



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

**Post 3272**

**Avon, Connecticut**

**“On Target”**

**September 2010  
LETTER #105**

**“Our Newsletter’s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year”**  
**“The Post’s 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year (1945 – 2010)”**

The Post met on Wednesday, **23 June 2010** at the Italian Club with 42 members in attendance. The ladies Auxiliary prepared, as usual, a delicious dinner that included plenty of second helpings.

Our *next meeting* will be held on **Wednesday, 22 September 2010** at the Italian Club on Old Farms Rd in Avon. Cocktails begin at 1800 hours with dinner at 1830 hours.

Join our **Post Family** for another evening of **good food, stimulating conversation and great friendship**. Hope to see many of you there as we begin our new season!

Since **Commander Roy Walton** was away of business, **Senior Vice Commander Grant Hagedorn** presided at the meeting and opened it for business at 1950 hours. After the opening ceremonies, Senior Vice Cmdr Hagedorn administered the new member oath to *Frank Celentano* (a WWII Army Veteran) and *Gene Flynn* (a Veteran of the German Occupation). Grant presented each of these new members with a VFW lapel pin and both were welcomed by the members.

Quartermaster *Don Perreault* also noted that we have received new applications for membership from *John Kelly* (a Navy Veteran of the Gulf War); *Adam Carmon* (a Marine Corps Sergeant on active duty in Afghanistan who has also served two tours in Iraq); and *Evan O'Donnell* (also a Marine) who is currently on active duty and deployed to several countries in the Middle East.

Members in distress during this period include Mike Battaglino, Mike Busha, Bob Campbell, Dr. Tim Curran, Mike Dlubac, Josephine Hinman, Wayne Hosking, Jim Katzung, Nat Michon, Harold Schaal, Al Simonelli, Ed Stepien and Clyde Whirty. Please remember them in your thoughts and prayers – and visit them if you are able. Please inform Chaplain Bob Galiette at (860-673-9324) if you learn of any other members who are ill or hospitalized. Names underlined are new this time!

Service Officer *Bill Coffey* reported that he has received no new service cases from members. He also noted that all members should be registered with the VA for benefits and get an ID which can be used at several stores for discounts on merchandise.

Under Committee Reports, *Bill Newman* reported that we had another record *Poppy Drive* this year and raised \$18,439 gross and \$17,456 net for our Relief Fund from the distribution of 10,000 poppies over a 10-day period. One again our volunteers (*40 this year*) did an extraordinary job. Bill especially thanked *Rich Ecke and Lee Wilson* for overseeing the drive during his absence.

*Bill Samo, Chairman of the Parade & Picnic for the 10<sup>th</sup> Year*, underscored the great success of this year's Memorial Day and Picnic and felt it was the best ever with perfect weather, the largest parade, a record crowd and fully-attended picnic. He thanked all who participated in these events and made the day such a success. Bill especially thanked *Mike and Mary Ann Conway* who worked all day as volunteers at the picnic and were such a great help. He also expressed his and the Post's appreciation to *Lee and Terri Wilson* for providing wonderful refreshments for the participants after our cemetery visits in the morning.

Tim Curran, Chairman of the Golf Fundraiser, advised that our 1<sup>st</sup> event at Blue Fox Run will be held this Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10am. Subsequent dates will be 14 August and 18 September. He still needs a few volunteers to man the 9<sup>th</sup> tee and solicit "donations" for our General Fund.

As Membership Chairman, *Bill Newman* noted that we now have 165 members and will need 5 new members to reach our 170 target base to be 100% again in the new year which starts on July 1<sup>st</sup>. We also will need for all annual members to pay their dues (\$21.00) to reach our 100% objective again in this new membership year. So, let's keep recruiting as we all know there are plenty of eligible veterans out there in the Farmington Valley.

Concerning our Relief Fund, *Don Perreault* suggested we commit at this time to the following veterans causes which the Relief Fund Committee has donated to in the past. He recommended we give \$500.00 each to the *VFW's Unmet Needs, Soldiers' Angels, Give2theTroops, the USO and VFW's National Home* for a total of \$2500.00. After a brief discussion, all motions for these expenditures were made, seconded and approved by the members present. *Bill Newman* also suggested we donate additional monies from the Relief Fund to meet Doug Sutter's request to provide school supplies for 250 Iraqi students near his base. We have paid for the shipping costs for 150 school packages raised by the Avon schools but that we supply the remaining 100 students with school supplies. A motion was made, seconded and approved to spend up to \$600 for these additional school supplies and shipping expenses.

Under New Business, *Bill Samo* proposed that we have a 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet published akin to the one we had for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2005. He advised that he and Carl Candels would secure the required amount of ads to pay for the printing and the Post would receive a donation from the printer as we did last time. Bill also suggested members take out \$25.00 ads for this Anniversary Issue. In our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet in 2005 many members purchased ads in recognition of former members and to provide their own message. After a short discussion and some questions, the members approved this undertaking with the understanding there would be no cost to the Post.

Under the Good of the Order, *Vice Commander Hagedorn* noted that our Post Newsletter was awarded 1st place in the State by the Department of Connecticut again this year. He also presented Bill Newman with an engraved plaque in recognition of his dedication and service as the Post Commander for the last two years.

## **Post Activities & Developments**

At our 1<sup>st</sup> Golf Fundraiser at Blue Fox Run on 26 June we raised a solid \$500.00 for the Post's General Fund and we appreciate the efforts of Tm Curran and his volunteers in offering their time and talents to this key fundraiser. Our next event at Blue Fox Run is scheduled for Saturday, 14 August. Please let Tim know if you would like to participate and help add to this great start!

**Sergeant Al Lapore**  
**U. S. Army – German Occupation**

It is with sadness that we report *that Al Lapore (79) died suddenly* at his home in Canton *on 26 July 2010*. Al transferred in 2009 to our Post from the Canton Post where he served as the Quartermaster since its inception. He enlisted in the Connecticut National Guard in 1949 at 17, took basic training at Camp Pickett, VA, went to ordnance school at Ft. Jackson, NC and served with the U. S. Army at Will Kaserne in Munich, Germany in 1951–'53 as a Motor Pool Sergeant with Headquarters Company, 169<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 43<sup>rd</sup> Division as part of the *Occupation Forces*. His decorations include the Good Conduct Medal, Occupation Medal (Germany) and the WWII Victory Medal. Funeral arrangements were provided by Vincent Funeral Home in Canton with calling hours held at Vincent's on 30 July 2010 from 2-4pm and 6-8pm. Members of our Post served as Honor Guards and performed the VFW Final Salute Service. His funeral was held on Saturday, 31 July at 9:45 with a procession from the funeral home followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:30am at St. Patrick's Church in Collinsville. Burial with full military honors was held at Dyer Cemetery in Canton. May Al and all our departed comrades rest in Peace!

The Post met on Wednesday, **28 July 2010** for our **“Ray Zacherra Memorial Picnic”** with 70 members and their guests in attendance. It was a beautiful evening and a perfect setting with plenty of great food, beverages and comradeship. Although there was no regular meeting held, *Commander Walton* led the gathering in the Salute of the Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance. He also presented *Brian O'Donnell* with a **“Gold Star Banner”** in recognition of his son Evan's deployment overseas with the Marine Corps. All were delighted to see *Bob Campbell* arrive in his spiffy wheelchair. Roy also honored *Wendy Zacchera* who received the VFW **“National Citizenship Education Teacher Award”** at the recent Department of Connecticut Annual Convention in Rocky Hill. A special thanks to *Roy & Cathy Walton* for organizing this annual event and to *Alice Zacchera* for hosting it again this year.



**Commander Roy Walton – Wendy Zacchera – Bill Newman**  
**Ray Zacchera Memorial Picnic - 2010**

**Colonel John Higgins**  
**WWII – Pacific**

It is with deep sadness that we inform you of the passing of John J. Higgins (90) on 31 July 2010 in Avon. Colonel Higgins was an active member of our Post who attended all our meetings and weekly coffees – and will indeed be missed by all of us! John joined the Connecticut National Guard on 26May40 as a Private in the 169<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and held virtually every rank to full Colonel in his 35 years of service. He served on active duty during WWII in the South Pacific, Philippines and Japan as an infantryman with the 169<sup>th</sup> from 24Feb41 to 31Jan46. He also served a tour of duty in Germany in the early 1950s. Among his many decorations were the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star w/ 2 clusters & “V” device, Army, Commendation Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign w/ 4 bronze stars & arrowhead, Occupation Medal, Philippine Liberation Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge and State of CT Gold Medal of Merit w/cluster. He served in a variety of places and assignments as an enlisted man, non-commissioned officer, warrant officer and commissioned officer. John also served as Chief of Staff to the Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard for 4 years. Funeral arrangements were provided by Carmon Funeral Home of Avon with calling hours on 4 August from 5-8pm. Members of the Post provided Honor Guards during the calling hours and performed the VFW Final Salute Ceremony. Family and friends gathered at 9am on Thursday, 5 August at Carmon’s and processed to St. Mary Star of the Sea Church in Unionville where a Mass of Christian Burial was offered at 10am. After the service, Internment with full Military Honors was conducted at St. Ann’s Cemetery in Avon. The Post is most grateful to the Higgins Family for suggesting in lieu of flowers that memorial donations be sent to VFW Post 3272. May Colonel John Higgins and all our departed comrades rest in the everlasting peace of the Eternal Father.

At our coffee at Friendly’s on Thursday, 24 June Bill Newman presented Bob Galiette with a Blue Star Banner in recognition of the recent deployment to Afghanistan of his Grandson – Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant James C. Flannery. Lieutenant Flannery is stationed with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne and recently wrote to his family that they are now at Salerno Base in Afghanistan after humping the mountains there over the last couple months. He has finally received mail – including the care package we sent from the Post. He and his troops were happy to get showers and real food after several weeks in the “bush”. They expect to be moving out again shortly. When we get his new address, we’ll send another package. Please keep him & his unit in your thoughts & prayers!

On Friday, 13 August and again on the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, members of the Post pasted out safety material regarding texting and using cellphones while driving for Wal-Mart. We also used the occasion to recruit new members. Since many of Wal-Mart customers wanted to donate to the Post, we finally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend put out one of our poppy cans. To our delight & surprise we collected \$700.00 for the Post during that 2-day period. Members who participated included Mickey Bennett, Bill Coffey, Tim Curran, Rich Ecke, Mike Fyler, Bob Galiette, Bernie Driscoll, Grant Hagedorn, Bob Manchester, Bill Newman, Art Ostheimer, George Slack and Lee Wilson.

We had our 2<sup>nd</sup> Golf Fundraiser at Blue Fox Run on Saturday, 14 August and raised \$387.00 for the General Fund at this event. The weather was perfect but the golfers were fewer. The hole played a little easier and we hoped for stronger headwinds but to no avail. It was another good day and our thanks again to Tim Curran for arranging this event.

The Boy Scouts invited us to attend their Eagle Scout Awards Ceremony at Carmon's Funeral Home to 22 August 2010. One of the two Eagle Scout Awardees was Mike Miller for whom Bill Newman had acted as Project Advisor this past summer.. Mike's project was to send care packages to six local Troop 170 Eagle Scouts who were deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Bill Newman and Lee Wilson attended this special Boy Scout Celebration and represented the Post.

We are pleased to announce four (4) new member applications from the following individuals:

**Don Reed** – A Navy Veteran of WWII (Pacific) who entered military service October 1942 as a Naval Aviation Cadet, was activated January 1943 and was commissioned Ensign - Naval Aviator April 1944 at Pensacola. He completed PBM combat training July 1944 and was sent to the South Pacific in the fall of 1944. Served in 3 major campaigns, the last being Naval "Black Cat" operations over the South China Sea with 14 hour every other night flights ranging to China, to Formosa from Lingayan Gulf & to Luzon in the Philippines. About 3,000 hours of night instrument flying. Our squadron received the Presidential Unit Citation for sinking the highest number and largest tonnage of Jap shipping by any Naval squadron in WW2, Received two Distinguished Flying Crosses, seven Air medals, Navy Unit Citation and various others decorations. Discharged from active duty as full Lieutenant in October 1945. When commissioned in 1944, the commissioning Admiral told me I was the 3rd youngest Naval Aviator, the first being George H. W. Bush, we often joked at occasional meetings, wondering what happened to number two. Don resides in Avon and was introduced to the Post by George England.

**Tom Voorhees** – A Navy Veteran who served during the European Occupation period as a Gunnery Officer on the USS H. R. Dickson (DD708) from 29Jun53 to 8Jun56. Tom was appointed Midshipman USAR on 16Sep50 and commissioned an Ensign in the U. S. Navy on 5Jun53. The USS Dickson was a unit of DesRon 12 assigned to the Atlantic Fleet during the period of the Korean Conflict. The Navy was stretched thin at that time and as such the ship was at sea most of the time. DesDiv 121 was sent to Korea and his unit (DesDiv122) was scheduled to follow but it remained with the Atlantic Fleet. The ship served in the Caribbean, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the North Sea. He was awarded the Occupation Medal (Europe) for service aboard the Dickson as a unit of the Sixth Fleet. Tom served on active duty from 16Jun53 to 14Jun56. He resigned his Regular Navy Commission in March 1956 and accepted commission in the Naval Reserve. He was released from active duty in Jun '56, joined the Naval Reserve Research Company 4-1 in Oct '56, transferred to the Retired Reserve in Feb '78 and retired from the Navy in Dec'91 as a Lieutenant Commander. Tom was introduced to the Post by Brian O'Donnell and also lives in Avon.

**Steve Doten Jr** – An Air Force Veteran who served on active duty from 1994–98 as a F-16 Crew Chief and then joined the Connecticut Air National Guard as an A-10 Crew Chief. Steve deployed to Iraq in March to May 2003 with the A-10s. He is an E-5 and has 12 1/2 years of Air Force and Air National Guard service. Steve works at Bradley with the TSA and attends college at CCSU. He lives in Avon and is also a Volunteer Fireman here. Bill Newman met Steve at our recent event at Wal-Mart.

**Todd August** – A Connecticut National Guard Veteran who has served two (2) tours in Iraq and marched with us in our Memorial Day Parade this year. Sergeant August lives in Simsbury. Bill Newman met Todd again in August at Wal-Mart's and he elected to join our Post at that time.

### Annual Dues Reminder

We want to remind members who pay annual dues that the 2010 – 2011 year is now underway. Please remit your dues of \$21.00 directly to VFW National or to *Quartermaster Don Perreault* as soon as possible as we want to maintain our 100% membership once again this year. The cut-off date is 31 December 2010 to receive the 100% banner and be ranked by the Department of Connecticut as one its top membership posts in this new year.

We are very happy to report the return home of two (2) of our deployed members – *Lance Corporal Evan O'Donnell* returned home for leave after several months of sea duty with the Marines – first at Haiti and then visited countries in Africa and the Middle East. *PFC Grant Hagedorn, Jr* has returned home recently from a 7-month deployment in Iraq at Camp Styker near Baghdad with the 250<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. A hardy WELCOME HOME to both these men!

Our last Golf Fundraiser for the year is set for Saturday, 18 September at Blue Fox Run. Tim Curran will be there with his crew of low-handicapped and fast-talking volunteers. We hope for a beautiful day, generous duffers and wicked crosswinds.

Both the Post and the Ladies Auxiliary have booths at Avon Day on Saturday, 25 September. We will need some volunteers to set-up, man and break-down these 2 booths on that Saturday. The Post Color Guard will participate in the opening ceremony which is scheduled for 2pm. All members are encouraged to attend this Annual Avon Event and stop by our booths. Many of you are no doubt aware that Carl Candels will be honored on this occasion as "Avon's Citizen of the Year" and are likewise aware that he has attended many of our activities over the years and served as our photographer as well as our local PR Man on many occasions. We offer Carl our sincere and heartfelt congratulations on being so honored by the Town of Avon!

One of our major undertaking this summer has been the development of our Post's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine. Through the determined efforts of *Carl Candels* and *Bill Samol* we have recently reached our target for advertisements and now are diligently designing and assembling the 36-page layout for the magazine. We had hoped to have it available for Avon Day but that appears increasingly unlikely. It will, however, be ready for printing next week and available for distribution soon thereafter. It will have 4 additional pages and have a larger format than our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue – as well as more photos and activities highlighted (i.e. Poppy Drive, Service History Project, Etc). We hope you consider it a keepsake and give copies to your family and friends.

Coincident with this magazine effort, *Vice-Commander Grant Hagedorn* suggested and searched for an approved vendor who would design a 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Challenge Coin that might serve not only as a keepsake but also as an additional fundraiser. The design developed by 4 Heroes of Wisconsin proved very attractive and, in the interest of time, we conducted an email vote which showed that members would approve of an order of 200 coins a on a 25 to 2 basis.

We note that there are Post members who would like to purchase Custom Jackets (\$89.00), Overseas Caps (\$36.00 - Official VFW Cover), Baseball Caps (\$9.00 - Leisure Cover), Ties (\$16.00), Name Tags (\$6.00) or Embroidery VFW Crests (\$18.00). These prices may vary based upon sizes and/or options. Please contact Post Quartermaster *Don Perreault* (860-673-0552) to order any of these items.

## Noteworthy Quotes

### Facing an "Airpower Gap" with China

"The US may be in a military airpower race with China, but only one side is racing. Adm. Michael G. Mullen recently called worried attention to China's "heavy investments" in advanced "expeditionary, maritime, and air capabilities." This, he noted, is "oddly out of step" with Beijing's "stated goal of territorial defense." The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff implied China had a more ominous aim. The "gap" between its words and deeds is large, Mullen told the Asia Society June 9. Mullen's words were unusual; frank talk about the threat of growing Chinese power is rare. Even as China has pressed to build up its military forces, Washington has reacted tepidly. This stems from the existence of a second and more significant "China gap." Rebecca Grant, director of the Mitchell Institute for Airpower Studies, defines it as "the gap between China's steady pursuit of military capabilities under an artful strategy [and] US defense strategy, which has apparently chosen to downgrade and minimize the need for conventional deterrence in the Pacific." Grant was referring to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates' reorientation of US military capabilities away from deterrence of China's conventional forces to lower-tech, irregular combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. The SECDEF's assumption seems to be US air and naval forces still maintain a comfortable lead in the Pacific. This concept took heavy fire in recent hearings of the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, chartered by Congress. Experts noted that China's air force, in particular, has advanced from being a regional power with limited capabilities to a force with growing potential to imperil US interests. On its current course, it was noted that, "China will have one of the world's foremost air forces by 2020." Nearly 500 of China's approximately 1,600 fighters now are of the fourth generation type. They can be seen as at technical parity with US fighters such as the F-15 and F-16, he noted. If Ulman is correct, China will have a stealthy "fifth generation" fighter, rivaling USAF's F-22 Raptor, operational by 2018, years earlier than Gates himself has estimated. Roger Cliff, a RAND Corp. analyst, noted that China now produces a beyond-visual-range radar-guided air-to-air missile comparable to the US AMRAAM or Russian AA-12, and a variety of laser, TV, and satellite guided precision munitions. The panel heard warnings that the PLAAF has made a tremendous investment in ground-based air defenses, needed to blunt any USAF operations against Chinese targets. Since 2000, the PLAAF has purchased many more Russian SA-20 SAMs. China also has begun to deploy the domestically produced HQ-9, comparable to the SA-20.

*"The China Gap", Robert S. Dudley, Editorial, August 2010, Airforce Magazine*

### Ceremony at Hiroshima & Moral Equivalence

"For the first time since the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan 65 years ago, today the U.S. ambassador to Japan will attend the official commemoration ceremony at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. The U.S. ambassador has always declined the annual invitation, but this year is different. As State Department spokesman Philip Crowley explained, Ambassador John Roos will be there *"to express respect for all the victims of World War II."* By saying "all the victims" Mr. Crowley raises the specter of moral equivalence, a problem that's grown worse over the years when it comes to judging right and wrong during World War II and throughout history. The U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. When the Japanese still didn't give up, the U.S. dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki three days later. On Aug. 15, the Japanese surrendered unconditionally, ending the most brutal war in the history of the world. Japan remains the only country ever to have been targeted by atomic bombs. It should be noted that when President Harry Truman was considering whether to invade Japan instead of dropping the bombs, his advisers estimated that an invasion would result in one million American casualties and at least two million Japanese deaths. In the strange calculus of war, the bombs actually saved Japanese lives. If the Obama administration wants to ease the friction over this event then perhaps it is also a good time for the Japanese government to begin to discuss World War II truthfully with its own people. Since 1945, Japan's narrative has centered almost exclusively on the atomic blasts and its role as victim—with short shrift given to the Japanese invasions of China, Manchuria, Korea, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Indochina, Burma, New Guinea and, of course, the attack on Pearl Harbor. Japanese children have learned little about the Rape of Nanking or *the fact that as many as 17 million Asians died at the hands of the Japanese in World War II—many in the most brutal ways imaginable.* There is also the inconvenient truth that Japan started the war in the first place. There would have been no war in the Pacific between 1937 and 1945 had Japan stayed home. Focusing on the atomic bombs paints the Japanese as victims, like other participants in World War II. They were not. The Japanese, like their German allies, were bent on global conquest and the destruction of other people who did not fit their bizarre racial theories. Japan's continued focus on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been an understandable sore point for its Asian neighbors, who suffered greatly at its hands. *Young people today may have a hard time understanding that point because of the moral equivalence and political correctness that have taken over our society, our media and especially our universities.* Concerning today's event in Hiroshima, the State Department said "at this particular time, we thought it was the right thing to do." But by *tacitly placing all of World War II's participants in the same category, we undermine the ability of future generations to identify real evil, putting them at great risk.*

*"An Hiroshima Apology?", Warren Kozak, Opinion, WSJ, 8/6/10*

## **Early Withdrawal from Iraq**

"Our combat troops have departed the faraway country they liberated. The Iraqi people have them and George W. Bush to thank for a chance at long-term freedom, and themselves to blame if they squander it. It's by no means clear that the departure of our soldiers from Iraq is not premature. The Iraqi government is in an extended state of stalemate after March elections that saw former Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi's party edge incumbent Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's coalition by just two votes, both groups well short of a majority. Many Iraqis are said to wonder whether the terrorists who U.S. and Iraqi personnel did so much to combat are in sleep mode? We have lost more than 4,400 of our best and bravest since Operation Iraqi Freedom began seven years ago. The death of Saddam Hussein and the demise of his menacing Baathist regime assure that those thousands did not die in vain. George Friedman, founder of Stratfor, a private intelligence agency whose clients include foreign governments and Fortune 500 companies, believes neighboring Iran could ruin things in post-American Iraq. "The geopolitical problem the Americans face is that, with the United States gone, Iran would be the most powerful conventional power in the Persian Gulf," he wrote last week. "American and Iraqi officials have publicly said that the reason an Iraqi government has not been formed is Iranian interference," Friedman added. "To put it more clearly, there are any number of Shiite politicians who are close to Tehran and, for a range of reasons, will take their orders from there." Polls don't show it today, but history will credit Bush with greatness for resisting the Washington establishment of both parties and enacting the surge that saved the U.S. from surrender in Iraq. Our forces may be leaving prematurely this week, but the more important concern is: Will the U.S. be willing to bomb a future Saddam — or Iranian puppet regime — if we have to in the years to come?" ***On Leaving Iraq, Editorial, IBD, 8/18/10***

## **Genocide & Justice in Cambodia**

"Late last month in Cambodia, Kaing Guek Eav—the killer known to all Cambodians as Comrade Duch—was finally convicted. The former commandant was found guilty by a U.N.-backed tribunal of crimes against humanity in the sadistic murders of at least 14,000 of his countrymen. He was sentenced to 35 years in prison. Though his conviction was a milestone for Cambodians who have waited years for some form of credible justice, many genocide survivors, including me, felt the punishment was far too soft given the severity of his crimes. After the Extraordinary Chambers—as the tribunal is formally known—deducted five years to redress violations of his rights when he was held illegally in prior military detention, and 11 years for the time he's already served, Comrade Duch would only serve 19 years behind bars: *11 hours of imprisonment for each person he slaughtered.* Since Vietnam invaded Cambodia and ended the Khmer Rouge regime in January 1979, these killers wandered the country with impunity thanks to Cold War rivalries among various communist regimes. It was just four years ago that it began to try the mass murderers of 1975-1979. Comrade Duch was the commandant of only one Khmer Rouge detention center (Tuol Sleng) and only one killing field (Choeung Ek). *There were at least 200 detention centers and thousands of killing fields spread across the country.* Almost every rice field, pagoda and school in the country became a site for slaughter. The Khmer Rouge rounded up their victims—mainly fellow Cambodians evacuated from the capital and major towns—on the grounds that they were tainted by Western imperialism. They gathered them in the middle of the night for mass execution into graves usually dug by the victims the day before. Bullets were saved for the war against Vietnam. Instead the Khmer Rouge butchered and whacked their own people from behind at the stem of the neck with crude farm instruments like hoes. Those who didn't die immediately were asphyxiated under the bodies piled on top of them in mass graves. Other detention centers resulted in more deaths than the 14,000 carried out by Comrade Duch at Tuol Sleng. For example, in the Boeung Rai detention center in the heart of the "Eastern Zone" where I was detained as a 7-year-old child, the Khmer Rouge killed 30,000 people including my mother. Comrade Duch is "most responsible," according to the Tribunal, for the 14,000 lives stamped out at Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek. But he was not a "senior" Khmer Rouge leader and should not be made the sole scapegoat of this genocidal regime that murdered 1.7 million people. The heart of the Extraordinary Chambers is the highly anticipated Case 002, the trial of senior Khmer Rouge leaders. (Comrade Duch's was Case 001.) We must press forward to ensure that Case 002 goes to trial as soon as possible. Should this Cambodian government make Comrade Duch the sole scapegoat by obstructing the start and completion of Case 002, the tribunal will be considered a failure for the millions of dollars wasted and the irreversible cynicism it has embedded in a society already fractured by fear. If that is the case, let the record show that we survivors have registered our deep disappointment." ***"Comrade Duch & the Killing Fields", Theary Seng, WSJ, 8/17/10***

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**Bill Newman**