

"OBOMBA" FROM PAGE ONE

to complete an expansion of the Bagram prison. The conditions at Bagram prison have been described as worse than those at Guantanamo on a bad day. This facility has been poorly covered in the mainstream media compared to Gitmo, even though two Afghans were beaten to death by US Army interrogators in December of 2002. Additionally, Obama has said he supports the Bush policy of labeling detainees as 'enemy combatants' who are alleged members of terrorist organizations that don't quite fit under the category of prisoner of war, continuing the Bush-era policy of denying people the right of habeas corpus.

Abu Ghraib, a prison facility outside of Baghdad, is rich in history of torture, under Saddam's rule, and under US occupation. Photos were released in 2004 revealing the inhumane treatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib. The prison was closed in 2006, but quietly reopened under another name - the Baghdad Central Prison - in February 2009. Photos were released of the newly renovated prison, including a photo of the dining hall with flower arrangements neatly placed at the center of each table. I'm sure it's just rosy in there.

These symbolic changes are only a distraction from the pro-war and pro-torture policies of our new president and the perpetual war machine that has continued unchecked since this country's inception, regardless of party. •

"BORDER" FROM PAGE THREE

sleeps at night - how he is kept awake by the shooting, and the fear of it. Tubi's mother, whose house is even closer to the Green Line, hasn't stayed in her house since the start of the War. It seems she has no intention of returning any time soon.

Salim shows us the gunshot holes in his house, and explains that they never sleep with only one wall between them and the Green Line. The bullets used can penetrate through walls, so the family always make sure they have at least two walls between them and Israel when they sleep.

"The cease-fire is for the cities - the centre of the cities", he cries. "Not for the people near the borders!" •

BE THE MEDIA!

State of Disunion

NUMBER OF US SOLDIERS that died in Afghanistan in 2001: 12	NUMBER OF US SOLDIERS that died in Afghanistan in 2008: 155
NUMBER OF PRISONERS being held at Bagram Prison in Afghanistan 600+	NUMBER OF DOLLARS farmers could get fined for not complying with the requirements of H.R. 875: 1,000,000
NUMBER OF TIMES Obama has ordered bombing strikes on Pakistan: 5	NUMBER OF PEOPLE that died as a result of Obama's airstrikes in Pakistan: 100+
NUMBER OF SOLDIERS that Obama will leave in Iraq: 50,000	NUMBER OF SOLDIERS that are being deployed to Afghanistan, in addition to the 38,000 that are already there: 27,000
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE in Grand Junction: 1000-1500	NUMBER OF ZINES Grand Junction Alternative Media publishes: 8

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

CALL TO ACTION

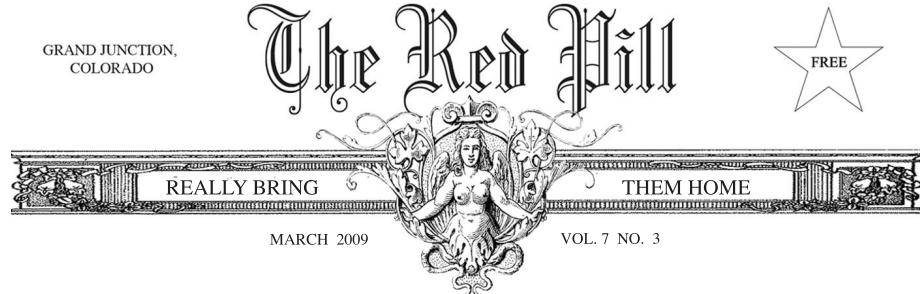
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GRAND JUNCTION,
COLORADO

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE



REALLY BRING THEM HOME

MARCH 2009

VOL. 7 NO. 3

OBAMA: THE SYMBOLIC "ANTI-WAR" PRESIDENT

The day that Obama announced his appointment of Robert Gates, the former director of the CIA, to Secretary of Defense, all the hopes of a pro-peace president went down the drain. Obama is not an anti-war president (big surprise for any politician, eh?). The same dude who has been in charge of US military for the past two years will continue his reign. Oh boy, here we go.

Here is an excerpt from the press conference where Obama named Gates, Clinton and others to his cabinet: **Dean** (reporter): Do you still intend to withdraw all US forces from Iraq in 16 months after inauguration? Did you discuss the possibility of that with secretary Gates before selecting him?

Obama: Well, keep in mind what I said during the campaign, Dean, and you were there, uh, most of the time, uh. I said that I would remove our combat troops from Iraq in 16 months with the understanding that it might be necessary, likely to be necessary to maintain a residual force...

A "residual force" has remained in North Korea for nearly 64 years. John McCain's plan of occupation of Iraq for the next 100 years doesn't seem so far off from Obama's plan for Iraq. Up to 50,000 troops will be left in Iraq to maintain a steady "period of transition." A symbolic withdraw from a symbolic president.

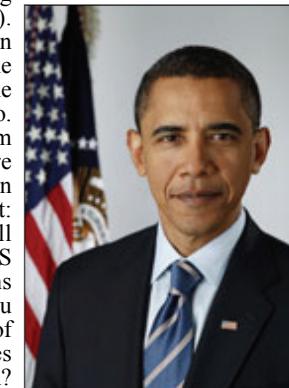
Since Obama took office in January, five drone attacks in Pakistan have killed over 100 people—civilians and militants alike. The CIA-engineered airstrike campaign in Pakistan began under the Bush

administration, and seems to be escalating under the Obama administration. The US officially denies any unmanned attacks on Pakistan since Obama took office.

And Afghanistan? Another 17,000 troops have been deployed to Afghanistan to add to the 38,000 already on the ground, and they plan on sending at least another 10,000 on top of the 17,000. We're going to have to send more and more troops and resources to Afghanistan in the future, because our allies want out. Canada plans to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan has cancelled a lease for a US military base, that served as a main resupply point for the occupation of Afghanistan. NATO doesn't want to send more troops either.

In their campaign white papers, Obama and Biden supported an increase in the size of the military, preserving global reach in the air (including unmanned vehicles and electronic warfare capabilities), maintaining power projection at sea, and the controversial national missile defense system.

Although the new administration has promised to close Guantanamo Bay, the act is nothing more than a symbolic gesture. There are only 245 detainees still in Guantanamo. In 2004, the Supreme Court said that Gitmo detainees had the right to challenge their detention in a court of law. As a result the population at Bagram Prison at the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan increased to about 600 prisoners today. And the military is about



"OBOMBA" ON PAGE EIGHT

AMERICAN CITIZEN CRITICALLY INJURED AFTER BEING SHOT IN THE HEAD BY ISREALI FORCES IN NI'LIN

Courtesy of the International Solidarity Movement

An American citizen has been critically injured in the village of Ni'liln after Israeli forces shot him in the head with a tear-gas canister.

Tristan Anderson from California USA,

37 years old, has been taken to Israeli hospital Tel Hashomer, near Tel Aviv. Anderson is unconscious and has been bleeding heavily from the nose and mouth. He sustained a large hole in his forehead where he was struck by the canister. He is currently being operated on.

"Tristan was shot by the new tear-gas canisters that can be shot up to 500m. I ran over as I saw someone had been shot, while the Israeli forces continued to fire tear-gas at us. When an ambulance came, the Israeli soldiers refused to allow the ambulance through the checkpoint just outside the village. After 5 minutes of arguing with the soldiers, the ambulance passed." - Teah Lunqvist (Sweden) - International Solidarity Movement

The Israeli army began using a high velocity tear gas canister in December 2008. The black canister, labeled in Hebrew as "40mm bullet special/long range," can shoot over 400 meters. The gas canister does not make a noise when fired or emit a smoke tail. A combination of the canister's high velocity and silence is extremely dangerous and has caused numerous injuries, including a Palestinian male whose leg was broken in January 2009.

Tristan Anderson was shot as Israeli forces attacked a demonstration against the construction of the annexation wall through the village of Ni'liln's land. Another resident from Ni'liln was shot in the leg with live ammunition.

Four Ni'liln residents have been killed during demonstrations against the confiscation of their land.

Ahmed Mousa (10) was shot in the forehead with live ammunition on 29th July 2008. The following day, Yousef Amira (17) was shot twice with rubber-coated steel bullets, leaving him brain dead. He died a week later on 4 August 2008. Arafat Rateb Khawaje

(22), was the third Ni'liln resident to be killed by Israeli forces. He was shot in the back with live ammunition on 28 December 2008. That same day, Mohammed Khawaje (20), was shot in the head with live ammunition, leaving him brain dead. He died three days later in a Ramallah hospital. Residents in the village of Ni'liln have been demonstrating against the construction of the Apartheid Wall, deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004. Ni'liln will lose approximately 2500 dunums of agricultural land when the construction of the Wall is completed. Ni'liln was 57,000 dunums in 1948, reduced to 33,000 dunums in 1967, currently is 10,000 dunums and will be 7,500 dunums after the construction of the Wall.

Orly Levi, a spokeswoman at the Tel Hashomer hospital, tells Ha'aretz:

"He's in critical condition, anesthetized and on a ventilator and undergoing imaging tests. She described Anderson's condition as life-threatening."

Israeli activist Jonathan Pollack told Ynet: "...the firing incident took place inside the village and not next to the fence. There were clashes in the earlier hours, but he wasn't part of them. He didn't throw stones and wasn't standing next to the stone throwers.

There was really no reason to fire at them. The Dutch girl standing next to him was not hurt. It only injured him, like a bullet."

13 March: Anarchists Against the Wall reports on Tristan's condition(volunteers with AWALLS were present when Tristan was injured and have been at the hospital to oversee his treatment):

"The impact of the projectile caused numerous condensed fractures to Anderson's forehead and right eye socket. During the operation part of his right frontal lobe had to be removed, as it was penetrated by bone fragments. A brain fluid leakage was sealed using a tendon from his thigh, and both his right eye and skin suffered extensive damage. The long term scope of all of Tristan's injuries is yet unknown."



LOCAL AUTHOR PUBLISHES STUDY OF AREA HOMELESS

Grand Junction Alternative Media, long time publishers of The Red Pill, Grand Junction's only alternative newspaper, is proud to announce the publication of the short local ethnography: Freedom & Oppression: Homelessness and the Grand Valley by Jacob Richards.

Richards, a local activist and writer, spent over a year doing anthropological fieldwork, interviews, participant observation, and research. "It started as a semester long project for an Ethnographic Methods class, and later as an independent study. But the book also draws on my experience working with the homeless prior to and after my formal study," said Richards. "I wanted this study to move beyond statistics and present a more humanistic portrayal of the homeless. I try to let my sources tell much of the story."

Freedom & Oppression is a compassionate inquiry into the lives of Grand Junction's homeless community. At times academic, and at others a from-the-horse's-mouth style ethnography, where the informants' own words speak for themselves.

Richards' style is able to move freely from creatively setting a scene at a homeless camp or reconstructing a conversation, to discussing trends of gentrification and the criminalization of homelessness.

"Police Harassment of the homeless population in Grand Junction is an ongoing problem," Richards said. His ethnography documents police harassment from brutality to indifference when homeless persons are the victims of crime. "It's probably the most explosive part of this study," said Richards.

Freedom and Oppression avoids academic jargon and is accessible to the layman while remaining interesting to the trained anthropologist.

Richards, through his sources, also looks at issues of: getting out of homelessness, gentrification, economic exploitation, causes of homelessness, and life in the camps.

Copies of Freedom and Oppression, are for sale for \$5 at Confluence Books 600 White Ave. Suite 302, at www.etsy.com/ConfluenceBooks, and at www.gjredpill.org.

WHAT'S A ZINE?

Zines (pronounced like magazine minus the *mag*) are alternative homemade publications that are often photocopied. Zines have small print runs and are often labors of love to those who publish them. Some zines are underground comix, some are DIY (Do-It-Yourself) guides, some are 'perzines' or published journals, some are music zines (often punk rock), and others still are radically political, some are academic essays, and much more.

Zines are a relatively new thing to Grand Junction, and all of Western Colorado. On November 7th, Confluence Books Radical Bookstore and Community Center opened its doors in White Hall Village and became the only retailer of zines in all of Western Colorado.

"We specialize in books, zines and other publications that are not carried by chain book stores," said Connie Murillo, co-owner of Confluence Books, "there is such a wide spectrum of ideas and publications that are simply unavailable through the corporate stores."

Grand Junction Alternative Media (GJAM), the larger group that runs Confluence Books, also publishes a number of their own zines, including "The Red Pill" which is a free alternative newszine that has been published in the Grand Valley for over five years.

"We have "Freedom and Oppression: Homelessness and the Grand Valley" an anthropological ethnography of the homeless community here in Grand Junction. We also publish "The Peep Show," which is a serial alternative parenting zine. We have three poetry zines by local poet Quinten Collier, as well as the Stray Cat, an local art/music zine co-produced with the Black Cat Collective. We have the complete Volume three of The Red Pill, and we also have "The CIA's Nicaraguan Cartoon Sabotage Manual: Revised for Smashing the State," said co-owner Jacob Richards. "Not to mention our first DVD of short films produced by GJAM and our up coming project—a journal of undergraduate ethnography."

"It's about free speech and free expression. The world of independent publishing and zines is so much more varied and vibrant than the mainstream press. Once you start consuming alternative media you'll wonder how you ever lived life with the blinders of mass media on," said Richards.

Confluence Books is open 10am-6pm on Sunday, 10am-8pm Monday-Thursday, and 10am-10pm on Friday and Saturday. They can be reached at 245-4442, and are located in White Hall Village 600 White Ave Suite #302.

SUPPORT LOCAL MEDIA RED PILLS, CDS, ZINES, PATCHES, UNDERGROUND COMICS, BOOKS USED AND NEW, FAIR TRADE COFFEE AND TEAS, T-SHIRTS, MAGAZINES, DVDS, AND MORE.

CONFLUENCE BOOKS

600 WHITE AVE. SUITE 302
GRAND JUNCTION

ACTIVIST CALENDAR

Monday, April 6th • 6PM

Solidarity Not Charity has its monthly meeting the first Monday of every month to discuss the numerous projects going on throughout the community.
Confluence Books 600 White Ave Suite 302

Wednesday, March 1st • 5PM

Drinking Liberally gets together to drink and talk politics the first Wednesday of the month.
Kannah Creek Brewery, Grand Junction

Friday, March 20th • 5PM

Critical Mass. Bring your bike or skate for a community ride. We are traffic.
Lincoln Park, Grand Junction

Friday, March 20th • 7PM

Movie showing: Victor/Victoria at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Grand Valley
1022 Grand Ave. GJ

Saturday, March 28 • 1-2:30PM

Alternative Parenting Series #3: Homebirth: Come Listen to two local homebirth midwives about your birthing alternatives. Future Parenting Events: Home Schooling, Breast Feeding, Baby Wearing, Natural Parenting/ Attachment Parenting, and more!
600 White Ave., Suite 302, Grand Junction, CO

THE WAR ON SMALL FARMERS

Chere is a bill working its way through congress right now that would literally kill local organic farmers, farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture, through a death of a thousand cuts. H.R. 875 is a corporate agriculture wet dream that benefits massive factory farms, while straddling small farmers with a bureaucratic nightmare. The bill was sponsored by Californian Democrat Rosa DeLauro whose husband Stanley Greenburg works for Monsanto, the bill is also co-sponsored by Colorado Democrat Diana DeGette.

The problem with the bill is that it is very broad and unclear what would be considered a food production facility—your home garden plot could fall under the jurisdiction of the new federal agency that the bill creates. If you fail to properly fill out all of the forms and paper work that H.R 875 requires they can fine you up to a million dollars for each infraction.

If this monstrous bill passes we can all say good by to local nutritious food, farmers markets, CSAs, and roadside produce stands. •

LIFE IN THE BORDER ZONES

Courtesy of the International Solidarity Movement

Jf you stay here for five minutes, you will hear gunfire", explain locals in Wadi Salqa. "They shoot at anything moving in the village". Palestinian radio stations have reported that people living in Wadi Salqa are scared to death. Arriving in the village, this seems no overstatement. "If you move beyond the end of this road, you will be shot", explains Mohammad Abu Magaseeb, pointing to the end of the road we have just arrived on.

He takes us into his uncle's house, situated just 1km from the Green Line - the electrified fence and military bases clear from the three-storey home. It's a beautiful home, only partly finished, but it's already been bombed.. Tank shells were fired through the second storey during the war. They take us into the newly-furbished bathroom - the bathtub full of rubble and the southern wall missing.

Somehow the damaged mural of a waterfall on the tiling seems particularly tragic. No one is sure exactly when this shelling happened, because, like most other villages near the border with Israel, the entire village evacuated as soon as the War on Gaza started - drawing back into villages closer to the centre of the strip.

Mohammad's uncle is lucky, however. Whilst his home is badly damaged, more than 30 houses in the village of 6000 people were demolished during the war, leaving 120 families (approximately 10% of the population) homeless. The rest of the 70 houses in the southern border area were damaged or partially destroyed. Mohammad and the neighbours who accompany us are clearly nervous to be in the house, especially to be near the windows, for fear of getting shot.

We move up to the rooftop, from where we can see the Green Line on one side, and the Mediterranean on the other. At this point, halfway between Gaza city and Rafah, the Gaza Strip is just 5 kilometres wide. "We are in a small cage", one neighbour notes. They point out the destroyed houses in the south of the village, as well as a pipe factory that was attacked with tanks and Apache helicopters. In that neighbourhood, the only building standing is the village water reservoir.

Whilst being in the house itself is considered dangerous, nowhere in the village is really thought to be safe. Certain types of behaviour, though, seem to be more dangerous than others. "If any guy carries just a pipe in the village, they shoot at him", Mohammad advises. "They can see everything. They

have cameras and are filming everything that happens in the village. When guys have been arrested, they have been shown the footage that the soldiers have". This intense level of surveillance takes place not just in Wadi Salqa, but throughout the villages close to the border. Beit Hannoun in the extreme north of the Strip, for example, has white, camera carrying, fish-shaped balloons floating above the border, looking for all the world like children's helium balloons, filming everything.

The other sure-fire way of getting shot at in Wadi Salqa is to be within 1km of the electric fence, regardless of your age or what you might be doing there. On 26th January, Israeli forces shot a 13 year old boy who was working on farmland approximately 500m from the Green Line - an area that was previously considered safe. Yousef Al Akhrasi was shot in the back whilst he was working harvesting peas to help earn some money for his family, villagers advise.

Whilst we are standing on the roof, a tank appears on the dirt-road that runs behind the electric fence, and we are quickly ushered downstairs.

The extension of the "no-go" area of the village, from 500m to 1km from the Green Line, has been replicated throughout the Gaza Strip. In almost every border village, farmers are unable to enter their lands; families are unable to reach their (mostly destroyed) houses. Not only have their houses been destroyed, they now have no hope of rebuilding them. In Wadi Salqa, where the majority of the villagers are farmers, approximately 4000 dunums (1000 acres) of land have been effectively confiscated - hugely significant in the sixth most densely populated region in the world.

Wadi Salqa is a village living with precarity in the extreme. Whilst villagers will enter the town during the day, since the cease-fire approximately half are sleeping in other villages - with friends; relatives; friends of friends.

Visiting another house in the village, Salim's house, gunfire starts. People shuffle to make sure the house is between them and the Green Line. His four year old daughter, Sara, shows us the cast on her leg - she broke it when she fell down, running from gunfire. His neighbour, Tubi, explains how he no longer

POLITICIAN: FOR BILL HICKEY

Too damned old & leonine?
No, bolder & wiser,
amigomeister.

Hold bedrock values
in spite of the rainbows I wear.
Share citizens' trust.

Truth is, this job makes you
change your mind
as often as teens change clothes.

Learn from whatever
you bump up against & can't move.
Yes I sometimes roar.

Get passionate
about the People's work.
Parse a certainty

for the lie it may be.
Sniff the wolves in sheepskin.
Know maybe

the best can be done
puts band-aids
on bleeding arteries.

Like Vincent St. John knew.
Like Harvey Milk Knew.
And yet, dared to do.

art goodtimes / union of street poets
vincent st. john local / colorado plateau/
aztlan kuksu brigade (ret.) / san francisco
23sep15008 [v10708]

BIRTHDAY BOMBS

BY COMFREY JACOBS

When i turned 10 bombs started to fall upon Baghdad
and the troops came marching in
as i blew out the candles atop my cake
bullets extinguished little boys and girls live's
helicopters gunned down old ladies and blew up mosques
as i watched the tv say it would be ok
that they were terrorists and had WMD's

so happy birthday to me
i really loved all those dead iraqi babies Mr.Bush sent me
the thought of them makes me wanna cry
the thought of them makes me wanna die

so today i stand here 6 years later
and bombs are still a fallin' and bullets still flyin'
and where's those WMDs and over 4000 boys and girls that died in this war
they're 6 feet under and i still watch
the insanity of babies blown to smithereens
and this cake tastes like ash in my mouth

so happy 16th birthday to me
i really loved all those dead babies Mr.Bush sent to me
FUCK THE REGIME "CHANGE"
imperial capitalism still exists
so happy birthday to me
i really love those dead babies Mr.Obama is sending me



KNOW ONE KNOWS HER

BY ANGEL

No one knows where she came from—
small towns just don't ask much
as long as you don't act like you belong.
That's why they're going to hide in—
you can lie all day long.

No one knows where she came from—
cities just don't ask much.
They only know her as the cart lady.
She may have been there forever
keeping her secrets, keeping shady.

No one knows how she got there—
neighbors just don't ask much.
The couple sure seemed nice enough
who ever would have known
any man could get that rough?

I don't know where they all come from,
and I don't need to ask.
The stories have the same, sad ring;
but I'm glad just one once made it out
that we may all take wing.



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