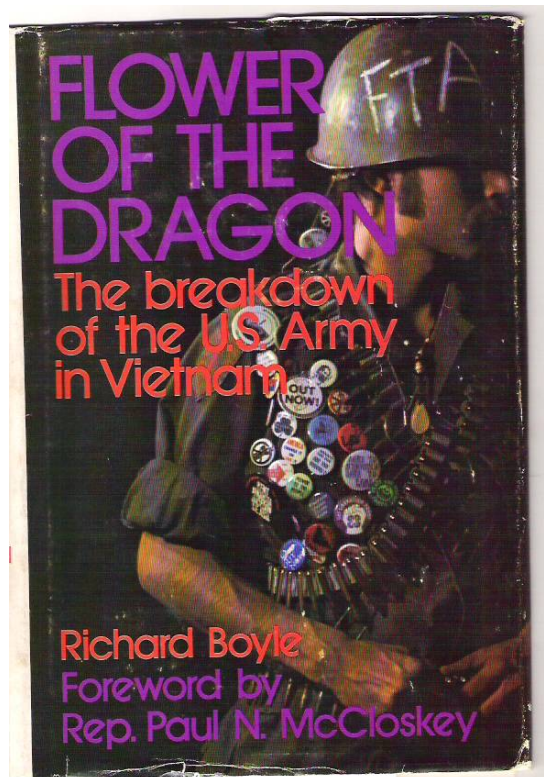


GI SPECIAL 2#C55



When Soldiers Stopped A War:

One Of Many Stories:

Fire Base Pace Has Enough

The men agreed, and passed the word to the other platoons: nobody fires unless fired upon.

As of about 1100 hours on October 10, 1971, the men of Bravo Company, 1/12, First Cav Division, declared their own private ceasefire with the North Vietnamese. For the first time since they got to Pace, it was all quiet on the Cambodian front.

Now there were no longer two sides at Pace, there were four—the lifers; the South Vietnamese, who seemed almost to be spectators; the North Vietnamese, possibly massing for a final attack; and the grunts, who, like the ARVN, were opting out.

To the grunts, it wasn't the North Vietnamese who were the enemy, it was the lifers.

McAffee knew, when he heard that grunt's bolt click, that the grunts had power. They had the machine guns, the light assault weapons. The grunts outgunned the lifers by about 30 to 1. After taking 30 percent casualties, even the artillerymen who manned the big guns had low morale. If it came down to it, most of them might join the Bravo Company rebellion rather than side with the lifers.

Grana came back from the meeting with the other platoons and reported that they now had over 50 percent of the company. They were bordering on open mutiny. The only thing that could save them now was public opinion.

"What if they try to cover this up, say it never happened?" Grana asked me.

"It's very likely." I had seen them do it before. The world of the Saigon follies was like 1984. When the South Vietnamese were routed in Laos it was a "victory." Thieu and his cohorts were the "democracy" slate.

"They'll simply say it never happened. How can you have a revolt in a unit that doesn't exist? They'll say I'm crazy, or that I made the whole story up. When it comes down to it, who do you think they'll believe," I asked, "—me, or the U.S. Army?"

"But we've gone too far. There must be a way to let the people back in the world know the truth about what's really happening here."

"Hey, man, wait a minute," said one of Al's buddies. He came back with a portable tape recorder. "It doesn't have any batteries, but maybe some of the other guys can scrounge some up."

"That's it."

"Now they can't say it didn't happen," said Al.

MORE:

Soldiers In Revolt: 1971

From: SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1975

A sure sign of the malaise within the ranks is the staggering level of desertions in recent years. **During the five peak years of Vietnam involvement, the Army desertion rate increased nearly 400 per cent, from 14.9 incidents per thousand in 1966 to 73.5 per thousand in 1971.**

During the same period, the desertion rate for the armed forces as a whole jumped threefold, from 8.4 to 33.9 per thousand.

While desertions have typically increased at the end of major wars, the massive levels of recent years are truly unprecedented. The Army's 1971 rate was three times as great as the highest Korean War levels and even surpassed the World War II maximum of 63 per thousand during 1944. **(In making such comparisons, it is important to keep in mind that, unlike those of World War II, most Vietnam-era desertions did not take place under fire, indicating that servicemen took off not because of danger but because of disgust.)**

Army desertion and AWOL rates in 1971 were the highest in modern history; seventeen AWOLs and seven desertions for every one hundred soldiers.

The significance of such figures can be seen by trying to assess their cumulative impact. The Pentagon reports that a sizable portion of AWOL incidents involve recidivists and it thus would be misleading simply to add AWOLs and desertions to find the total number of absentees. However, even assuming that half the AWOLs were repeat incidents, the total number of runaways exceeded fifteen per hundred, **meaning that at least one out of every seven soldiers went over the bill during 1971.**

Iraq Vet Michael Hoffman Speaks Against The War: Emmaus Grad Spent Two Months There With Marines



MICHAEL HOFFMAN

http://homepage.mac.com/union_county_labor/Veterans_for_Peace/PhotoAlbum89.html

Like Vietnam, said Hoffman, the only way to end the war will be for millions of Americans to get out on the streets every week and demand that it end.

December 17, 2004 By Randy Kraft, Of The Morning Call

If you have one of those magnetic "support our troops" ribbons on your car, Michael Hoffman suggests you grab a marker and add a few words: "Bring them home now."

Hoffman, who graduated from Emmaus High School in 1997, returned to the school Thursday night to speak out against the war in Iraq.

"Being against the war is the only way to be for the troops," said Hoffman. "We're doing them no good by sending them over there."

The 25-year-old Marine veteran is a co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War, a 5-month-old organization that claims 150 members, including some on active duty in Iraq. It wants the immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces from Iraq, "real" reconstruction aid for that country and properly funded and administered veterans' benefits.

"I need to make sure this stops," he said. "The honest truth needs to be told in order for this war to end. We've got to get these guys home now before another guy is killed on either side."

"This war would be over right now if people really understood the horror of it."

Like Vietnam, said Hoffman, the only way to end the war will be for millions of Americans to get out on the streets every week and demand that it end.

More than 80 people attended the program, sponsored by the school's chapter of Amnesty International. Hoffman spoke for nearly 90 minutes, taking questions from the mostly supportive audience for most of that time.

He said the primary reason we're fighting in Iraq is to get its oil. He maintained the war was never really about finding weapons of mass destruction, capturing Saddam Hussein or establishing democracy.

Hoffman served in Iraq for nearly two months during the invasion last year. He helped aim a battery of 155mm howitzers at targets 10 to 15 miles away. He never was told what they were shooting at, only given coordinates. His battery fired about 700 rounds a day, pounding its way across the country.

"Artillery is nameless and faceless," said Hoffman, adding he's haunted every day, wondering: "Who did I kill?" He knows he helped to kill innocent Iraqis.

"We haven't learned the lessons from Vietnam," said Hoffman. "Most of our enemies are average Iraqis fighting back against this occupation. We have violated their sovereignty."

If another country invaded the United States, bombing and killing innocent women and children who had nothing to do with the war until their lives were taken, "wouldn't we all be up in arms defending our country?"

He claimed the majority of troops on the ground in Iraq feel "we shouldn't be there. They don't see the point. We're not doing any good." A member of the audience disagreed, saying the military overwhelmingly supported Bush in the last election.

Hoffman said Bush went to war before the military was properly equipped. He said the administration has disregard for people who are willing to serve.

He said American soldiers are fighting only to protect their lives and the lives of their friends because someone is shooting at them.

Hoffman is the son of Rick and Susan Hoffman of Macungie. His father, who videotaped his appearance, said he is proud of his son both because of what he is doing now and because he served in a war he did not believe in.

Michael Hoffman said the United States should not abandon Iraq, but should end the military occupation. He said Iraqis can establish democracy, if they want it and if we "stop occupying them and trying to do the job for them."

[Join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)]

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

Vietnam Vet: "The Time Has Come To Take Back What Is Ours"

Our country has become everything our forefathers revolted against. Let's never forget that revolution is what made this nation, and that revolution is what can save this nation.

From: "Ward Reilly" wardpeace@hotmail.com
To: GI Special
Sent: Sunday, December 19, 2004 10:19 AM
Subject: From a old volunteer infantry vet

Just writing to say that I need help...I am in the belly of the beast, in the deepest of the deep south, and I have been fighting the fascists for so long down here....and now I need veterans-kind of help.

It has come down to this...if we do not take back what is ours, what we have earned, what so many heroic grunts have given everything for, then we are just as guilty as the rapists now feeding at the trough, known as the White House and Congress.

Only veterans can lead the way, again, and only veterans understand what it will take to save our nation.

I had 3 full years of overseas infantry duty by my 20th birthday, having volunteered for the infantry in 1971 at the age of 17. I learned from the inside about the way that our troops are used and lied to, and then mistreated and forgotten when the pigs have finished using them up, and I learned from so many combat vets the true meaning of liberty and freedom. True appreciation for what they earned for all of us.

Has anyone seen liberty and freedom anywhere in our system, anytime lately? America is not coming back home unless we lead her back home....to turn on the lights so the world can see that we do care about what is being done around the world in our names.

The time has come to take back what is ours, that which so many of our brothers and sisters gave all for, and if we don't, then we are just as bad as the sheep. It is our duty because we know what the truth is. If we don't take our nation back, then we are just as guilty as the rapists that now occupy our government in place of real patriots.

I have been organizing, writing, marching, speaking, singing, urging, and traveling non-stop for 5 years now, in a vain attempt to right the ship.

I need help. I need your help now. The neocons, and every politician like them, that sit and allow our nation to sink, have NOT been where we have been, and they have not seen what we have seen. I took a vow to die for my country if necessary, and I am standing by that oath now.

Our country has become everything our forefathers revolted against. Let's never forget that revolution is what made this nation, and that revolution is what can save this nation.

I need your help. I'm tired, but I am ready to put one foot ahead of the other, and to take back what my ancestors fought and sacrificed for, from the Battle of New Orleans, to the Argonne Forest, to my own service as an infantryman as an occupation soldier 30 years ago.

Please help me. It is something we must do, like it or not. We've slept in the mud. We humped until we couldn't hump anymore, but kept on going anyway. The U.S. Infantry trained me well.

NOW our country really needs us, even though many sit by in ignorant-splendor, without even realizing the disaster that is at hand. **Our nation is being lost. Our leaders are rapists that couldn't care less about our brothers and sisters that gave all for our**

Constitution. And now the world is turning against of, because of the actions of only a few.

We are not invulnerable. We are not almighty. The world demands that we take back control of our government, or they will do it for us, in a much more terrible way than if we do it ourselves, which is our duty.

It's time to hit the streets in a serious way.

Excuses are not allowed.

Excuses are not acceptable.

PLEASE help me.

Peace from Ward Reilly in Baton Rouge

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Kaneohe Marine Killed

December 19, 2004 By Gregg K. Kakesako, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

Sixteen Kaneohe Marines have died in Iraq this year, the latest being Lance Cpl. Franklin A. Sweger, who was killed Thursday while fighting in Al Anbar province.

His mother, Susie Hernandez, told the Associated Press that her son was depressed when he first arrived in Iraq three or four months ago.

However, Sweger, 24, of San Antonio, Texas, was more upbeat when he last talked to his family by phone two weeks ago.

"Everything's OK, mom, don't worry about me," she recalled him saying. "I think I'm going to make it."

Sweger was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, which left Kaneohe in July in what was supposed to be a seven-month training deployment to Okinawa.

Instead, the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, which the 1st Battalion is assigned to, received orders in August to reinforce the U.S. force in Iraq. The unit arrived in Iraq

in October and was part of the major house-to-house battles in Fallujah at the end of last month.

Sweger was the 51st person with Hawaii ties to die in Iraq, Kuwait or Afghanistan since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Of the 37 deaths in Iraq, 16 of them were Marines and 12 came from Schofield Barracks' 25th Infantry Division.

Hernandez said her son joined the Marines in April 2001 after having trouble in his first semester at Lamar University. He wanted to go back to school to study chemistry after completing his military obligations, she said.

"He loved science," she said.

"He studied chemistry and everything on his own since he was little. He wrote down all the definitions for everything."

In addition to his mother, he is survived by his stepfather, his father and stepmother, and two stepbrothers.

"He was always making everybody laugh," Hernandez said. "He loved everybody. He was just so full of love and laughter and joy."

Kuwait: U.S. Soldier Killed, Three Injured In Accident

19-12-2004 Al Bawaba

One U.S. soldier was killed and three injured in a traffic accident outside Kuwait City on Sunday, the U.S. military said in a statement.

The statement said the "hit and run" accident happened in the morning, and the injured soldiers were admitted to a civilian hospital.

More War In Falluja; Casualties Not Reported

19 December 2004 Aljazeera.Net

The US military has renewed its aerial assault of Falluja amid reports of fierce clashes with the city's resistance, an Iraqi journalist said.

According to independent Iraqi journalist Fadhil al-Badrani, US warplanes targeted Falluja's eastern and southern districts.

He said fierce clashes had broken out in the city centre between US forces who have been in the city since 8 November and Iraqi fighters who had infiltrated back in across the Euphrates river.

"There is no way to determine the number of casualties as US authorities have barred journalists and aid workers from entering Falluja," al-Badrani told Aljazeera.



Lance Cpl. Franklin A. Sweger, from San Antonio, Texas. Sweger, 24, died Dec. 16, 2004, as a result of enemy action in Al Anbar Province. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii. (12.18.04 AP Photo family photo via the San Antonio Express-News)

An admission of defeat:

**How Bad Is It?
Airdropped Supplies Necessary;
“Even Trucks Are Sometimes
Shipped In By Air”
Kuwait-Baghdad Highway Cut**



Using transport planes like the C-130, above, and the C-17, the Air Force is planning to expand its airlift of equipment and supplies to Iraq. (Pool photo by Maurice McDonald)

Cargo Flights Added To Cut Risky Land Trips

Flying cargo is more expensive than hauling supplies overland, **but the Air Force's decision reflects the judgment of air and ground commanders that the insurgency will continue to pose a lethal threat to American supply lines, and that extraordinary steps must be taken to ensure the safe flow of cargo and to reduce casualties. [Which means the occupation command admits there is nothing whatever they can do to alter the balance of forces. This is admission of defeat.]**

December 15, 2004 By ERIC SCHMITT, New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 - **Responding to the threat of roadside bombings and ambushes of American ground convoys in Iraq, the Air Force is sharply expanding its airlift of equipment and supplies to bases inside the country** to reduce the amount of military cargo hauled over land routes, Air Force officials said Tuesday.

Dozens of Air Force C-130 and C-17 transport planes, and contracted commercial aircraft, are ferrying about 450 tons of cargo a day, including spare parts, food, water, medical supplies and other matériel that normally moves by truck or trailer, **a 29 percent increase in the past month.**

Even trucks are sometimes shipped in by air.

In just the past month, the increased air operations have kept more than 400 trucks and about 1,050 drivers with military escorts off the most dangerous roads in Iraq, said an Air Force spokesman, Lt. Col. Mike Caldwell. **American military convoys have been suffering about 100 deaths and injuries a month.**

The increased airlift operations started in early November at the urging of Gen. John P. Jumper, the Air Force chief of staff, who told reporters on Tuesday that he threw "a little fit" when he learned on a visit to Iraq last month that air and ground commanders were not sufficiently focused on finding ways the Air Force could reduce

the number of ground convoys, especially in the treacherous Sunni-dominated areas north and west of Baghdad.

Flying cargo is more expensive than hauling supplies overland, but the Air Force's decision reflects the judgment of air and ground commanders that the insurgency will continue to pose a lethal threat to American supply lines, and that extraordinary steps must be taken to ensure the safe flow of cargo and to reduce casualties.

General Jumper's comments reinforce the concern that military personnel, from troops in the field to members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are expressing over one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq.

The stepped-up airlift operations were first reported Sunday by The Washington Post. General Jumper and other Air Force officials gave new details on Tuesday.

Until early November the military was operating an average of 215 convoys and 3,000 vehicles a day.

Highway From Kuwait To Baghdad Cut By Resistance

He said the Air Force would be flying what had been carried over the riskiest routes. In the last month, for instance, the Air Force has flown 44 six-ton armored Humvees to Baghdad from Kuwait, saving the Army from making trips over dangerous highways and roads, Colonel Caldwell said.

Instead of flying only to major bases, like Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad, and trucking supplies to outlying areas from there, the Air Force will now fly directly to more remote bases, Colonel Caldwell said.

General Jumper also said he would not rule out the possibility of airdrops or landing on roadways if needed. He acknowledged that the new operations would add fuel costs and other expenses to the \$4.4 billion monthly price tag of the Iraq operation.

Aside from its cost, the increased airlift effort poses greater risk to pilots and crew members from surface-to-air missiles, including shoulder-fired rockets. Cargo plane pilots in Iraq routinely use evasive tactics, including flying low and fast. "Yes, there'll be increased SAM threats to C-130's, you bet," General Jumper said. "But you also have 100 casualties a month in convoys."

He said he had also encouraged commanders in Iraq to examine other ways to cut down on convoys. He said, for instance, that he was surprised to learn that 30 percent of convoy cargo was bottled water, and he suggested that the military look for more local water suppliers.

He said it should come as no shock that he, as a senior Air Force general and former fighter pilot, was scrutinizing the Army ground convoys. Because of the shortage of Army truck drivers, the Air Force has lent many from its own ranks to the motor pool.

"We have 2,000 airmen driving trucks for U.S. Army," General Jumper said. "We have a vested interest in this."

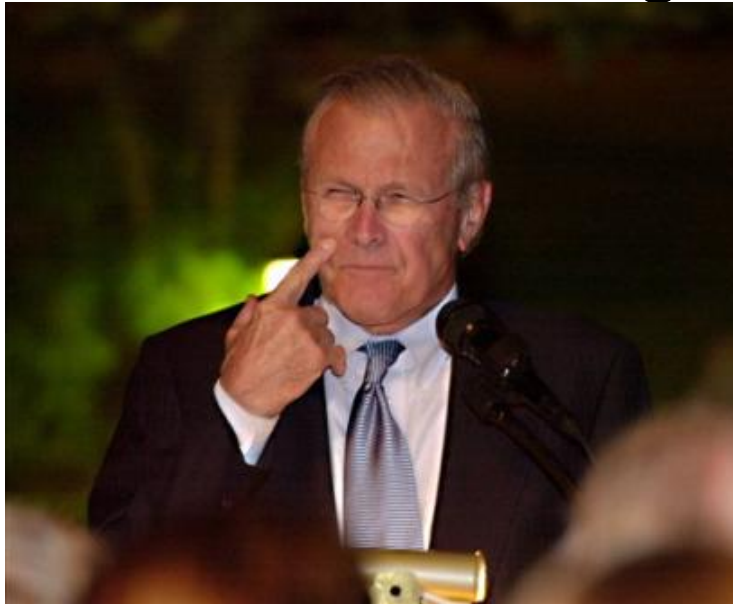
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans' benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

TROOP NEWS

Dead Man Walking



November 11, 2004. AP Photo/Luis Romero)

"He has absolutely no credibility with the soldiers anymore, and remember they are the ones who are out there pulling the triggers."

Dec. 17, 2004 By Drew Brown, Knight Ridder Newspapers

Retired Gen. Barry McCaffrey, who led the 24th Infantry Division to victory in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, related a story about a young Marine he visited Thursday at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The Marine, who lost a leg in Iraq, was upbeat and blunt.

"Sir, I just have three stripes, and not three stars, but I do not understand why we don't use tanks and armored vehicles. Those people are killing us with our tactics and lack of armor," McCaffrey recalled the man saying.

"Rumsfeld is a disaster for our national security," McCaffrey said. "He is starting to unravel, forgets what he has been told. Staff that surrounds him filters and blocks to prevent the backlash on bad news."

"I can see how that specialist might perceive it as arrogant and essentially saying, 'I don't care whether you live or die,'" said retired Maj. Gen. Robert Hughes, deputy commander of 1st Army (Reserve) from 2001 to 2004.

"He has absolutely no credibility with the soldiers anymore, and remember they are the ones who are out there pulling the triggers."

Andrew Krepinevich, a former Army colonel who's now the head of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, once a strong advocate of reshaping the military force along the lines Rumsfeld envisions, said Rumsfeld's problems would only multiply as the Iraqi insurgency continued.

"As this goes on and on, and the stress on the force increases, and troops are increasingly willing to speak out, I think you have a perfect storm here in terms of coalescing factors that are putting pressure on Rumsfeld," he said.

"I give him until June," said a senior administration official, who requested anonymity because the president supports Rumsfeld.

"Until Kuwait, he was protected by the fact that criticism of him seemed like criticism of the troops. Now you can criticize him and still be on the side of the troops. Now the war planning, the problems fighting the insurgency and the command climate that led to Abu Ghraib are all fair game."

Lawmakers Slap Rumsfeld For Fake Sympathy Letters

Dec 19, 2004 By Jackie Frank, WASHINGTON (Reuters)

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld did not personally sign his name on letters of condolence to families of troops killed in Iraq but instead had it done by a machine, an action lawmakers said on Sunday showed insensitivity and was inappropriate for leadership during war.

Rumsfeld acknowledged that he had not signed the letters to family members of more than 1,000 U.S. troops killed in action and in a statement said he would now sign them in his own hand. **"While I have not individually signed each one, in the interest of ensuring expeditious contact with grieving family members,** I have directed that in the future I sign each letter." **[Always the lying bullshit.]**

"This issue of the secretary of Defense not personally signing the letters is just astounding to me and it does reflect how out of touch they are and how dismissive they are," **Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel said** on CBS's "Face the Nation."

"I have no confidence in Rumsfeld," Hagel added.

"To me it's an insult, not only as someone who lost a loved one but also as someone who served in Iraq," **Army Spc. Ivan Medina** whose brother Irving was killed in Iraq this summer, told the newspaper.

“We Feel Like Sitting Ducks”

Dec. 12, 2004 By ANGELA K. BROWN, Associated Press

TEMPLE - After spending three months in Iraq, it's not memories of the 120-degree heat or sounds of distant explosions that haunt psychiatrist Paul Hill.

It's the soldiers: a young man who showed up at Hill's makeshift office with his uniform and boots still splattered with his friend's blood, another shaken after seeing his friend decapitated during a convoy bombing.

Hill said he was a bit surprised by his sometimes tearful reactions to their stories. After all, he thought he had seen it all in his 71 years < from his 20 years in the Army, including a year in Vietnam, to working 30 years as a psychiatrist, sometimes treating older veterans.

"People over here have no idea how much stress these guys are under," said Hill, who returned to Central Texas in November. "An awful lot of these soldiers are on the road every day, and it would be unusual not to get shot at. ... They said, 'We feel like sitting ducks.' "

"One mother said (of her deceased son), 'His body came home, and we buried it. A week later another piece came home, and we buried it. A week later another piece came home, and we buried that too.' They were really ripped apart by that (rocket propelled grenade)." (December 19, 2004. Eric Steinkopff, Daily News Staff)

British Army Blames Iraq & Anti-War Movement For Drop In Recruits

December 19, 2004 Lorna Martin, Scotland editor, The Observer

Senior army commanders have expressed fears that the increasingly vocal anti-Iraq war movement is discouraging thousands of young men from considering a career in the armed forces.

They blame high-profile campaigns against the war, often led by bereaved parents and supported by celebrities and political figures, for worsening recruitment problems, particularly into the infantry.

According to military sources the high media visibility of bereaved parents, such as Rose Gentle, whose 19-year-old son was killed, and the unpopularity of the war have made recruitment and retention a problem, exacerbating an already acute recruitment crisis in areas such as Scotland. The problem is now also spreading to the north of England and Wales, forces officials say.

As well as a shortfall in young men volunteering, army officers have reported a wider reluctance to support a career in the army with parents refusing to sign consent forms for junior soldiers to sign up and, in some cases, local authorities with a strong anti-war sentiment refusing permission for recruitment officers to put up stands at local venues.

According to army sources the problem is also evident in the Territorial Army which has bolstered the regular Army's ranks in Iraq.

'People join the Territorials for a hobby,' said another source. 'They don't expect to end up being sent to Iraq for six months, taking casualties and seeing a lot of killing. There is no end in sight to the war in Iraq. That is what is really putting people off.'

GET THE MESSAGE?



A British soldier scans the area during a patrol near a prison in the Iraqi southern city of Basra. (AFP/Essam al-Sudani)

Fuck The Armor, General Myers OKs Sending Stuffed Animal Toys To Troops



[Thanks to John G., who sent this item in.]

12.7.04 Morning Report, Village Voice

Reinforcements are on the way to chaotic Iraq.

The Pentagon, hoping to promote warm and fuzzy feelings here and abroad, is shipping more than 28,000 stuffed animals to soldiers there and elsewhere overseas as part of Operation Grateful.

Arizona schoolgirl Alison Goulder already has the approval of General Richard "Quag" Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for her roundup of thousands of dolls from the play areas of American homes. She also has the full support of Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. (See photo).

Operation Grateful was set up by Greenberg Traurig, the powerful D.C. firm of lawyers and lobbyists that was the HQ of Bush fundraiser/pal Jack Abramoff.

Not a word of protest has been heard from the stuffed animals heading to Iraq—unlike human soldiers such as Donald Qualls who are being kept on active duty despite their protests and lawsuits.

Military Sees Sharp Fall In Black Recruits: "Bush Has Two Daughters. Let Them Go Over And Fight"

18/12/2004 news.telegraph.

Dolly Wilson's father proudly served in the Second World War and her husband in Vietnam. But her children will not join the military if she has any say in it.

"We don't want our kids to go into no war for nothing," said Mrs Wilson, snatching a cigarette with colleagues outside her Washington office.

"Bush has two daughters. Let them go over and fight," she added, to a chorus of "That's not our war" from the others.

James Golladay served in the US coastguard, but would discourage his two teenagers if they came home talking about enlisting. "I wouldn't want them to experience anything like that," he said, as he passed a US army recruiting office on 14th Street, Washington.

Constance Allen's husband, grandfather, uncle and son all served, but she would "never" let her grandson join up.

Mrs Wilson, Mr Golladay and Mrs Allen are not typical of America as a whole. But their views are enough to give the Pentagon cause for alarm. The reason? All three of them are black.

For years, black Americans have formed the backbone of the all-volunteer US army, filling a quarter of its ranks, though blacks account for only 13 per cent of the population.

But the proportion of black recruits into the army was only 15.6 per cent, down from 22.3 per cent in the fiscal year 2001. In the part-time army reserve, the drop is sharper.

That hostility increased exponentially with the invasion of Iraq, which was opposed by a large majority of black Americans, amid suspicion over the reasons given for toppling Saddam Hussein and anger at billions of dollars spent overseas, rather than at home.

Mrs Allen pointed to the rain-lashed streets of Washington, a large, poor, mainly black city that also happens to be the nation's capital.

"You've got so many homeless people here, they were in the military, half of them. You look at that, people ask, 'Why should I go fight the white man's war when there's nothing for us here?' " she said.

Pentagon statistics from 2003 back him up, showing that 67 per cent of black soldiers served in support or rearguard units, working as technicians, medical assistants, clerks or cooks. Only 16 per cent of black soldiers were in combat units.

Asked why blacks chose rear-line units, Mr Golloday answered: "People looked to the military as a way of receiving benefits. People want to transition into a civilian life later. Being a chief gunner isn't something that people will pay a lot for." Then he laughed, and added: "And they don't want to die."

Kayla Roach, a black woman, said: "I know families whose kids want to join the military, and their parents are saying no. Maybe they have just one or two children and it's scary to them."

The perception has spread among black Americans that in the war on terrorism, rear-line units are as vulnerable as front-line infantry squads.

To Mr Golladay, the military is not the problem. "People join understanding that they might go to war," he said. "But this war now, I feel it's unnecessary."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



Iraqis from Fallujah chant slogans under a banner that reads: 'Save our brothers. Save our history,' during a demonstration in Baghdad to demand the return to their devastated city. (12.19.04 AFP/Ahmad Al-Rubaye)

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION
BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!**

Occupation Cop Officer Killed In Fighting Near Basra

2004/12/19 BASRA, Iraq (AP)

Iraqi police said an officer has been killed during clashes between coalition forces and insurgents near the southern city of Basra, police said Sunday.

Lt. Col. Karim al-Zaidi said a police captain was shot dead Friday at 6 p.m. after being caught in the cross-fire between British soldiers and Iraqi insurgents during clashes in Zubayr, just west of Basra, Iraq's second-largest city.

A British military spokesman, Squadron Leader Steve Dharamraj, said an investigation is underway into an incident on the same day at the same time involving "a multinational convoy and a civilian vehicle."

Resistance Takes Over Baghdad Street; Sets Up Checkpoints: Three Occupation Government Workers Killed

19 December 2004 Aljazeera.Net & AP By PAUL GARWOOD & By Haider Salaheddin, Reuters

In the capital, witnesses said an armed group fired on a police car as it drove through central Baghdad on Sunday, then dragged three passengers from the vehicle and shot them dead. The vehicle was then set on fire. About 30 militants hurling hand grenades and firing machine guns attacked the car.

Witnesses said the people pulled from the car were wearing civilian clothes although they were travelling in a police car.

A spokesman for the Electoral Commission, Farid Ayar, said the three were staff members from an Iraqi elections office.

The attack occurred in Haifa Street, a major thoroughfare in downtown Baghdad that has become a focal point of attacks.

Fighters armed with AK-47 assault rifles and pistols then set up a roadblock on the street, stopping and searching every car that passed, pointing their guns in through the windows, the witnesses said. Some scenes were filmed by Reuters Television.

There were no police or US forces in the area. The police source said units were unable to get to the scene. Fierce gunbattles ensued, witnesses said, as police tried for several hours to get to the scene of the attack.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

10 Employees Of U.S. Imperial Predator Firm Captured; Execution Threatened For Corporation That Boasts Of Its Ability At Execution

December 19, 2004 AP & By Haider Salaheddin, Reuters

Iraqi insurgents have released a video threatening to kill 10 Iraqis working for an American company if the firm doesn't leave the country.

On the tape obtained by Associated Press Television News, a masked man claims to represent three Iraqi militant groups, and threatens to kill the employees of the Washington-based Sandi Group, and anyone who cooperates with it.

The tape also showed at least four insurgents with their faces covered by traditional Arab head scarves and posing with machine guns. They appear to be holding nine blindfolded hostages. The captives are lined up against a stone wall and a 10th is lying in a bed, apparently wounded.

"The company supplies tanks which are used in fighting," the blindfolded hostage said. "I urge everyone not to work for the Americans or to help the (Iraqi) government."

Sandi Group employs 7,000 people in Iraq.

[Who is Sandi Group, you may ask? Here's only part of the blurb from their website announcing how great they are at making money off Iraq's misery:]

"We offer a focused and complementary menu of services to allow multi-national companies and foreign investors to thrive in this environment. **Our customers can rely on our execution skills** and professionalism to deliver solutions to the challenges of Iraq, whatever their needs. At the same time, The Sandi Group is investing in facilities

that complement these services, especially in the hotel sector."
<http://www.thesandigroup.com/>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"Blaming the troops for war is like blaming a waiter for something the cook did."
Vietnam Veterans Against The War

Iraq Is Not Like Vietnam

Kevin Thomson – November 27, 2004

No, Iraq is unlike Vietnam. It is much worse than Vietnam militarily.

During the Vietnam War, American facilities in the capital of Saigon were usually safe and rarely attacked. In contrast, the Green Zone in Baghdad, the symbol of American occupation, is mortared almost daily.

Along the 6-mile-long highway from Baghdad International Airport to the Green Zone, numerous military personnel and civilian contractors were killed or wounded. The Green Zone is like a prison for Americans and Iraqi puppets, hiding behind layers of blast walls and other fortifications.

No, Iraq is unlike Vietnam. Vietnam was just a quagmire. Iraq is turning into an inferno.

The only victory by our military is its successful media control.

OCCUPATION REPORT

“Democracy” U.S. Occupation Style: Run For Office Or Stay In Prison

19 December 2004 Aljazeera.Net

Shaikh Fakhri al-Qaisi, secretary-general of the Supreme Association for Guidance and Dawaa, told Aljazeera: "The association, through this mosque, one of the most prominent in Iraq, completely rejects the occupation of the country," al-Qaisi said.

"One of the arrested members of the association has been recently released," al-Qaisi said. "He told us that US forces have set conditions for the release of Shaikh Mahdi al-Sumaidai, saying they will not release him unless he runs in the elections."

"We learnt that Shaikh Mahdi is under pressure and is now in solitary confinement at the airport," al-Qaisi said.

"US forces want a public announcement from him, stating that he accepts the elections. In return, they will financially and emotionally support him," he said. "However, he has remained firm, rejecting the offer entirely."

On 11 November, US-led troops raided the same mosque and arrested the head of the Dawa Association, Shaikh Mahdi al-Sumaidai and about two dozen others.

Local “Non-National Guards” Makes Iraqis Puke

<p>Iraqis have developed a play on words to insult them: their Arabic name is al-Haras al-Watani but for many they have become al-Haras al-Wathani -- the Heathen Guard.</p>

Dec 16 By Omar Anwar, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

When the U.S. military looks at Iraq's 40,000-strong National Guard, it sees an exit strategy. **What Iraqis often see instead is an ill-disciplined rabble many regard as more foe than friend.**

The animosity stems in large part from the fact National Guard soldiers wear a camouflage uniform similar to the Americans and, being U.S.-trained, have picked up attitudes and habits many Iraqis associate with the disliked U.S. military.

"Are the National Guards wearing the same uniform as the occupiers?" Sheikh Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor al-Sammerai, a preacher at Baghdad's Um al-Qura mosque, asked the faithful recently.

"They fire randomly at people," said Sammerai, who also accused a National Guard trooper of shooting dead one of his bodyguards while he was queuing for petrol.

"Is the blood of Iraqis that cheap? Who is responsible for this bloodshed? Many children, young men, old men, and women have died from random shooting for no reason," he said.

Most have received only limited training, and even if they have had that, the courses do not involve lessons in restraint of force or basic civil rights, one U.S. trainer said.

There are no precise figures, but it is estimated more than 1,000 National Guards and even more police have been killed in the 18-month insurgency.

"They cover their faces and rank because they are afraid. Officers in the past showed off their ranks and were proud to be officers," said a woman civil servant, who refers to them as the "non-National Guards," doubting their patriotism.

Rasool Noori, an unemployed 22-year-old, said he had witnessed Guards firing warning shots to prevent drivers and pedestrians approaching their convoys, like the Americans do.

"Most of the guardsmen were laborers and streetsellers before joining the National Guard," said Noori. "They are Iraqis like us, but they act like the Americans. They lack morals."

Iraq's Defense Minister Hazim al-Shaalan, whose department is responsible for the National Guard, has admitted incidents of ill-disciplined Guards insulting their commanders.

Iraqis have developed a play on words to insult them: their Arabic name is al-Haras al-Watani but for many they have become al-Haras al-Wathani -- the Heathen Guard.

OCCUPATION HAITI

Massive Protest Demanding Aristide's Return In Haiti's Second Largest City

December 16, 2004 Cap Haitien, Haiti (HIP)

On the anniversary of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's first electoral landslide in 1990, more than 10,000 Haitians took to the streets of Haiti's second largest city to demand his return and an end to repression against his Lavalas political party.

Following earlier negotiations with Chilean troops of the United Nations and the Haitian National Police (PNH), an agreement was reached with organizers to provide security for the peaceful demonstration.

One organizer stated, "Although we see the UN and the police allowing us to demonstrate peacefully today for the return of our president in Cap Haitien, we have no illusions that their role could turn repressive once again. Even though we are happy for

their cooperation today, we cannot forget it was the same UN that stood by and allowed the police to kill unarmed demonstrators in the capital on September 30th. It is the same UN that has allowed the illegal government of Gerard Latortue to fill the prisons with Lavalas and has allowed the former military to return and kill us."



Chanting "Aristide must return!" and "We will never accept the kidnapping of our president!" thousands of residents poured from the poor neighborhoods of Cap Haitien to join the demonstration.

The massive crowd broke into frenzy at the monument of Vetiere, which commemorates the defeat of the Napoleon's armies in 1804, when Moise Jean-Charles joined them. Jean-Charles is the founder of a local peasant movement called Movement of Milot Peasants (MPM) and the former popular mayor of the town of Milot

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Check out: www.talibancountry.com

Received:

[Thanks to Z, who sent these in.]

A day will come when a cannon will be exhibited in museums, just as instruments of torture are now, and the people will be astonished that such a thing could have been.
~Victor Hugo

You can't say civilization don't advance, however, for in every war they kill you in a new way.

~Will Rogers, *New York Times*, 23 December 1929

When the rich wage war, it's the poor who die.

~Jean-Paul Sartre

War hath no fury like a noncombatant.

~Charles Edward Montague, *Disenchantment*

Militarism weighs like lead on our whole life. But it is especially an economic weight, a pressure under which our economic life groans, a vampire which constantly, year after year, sucks the blood of the economy by drawing the strength of the nation away from productive and cultural work, as well as by the direct effect of its insane cost.

~Karl Liebknecht, 1907, *Militarism & Anti-Militarism*

The mad delusions about the "holy aims" of the war have given way more and more, the enthusiasm for the war has dwindled, the will for a rapid peace has grown powerfully all over – even in the Army!

~Karl Liebknecht, 1915, *The Main Enemy Is At Home!*

Iraq Plunder Promoter Targeted Again!

December 16th 2004. From: Ewa Jasiewicz, England

Four anti-war activists dressed in business suits entered and occupied the building housing Iraq plunder-promoters Windrush Communications yesterday.

Windrush Communications organise conferences which allow for the sell-off of Iraq's assets, properties and resources – all in contravention of international law.

These conferences amount to organised pillage and lay the groundwork for the stealing of the futures, possibilities and potential of generations of Iraqis to come. The last two were held in Jordan in November and London last April. The next is taking place in Jordan again in June.

These conferences are indispensable to the looting of Iraq; they manage the bomb-paved corporate gold-rush; they form an integral part of the free market fundamentalist crusade ripping through Iraq. These conferences are sponsored by arms dealers, mercenaries and oil giants such as Erinys, Raytheon, Shell, Chevron and Bayer.

The survival of these war profiteers depends on death, destruction and perpetual war. As a result, Iraq Procurement conferences and their supporting trade events, despite their luxury hotel locations, eloquent presentations, soft chatter and safety, socialising and champagne, are incredibly violent.

The activists, two women and two men, made their way up to the top floor, where Windrush have a low-profile office space with a plain brown wooden door and no plaque to denote their presence. Employees refused to answer the door despite the protestors insisting on a meeting to show them the international laws they were breaking and the illegality of Order 39 on Foreign Investment passed by the occupation. Each activist had a copy.

A legal briefing was pushed under the door and pictures of the effects of the ongoing massacre in Fallujah were stuck on the surrounding walls and door.

Police were called, at which point the activists asked them to launch a criminal investigation into the activities of Windrush.

Asked to leave, the activists refused and occupied the landing outside the office for three hours, depriving employees of their lunch break and causing them considerable irritation.

Activists repeatedly quoted Hague Regulations and Geneva Conventions at the employees and referred to their activity as plunder. One employee, at around 2.30pm was heard exclaiming 'My body wasn't made for no food!' to which one of the protestors replied, 'Neither were the kids starving now in Fallujah'.

Four squad cars, two vans and over 25 police were called to the scene. The protestors despite multiple warnings were arrested for 'Aggravated Trespass' - the same charge levied at two activists who disrupted April's Iraq Procurement Conference in April. Those charges were later dropped and the defendants acquitted a few weeks ago in what was understood as a politically motivated decision.

Neither the government nor Windrush want to face up to the fact that that their work, their conferences and the orders they are following are illegal and amount to war crimes.

A group of four police officers had to physically carry each protestor down four flights of stairs and out across the square and into waiting vans following the arrests.

Meanwhile a successful protest picket carried on outside with participants dressed as pirates engaging not just members of the public but employees sharing office space with Windrush Communications.

Many were shocked to hear who they were sharing a building with. School kids were also totally on-side and joined the picket, reading the info leaflets with great interest. Action pics can be viewed at: <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2004/12/302836.html>

After being held for over eight hours and remaining silent during CID conducted interviews at Shoreditch police station all four protestors were released without charge (bailed to return in January). The decision not to press charges proves again that Windrush are running scared and afraid of negative publicity and the legal consequences of their unlawful activity.

VICTORY!

Anti-War Protestors 2; Plunder Promoters 0

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/> ; www.gifightback.org ;

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>,

www.williambowles.info/gispecial

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