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MONDAY, JULY 11, 2005

Bush's Failure To Protect and Defend America Part II

by Michael in New York on [7/11/2005 04:30:00 AM](#)

We've already talked about some of the many, many ways Bush has weakened our military, left our borders vulnerable and simply refused to take the common sense, essential steps needed to make America safer and more secure.

Here's another infuriating way Bush has let our troops -- and therefore our country -- down. [Our crumbling, delapidated Veterans Administration hospitals.](#)

The Washington Post focuses on one hospital to tell the story of Bush's incompetence on the care of veterans. That hospital just happens to contain one of the best PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) Units in the country, one ideal for helping veterans cope with their injuries and a return to civilian life. 250,000 new veterans entered the VA system in 2004, with almost half of them coming from Iraq. Bush couldn't have guessed this would happen? Here's the result of his negligence.

According to documents released at recent meetings of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees, the VA hospital in White River Junction, Vt., was **forced to shut its operating rooms temporarily because of a lack of maintenance funds** to repair a broken heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. Hospitals in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Louisiana and eastern Texas **stopped scheduling appointments for many veterans.** The VA medical center in San Diego, with a **waiting list of 750 veterans**, diverted \$3.5 million in maintenance funds to partially cover operating expenses and delayed filling 131 vacancies for three months to cover operating expenses. The Portland, Ore., hospital delayed non-emergency surgery for at least six months, and 7,000 veterans who use the VA facility in Bay Pines, Fla., are waiting longer than 30 days for a primary care appointment.

He's not just screwing over soldiers who fought in Iraq. He's screwing over the veterans of Vietnam, Korea and World War II to boot. Bush tries to cut hazardous pay to soldiers fighting overseas, plays games with the VA budget by pretending there won't be a massive influx of wounded kids that will need intensive care, and abuses the National Guard and Reserves. How can he even pretend to support the troops?



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