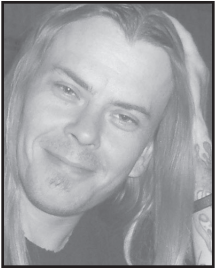


War profiteers eat the almighty



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Op-Ed Editor

Finally, Democrats have quit smoking the joint of incompetence and initiated a new law that will allow the hands of justice to tighten the reins on the puppet masters behind the continuation of the war in Iraq—the war profiteers.

In the Senate, congressional leaders passed a \$627 defense policy that requires the government to release reports on its addiction of security contractors. In addition, the government must establish a new bipartisan commission to investigate the abuse of wartime contracts.

And it is about time lawmakers tried to close the loophole that left the contractors immune to prosecution, but it may be a little late.

Democrats passed the joint of incompetence after the FBI announced it was going to investigate Blackwater USA, a military contractor, for the September 16 brain fart where security employees of the company participated in a shoot-out in Baghdad that killed 11 Iraqis.

Sadly, most Americans have missed the mechanics of the war profiteers because they were busy running in circles, worrying about threats of nuclear war, communists and now terrorists.

The war profiteers have been preaching the gospel of privatization since the dawn of the Vietnam War. And several entities incorporate their round table of discontent:

The private contractors CACI and Titan intelligence agencies; Bechtel, a San Francisco-based construction and engineering giant; Aegis Defense Services, a company that provides “corporate warriors” (mercenaries); General Dynamics, defense contractor; Nour USA Ltd., a contracting firm; the oil mongers Chevron, ExxonMobil and Halliburton.

In 2005, the Washington Post reported that CIA officials stated that 50 percent of their intelligence was outsourced to CACI and Titan at a cost of over \$40 billion.

However, the Center for Constitutional Rights is suing the companies because the companies’ employees “engaged in a conspiracy to torture and abuse detainees, and did

so to make more money.”

Bechtel received the largest non-bid contract of \$2.4 billion to rebuild Iraq.

And yet, the company has been plagued with problems ranging from shoddy school repairs to an overwhelming over-budget cost of \$70 million to \$90 million for the reconstruction of the Basra Children’s Hospital Project.

Aegis Defense Services has over 48,000 private security and military contractors (PMCs) fighting the War on Terror, and industry observers state that the PMCs is growing business that will profit over \$200 billion by 2010.

However, the company’s CEO, Tim Spicer, was accused of breaking an arms embargo in Sierra Leone, and an industry-insider stated that the company was given a \$293 million contract despite lower bids from other American contractors.

General Dynamics is the largest military supplier to the war in Iraq, providing the military with everything from bullets to wheeled light-armored vehicles.

The company’s earnings have tripled since 9/11 with a little help from a former top aide to the Army Chief of Staff, David K. Heebner, who before General Dynamics hired him had initiated a plan for the Army to start using wheeled light-armored vehicles; a month after Heebner was hired, the company won a multi-billion dollar contract to produce the vehicles.

Nour USA Ltd. was incorporated after the war began and has acquired over \$400 million in Iraqi contracts.

The company was rewarded an \$80 million contract to provide oil pipeline security – despite the fact that the company has absolutely no experience in this field of expertise, and the man who help them acquire the contract, Ahmed Chalabi, is a fugitive from Jordan law enforcement officials and accused of passing classified information to a member of the Axis of Evil, Iran.

The “petro-imperialists,” Exxon-Mobil and Chevron, have just about solidified their control of the Iraq oil-field with the upcoming implementation of the new oil law in Iraq’s constitution that will privatize the Iraqi National Oil Company.

The new law will allow the oil mongers access to Oil Ministry officials and geological data as well as provisions in the law that will lock

the government in long-term commitment contracts (50 years).

And Halliburton, a company with commercial ties to terrorist states?

Well, it is the biggest profiteer of all and with a little help from their Connecticut Cowboy president and his band of merry rednecks, the government paid the company \$37 million to build prison camps in Guantanamo Bay, \$100 million to build a new embassy in Kabul, \$7 billion to restore Iraq’s oil industry to prewar status.

Republicans awarded the oil monger an unclassified amount of money for constructing new oil wells and the supporting of U.S. troops in Afghanistan, Kuwait, Jordan, Uzbekistan, Djibouti, the Republic of Georgia and Iraq with their numerous firms that provide laundry, food and other basic needs at 300 percent inflation rate.

It is about time that the competent members of the government put a restraint on these abusers of justice, these slayers of humanity, these addicts of the almighty green.

And yet, it is all for naught.

It is almost impossible to secure an Iraq contract from the government that has over \$20 billion set aside for the Iraqi relief and \$5 billion set aside in the Development Fund for Iraq—especially with executives like Dick Cheney who has his hands so far entrenched in the machine of money war that fellow contractors have stated:

“Anything that has to do with Iraq policy, Cheney’s the man to see. He’s running it the way that L.B.J ran the space program.”

And new start-up companies like Free Market Global, an international company that trades in gas, petroleum and other resources, have members on their advisory boards like Gen. Tommy Franks, commanded the invasion of Iraq last year.

How exactly will a government so corrupt stop the machine of evil with a law that will be judged upon by Supreme Court justices appointed by the mastermind’s puppet?

Will someone please put the joint down for the love of almighty Jehovah, Allah, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Satan and any other diety involved in the mechanics of war and money.

Let us take a breath of fresh air before the war profiteers suck all the profit out of the almighty green.

Christian’s Horoscopes

Today’s birthday (10-03-07): Confidence seems to come naturally for you, but really it doesn’t. You need a little dash of creativity to boost your self esteem, but the elusive muse seems to avoid you like the plague. Try hitting it over the head with a hammer. You might have a twisted view of the world afterwards, but at least your confidence will return.

Aries (March 21-April 19): You are wrapped in your work, lost within the ravenous veins of capitalism. Your friends want to join and help, but their offer of help only annoys you. Try ignoring them. Your friends will eventually get the hint, and you will succeed in your goals and feed the machine.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): It is a shame. The almighty green has tapped you for corruption. Try feeding the machine and just maybe you will keep your sanity for just a little bit longer.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): You like to gossip and a whole world of drama is going to fall into your lap. You can try and keep your mouth shut, but we both know this is impossible for you. Just go with the flow and let the gossip gods enlighten you – only then will you realize your true talk show host destiny.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): The week has been hectic, and it seems that a little relaxation is in the forecast. Just kidding! You live and breathe the chaos of the machine. Why deny your true self? You do not need to relax. The darkside of capitalism has inserted its finger of OCD into your mind. Get rid of the xanax. It is futile to resist.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Hopefully, after last weeks forecast, you have avoided all contact with humanity. If so, your awareness has kicked into overdrive. However, your luck has not improved. Stay hidden for another week.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your financial outlook sucks for this week. It is time to cry. Your gold card is maxed out. It is time to go to your local foodstamp office and enter the world of the poor. It is not pretty, but at least it will be a “free” ride for a while until you can figure something else out – try hooking up with Cancer.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Past difficulties are trying to get you down. Let it. It is good to relive mistakes – maybe then the door of opportunity will finally swing open or hit you in the ass, depending on your prescription levels at the time.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You have had a hard time keeping your life together. However, your day to shine is right around the corner, and the almighty dollar has turned its sights on you. Join the insanity of Taurus, and just maybe you will survive the onslaught – either way... it will be one hell of a ride.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The eyes of love have almost stopped looking for you. Tonight, connect with a true artist of the street – try tattoo therapy. It is good for the mind, body and soul.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Midterms are just around the corner, and you are beginning to panic because the jerk in the back of the class will not quit texting in the middle of class. Unleash the darkside within you. Break their cell phone.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your friends are trying to change your mind. Ignore them.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Try to stay out of your friends’ business. Open your eyes to something that truly matters – your life. It will be an awe-inspiring awakening that may change the course of history... at least in your mind.

- Letter to the editor -

Parking spaces, or lack thereof, have been a hot topic since school started but the students have heard almost exclusively from residents.

As a commuter, here is what I think. I realize that residents pay more money than I do.

However, that extra cost goes towards room and board, not anything to do with actual class fees.

In return, they are given two moderately sized parking lots (Killingworth/Pierce, and between Sunwatcher and the Church of Christ building) that are exclusive to them.

Commuters are not allowed to park there, and they are fined if they do.

In the same way, residents are fined for parking in commuter lots.

It seems to me that each student’s parking reflects the money that they pay to the school.

Residents pay most of their money for housing so they are given the closest parking to the buildings they live in.

As a commuter, all of my money goes towards my actual education.

I am rightly given the closest parking to university buildings.

The only problem I see with residents is who come in at late hours and expect a parking spot right next to the doors of their buildings.

I realize the mercantile

building seems far, and maybe dark and scary at 2 o’clock in the morning.

But there are steps being taken to put lights in the darker parking lots.

I don’t think 2-3 minutes of walking is too much to ask.

And really, I don’t mind if a resident returning to their room past midnight parks in a commuter lot, like the one in front of Prothro-Yeager, overnight if they need to.

But in the morning, before classes, they need to respect commuters enough to move their car.

-A commuter student