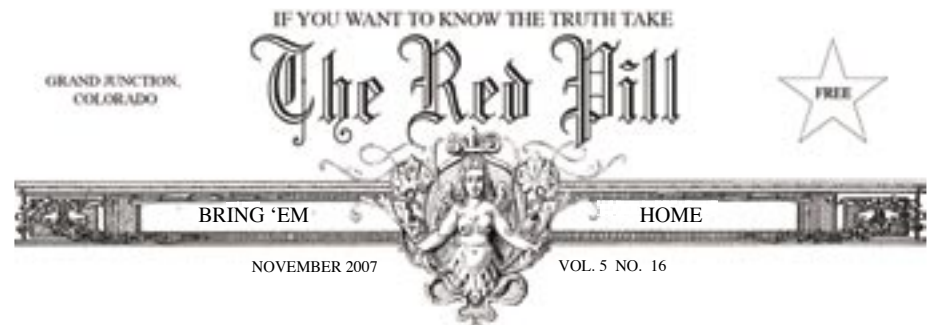
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VETERANS' DAY ISSUE

A VETERANS' DAY PARADE

JEFF ENGLEHART—IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR—WWW.IVAW.ORG

Coming from the opinion of an Iraq war veteran, I can testify that Veterans Day—a day of remembrance for all the veterans who sacrificed their lives, limbs, and sanity for the decency of American society—strikes me as a shallow, contemplated lie, and really does not mean a damn thing to me.

And why should it? To some, this callous attitude towards a national holiday may appear unjustified, or that as a veteran, I may sound ungrateful for it. But to frame this holiday into a rational context, I have to ask: When the negligence and indifference towards the humanity and respect of a group of people can be so easily redressed once a year on a federally mandated

holiday, why should we place any amount of importance on this faux holiday of remembrance, and especially when it insults our intelligence?

In short, veterans, and the day to honor them, hold about as much importance to most Americans as Kwanzaa does to the Young Republicans of Texas.

For some of my closest friends and me, Veterans Day is every day, and it is a fact that cannot be so easily praised and cheered with the enthusiastic waving of an American flag.

Many of us live through life in the solitary confines of our experiences, walking amongst the living while holding hands with the dead.

Some veterans, homeless, jobless and

"PARADE" ON THIRD PAGE



Jeff Englehart (center) with two fellow veterans

www.gjredpill.org

FROM THE SERVICE TO THE STREETS: HOMELESS VETERANS IN AMERICA

"A grateful nation would work to ensure that the men and women who risked their lives serving their country are not left stranded when they fall on hard times back home...we should act to make sure veterans can put a roof over their head."

--Senator Robert Menendez--

The war's not over," said Badger, a homeless disabled Vietnam Veteran. The Red Pill was able to sit down with Badger at a picnic table in Bum Park while just a few blocks away, thousands of people lined Main St., Grand Junction for the Veterans' Day Parade.

According to Badger, the reason that so many of the homeless are veterans is that "we were psychologically screwed up from the war." Coming home, Badger said that he felt like a "strange man lost in a strange country," due to being "conditioned to kill."

"I just want a warm room and a roof," said Badger, explaining that the \$755 dollars in disability he gets every month is "not really enough, unless you like being destitute."

On November 5th, the National Alliance to End Homelessness released a report entitled "Vital Mission: Ending Homelessness Among Veterans." The study found that on any given day there are 195,827 homeless veterans walking the streets, and that 495,400 veterans experienced homelessness during the year of 2006. Veterans make up roughly 11% of the civilian population, but account for 26% of the homeless population.

The report identified a number of causes of homelessness amongst veterans including: lack of income, physical health and disability, mental health and disability, substance abuse, weak social networks, and a lack of services.

The study found that the unemployment rate for veterans aged 20-24 is 15% and that "younger veterans with limited education are struggling to transfer their military skills into the civilian work force."

Many homeless veterans are physically disabled, and the number of disabled is growing with more than "20,000 veterans suffering from their wounds in Iraq and Afghanistan." The study also found that "typical SSI disability payments are inadequate to meet the cost of rental housing in most cities."

Mental health is another major factor for homelessness amongst veterans. The Veterans Administration (VA) estimates that 45% of homeless veterans suffer from mental illnesses, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Recent studies indicated that 19% of Iraq veterans reported a mental health problem.



"This is my life, I'm a military brat, these are my people," Sammy said, gesturing with his arm to the Veterans' Day Parade taking place behind him. "But these fuckers don't want to have anything to do with me." Sammy, who has been homeless for the past five years, said that he wouldn't be able to make it on the streets if it wasn't for the services provided by the VA.

"The VA is extremely helpful, they actually sympathize with me," said Badger.

According to the Paul Sweeney, the Public Relations Officer at the Grand Junction VA Hospital, the local VA has a mental health specialist that is the homeless issues officer, who makes sure that the homeless veterans' "needs are met." According to Sweeney, the VA works closely with Catholic Outreach, Grand Valley Coalition for the Homeless, and Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley to support and identify veterans who need assistance.

Sweeney said that one of the major issues locally driving up the number of homeless veterans on the street is that "the housing prices are going up."

Nationally, the VA oversees 19,000 beds of transitional housing for homeless vets and spends 287 million dollars on homeless specific programs, "employing 346 clinicians that work exclusively with the homeless," said Sweeney.

Nationally and locally, the VA is involved in "Stand Downs," which are collaborative events that bring the VA, area homeless service providers, and military together to provide homeless veterans with flu shots, excess military clothes and gear, and other services.

"I got my flu shot, and some warm clothes from the 'Stand Down' this year," said Sammy.

"What we need is a more conscious President, rather than starting new wars, we need help for those who have already served," said Badger. "I'm against this war. I hate it. I have a son over there."

I asked Badger if he was going to head up to the Veterans' Day Parade. "No, I think I'm going to go fly a sign. But who knows, last Veterans' Day I didn't make shit."

DEPLETED URANIUM: IRAQ'S AGENT ORANGE

Depleted Uranium shells have been a favorite anti-armored vehicle weapon of the U.S. military for quite sometime. Since it is twice as dense as lead and a waste byproduct of uranium enrichment, it is incredibly cheap and without a doubt, incredibly effective as a weapon. When a DU round penetrates an armored vehicle, the nose of the rod fractures, creating a self-sharpening "spear" of uranium that punches through any kind of armor on the planet. During this impact, the release of energy eventually turns the DU round to a fine atomic dust that ignites upon contact with air in the interior of the armored target (pyrophoric properties), thus engulfing the crew in a hellish last second of life as even the air they breathe turns to fire and cooks them alive.

The side affects of DU used during the first and second wars against Iraq have been a topic of hot debate for many people across the nation since the first Gulf War. While the Pentagon says that, "Gulf War exposures to depleted uranium have not to date produced any observable adverse health effects attributable to DU's chemical toxicity or low-level radiation," their actions after the first Gulf War tell a far different story. Of the 4,000 Iraqi military vehicles destroyed during the war, the Pentagon declared them all to be a substantial risk to human health and all of the vehicles were either buried in Saudi Arabia or in U.S. radioactive dumps.

The catch is that DU shells, as a whole unused munition, have such low levels of radiation coming off of them that they pose little risk to human health. However, when a shell is used, it is turned into a highly toxic radioactive dust that is easily inhaled by humans, even penetrating gas masks and protective clothing. "Depleted uranium dust that is inhaled gets transferred from the lungs to the regional lymph nodes, where they can bombard a small number of cells in their immediate vicinity with intense alpha radiation," according to Dr. Asaf Durakovic, a former Army colonel and head of nuclear medicine. From the lungs, the dust is then processed out of the body through all of the major bodily organs eventually building up to very high levels in the kidneys and liver. Iraqi doctors have reported an eleven fold increase in cancer among the civilian population since the invasion in 2003. In 2004, American Free Press reported on the investigative work of Marion Fulk, a former nuclear chemical physicist at the Lawrence Livermore lab, that found eight

soldiers out of a unit of 20 had developed massive cancerous malignancies within only 16 months.

Just as with Agent Orange in Vietnam, the Pentagon has been slow to admit the dangers of Depleted Uranium. They admit that it is toxic when turned into radioactive dust particles, but they fail to admit that the nearly 2,000 tons of it that has been used in the current gulf war was turned into dust when it destroyed numerous enemy targets. Last time I checked, Iraq was a desert that suffers from constant dust storms sweeping across whole provinces, now those dust storms are roving clouds of cancerous particles poisoning massive areas of Iraq. How can our soldiers not be in danger from depleted uranium?

580,400 soldiers served in the first Gulf War, a war that barely lasted a couple of months before most of those troops were redeployed elsewhere. Of those veterans that served, by the end of 2000, 325,000 of those men and women had been declared as disabled. In ten short years, that means about 56 percent of all vets who had served were casualties of our first escapade in the Middle East. Presently, over 1 million U.S. troops have served tours of duty ranging from 6 months to 15, and a majority of these troops have been deployed for multiple tours of duty in Iraq. What will be the true cost of this war in a decade? How many veterans will be able to receive the medical attention they need if 60 percent of them will be qualified as disabled in a decade. How many children will be born deformed or still born in the years ahead? Some U.S. sperm banks even offer a discount to soldiers who are about to be deployed since so many troops fear the affects of their own weapons as much as they fear a sniper's bullet.

If you want to be a patriot, then stop listening to the war hawks in Washington and bring the troops home. The rich never suffer from war, just like George W. Bush dodging his duty in Vietnam, they always avoid the dangers of war, while making a killing off of their investments in the defense industry. It's always the troops, their families, and civilians who pay for the greed of those in Washington, who bleed to death thousands of miles away from home, or in the case of DU tainted vets, die slowly and painfully for the next ten or twenty years.

*Sources for this story can be found on our website: www.gjredpill.org.

DU's INNOCENT VICTIMS



Iraq



Kosovo



Afghanistan



USA

EVERY MONDAY• 5:30pm

A Voice of Reason, the local peace group meets to strategize local actions to end the war in Iraq.

For more info call 245-3720

November, 16-18th

Thousands will gather at the gates of Fort Benning, Georgia to protest and participate in non-violent direct action to close the School of the Americas. If you don't know what the SOA is or are interested in attending check out: www.soaw.org

RED PILL LOCATIONS

You can pick up your copy of The Red Pill at the following locations: Planet 9, Heart of the Dragon, Third World Imports, Planet Earth, The Hot Tomato, Kleen Sting, Colorado Java, Himalayan Feeling, Contemporary Glass Works, Change Skateboards, Coffee Muggers, Triple Play Records, Pretty Things, Dream Child Entertainment.

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THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE JOINING THE MILITARY

Editor's note: This story was originally published in The Red Pill Vol. 3 No. 4. The information is as useful today as it was two years ago, and some facts have been updated to reflect the most recent data possible.

*"Our military is not a job or a training program; It's only there to fight wars."
—Dick Cheney—*

We are a warring nation that is at war again—in at least two countries. Many are asking 'why?' Especially young people, who disagree in large numbers about supporting the war. Many realize that America has a history of eating its own young.

The No Child Left Behind Act gave military recruiters incredible predatory powers. If you are under eighteen and do not want to be pestered, remember, you are in control. You can stop by your school's office and demand to be taken off the recruitment list.

Why would you want to avoid the military? Because if you are a veteran of the military, you have only a 15 percent chance of getting a four year degree in your life. Since the 1970s, ex-G.I.s have received paychecks that pay out 15 percent less than for similar non-vets. Vets end up in prisons and mental hospitals much more than non-vets, and one fourth of all homeless people are veterans.

As a soldier, you can be killed in a war, whether you agree with it or not. You can be killed in a war we win just as easily as you can in a war we lose.

Military service is a specifically hazardous career for women. A Cornell University study shows that 90 percent of all women in the military have experienced sexual harassment. Thirty percent report being sexually assaulted.

Ironically, many people join the military to help defend America and our Constitution. It's ironic because after you enlist, you waive all your civil rights. Instead, you become controlled

by the uniform code of military justice. If you are a lower rank than your adversary in court, the higher ranked G.I. will win.

The military lies all the time—especially about harm carried out against our own G.I.s. In the 1950s, the army exposed soldiers to dangerous levels of radiation with enormous rates of cancer killing off our own troops, while the government denied any responsibility. It happened again in Gulf War I. There, troops got ill with Gulf War Syndrome, a disease that has killed over 10,000 of our own troops since the war's end. Remember that, yes, the military lies. Ask a couple of vets if they think recruiters lie and listen closely.

The lies, the scandals, the cronyism and the horrors of war are more than enough evidence to show that for most people, the military is a poor choice. If you are avoiding college because you think that you can't handle it financially, at least call up one college's financial aid office to receive advice on how to make college possible. Remember that only 15 percent of all vets get college degrees after the service.

If you are already enlisted in the delayed enlistment program, don't despair. There are ways that you can get out of it that cost little or no money. The best web-site to learn the truth about how to get out of a delayed enlistment program is www.objector.org.

Objector.org, has detailed info on how to register as a conscientious objector (C.O.). A conscientious objector is someone who is morally, ethically, or spiritually opposed to war, and the military cannot send them to war. Everyone 18-26 years old, should probably get started on their C.O. status right away, because a draft seems like it's right around the corner.

Also check out www.veteransforpeace.org, and www.mfso.org, for honest information, with no BS, about life in the military.

Think seriously about some career other than the military. After all, We REALLY need you to fight the military industrial complex!

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RED PILL NEED'S YOUR HELP!

We need volunteers. We need your events. We need writers. And most importantly we need cash for a new copy machine. You can get a hold of us at gjredpill@hotmail.com, or donate through Pay-Pal at our website www.gjredpill.org. We couldn't do all this without you.

Thanks.

I'M A VETERAN FROM A WAR THAT NEVER TOOK PLACE

What do you think of when you think of the Coast Guard? Search and rescue? Oil spills? Smugglers? Think of all of this but add in littoral warfare. Littoral warfare, or as we preferred to call ourselves, "puddle pirates" is the main reason for Coast Guard vessels. Littoral means coastal or shallow water. Think Apocalypse Now, or the Tigris and the Euphrates. Go to www.piersystem.com/go/da/651/153096 and see if this looks like a friendly vessel.

In boot camp, I qualified on the .45 caliber pistol, the M-16, the 40 mm grenade launcher, and the .50 caliber machine gun. I trained on the three inch gun when I got to my first duty station, the 210 foot coast guard cutter, Dependable. Throw in a flight deck for an HH-52 helicopter and you're good to go for combat.

We spent a lot of time on what was called surlepat, surface law enforcement patrol—mostly off the coast of Honduras, but who really knew. Using our helicopter and our 22 foot motor surf boats, we did some real hot insertions and extractions. What were we hauling? Don't ask me or the crew because we were never told.

"PARADE" FROM FIRST PAGE

hungry, live day to day begging for scraps on the streets, all the while running from the demons that follow them from the war.

Other vets try desperately to placate their own personal hells, to mask their horrible disfigurement and pain by medicating through substance abuse and violence. Having been turned away from the very hospitals that bear their name, they sit in wheelchairs, with missing limbs, with jade eyes, inebriated in front of TVs, just to forget, just to make it through the day.

Some veterans will not even be alive to see the big Veterans Day parade, because for some toiled and tired vets, suicide will be the only solution to the all-consuming problem that is their life.

For some of us, Veterans Day is much more than a day off from work, or an all-day shopping spree, or a good excuse to fire up the barbecue grill. It is an unpleasant fact. It is hiding from the ghosts of our pasts. It is living every day with an unbearable guilt. It is trying to live and maintain in a society that you feel deep in your gut is inherently sick and deranged.

It is living without hope.

As Americans, we only pretend to celebrate the honor of veterans on Veterans Day. Maybe because deep down in our national psyche, we all know that the crimes our politicians commit against helpless people in foreign countries—enforced through the strength of our troops—is ultimately dishonorable, immoral, disgusting, and wrong.

But if we truly believed in recognizing the services of our veterans, we as a people would honor our vets by removing them from

We were given standard operating orders, basically if it moved in the Mangrove swamps, we opened fire.

On one mission we bailed out some SEALs from where they were pinned down. Since it was covert, our medals were not "unit commendation medals." Here's a hint, lots of G.I.s have medals for secret missions they went on, part of mine was attempting to breathe life through a set of bloody, lifeless lips, in the dark, under fire.

I worked as a medic and was exposed to a fair amount of blood. Believe it or not, we never wore gloves; took too long we were told. As a result, I have 100% disability for catching Hepatitis C sometime in 1978 or '79. bad trade.

My commander in chief? Jimmy Carter. He is now seen as man of truth and peace, but I knew him when he employed violent and secretive operations in another country's back yard.

The Coast Guard got a whopping pay increase when it merged with the Department of Homeland Security. I don't know what the future will bring for the Coast Guard, but I know what it brought my liver. I'm a disabled veteran of a war that never "took place." •

the immorality of a criminal war and demand an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of American troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

If we honestly revered the sacrifices of our soldiers returning home, we as a people would hold our government responsible for guaranteeing that every veteran in this country is afforded with free health and education services to ensure each vet has a fair opportunity to start her/his new civilian life.

In a perfect world, this is how we would honor our veterans in America. Furthermore, it would not be solely an annual event. The duty of a compassionate citizenry forcing governments to take care of its veterans would be a daily function in our lives...in a perfect world.

The reality is that America has a long history of sending young adults to the collective suicide of war, only to neglect and sweep under the rug those veterans who return home. From the stolen pensions of veterans in the Revolutionary War, to President Hoover's military assault on the "Bonus Army" of World War I veterans in 1932, to soldiers' Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam to Depleted Uranium exposure to Gulf War and Iraq War vets, each generation has its ugly war story to tell.

When one considers this history of negligence and insensitivity, it's no wonder that most veterans do not think highly of Veterans Day. Much like Black History Month is to the Civil Rights struggle, or that Columbus Day is to the Native Americans, Veterans Day is the ultimate irony for the war veteran: a

"PARADE" ON FIFTH PAGE

Saturday, November 18th • 9am-3pm

Grand Valley Peace and Justice is sponsoring the Alternative Christmas Fair. "You'll solve your gift-giving problems and help build a better world."

St. Joseph Parish Hall, 3rd and White, Grand Junction

Friday, November 23rd • ALL DAY

International Buy Nothing Day

To show that you're sick of rat-race consumerism by not buying anything on the busiest shopping day of the year.

www.buynothingday.org

WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME

Iraqi war veterans have the highest rate of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) in the country. Forty nine percent of members of the National Guard experience psychological disorders, and 39 percent of Soldiers experience PTSD. In many cases, the US military does little or nothing to stop, treat, or prevent PTSD from swarming the armed forces of the United States.

PTSD occurs after experiencing a traumatizing event, like a natural disaster or, more commonly, combat or military exposure. Symptoms include depression, reliving the event, numbness of emotion, elevation in emotion, and avoiding things that remind one of the events. Not commonly placed on this list is suicide, although it is a definite symptom. Social problems, like dysfunctional relationships, arise. A whole life change occurs.

Mesa State College student, Ali Vaisvil described to the TRP what it was like for her husband after returning from Iraq. He was deployed for a year with the Air Force and returned November 2006. She said he was depressed, suicidal and even had flashbacks (occasionally) after he returned. These are obvious signs of PTSD. "The Air Force, you know, typical military, didn't do shit," said Vaisvil. He went to a private psychiatrist and Vaisvil's family doctor due to lack of help from the VA. She said the military didn't try to help him until after he was given an official diagnosis from the private doctors. When asked if she could change anything about his experience she said, "That he didn't have to go."

The Defense Department makes little effort to determine whether returning troops need mental health help. Their idea of accurate screenings is a questionnaire regarding issues like battle experiences. These questionnaires are probably not filled out truthfully in fear of being kept on base longer or in fear of retribution for reporting mental health problems. The troops fear they would be ridiculed or that their careers would be damaged. The Defense Department's Task Force on Mental Health claimed in May 2007 a fundamental shift in treatment to, prevention and screening. No significant changes have been noted thus far.



A veteran getting arrested at the Sept. 15th Die-in at the Capitol. Vets led much of the demonstrations.

The military's hike in PTSD cases (about 1/3 of all in the military, according to the Defense Department's Task Force on Mental Health) is a result of many things, one of which is repeated deployments due to the recent surge and extended U.S. presence in Iraq. According to an investigation by the Government Accountability Office, only 22 percent of returning troops from Iraq and Afghanistan showing signs of PTSD were referred to receive mental health evaluation.

The average wait time for a pending claim at the VA is 127 days. Some 83,000 claims have been pending for more than 6 months out of a total of 378,000 claims since 2003.

Maybe the problem with lack of medical care and attention lies within the bureaucracy. Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson could write a better political bumper sticker than a plan to quicken the process of PTSD claims in VA hospitals. Nicholson served as the chair of the RNC through the 2000 election and had had no experience in the medical field or administration thereof.

Amy Goodman of "Democracy Now!" points out a story of a young vet, U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Jeffrey Lucey. While in Iraq in June 2003, Lucey was ordered to execute two Iraqi POWs. When he returned home, depression enveloped him and he secluded himself to his room, drinking heavily. In May 2004, the Lucey family had him involuntarily committed to the VA. They released him after three days. Again, on June 5, 2004, the family brought Lucey back to the VA, where they concluded that he wasn't saying enough to be involuntarily committed. During that visit, Jeffrey talked about three ways to kill himself: he said he would OD, hang himself, or suffocate himself, according to staff notes. A psychiatrist was never called to evaluate him on this visit. Two weeks later, Jeffrey hung himself in the basement, a result of PTSD. Three years later, his parents have filed suit.

The best solution to this constant VA crisis is to solicit for help until it is given. For information on how to get help from the VA, call the VA Health Benefits Service Center toll free at 1-877-222-VETS.

AMERICA'S COLD WAR GUINEA PIGS: THE ATOMIC VETERANS

Atomic Veterans are forgotten victims of the Cold War. From July 16, 1945 to November 23, 1992, the U.S. military carried out 1,054 nuclear tests. The National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV) estimates that one million U.S. soldiers were exposed during these tests. During many of these tests, soldiers performed maneuvers close to or at ground zero without protective gear.

The Red Pill was able to speak with R.J. Ritter, a Korean War Veteran who served as a Non-commissioned Officer (N.C.O) in the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard. During his years of service, Ritter participated in two nuclear tests. The first was code named Operation Wig-Wam, which took place off the coast of California on May 14, 1955. Ritter's ship was towing a 30 kiloton antisubmarine nuclear bomb. "When it went off, there was a one and a half mile wide radioactive dead zone that drifted for 41 days," Ritter said. Ritter also participated in Operation Redwing, which was a series of 17 nuclear blasts in the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific. "I'm very fortunate that I haven't exhibited any radiogenic illnesses," Ritter said.

Ritter, who is the head of the NAAV, said that 700,000 Atomic Veterans are recognized by the U.S. Congress. Veterans recognized by Congress are limited to those soldiers that participated in atmospheric and underwater nuclear tests between 1945-1962, those vets part of the occupational forces in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and those veterans who were POWs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima when the bombs were dropped.

NAAV does not limit itself to those vets formally recognized by the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, and is an advocate for veterans from the first Gulf War and the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq that have been exposed to depleted uranium. "We have interest in helping those folks as well," Ritter said.

Check out www.naav.com, and www.vbdr.org for more info.



"PARADE" FROM THIRD PAGE

government-sanctioned holiday for the purposes of whitewashing the patterns of social inequality throughout the years of America's history.

But perhaps I shouldn't be so pessimistic about yet another great American spectacle. People are always telling me I have the stereotypical "Angry War Vet" complex brought home from Iraq. Maybe it is time I take my doctor's advice, pop a VA prescribed Paxil, and "loosen up" a little bit. After all, Veterans Day does serve a higher, nobler purpose. Not only does it encourage blind jingoism and unquestioned

obedience to the established order set forth by our ruling elite's greed-driven capitalist regime, it also gives millions of Americans a nice and cozy "Patriotic" reason to go shopping this weekend.

Indeed, reverence through consumption, our good ol' American pastime. And on this fine "Veterans Day-Weekend-Blow-Out-Sale-Extravaganza", as long as the American consumer is getting a whopping 15% off on all furniture purchases at IKEA or 0% APR financing for 6 months on their brand new Ford monster truck, at least I know I did my part in fighting for the American Cause. For God, Country, and the Almighty Dollar.

NEXT SUMMER-DEMOCRATIC and REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

You'd better mark it on your calendars now, and request the time off of work, because at the end of next summer, large protests are going to rock Denver and Minneapolis. The DNC is going to be in Denver from Aug. 25-28th and the RNC is going to be in the Twin Cities from September 1st-4th. Check out www.recreate68.org and www.ncwelcomingcommittee.org for more info and updates.

See you in the streets.

Wednesday, November 28th • 10am-2pm

Campus AVOR will be tabling in the MSC College Center to raise awareness and promote anti-war presidential candidates for the upcoming 2008 presidential election.

Volunteers needed: 245-3720

Wednesday, December 5th

Last day to register with a party to participate in the February 5th presidential caucuses.