

weeks utilizes nearly 50 historical and current classified sources and draws from 250 interviews he conducted with soldiers throughout Afghanistan during his most recent year-long combat deployment.

In addition to the classified report, LTC Davis has written an 86-page unclassified version, as well as an article, published today by the Armed Forces Journal. These reports depict a near institutionalizing of dishonesty and deception by senior DOD leadership towards the American public and Congress. LTC Davis documents, as well, examples from the Iraq war and major weapons procurement programs to illustrate the persistent duplicity of the Pentagon's senior ranks. Victory narratives, career ambitions and institutional protection fuel these deceptions. Deceits that have only delivered the loss of thousands of lives, the waste of hundreds of billions of dollars and the failure to achieve American policy objectives.

LTC Davis has submitted his reports to the Department of the Army, his chain of command and the Department of Defense Inspector General. Hard copies of the classified reports are available for viewing by appropriately cleared members and staff of Congress. However, DOD has not publicly released the unclassified version, even with it being verified as not containing classified information. This is in spite of LTC Davis having provided the report for review to the Defense Department over two weeks ago (Defense Department regulations require only a 10 business day review). I am not surprised DOD is slow with its approval; his allegations are harsh and damning, although accurate and honest.

Danny Davis is a friend of mine; we have known each other since the fall of 2009. Bonding over coffees and lunches as rightful skeptics of the escalation of the Afghan war, we are now observing our worst concerns being realized. At a cost of over 11,000 killed and wounded Americans, the surge in Afghanistan is now being wound down without the achievement of its core objectives.* However, accompanying such a failure, are triumphant claims of success and accomplishment from American generals and their civilian counterparts. For those that comprehend the true consequences of this war: the cold, waxen dead; the mutilated flesh and shattered bone; the fatherless children so very young and the new widows so alone and so heartbroken; such specious and unfounded claims of progress without fact in this war are reckless, dishonorable and injurious.

Over the last several months, at great risk to his career and personal life, LTC Davis has documented the deliberate misleading of the American people and Congress by the leaders of the Department of Defense.** He has done his nation and the United States Army a tremendous service. Thus far the Army has taken no punitive action against LTC Davis, however, I have no doubt his character and motivations will ultimately be attacked and disparaged. I suspect elements of DOD leadership and their supporters will seek to discredit him and persecute him. I am afraid he will face significant, but spurious, investigations and prosecutions for his truth telling actions, such as Justice Department lawyer Thomas Tamm or National Security Agency employee Thomas Drake had to suffer, or that State Department officer Peter Van Buren is currently enduring.

Over 5,500 Americans were killed or wounded in Afghanistan in 2011. Tens of thousands who have come home will soldier a lifetime with the unseen scars of post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury. Our service members find themselves held to account on a callous and unsympathetic battlefield in a schizophrenic and absurd war. They do what is expected of them and hold themselves responsible to those who depend on them.

In contrast, for those in Washington charged with the decisions of war and peace, many of the participants seem to alternate between Pollyannas, chickenhawks and those who have lost sight of the difference between respect for and deference to the military. Any accounting for last year's 5,500 killed and wounded, if the discussants are even aware of the toll, is only a mathematical exercise, and an abstract one at that.

We expect our service members in Afghanistan to do the hard, brutal and savage fighting our policies ask of them without question. They do. Their expectation of those of us in Washington, those of us in our heated offices, wearing ties and high heels, who wake each day safe with our families, is that we ask hard questions, examine the reality of the conflict and not accept assertions of success without evidence.

The assumptions underlying the escalation of the Afghan war were incorrect. The Afghan surge, viewed by policy makers and some in the military as some form of social experiment to validate personal and institutional legacies and theories, rather than achieve US objectives worthy of bodily sacrifice, is failing. LTC Davis has demonstrated the courage to expose the deceptions that perpetuate this war, its failings and its deaths. It is now up to the American people and its Congress to hold those who were not just wrong, but mendacious, to account.

*To be clear, however, continuation of the current war policy would simply be madness. Secretary Panetta's recent announcement to end US combat operations in 2013 is a wise decision (wiser if it had been made in 2009); particularly if this policy shift is coupled with a transition of the role of the US from belligerent in the conflict to mediator of an inclusive political process to settle the three decade plus Afghan war.

**Myself and investigative journalist and historian Gareth Porter, and former intelligence officer and author Tony Shaffer, have provided moral support throughout this process.

ODDS AND SODS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. McCOTTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, odds and sods for brunch this morning.

We have recently seen an ad that played during the Super Bowl that is referred to as the halftime ad. It has caused much discussion in this country, much of it focusing on the political dimension of the attempt to sell cars that were made in my hometown of Detroit.

First I must admit that I disagree with the premise of the ad, that it is halftime in America. For logically, we would then have to conclude that the free Republic in which we inhabit will expire before its 500th birthday. I refuse to concede that a revolutionary experiment in human freedom has any timeline whatsoever. But what I do wholeheartedly concur with is the fact that American manufacturing, especially our auto industry, is starting to revive. As it does, it will continue to form a critical engine of any economic recovery we have and will form the basis of ensuring that our American

economy leads the world. Yet despite this nascent recovery, we must continue to watch the horizon for any dangers that may loom to our industrial base here at home.

One of these is the attempt of our strong ally Japan to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership initiative. Currently the United States, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam are trying to ensure the free flow of goods, including automobiles, amongst our Nations. Japan wishes to enter into this partnership which was formed. Unfortunately, the time is not right. For Japan, like Communist China, continues to manipulate currency, continues to put up nontariff trade-entry barriers, and until Japan has restructured and reformed itself, their entry into this organization, to this initiative can only slow the progress and have a detrimental impact upon our manufacturing base.

I would encourage all to understand the importance—not just to those of us who were born and bred in what was once known as the arsenal of democracy—to understand the importance of manufacturing. I ask this administration and I ask all those involved in this initiative to ask Japan to do the right thing before they join us at the table and embark upon a greater period of prosperity for our nations.

□ 1010

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out, as I did when the ObamaCare legislation on health care was passed: So this is what change looks like.

As an Irish Catholic, I remind my coreligionists and all Americans that no government can come between you and your conscience and the central tenets of your creed. What we are seeing now is the unfortunate fruits of the logical extension of the cesspool of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his civil religion whereby your true religion was tolerated as long as it was subservient to the state. That is not what this Nation is about. It is a clear violation of your constitutional right to freely exercise your religion.

There is no debate. There is nothing to be worked out. This odious regulation must be withdrawn, lest this administration or those who support it go back on their word to protect and defend your rights under that said Constitution, and, as a practical matter, belie the left's myth that they will not enforce their morality on you.

END THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to speak about the Afghanistan war. I commend President Obama's administration for the steps it has taken to bring the longest war in our Nation's history to a close.

Last week, Defense Secretary Panetta said that by mid- or the latter part of 2013 we'll be able to make a transition from a combat role to a training, advice, and assistance role. I urge the administration to fulfill this aspiration and bring our troops home to their families. They have sacrificed enough.

The Afghanistan war began as a war of necessity. After the horrific September 11 attacks, we sent our troops to eliminate al Qaeda and their leaders and destroy their training camps to prevent a future terrorist attack. Our troops carried out this mission with extraordinary courage and dedication. Osama bin Laden was driven out of Afghanistan, and he is now dead.

Furthermore, the intelligence community affirms that al Qaeda is virtually extinguished from Afghanistan; yet the war continues. End this war now and focus like a laser on terrorists wherever they may be.

Our troops in Afghanistan are no longer fighting terrorists who pose a threat to the United States. They are now fighting domestic Afghanistan factions and defending a corrupt and inept Afghanistan Government. Our servicemembers are dying in another country's civil war. This has become a war of choice.

I recently met with Lieutenant Colonel Danny Davis, who described to me what a civil war looks like on the ground. He has served two combat deployments in Afghanistan and has traveled throughout the country talking to U.S. troops stationed all over. A recent evaluation of Colonel Davis reads: "His maturity, tenacity and judgment can be counted on in even the hardest situations, and his devotion to mission accomplishment is unmatched by his peers."

Now, this is what Colonel Davis has described as to what he has observed: "What I saw bore no resemblance to the rosy official statements by U.S. military leaders about conditions on the ground. Entering this deployment, I was sincerely hoping to learn that the claims were true: that conditions in Afghanistan were improving. Instead, I witnessed the absence of success on virtually every level."

"I saw the incredible difficulties any military force would have to pacify even a single area of any of those provinces; I heard many stories of how insurgents controlled virtually every piece of land beyond eyeshot of a U.S. or International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, base. I saw little to no evidence the local governments were able to provide for the basic needs of the people. Some of the Afghan civilians I walked with said the people didn't want to be connected to a predatory or incapable local government. From time to time, I observed Afghan security forces collude with the insurgency."

Colonel Davis' candid testimony reinforced my own conviction that there is no military solution to the conflict in

Afghanistan, only the prospect of continued shedding of American blood in a war that is not ours to fight. Only through negotiated political settlement amongst the Afghan factions, not through an open-ended U.S. military presence, could Afghanistan become a stable and developing country.

America faces new threats now. More than \$1 trillion spent on two wars over the course of a decade undermines our financial stability and takes away much-needed funds for American jobs and investments at home. The Obama administration has shown courageous leadership in eliminating Osama bin Laden. They have also shown leadership in bringing the war in Iraq to an end and in planning to ensure that the U.S. military commitment in Afghanistan is not an open-ended one. As President Obama clearly stated in his speech on the drawdown plan last year, we need to focus on nation-building at home. I agree. I strongly support ending U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan and bringing our troops home by mid-2013, if not sooner. It's us, the 435 Members of this body, the United States Congress, that can choose when this war ends.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME FROM AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I join my friend from California who just spoke, and my friend from Massachusetts who spoke before him, Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. MCGOVERN.

I joined in that meeting with Lieutenant Colonel Davis. He is a very brave man. In fact, if any of my colleagues would like to read the article in *The New York Times* on Monday, the title is: "In Afghan War, Officer Becomes a Whistle-Blower," with a subtitle of "A Solo Campaign to Tell the Truth." And as my two friends who have just spoken said, the truth does matter. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ spoke the truth, and it's time that we in Congress demand the truth on this war in Afghanistan.

I think Colonel Davis is doing this country a tremendous favor by trying to say: Congress, ask the right questions. Stop listening to those who keep telling you that training the Afghan soldiers and the Afghan to be policemen is going well. I'm on the Armed Services Committee, and I've been hearing that for 10 years. You can teach a monkey to ride a bicycle sooner than 10 years. How many more young men and women have to give their legs and their arms?

Last week, I had a Marine general in my office and a Navy admiral. After we talked about the issues impacting eastern North Carolina where we have three bases, we got into this war on Afghanistan. I was telling them that the broken bodies I've seen at Walter Reed

and Bethesda—which now have been consolidated to Walter Reed at Bethesda, and I'll be there next Tuesday—I was telling them about seeing four young men that have no body parts below their waist. They're living. They would have died in Vietnam.

Medical technology has advanced to the point that a young man or young woman can live with half a body, nothing below their waist. The admiral told me of seeing a young man that he visited that has no arms or legs, no arms or legs and he's living. Uncle Sam, you've got a tremendous responsibility to take care of these heroes for the next 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years; and this Congress can't even balance the budget. No veteran from these two wars should ever be told that your check did not come in this month because Uncle Sam cannot pay his bills.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, these two little girls beside me on this poster, their father, Sergeant Balduff from Camp Lejeune, was sent to Afghanistan with Colonel Palmer from Cherry Point Marine Air Station to train Afghans to be policemen. Sergeant Balduff emailed his wife, Amy, the night before he died and said, "I don't trust them. I don't trust them. I don't trust any of them." The next night, a trainee stood up at a dinner and shot and killed the colonel and the sergeant.

To my friends who have spoken and my friends who are speaking after me, we must demand that this Congress awaken from its sleep on Afghanistan.

□ 1020

The American people are ready to bring our troops home. We don't need to wait till 2013, 2014, or 2015. We need to say to the President, Start the process this fall. It will take a year to bring them home. If you announce that you're going to bring them home this year, it will take a year before they come home.

These two little girls are standing at their father's grave at Arlington Cemetery. How many children have cried, and how many children have felt pain, and how many babies will never know their father or their mother?

To my colleagues on the other side and my colleagues on this side, let's come together. Let's end the war in Afghanistan. Karzai is a crook. Afghanistan's history said no great nation will ever conquer Afghanistan.

So, as I close, Mr. Speaker, as always, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I ask God to bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for the American people. And I ask God to please bless the President, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for the American people.

And I close by asking three times, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.