

SOUND OFF!



VOL. I, NO 14 THE NEWSLETTER OF VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.

“VETERANS STANDING UP FOR EACH OTHER”

10 FEBRUARY 2006

FIRST CALL - THEME OF THE ISSUE AND/OR CLIPS & QUOTES

We keep coming back to the concept of common sacrifice, Where is the sacrifice, except by those who serve directly in these wars? Today let's lead off with an article by Joe Galloway. Joe was with then LTC Hal Moore (LTG, USA Ret) at the battle for the Ia Drang Valley in 1965.

FAREWELL TO THE FALLEN

[Joe Galloway](#) | February 01, 2006

On a cold January day on this American base outside Tal Afar the soldiers of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment paused to say farewell to three of their own who died earlier in the month in a Blackhawk helicopter crash along with eight other Americans.

Those who could get away from duty for an hour filled an auditorium set up to provide a warriors' memorial service for the three: Maj. Douglas A. LaBouff, 36, a native of Baldwin Park, Calif.; Maj. Michael R. Martinez, 43, who grew up in Missouri; and 1st Lt. Joseph D. deMoors, 36, who was born in Montreal, Canada. LaBouff and deMoors were military intelligence officers. Martinez was a legal affairs officer.

It is good that on occasion we look upon the faces of some of the fallen and learn the names of their wives and children. They are not numbers but Americans whose deaths in a distant and dangerous land broke the hearts of three wives, nine children, mothers, friends and comrades. The soldiers' memorial service -- which happens far too often in Iraq -- is as close to a Viking funeral as you can get these days. On a stage flanked by the American flag and the battle flag of an old and distinguished regiment, which dates to the 1847 war with Mexico, there stood three bayoneted rifles -- each with a pair of desert boots in front, a helmet atop the rifle butt and a set of dog tags attached.

The program provided biographies of the three, and they were, of themselves, enough to make you weep.

Doug LaBouff, the program said, loved football and collecting stamps. He came to the Army as an ROTC graduate of Whittier College. He is survived by his wife, Karen, and two children, Cassidy, 7, and Douglas, 3, as well as his mother, Lela LaBouff.

Mike Martinez enlisted in the Army out of high school in 1980 and served as a paralegal and court reporter and rose to the rank of staff sergeant. He then went to college and graduated from the University of Missouri School of Law in 1998. He returned to the Army as an officer in the Judge Advocate Corps. He was a talented amateur photographer and a weightlifter. He is survived by his wife, Kelly, and four children -- Alex, 20, Kathryn, 19,

Colby, 18, and Ben, 15, as well as his mother, Beatrice Martinez of Albuquerque, N.M.

Joseph deMoors enlisted in the Army in 2001 and was a French cryptologic linguist. In 2004 he completed Officer Candidate School and was commissioned a second lieutenant. He is survived by his wife, Vendella, and three children, Moroni, Demetrius and Chastity.

After the national anthem was played and chaplain David Causey gave the opening prayer, the regimental commander, Col. H.R. McMaster, spoke movingly of the selflessness of soldiers who willingly go into harm's way trying to help a people escape tyranny and terrorists. The colonel is a passionate and emotional leader when it comes to his troopers.

Half a dozen brother and sister officers rose to speak of each of the three and how hard they worked and how little they complained and how proud they were to serve with the Brave Rifles.

A bagpiper played "Amazing Grace," and then there was a last roll call in which sergeants with booming voices repeatedly called the names of the three who will never again answer "Here, First Sergeant!" A firing party just outside fired three volleys and a bugler sounded a sweet and mournful Taps.

With that, two by two, the Cavalry commanders and their sergeants major or first sergeants came on stage. Each knelt on one knee, head lowered, and tightly gripped the dog tags on each of the rifles and said a personal goodbye to Doug LaBouff, Mike Martinez and Joseph deMoors.

There is pain and pride and pageantry when you say farewell to a fallen soldier, and rightly so. The unspoken line I kept hearing that day was the question Frederic March asks at the end of the movie "The Bridges at Toko Ri":

"Where do we get such men?"

To which I add my own question:

What are we doing as a people and a nation to deserve the service and sacrifice of such men and women? We are entering our fifth year in a declared war against global terror, but our leaders ask no sacrifice of the 99 percent of Americans who are protected by the 1 percent.

They and we leave the sacrifices to those like the three soldiers, and their widows, and their children.

AND THIS QUOTE FROM AN ARTICLE BY [REGGIE RIVERS](#), A FORMER DENVER BRONCO, IN THE DENVER POST

"When the troops come home, many of them say they are shocked by how little concern the public has for the war and the soldiers fighting it. ...

Despite our rhetoric about supporting the troops, our actions suggest a deep indifference. Maybe that's because the war doesn't cost us anything or provide any entertainment for us. We care about the NFL playoffs, because we have money riding on the games, or because we're passionate about our Broncos. But the hundreds of billions of dollars being spent in Iraq is borrowed money that's not coming directly out of our pockets, and the troops are mostly people who we don't know. "

AND FINALLY THIS COMMENT – APPROPRIATE FOR CONGRESS

"It is hard to imagine a more stupid or more dangerous way of making decisions than by putting those decisions in the hands of people who pay no price for being wrong." --

Thomas Sowell PhD.

Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, September 1980 - present

REVEILLE - WAKE-UP CALLS

WAKE UP! SPREAD THE NEWS!

MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN, FREE, AND VERY WORTHWHILE! GET YOUR FELLOW VETERANS, AND VETERANS' FAMILY MEMBERS TO JOIN VUFT! WE ARE BEGINNING TO BE HEARD, AND WE NEED YOU TO HELP US GET THE MESSAGE OUT.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE!

PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE AT [WWW.VUFT.ORG](http://www.vuft.org). CHECK OUT THE NEW "CANDIDATES" PAGE, WHICH IS OUR EFFORT TO LIST ALL VETERANS RUNNING FOR STATE-WIDE AND FEDERAL OFFICE IN THE U.S.; IT IS BEING UPDATED DAILY. PLEASE HELP US MAKE THIS AS COMPLETE A LIST AS POSSIBLE BY SENDING CANDIDATE INFO TO SANDY.COOK@VUFT.ORG.

If you would like to give some telephone time to those serving in Iran and Afghanistan, the VFW has a donation site at

https://secure2.convio.net/vfw/site/Donation/941705061?ACTION=SHOW_DONATION_OPTIONS&CAMPAIGN_ID=1381&=&=

ASSEMBLY - PROGRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION

New members are joining us every week. If you are getting this newsletter and have not yet joined, please go to our website at www.vuft.org/membership.html and join. Membership is free. The more our numbers grow, the greater voice we have with legislators. It shouldn't be that way, but it is, so join us and help us take the fight to Congress and the state legislatures.

OUTREACH: If you are interested in starting a chapter of **VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.** in your state, please contact the chair bhandy@vuft.org.

SUPPORTING THE CAUSE

If you wish to donate to our work you may now do so via PayPal or Visa on our website "Join" page. Every little bit helps. You can also buy our handsome pins using the same method.

MAIL CALL - LETTERS FROM MEMBERS AND OTHERS

Thursday, January 26, 2006 8:33 AM

Subject: VA help

There are lots of horror stories about government bureaucracy and inefficiency. This week I have experienced government at its best. I learned that VA has prescription plan for vets. My client is 91 years old, served from 1942 to 1946. I keep his jungle rot in check by cleaning and medicating his feet daily. His daughter is spending \$300 per month on prescriptions imported from Canada.

He could not remember the month he went in the army, nor his service number. At the VA service center, located in a lower backroom of SLO Veteran's Hall, the lady spent over an hour on the telephone, calling several agencies, and finally was able to get his service number. She was very careful to explain the forms she gave me so whatever information George could remember would be put down so they can process his claim.

I was able to on-line and request his official records which will be mailed after they receive his signature on the form I downloaded.

I am also signing up to see if the VA prescription plan will be good for me. I'll bet the [administration] never thought their pharmaceutical companies' welfare plan would cause such a rush to VA.

Lee Greenawalt – Morro Bay, CA – USA '54-'60

RECALL - FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATORS

IN KENTUCKY THEY ARE STEPPING UP

MILITARY FAMILY BENEFITS BILL SAILS THROUGH SENATE COMMITTEE

From LRC eNews: FRANKFORT — Kentucky National Guard members, military reservists and their families would gain a major boost in their support structure under legislation forwarded to the Senate floor today. The proposed law, dubbed the "Military Families Benefits Bill," tackles the needs facing the men and women who serve overseas as well as their spouses and children. [Senate Bill 2](#), which was approved unanimously by the Senate Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee, is a comprehensive measure that takes on families' needs in multiple components, ranging from financial assistance to protecting custodial rights.

"Many times the person headed off to war is the family's primary income earner, and their military pay is less than the civilian job they held," said Sen. Elizabeth Tori, R-Radcliff, who is sponsoring the bill along with Senate President David Williams, R-Burkesville. "We owe them for the sacrifices they and their family make in the name of freedom and security."

Among the more notable goals of the bill are:

- An assistance fund, supported by the state's General Fund as well as donations, to help particularly hard-pressed families pay for rent, utilities, groceries, and other basic needs, controlled by an oversight board.
- Another aspect of the assistance fund to help military families meet the co-pays required under their federal health care insurance.
- A separate loan program, run by the Kentucky Housing Corporation, to help families meet mortgage payments while a member is deployed.
- An expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program to include qualified military families during deployment.
- A death benefit of \$80,000 to the family of any Guardsman or Reservist killed while on active duty.
- Unemployment compensation eligibility for the spouse of an active duty member who is transferred to a state that offers the same out-of-state benefits. <More at: www.bipps.org/blog/archives/general_assembly/>

RETREAT – NEWS

EXPLANATION SOUGHT FOR PROBLEMS WITH VA HELP LINES

BY CHRIS ADAMS Knight Ridder Newspapers Jan. 26, 2006

WASHINGTON - Key members of Congress from both major political parties are demanding that the Department of Veterans Affairs explain why its call centers routinely provide veterans with bad information. In response to a Knight Ridder story in December, Democrats and Republicans from the House of Representatives and the Senate have asked the VA to account for the incorrect answers it gives people who call the department's help lines. According to the VA's own "mystery caller" program, Knight Ridder revealed that people who call the agency for help and advice are more likely to receive completely wrong answers than completely right ones. <More at: www.realcities.com/mld/kriwashington/news/special_packages/veterans/>

GAO AUDIT INDICATES VA BUDGET SHAM

February 2, 2006

"VA officials told us that the management efficiency savings assumed in these requests were savings goals used to reduce requests for a higher level of annual appropriations in order to fill the gap between the cost associated with VA's projected demand for health care services and the amount the President was willing to request." (GAO-06-35R issued February 1, 2006)

Washington, DC – While calling for the establishment of user fees and increased co-payments for veterans seeking health care, and altogether barring at least 260,000 veterans from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system, the Bush Administration falsely claimed billions of dollars in unsubstantiated "management efficiencies" and used its phantom claims to offset VA budget requests for health care.

A Government Accountability Office (GAO) report issued late yesterday found VA was unable to provide any support for the estimates in the President's past budget requests and that VA lacked a methodology for even making the savings assumptions. A direct result of this potential \$4 billion deception is that VA health care was inadequately funded, causing a decrease in veterans' access to the system, and a series of emergency supplemental budget requests in order to keep the system running. <More at: www.veterans.house.gov/democratic/press/109th/pdf/gao06-359r.pdf>

STUDY: ARMY STRETCHED TO BREAKING POINT

Jan 24, 2006 - Robert Burns

WASHINGTON (AP) - Stretched by frequent troop rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has become a "thin green line" that could snap unless relief comes soon, according to a study for the Pentagon.

Andrew Krepinevich, a retired Army officer who wrote the report under a Pentagon contract, concluded that the Army cannot sustain the pace of troop deployments to Iraq long enough to break the back of the insurgency. He also suggested that the Pentagon's decision, announced in December, to begin reducing the force in Iraq this year was driven in part by a realization that the Army was overextended. As evidence, Krepinevich points to the Army's 2005 recruiting slump - missing its recruiting goal for the first time since 1999 - and its decision to offer much bigger enlistment bonuses and other incentives.

<More at: <http://apnews.excite.com/article/20060124/D8FBAKS06.html>>

RUMSFELD: FORCES NOT OVEREXTENDED

Associated Press | January 25, 2006

WASHINGTON - Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on Wednesday disputed reports suggesting that the U.S. military is stretched thin and close to a snapping point from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, asserting "the force is not broken."

"This armed force is enormously capable," Rumsfeld told reporters at a Pentagon briefing. "In addition, it's battle-hardened. It's not a peacetime force that has been in barracks or garrisons."

<More at: www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,86316,00.html>

US ARMY FORCES 50,000 SOLDIERS INTO EXTENDED DUTY

29 Jan 2006 - Source: Reuters - Will Dunham

WASHINGTON, Jan 29 (Reuters) - The U.S. Army has forced about 50,000 soldiers to continue serving after their voluntary stints ended under a policy called "stop-loss," but while some dispute its fairness, court challenges have fallen flat. The policy applies to soldiers in units due to deploy for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The Army said stop-loss is vital to maintain units that are cohesive and ready to fight. But some experts said it shows how badly the Army is stretched and could further complicate efforts to attract new recruits.

"As the war in Iraq drags on, the Army is accumulating a collection of problems that cumulatively could call into question the viability of an all-volunteer force," said defense analyst Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute think tank.

"When a service has to repeatedly resort to compelling the retention of people who want to leave, you're edging away from the whole notion of volunteerism." <More at: www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N196487.htm>

SOLDIER SAYS HE WAS CHARGED FOR ARMOR

Allison Barker - NewsDay/AP - Feb 08, 2006

A former U.S. soldier injured in Iraq says he was forced to pay \$700 for a blood-soaked Kevlar vest that was destroyed after medics removed it to treat shrapnel wounds to his right arm. First Lt. William "Eddie" Rebrook IV, 25, of Charleston had to leave the Army because of his injuries. But before he could be discharged last week, he had to scrounge up cash from his buddies to pay for the body armor or face not being discharged for months -- all because a supply officer failed to document that the vest had been destroyed more than a year ago as a biohazard.

"I last saw the (body armor) when it was pulled off my bleeding body while I was being evacuated in a helicopter," Rebrook told The Charleston Gazette for Tuesday's edition. "They took it off me and burned it."

<More at: www.newsday.com/news/politics/wire/sns-ap-armor-bill,0,543030.story>

NOTE: Within 24 hours of being confronted by Sen. Byrd in Senate Armed Services hearings, Gen. Schoomaker, CSA, directed that Lt. Rebrook be reimbursed. It shouldn't take this level of involvement to get simple things done. Ed.

EDITORIAL – THE NEW QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW (QDR)

The new QDR is out and is available at www.defenselink.mil/pubs/qdr2001.pdf. To me, the first disturbing element of this QDR is its re-statement of the purpose of the Armed Forces as:

"The purpose of the U.S. Armed Forces is to protect and advance U.S. national interests..."p2, ¶ 1

This seems to have come a long way from “provide for the common defense” as stated in the Preamble to the Constitution. Even the second amendment speaks only of “the security of a free state”. It certainly goes beyond the “just causes of war” delineated in many places by the Founders in *The Federalist.Papers*, particularly numbers 3, 8, and 80.

It is likewise disturbing when compared with the very reasonable statement from the 1997 QDR:

“NATIONAL SECURITY IMPERATIVES

... we must preserve the sovereignty, political freedom, and independence of the United States with its values, institutions, and territory secure; protect the lives and personal safety of Americans at home and abroad; and provide for the well-being and prosperity of the nation and its people.”

In the end the new QDR pumps out platitudes and doesn't tell us with any precision where the future course of the Armed forces of the United States could or should go. As this issue's add-on on the last page there is a DoD-provided summary of the QDR points. Read it and see if you can make anything concrete out of it. I have been reading these documents for years and I don't see any meat on the bones.

TO THE COLOR - GATHERINGS

Date	Time	Where	What	Who	Purpose
4/20 – 23/06		Pleasanton/Camp Parks, CA	AUSA Spring Symposium	AUSA 6 th Region	Periodic Meeting
4/25-26/06		Washington DC	Veterans March	Varied Groups	VA funding

Let us know about meetings and gatherings and we will advertise them

TATTOO - CURRENT ISSUES

FIRST UNDER OUR ISSUES IS YET ANOTHER BROKEN PROMISE --

PROPOSED CHANGES TO TRICARE BENEFIT

The administration's proposed budget would introduce a three-tier fee structure for retirees under age 65. It includes higher annual enrollment fees for Prime, new annual enrollment fees for Standard and increased annual deductibles for Standard.

No fee changes are proposed for active-duty members or their dependents, or for retirees over 65 who participate in Tricare for Life. The enrollment fee and deductible changes for retirees under 65 and their families:

Fiscal year	TRICARE PRIME		TRICARE STANDARD	
	Annual enrollment fees		Annual enrollment fees	Annual deductible
<i>Retired junior enlisted (E-6 and below)</i>				
Current	\$230 / \$460		\$0	\$150 / \$300
FY 2007	\$275 / \$550		\$75 / \$150	\$175 / \$350
FY 2008	\$325 / \$650		\$140 / \$280	\$185 / \$370
FY 2009			Adjusted *	
<i>Retired senior enlisted (E-7 and above)</i>				
Current	\$230 / \$460		\$0	\$150 / \$300
FY 2007	\$350 / \$700		\$100 / \$200	\$175 / \$350
FY 2008	\$475 / \$950		\$200 / \$400	\$185 / \$370
FY 2009			Adjusted *	
<i>Retired officers</i>				
Current	\$230 / \$460		\$0	\$150 / \$300
FY 2007	\$500 / \$1,000		\$150 / \$300	\$225 / \$450
FY 2008	\$700 / \$1,400		\$280 / \$560	\$280 / \$560
FY 2009			Adjusted *	

* Prime and Standard enrollment fees would be adjusted each year, beginning in 2009, using the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan (FEHBP) rates of inflation.

REMARKABLE – THEY WON'T LET US ALL INTO THE FEHBP; THAT PROGRAM'S JUST FOR THE BIG FOLKS - LEGISLATORS AND BUREAUCRATS, THEY WILL, HOWEVER, LET US USE THE INFLATION RATES THAT ARE FOUND THERE. HOW KIND! Ed.

The administration's proposed budget calls for changes in pharmacy co-pays for all eligible beneficiaries, except active-duty members. Those affected would include over-65 Tricare for Life retirees. These changes include: no co-pays in military clinics or for mail-order generic medications, increases in retail pharmacy co-pays, and **100 percent co-pays** for a few non-covered medications. The co-payment plan:

	Generic drugs	Brand-name drugs	Non-formulary drugs
<u>Current co-pays</u>			
Military clinic	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mail order	\$3	\$9	\$22
Retail	\$3	\$9	\$22
<u>Co-pays in FY 2007 and after</u>			
Military clinic	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mail order	\$0	\$9	\$22
Retail	\$5	\$15	\$22

Source: Defense Department

AS ALWAYS, THERE IS A GOOD REASON FOR BREAKING THE ONE-SIDED CONTRACT WITH RETIREES -- AGAIN

ADJUSTMENTS ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAINING TRICARE, OFFICIAL SAYS

By Sgt. Sara Wood, USA - American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2, 2006 – Adjustments to the Tricare program are necessary to ensure military health benefits are maintained at a superior level for many years, a Defense Department official said here yesterday. ... The adjustments, which will affect enrollment costs and other fees, will apply to the large military retiree population served by Tricare. Raising costs to beneficiaries is a controversial issue, but DoD cannot keep up its medical system if the costs keep increasing at the rate they have been, Winkenwerder [ASDHA] said. <More at: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2006/20060202_4078.html>

AND THEN THERE ARE THOSE WHO COUNT ON THE VA

MORE THAN 260,000 CAN'T GET VA HEALTH CARE

Associated Press | January 25, 2006

WASHINGTON - More than a quarter-million veterans considered to have higher incomes could not sign up for health care with the Veterans Affairs Department during the last fiscal year because of a cost-cutting move. Those locked out - totaling 263,257 in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 - have no illnesses or injuries attributable to their service in the military and earn more than the average wage in their community. The VA suspended enrollment of such veterans beginning in January 2003 after then-VA Secretary Anthony Principi said the agency was struggling to provide adequate health care to the rapidly rising number of veterans seeking it. That year the VA population was about 6.8 million. About 7.5 million are enrolled today, with more than 5 million treated. <More at: www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,86271,00.html?ESRC=eb.nl>

IN CALIFORNIA THEY KEEP THE COSTS DOWN BY NOT TELLING ANYONE ABOUT AVAILABLE BENEFITS

MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF FUND GOES UNTAPPED

Rone Tempest - NewsDay/AP - Jan 30, 2006

SACRAMENTO — A year after it was launched to help activated National Guard families suffering financial hardships, the California Military Family Relief Fund has been a major disappointment to its sponsors. In 2005, the fund paid out only \$7,687 to just three families from among the 7,000 soldiers activated for federal duty in Iraq, Afghanistan and other postings that year.

The emergency fund was designed to help National Guard families facing unexpected bills, such as food, housing, child care, utilities, medical services and insurance. In comparison, a similar fund in Illinois but which also includes military reservists called up for duty paid \$1.1 million to 2,682 families in its first year of operation. At least half of those who were helped, said Illinois program director Eric Schuller, were members of the Illinois National Guard.

By the numbers - Comparing the California Military Family Relief Fund to a similar effort in Illinois:

	California	Illinois
Families aided by fund in its first year	3	2,682
Amount paid by California fund in its first year	\$7,687	\$1,100,000
Support from General fund	\$0	\$5,000,000
Privat donations to fund	\$10,000	\$500,000
	(2004-06)	(2003-06)

Sources: California National Guard, California Tax Franchise Board, Illinois Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Department of Defense.

<More at: <http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/?page=article&id=6367>>

IN MASSACHUSETTS THEY JUST MAKE THEM PAY THEIR OWN WAY

SOLDIERS SUE OVER OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

Sara Miller Llana | Christian Science Monitor - Feb 01, 2006

BOSTON - After 9/11, hundreds of thousands of America's part-time soldiers answered the call to serve. Along the way, some have asked whether the costs they bear - from insufficient body armor to mounting debt for their families at home - is fair.

Now, Massachusetts National Guard soldiers are taking the question straight to the top. They have filed a class-action lawsuit claiming they are owed \$73 million in food, lodging, and commuting expenses they paid out-of-pocket while activated under state orders to protect sites such as military bases and reservoirs from terrorist attacks.

The lawsuit, filed recently in federal court against the Massachusetts National Guard and the US Department of Defense, is believed to be the first of its kind nationally, and raises new questions about what the government owes its men and women in uniform. <More at: www.csmonitor.com/2006/0201/p03s02-usmi.html>

HAVING BEEN GIVEN AN INCONSEQUENTIAL ROLE IN THE VA HEARING PROCESS, DAV HAS TAKEN IT TO INDIVIDUAL CONGRESSPERSONS VETERANS TURN TO CONGRESS FOR ADEQUATE BUDGET

February 8, 2006 - DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS – Press Release

The Disabled American Veterans is urging Congress to fully fund veterans health care and provide the resources needed to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the disability compensation system.

“Once again the Bush administration’s budget plan has come up short of what’s needed to honor America’s commitment to veterans,” said DAV National Commander Paul W. Jackson. “It is up to Congress to provide the funds needed to guarantee that sick and disabled veterans have timely access to high quality medical care and the full range of benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice.” - >More at: www.dav.org>

TAPS – PASSINGS AND WAR STATISTICS

NATIONAL GUARD (IN FEDERAL STATUS) AND RESERVE MOBILIZED AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2006

This week, the Navy announced an increase in the number of reservists on active duty in support of the partial mobilization, while the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps had a decrease. The Coast Guard number remained unchanged. The net collective result is six fewer reservists mobilized than last week.

At any given time, services may mobilize some units and individuals while demobilizing others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease. Total number currently on active duty in support of the partial mobilization for the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 107,802; Navy Reserve, 4,959; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 7,559; Marine Corps Reserve, 7,085; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 414. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel, who have been mobilized, to 127,819, including both units and individual augmentees.

A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel, who are currently mobilized, can be found at www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2006/d20060201nqr.pdf .

OIF/OEF – HACK DATE THURSDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2006

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

KILLED US	2,265
WOUNDED US [7 FEB + ESTIMATE]	≥ 16,653
KILLED UK	101
KILLED OTHER COALITION	103
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	600
KILLED CONTRACTORS	309
KILLED IRAQI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 34,082
KILLED IRAQI CIVILIANS	≥ 32,013
WOUNDED IRAQI MIL/CIVILIANS	≥ 139,262

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

KILLED US	261
WOUNDED/INJURED US	685
KILLED COALITION	127
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	393
KILLED AFGHANI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 8,619
KILLED AFGHANI CIVILIANS	≥ 3,525
WOUNDED AFGHANI MIL/CIVILIANS	32,034

NOTE: SOME NUMBERS DO NOT CHANGE BETWEEN ISSUES BECAUSE UPDATED FIGURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT PRESS TIME.

TO SEE THE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE CASUALTIES GO TO WWW.MILITARYCITY.COM/2000CASUALTIES/

AFTERTHOUGHT

The 200,000 retirees who will be charged \$250 for their TRICARE plan will save the DoD \$62,500,000. This is far less than the cost of any state's "Earmarks" in the current (2006) budget. Remember "Earmarks"? They are the pork that Congress hauls home to their districts, in return for buying votes and perpetual incumbency. They all do it, while they sit and cluck their tongues at the other guys and their earmarks. In the current budget, **in the Transportation bill alone**, New Hampshire has the smallest amount "Earmarked" at \$ 69,333,200 for 32 projects, while California has \$ 2,652,995,251 for 547 projects. Our Senators and Congresspersons take home an average of over \$45M of Transportation sausage and ham hocks **each**.

But all Congresspersons are not equal in amount or significance. In my district (CA 23 Capps (D)) there is a "High Priority" bike path for a cost of \$320,000. In the district just north of me (CA 22 Hunter (R)) there are \$630,000,000 (that's the correct number of zeros) **for Bakersfield alone**. That \$271,000,000 "bridge to nowhere" between Ketchikan and Gravina Island in Alaska pales by comparison.

The \$62.5M that DoD will save is one quarter of one percent of the "Earmarks" in the Transportation Bill, one tenth of one percent of the total Transportation bill, twelve one-thousandths of one percent of the Defense Bill, and two one-thousandths of one percent of the budget – by which time it is reduced to less than a rounding error.

Who is the hero that thought it necessary to charge retirees under 65 years of age \$250?

NOTICE

If at any time you cannot open a link in this newsletter to an article or web page that interests you, please let me know at scook@vuft; I keep a copy of most of the full articles, or can research an alternative route to the information. [Ed.]

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TRANSFORMING BY SHIFTING EMPHASIS FROM THE 20TH CENTURY TO THE 21ST CENTURY

The QDR is not a programmatic or budget document. Instead, it reflects the thinking of the senior civilian and military leaders of the Department of Defense:

- Need to “find, fix and finish” combat operations against new and elusive foes.
- Need for considerably better fusion of intelligence and operations to produce action plans that can be executed in real time.
- Realization that everything done in this Department must contribute to joint warfighting capability.
- Central reality that success depends on the dedication, professionalism and skills of the men and women in uniform – volunteers all.

If one were to attempt to characterize the nature of how the Department of Defense is transforming and how the senior leaders of this Department view that transformation, it is useful to view it as a shift of emphasis to meet the new strategic environment. In this era, characterized by uncertainty and surprise, examples of this shift in emphasis include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• From a peacetime tempo – to a wartime sense of urgency.• From a time of reasonable predictability – to an era of surprise and uncertainty.• From single-focused threats – to multiple, complex challenges.• From nation-state threats – to decentralized network threats from non-state enemies.• From conducting war against nations – to conducting war in countries we are not at war with (safe havens).• From “one size fits all” deterrence – to tailored deterrence for rogue powers, terrorist networks and near-peer competitors.• From responding after a crisis starts (reactive) – to preventive actions so problems do not become crises (proactive).• From crisis response – to shaping the future. From threat-based planning – to capabilities-based planning.• From peacetime planning – to rapid adaptive planning.• From a focus on kinetics – to a focus on effects.• From 20th century processes – to 21st century integrated approaches.• From static defense, garrison forces – to mobile, expeditionary operations.• From under-resourced, standby forces (hollow units) – to fully-equipped and fully-manned forces (combat ready units).• From a battle-ready force (peace) – to battle-hardened forces (war).• From large institutional forces (tail) – to more powerful operational capabilities (teeth).• From major conventional combat operations – to multiple irregular, asymmetric operations.• From separate military Service concepts of operation – to joint and combined operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• From forces that need to deconflict – to integrated, interdependent forces.• From exposed forces forward – to reaching back to CONUS to support expeditionary forces.• From an emphasis on ships, guns, tanks and planes – to focus on information, knowledge and timely, actionable intelligence.• From massing forces – to massing effects.• From set-piece maneuver and mass – to agility and precision.• From single Service acquisition systems – to joint portfolio management.• From broad-based industrial mobilization – to targeted commercial solutions.• From Service and agency intelligence – to truly Joint Information Operations Centers.• From vertical structures and processes (stovepipes) – to more transparent, horizontal integration (matrix).• From moving the user to the data – to moving data to the user.• From fragmented homeland assistance – to integrated homeland security.• From static alliances – to dynamic partnerships.• From predetermined force packages – to tailored, flexible forces.• From the U.S. military performing tasks – to a focus on building partner capabilities.• From static post-operations analysis – to dynamic diagnostics and real-time lessons learned.• From focusing on inputs (effort) – to tracking outputs (results).• From Department of Defense solutions – to interagency approaches. |
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