

Information Clearing House

NEWS YOU WON'T FIND ON CNN

 E-MAIL TO A FRIEND

Soldiers and Imperial Presidents

By Charles Sullivan

01/03/06 "Information Clearing House" -- -- The vast majority of those who serve in the United States military probably do so with the best of intentions and with honor. The belief that they are defending their country from foreign attackers and doing their patriotic duty as citizens is persistently reinforced. Military service is one of America's sacred cows; it is something that is rarely questioned and is surrounded by an invisible aura of nobility. No one, especially those who serve, wants to think of their time in the military as anything less than honorable and worthy of glorification.

But the trouble with sacred cows is that they tend to preclude critical examination and often escape the scrutiny of rational thinking and moral judgments. The premise of honorary military service thus goes virtually unchallenged, and often becomes the essence of dogma. But it seems to me that anyone contemplating a military career, especially since it may require killing other human beings and broad scale environmental destruction, should do so with open eyes and clear senses. They need to know who they are serving and whose interests they are protecting.

There is no escaping the fact that the U.S. is an imperialist nation conceived in genocide and racism that has continued through the ages, and worsened with the rise of modern technology and weaponry. With the advent of smart bombs came stupid and immoral leaders. Our litany of crimes against earth and humanity are concealed under layers of moral language, but the actual deeds belie the intent behind what is being done in our name. Ignorance, however, does not absolve anyone from culpability.

Anyone considering military service should deliberate upon the promises proffered by recruiters with extreme skepticism. Recruiters are trained to exalt war as the highest expression of patriotism and love of country; when, in fact, it is often the most debasing expression of our humanity that makes a shallow mockery of real service to god and country. The war resister and the conscientious objector may be

the true patriot.

I will make no effort to conceal my contempt for military recruiters who prey upon unsuspecting and inexperienced youth, especially the poor and economically disadvantaged. No parent should expose their children to these predators.

Recruiters are the moral equivalent of ambulance chasers, and they should be accorded no more respect than them, or the corporate con men who sell us goods that are detrimental to our health. These people are not concerned about the welfare of our children or the country; they are the representatives of imperialism, empire, and Plutocracy; and they are in search of cannon fodder.

Marketing militarism and war to society at large is no different than selling potato chips laced with trans-fats or carcinogenic chemicals, without regard to public health and its attendant social costs. It is all about managing public perception and providing widening profit margins to the corporations that are running the government. To hell with the public welfare and moral pronouncements, the plantation owner demands blood sacrifices as a show of loyalty and gratitude.

Thus it is not surprising that military sacrament is couched in the language of service to country, patriotism, and other noble causes that are as divorced from reality as the President is removed from sanity. The hypocrisy of righteous language contrasted to the actual deed is readily apparent to anyone who knows history. It is propaganda in the purest and most lethal form.

No doubt, the millions of men and women working in the armed forces today do so in the belief that they are heroically serving their country, as well as the cause of freedom and democracy. But in fact, they are serving the ruling clique, the Illuminati, and a few thousand wealthy investors, which represent less than 0.02% of the population. There must be no confusion that the financial interests of Halliburton, Bechtel, and the Bush dynasty are not the interests of America's citizens, especially those in the armed forces.

There is nothing noble or moral about invading defenseless sovereign nations and killing hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of innocent human beings. There is no morally justifiable way of making occupation and the outright theft of natural capital, such as oil, respectable or gallant. Genocide and theft are crimes against humanity, regardless how the corporate advertisers and public relations firms couch them; and the military is complicit in the commission of those crimes, whether they are ignorant of their role in them or not.

Consider, for example, the role the military has traditionally played in carrying out the plans of one imperial president after another. We have troops permanently stationed in 135 nations protecting America's corporate interests from democracy. Stifling democracy is quite different from nurturing it. Either most of our

presidents are pathological liars or they do not know the difference between nurturing and destroying. America's record of imperialism speaks for itself; and it is something that, when critically examined, is not easily mistaken for anything other than what it is.

Similarly, the bogus war on terror is a contradiction in terms, as historian Howard Zinn has so aptly pointed out. War is terrorism. Terrorism begets terrorism, and nothing but terrorism. War does not, and cannot ever lead to peace.

Aided by the CIA and death squads trained at the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia, the U.S. has crushed one fledgling democracy after another and replaced them with brutally oppressive right wing dictatorships friendly to American corporations and financial investors. Let us recall that Saddam Hussein was our man in Iraq until he converted from the dollar to the euro. From Iran to Chile there are hundreds, if not thousands, of cases that could be cited. For a more detailed analysis of these incursions, I refer readers to William Blum's provocative book, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions since World War Two*.

Let us assume that the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq is a fairly typical example of imperial policies that have been in vogue for well over a century. Like previous military actions, the invasion of Iraq was based upon a litany of lies set forth by the president and his cabinet, and carried forth in the corporate media. Iraq did not pose a threat to America or to the interests of the American people, and both the President and the commercial media knew it. Their intent was to deceive and to garner support for unconscionable acts of aggression and terror that are not in the people's interest.

Thus our armed forces are in Iraq under false pretenses that have nothing to do with spreading democracy or liberating oppressed people from tyranny. They are there for reasons that are as nefarious as they are treasonous. More than anyone, the men and women in the armed forces need to know why they are in Iraq and what is expected of them by the commander in chief.

The Plutocratic interests in Iraq may be summarized as the use of technologically advanced military forces and high tech weaponry that provide incalculable wealth to a privileged few. In this context, soldiers are nothing more than a means to an end; a Machiavellian way of socializing costs and privatizing profits—the ultimate in corporate welfare. Well over \$50 billion in profits have been hauled out of Iraq by 150 U.S. corporations, including the privatization of lucrative Iraqi oil. The profits and the death toll continue to rise simultaneously.

To date, some 700,000 Iraqi people have died in the war and occupation, and the violence is rapidly escalating. Most of the dead are civilians, many of them women and children. Over 3,000 American soldiers have died on the basis of lies and

thousands more are permanently maimed and traumatized—all to enhance the bottom line of America's wealthiest and most privileged elite.

It is not well publicized in the western mainstream media that fourteen permanent military bases are under construction in Iraq. The occupation is growing deep tap roots that are drawing the life, and the oil, out of the region, and consuming it in a firestorm of self-perpetuating violence.

President Bush and his kind, always eager to exploit a photo opportunity, frequently pay homage to the troops stationed around the world and in return garner their respect and admiration, neither of which is deserved. Placing soldiers in peril when there is no threat to America or to national security is an expression of utter contempt for them; it is a treasonous offense worthy of the most severe punishment short of execution.

Aside from photo ops, Bush and his wealthy brethren do not associate with enlisted men, whose petty lives transpire far below the lofty socio-economic status the elite were born into. Enlisted men and women are permitted to wipe the cow dung from the president's cowboy boots, but they are not allowed to wear them or travel in the same social circles as their owner.

The parasites that are running the country produce nothing, and have no more loyalty to the American people or to the Constitution than Frito-Lay or Halliburton. Their only allegiance is to accruing ever more wealth and power to themselves by all possible means, including war. You see, America is also an occupied country.

Neither the Iraqi nor American people's interest is served by the military industrial complex. War is never in the interest of those who are fooled into fighting them. War benefits those who instigate them and reap their financial reward from the safety of posh offices and marbled halls. War is the century's old tradition of peasants doing the bidding of kings and queens. That is whose interest is being served by our soldiers.

The truth is that soldiering is a particularly virulent manifestation of America's unending class war; the continued exploitation of the working class by the ruling elite—the rich preying upon the poor. Now the President and his accomplices in Congress intend to send even more soldiers to Iraq, further escalating the violence, and acting contrary to public sentiment. The lives of these men and women mean nothing to the emperor and his minions. They are only so much excrement to be wiped from their boots; the sacrificial lambs of empire crawling beneath their ignoble gaze.

Despite my severe criticism, it is not my intention to disparage either soldiers or military service. However, these men and women are being duped and exploited,

and someone has to tell them what they are killing and dying for. It will remain for each individual to weigh the evidence and decide whether it is right or wrong, courageous or foolish.

Sources:

The Bush Agenda: Invading the World One Economy at a Time, Regan Books, 2006

Information Clearinghouse, www.informationclearinghouse.info

Killing Hope, William Blum, Common Courage Press, 1995

Charles Sullivan is a photographer, free-lance writer and social activist residing in West Virginia. He welcomes your comments at csullivan@phreego.com.

Click on "comments" below to read or post comments

[Comments \(103\)](#)

Comment Guidelines

Be succinct, constructive and relevant to the story. We encourage engaging, diverse and meaningful commentary. Do not include personal information such as names, addresses, phone numbers and emails.

Comments falling outside our guidelines – those including personal attacks and profanity – are not permitted.

See our complete [Comment Policy](#) and [use this link to notify us](#) if you have concerns about a comment.

We'll promptly review and remove any inappropriate postings.

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, this material is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. Information Clearing House has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of this article nor is Information ClearingHouse endorsed or sponsored by the originator.)

 E-MAIL TO A FRIEND

Join our Daily News Headlines Email Digest

Fill out your email address
to receive our newsletter!

[Subscribe](#) [Unsubscribe](#)

[Powered by YourMailinglistProvider.com](#)

Hi
Please help support
**Information Clearing
House. Click here now**



amazon honor system
[Learn more.](#)

[HOME](#)

[COPYRIGHT NOTICE](#)