

GI SPECIAL 3A82:

**THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW.**



In the cargo hold of a C-17 aircraft, soldiers treated at Balad Air Base await evacuation to Landstuhl. Photographed Nov. 13, 2004, during a mortar attack. Red lights indicate "contingency situations." Lynsey Addario/Corbis/The New York Times Company

“Dear Dawnmarie”

From: Brooke M. Campbell
To: GI Special
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2005 1:54 PM
Subject: Dear Dawnmarie from Brooke Campbell

Dear Dawnmarie,

Your story [GI Special 3A81: David Beals Prepares To Return To Iraq Haunted By Post Traumatic Stress Disorder And A Suicide Attempt] was forwarded to me by the Georgia chapter of Military Families Speak Out, of which I am a member.

I lost my little brother, Sgt. Ryan Campbell, in Baghdad on April 29 of last year.

Ever since then, I have been trying to speak out as much and as loudly as I can against this senseless war and its chief advocates.

His best friend is over there now with the 3rd ID. I am studying at Emory in Atlanta right now, but graduated from high school and then returned to teach high school in Savannah for two years.

I am so sorry that you and your husband and family have to endure such terrible treatment.

I hope that you will consider joining our group and continuing to speak out on behalf of families and soldiers we know and love.

In solidarity, Brooke Campbell bmcampb@emory.edu

MORE:

**From: Denise Thomas
To: GI Special
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2005 2:37 PM
Subject: Dawnmarie Beals**

I was made aware of Dawnmarie and David's situation by Desmond Gardfrey of Students for Peace and Justice at Georgia State U.

We have recently started a Georgia chapter of Military Families Speak Out and would like to know if Dawnmarie would like to join us.

Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) is composed of family members of the military who are opposed to the Iraq war. **If she does not wish to join, we are still here to provide moral support.**

Please ask her how we can be of help to her. Many of us have been through or are going through similar circumstances and we want her to know that our thoughts and prayers are with her. Please give her my information:

**Denise Thomas
678 887-9047
LadyAcappella@myway.com**

She can also contact me through my website. There is a wife and mother from Idaho *AND* a WWII veteran from Michigan who are now contributors to the site. She will find stories there of people in similar circumstances. The site is not a part of MFSO, but we all work together:

[Save-Our-Soldiers](#)

We're looking forward to hearing from her.

Yours in Peace,

Denise Thomas

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. 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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Increasing Numbers Of Mercenaries Slaughtered In Iraq

March 25, 2005 By Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

"Regardless of the good news and spin from the Iraqi election, the figures show the corner hasn't yet been turned," said Peter Singer, a Brookings analyst who has written on the military's use of private contractors.

Titan Corp. had at least 131 personnel or subcontractors killed in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion - the most for any contractor, according to the Labor Department.

There are no reliable figures for the number of contractors in Iraq. **The Pentagon last year told Missouri Rep. Ike Skelton that about 20,000 personnel were employed by firms providing physical security.**

The dead numbered 15 in 2003 and at least 116 since 2004. Halliburton Co. units had the second-highest death toll - 61 - including 26 employees and 35 subcontractors. An Iraqi subcontractor for Environmental Chemical Corp., which cleans up ammunition sites, had the third-highest casualties - 22.

Overall, there have been at least 273 contractor deaths, including 23 in 2003, 209 last year and 41 so far this year, according to Labor Department figures. That's over 50 percent more than the 173 deaths of U.K. and allied troops, according to figures compiled by the Brookings Institution in Washington.

"Regardless of the good news and spin from the Iraqi election, the figures show the corner hasn't yet been turned," said Peter Singer, a Brookings analyst who has written on the military's use of private contractors.

"Iraq is just as dangerous as ever, both for U.S. soldiers and for contractors," he said. As of Thursday, 1,519 U.S. personnel have died in Iraq - 139 during the invasion.

"These figures suggest that while contractor deaths were about 5 percent of the 2003's military casualties, they represent about 25 percent of both 2004 and 2005's," said Deborah Avant, associate professor of political science at George Washington University, who has also studied contractor use in Iraq.

"Either contractors are doing more dangerous things or there were more contractors in the theater in 2004," she said.

Titan spokesman Wil Williams, citing security and personnel reasons, declined to comment on the company's deaths.

TROOP NEWS

Officer's Death After Iraq Tour Puzzles Doctors: Family Says Army Captain From Charleston Hiccapped Constantly; Womack Hospital Liar Trying To Hide Medical Records From Family

From: Marcie C, www.acinetobacter.org
To: GI Special
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2005 11:12 AM
Subject: Another soldier dies of mysterious illness

Marcie C here. I have gotten a few excellent responses through your posting of my letter on GI Special. I will share what is going on soon.

In the meantime I wonder how long it will take for this one to be forgotten, or maybe even never brought up beyond this article?

"To announce that there must be no criticism of the president, or that we are to stand by the president, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public." — President Theodore Roosevelt

Mar. 27, 2005 The State.com (South Carolina)

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. — The family of a Fort Bragg officer recently back from Iraq says Capt. Terrance Wright seemed to hiccup almost constantly for weeks before he died this month.

The Army said Wright died of an unknown illness shortly after returning from Iraq in February. His body was found in a Fayetteville motel room March 2.

Wright's mother, Sandra Wright, and an aunt, Karen Wright, said Wright had been a healthy 33-year-old before he deployed to Iraq in November. **It was his second tour in Iraq.**

Karen Wright said she spoke to her nephew in Iraq in early February. "He could not speak one sentence without hiccuping," she said.

Wright was seen by doctors in Germany and at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C., before being sent to a doctor at Womack Army Medical Center on Fort Bragg last month, said Capt. Kevin Broadnax, an Army casualty assistance officer.

Federal privacy laws bar the Army from saying why Wright was seen at Womack, hospital spokeswoman Shannon Lynch said. An autopsy performed by Womack doctors was inconclusive, Lynch said.

[Lie, lie, lie. After death, the immediate family has the legal right to all medical records of the deceased. Make the liars of Womack Hospital eat their fucking lies. Raise hell. Let there be a shitstorm on the head of hospital liar Shannon Lynch. This is a coverup. How do you think families get the records to sue incompetent doctors for malpractice? Why, they have the right to every scrap of medical records about the next of kin. Don't let Lynch or Womack Hospital get away with this slimy bullshit. And watch out for hospital attempts to only supply part of the hospital records, leaving out the ones that count. U.S. hospitals kill about 44,000 people a year by accident. I know. I work in one. T.]

Karen Wright said she talked to her nephew again on Feb. 17 while he was at Walter Reed. Again, he "hiccuped constantly" but didn't complain about anything, she said. She said she next spoke to him Feb. 19, when he called from Fayetteville to say he would catch a train the next day to his native Charleston. **[And don't forget the records from Walter Reed. And no, they have no right whatever to withhold them either. If they try the old "national security" smoke screen, nail their ass to the wall along with the Womack liars.]**

Wright spent three days in Charleston, his mother said. He hiccuped the entire time and looked “weak in the eyes,” Karen Wright said.

The officer returned to Fayetteville and checked into a motel on Feb. 24. A motel clerk said she knew Wright because he had stayed there before. The clerk said Wright looked tired when she saw him last.

Karen Wright said the last time anybody reported seeing the officer was Feb. 25, five days before his body was found.

Karen and Sandra Wright described Capt. Wright as a quiet, soft-spoken man who rarely complained.

Wright’s death follows the deaths of two North Carolina soldiers who died after returning from the Middle East and experiencing flu-like symptoms.

“You Want The Truth?” **Iraq Veterans Against The War** **Got Some, If You Can Handle It**

“I know that when I was in Iraq, I just really loved it whenever I heard someone speaking out against the war and calling for the troops to come home. I hoped they would be successful. Today we’re still working at it, but I personally saw that as the most support someone could give us—to get us out of harm’s way.”

Kelly Dougherty

[Unpublished interview by Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker newspaper reporter, at Fayetteville, March 19, 2005. Thanks to Eric.]

Kelly Dougherty, Colorado Army National Guard, served in Iraq from April 2003-February 2004:

I can say that from my own experience with my unit that was a military police company, we were unable to make any positive change in Iraq, and it really seemed like we were ineffectual because the problems the Iraqi people were facing many times were things that we couldn’t deal with on our level.

We had people tell us that they found all these bullets unexploded in a field, and that children played with them and they got their hand blown off. They asked if we could clean up the field. And we said, “Well we’re not in charge of that, we can try to tell someone else about it.” Or someone would come and say an Army semi-truck just hit my car and destroyed it. Are you going to compensate me for it? And we’d say, “Well it wasn’t our unit so I don’t know what we can do.

What good things could we do? We could give candy to little kids.

But I don't really think that's really that great of a thing. Although it might have made us feel good, it wasn't changing any situation.

One of the most frustrating things was when a fuel tanker or another car owned by Halliburton would break down, we would have to go and secure it to keep the Iraqis from looting it.

And we'd call them and ask for the corporation to send a tow truck or recovery asset to get the vehicle.

And they would always call back after several hours, while we were fighting against crowds of Iraqi people where violence often ensued, and say, "I'm sorry. We can't send anything. Just leave the vehicle or destroy the vehicle."

It was very frustrating to us because we were over there, we were supposed to be "spreading freedom" and helping the Iraqi people, yet day after day, what we were doing was burning fuel tankers in front of people who don't have fuel, don't have clean water, or electricity or food.

I could sense that there was a growing hostility towards us from the Iraqis. When they saw us doing this, not only was it confounding to them—why would we destroy something that was of so much value—but it also made them angry.

We came, and we were destroying their cities, running over their children with our vehicles.

And at the same time we were destroying right in front of their faces the very things that they didn't have that they needed to survive.

Asked what she would say to people who say it's irresponsible to just pull out:

It's irresponsible to say that we're going to go to war, we're going to make up the reasons and sell it to the American people as the truth when we know it's a lie, and once our lies get exposed, we're going to try to change the reasons for the war to continue it.

It's not in the interests of the Iraqi people, and the war is not beneficial to the average working class or middle-class person who's serving in the military. It's detrimental, it's ruining lives.

The most responsible thing to say is we need to leave Iraq. We're not in there for the right reasons, we're not having a beneficial impact, we're only creating more violence.

I know that when I was in Iraq, I just really loved it whenever I heard someone speaking out against the war and calling for the troops to come home. I hoped they would be successful. Today we're still working at it, but I personally saw that as the most support someone could give us—to get us out of harm's way.

The way that I see the situation is that we do have a responsibility to the Iraqi people, but we can't do something good for the Iraqi people when the main problem they're facing is our presence there as an occupying army.

That's why I feel that the responsible thing to do is to withdraw the troops. That's not abandoning the Iraqi people. I am not saying we shouldn't give them anything.

I'm saying we should give them what they need—aid and assistance—but not in a military form.

Many people feel that the Iraqi people without us would go crazy and not be able to function. But Iraq is the cradle of civilization. They have a lot of experience with culture and building a functioning society. They're educated people just like us, and they're capable if given the opportunity and the resources.

When I was there, I saw violence against Iraqis—both intentional and unintentional, just accidents that happen when you have 150,000 troops in a country.

One tragic thing I saw was when we were called out to secure an accident scene where there had been a convoy of military semi-trucks driving on a highway. It was a six-lane divided highway in the desert, so there was high visibility and not much traffic.

And a boy about 7 years old had been crossing the highway riding on a donkey and leading two other donkeys across.

The first vehicle in the army convoy ran him and all the donkeys over and killed them all. The convoy kept going and didn't stop.

I'm not putting that on the individual soldier because that's the policy.

You don't stop because you don't want to get ambushed because you are a target. So no matter what you keep going.

We were called there after the convoy had gone by to provide security so they could investigate the scene.

There's this small child's body lying under a sheet, with his family around it, and his grandfather just falling on the ground out of grief.

Yes, it's an accident, children in the U.S. get hit by cars, but I can only imagine that if that family had previously been sympathetic towards the U.S. forces or wanted to believe that we could make something better happen in their lives, to lose their child like that I'm sure that turned them against us and made them see us as enemies if they hadn't before.

It wasn't like that was an isolated incident. All the time, we had to clean up after accidents caused by U.S. military vehicles.

And in almost every situation, the injuries and the fatalities were suffered solely by the Iraqi people.

[Below: more from the interviews by Martin Smith (USMC ret'd) at Fayetteville, NC 3.19.05. These are additional to his interviews in GI Special 3A79, some with the same IVAW members.]

Brad Cross

Can you tell me your name, rank, and what service you were in?

My name is Brad Cross. I'm a corporal in the Marine Corps.

What was your MOS [Military Occupational Specialty]?

I was an O311 in the infantry.

How long were you in Iraq?

I was in Iraq from March 2003 till August 2003.

Why are you here today?

I'm here today, because I don't believe in this war. I joined Iraq Veterans against the War, and I'm here to have my voice heard in opposition to the war.

How did you come to that conclusion?

I never believed in it from the beginning, and I think after September 11 when our focus shifted to Iraq as opposed to fighting Osama bin Laden I felt betrayed as an American. I felt that our energies were being focused in the wrong directions.

What would you say to someone thinking of joining the military?

Go to college. I think recruiters are fucking liars, car salesmen types. I wouldn't recommend joining the military, unless it's something that is well thought out and a really well made decision.

Have you heard about the efforts to kick military recruiters off of schools?

I think it's great. I live in New Paltz, New York and there's a lot of stuff in the papers about the recruiters. I don't think that recruiters should have an open access to students, a legal access to students. I think it's wrong and they're fucking liars.

Allowing them into our schools is a disgrace. I'm a teacher, and I hate seeing them in our schools, because it's just defeating what I'm trying to do as a teacher.

Andrew Plummer (More)

Can you tell me your name and rank and when you served?

I'm Andrew Plummer. I was an electrician's mate, third class, on the U.S.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Why are you here today?

I'm here today, because I just got discharged from the military and I'm here hopefully to encourage other military members to speak out against the war.

Alex Przybyla

Can you tell me your name and rank?

My name's Alex Przybyla. I'm twenty-two years old and I'm a corporal in the United States Marines. I'm in the Individual Ready Reserve.

How long were you in Iraq?

We were there from March 20th to May 9, 2003, so it was for the initial invasion.

Why are you here today?

We're here to protest this war. I'm here as one of the co-founders of Iraq Veterans against the War and to send a message out to local people over here, the soldiers and military families that are affected by this war directly, and also to the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

You not only have regular protestors and people with military families but you also have veterans who have served in this war and know first hand what it's about and are against it.

What made you come to that conclusion?

When I first realized it was wrong and we shouldn't be there was shortly after I had returned from Iraq. It was the end of May 2003 and just watching the news every single day and seeing the body count continue to rise on both sides just made me realize that even with the exception of everything else it was just such a waste of human life and then beyond that I found out that it was illegal.

The reason it's not the Iraq War is because war was not officially declared that's why it's Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Beyond that, there were no WMDs, Saddam was not an imminent threat and all those reasons have fallen apart and people didn't even notice how they shifted

seamlessly from those reasons to well we're there to sell this democracy. It's like, since when?

Hart Viges

Can you tell me your name and rank and what service you were in?

My name is Hart Viges. I was a specialist in the United States Army, 82nd Airborne Division.

How long were you in Iraq?

For eleven and a half months.

Why are you here today?

I'm here to make reparations and put my voice in the right direction.

What would you to someone thinking about joining the military today?

I wouldn't know where I would start--being started off with lies, ending up with lies, and working for a lie. I've never really thought about what I would say to someone. Are you crazy? Are you nuts? I don't really think they'd understand what they'd be getting themselves into.

Have you heard about the efforts to kick military recruiters off of campuses?

Yes, I've heard of that. I've heard of counter-recruiters. That's a good idea.

Joshua Despain

Can you tell me your name and what unit you served in?

My name is Joshua Despain, and I served in the 82nd Airborne Division.

How long were you in Iraq?

I was in Iraq for a little less than six months from October of '03 to April of '04.

Can you tell me why you're here today?

I'm here today to basically protest the war in Iraq and just call for the return of our troops from this senseless war.

What made you come to that conclusion?

My experience in Iraq. Seeing how the people were absolutely no threat to America, and all the guys that have died and been wounded. It's just senseless.

Did you have contact with the Iraqi people?

I did. They actually let quite a few of them on base to work—filling sandbags, a few of them working on trucks and stuff like that.

What would you say to someone who might be thinking of joining the military today?

Really think about it because it's a dangerous situation. I know some people don't have a lot of opportunity—working at a fast food restaurant, being homeless--so they join the military. So I understand that for some people it has to be an option. But just be aware it's a very dangerous situation and that if you join there's a very good possibility that you will good overseas and be in combat.

What would you say to someone that says you have to support our troops?

That slogan just really eats at me, because I notice a lot of people that have the yellow ribbons on the back of their car, and I try to talk them.

The one thing that you can do to support me and the troops is just to listen to our voice and most that have that mentality support our troops don't want to hear what we have to say about ending the war. They think that supporting the troops is supporting the war which should be the complete opposite.

Another one is the support President Bush and our troops. It's such a conflicting statement. If you support President Bush you're not supporting our troops, and if you support our troops, you don't support President Bush.

Ft. Bragg: MORE:

“If Anyone Wonders Why We Decided To Hold An Antiwar Demonstration At Ft. Bragg, Maybe These Two Letters Can Answer Their Questions.”

From: Lou Plummer Military Families Speak Out; Bring Them Home Now!; Fayetteville Peace With Justice

To: GI Special
Sent: March 26, 2005
Subject: letters

T,

If anyone wonders why we decided to hold an antiwar demonstration at Ft. Bragg, maybe these two letters can answer their questions.

#1:

“I Have Had Enough Of The Lies, I've Had Enough Of The Death...”

To All My Brothers and Sisters in Peace,

As I reflect on last weekends protest at Fort Bragg I feel the healing has begun.

No longer do I feel alone, I spent the weekend with 5000 of my new brothers and sisters in peace.

Mere words can not express the gratitude I feel.

I threw away my car magnet today..true support of the troops is standing up and speaking out "Enough is Enough"

I have had enough of the lies, I've had enough of the death for us and the Iraqis.

I did not know it but you all were there with me on my sleepless nights as I cried in pain for my son in Iraq.

You knew of my fears and terror when I heard a soldier had died. My son's spirit forever damaged by the killing he has done and witnessed. I mourn the loss of my son's innocence.

There is a permanent look of pain in my son's eye. When my son left for Iraq it was as if I took a deep breathe and didn't exhale till he returned home.

Well I have caught my breath and I am now a force to be reckoned with. It is with all your encouragement that I found my voice.

My son dropped me off at the protest..I said you know we are doing this because we love you. My son replied "I know that Mom."

Thank you for standing up and being witnesses. We are standing with people of the entire world.

You have given me strength and I will not stop fighting till our last soldier is home.

Mother of Specialist Robert Stillwell Airborne MP (Iraq Combat Veteran currently stationed at Fort Bragg)

Georgia Stillwell

#2:

“I Don't Know What I Can Do To Help Him.”

Dear Lou,

I got your name from the MFSO website, I'm sorry to bother you but I felt that you might be able to help me. I also live here in Fayetteville, I am a military spouse, and I definitely oppose the war in Iraq.

I'm afraid to even say that for fear of military repercussion, but I trust that you'll keep my name confidential. I find myself in a situation where I don't know where to turn for help. My husband was sent to Iraq twice, once in Feb. 2003 and once in March 2004.

He was injured on his second tour not just physically but also mentally.

He has yet to fully recover from his physical injuries and has some serious mental issues stemming from his second tour. His unit intends to send him back for a third tour in October.

He is in no shape to go back, he has strong feeling against what he saw and experienced there.

I read a bit in the Fayetteville Observer about a young soldier who committed suicide after being released from a hospital. Without going too much into detail, I feel that a return to Iraq may be my husbands breaking point.

I don't know what I can do to help him. As I said before, I fear the military.

I also fear that they will take action against my husband because of his "weakness". Do you have any suggestions? The only person I have gone to so far is the Chaplain and he was ! no help.

Thank you for your help.
Sincerely,
R

To Hear The Speakers At Fayetteville:

http://www.traprockpeace.org/fayetteville_rally_1.html

<p>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</p>
--

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.

U.S. Force Level Drops 12,000 By End Of March

March 18, 2005 aus.bc

US force levels in Iraq already are coming down from the current level of 150,000 to about 138,000 around the end of the month as units whose tours were extended for the January 30 elections return home. That would leave the equivalent of 17 combat brigades in Iraq.

Bulgaria To Pull Out Of Iraq

17.03.2005 SOFIA (bnn) & March 18, 2005 aus.bc

Bulgaria will gradually withdraw its troops from Iraq by the end of this year, Minister of Defense Nikolay Svinarov said Thursday.

Bulgaria has close to 500 troops in Iraq but it is planning to pull out almost 100 soldiers in June.

Polls show more than 70 per cent of Bulgaria's eight million people disagree with the war and the opposition Socialists have promised to pull out if they win general elections expected on June 25.

Polish Troops Start Withdrawal

March 27 (KUNA)

Polish troops based in the southern Iraqi governorate of Muthanna started withdrawing, paving the way for British and Japanese troops to take over control of the city, an official of the Iraq-based Multi National Forces, speaking on a status of anonymity told newsmen Saturday evening.

There were about 1,700 Polish servicemen working under US commandship in Iraq, three of whom have been killed since such troops were deployed in the Arab country.

Steve Welter: Stabbed In The Back By Bank Capitalists: While Soldiers Fight In Iraq, Predators At Home Try To Rip Off Their Families

(March 27) By SAM HANANEL, AP

When Army reservist Steve Welter was called up for active duty in Iraq last August, his wife never thought she would face her own fight to save the family's home from foreclosure.

A 65-year-old federal law, which Congress expanded last year, provides a range of protections for activated reservists and for Guard members called up by the Pentagon.

Those protections include a 6 percent cap, under certain circumstances, on consumer and mortgage interest rate debt incurred before activation; protection from eviction or foreclosure; payment deferral for federal taxes; and a stay on civil proceedings, including divorce and bankruptcy.

Keira Welter knew the law was supposed to protect a soldier's property from creditors during active military service. But for months, she said, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Co. did not seem to care about the law, no matter how many times she explained her case.

"We had worked so hard to own our own home, and while my husband was over there serving our country it was going to be taken away," said Welter, 31, of Osawatomie, Kan.

After Wells Fargo started foreclosure proceedings in February, Keira Welter contacted the state attorney general's office and members of Congress. It was not until a local television station aired her story and Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., intervened that the company finally backed off.

The Welters are not the only ones who faced hurdles seeking protection under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Lt. Col. Bruce Woolpert, a legal adviser to the Kansas National Guard in Topeka, said he fields desperate calls every week from soldiers and their families trying to understand their rights under the law and asking how they can stop creditors from repossessing cars or seizing homes.

"We had a foreclosure that was actually going to occur the next day," Woolpert said. "It was going to happen until we could generate the letters and get them to

the company and say, 'Please stop this, it's not a valid foreclosure.' Wisdom prevailed and it was stopped."

Woolpert said most companies understand the law and try to follow it, but some, particularly smaller banks and car loan companies, are not as enlightened.

"One of the problems is with large lending institutions, as soon as the matter goes to collection, it becomes a bureaucratic problem to reverse the trend," Woolpert said. "Sometimes it's hard to find the right person to say 'Stop this because the rule applies.'"

In Welter's case, she appeared to follow all the rules. She first sent a copy of her husband's duty orders to Wells Fargo in August. The company claimed it was never received.

She kept calling the company to explain how the family, with three young children, struggled to make mortgage payments during her husband's Army training, when he had to stop working as a full-time firefighter for weeks at a time. His reserve paychecks were much smaller than his firefighter salary.

"I mentioned the law every single time," Welter said. "And every single time I was told 'We don't know what that is.'"

Roberts, outraged by Welter's story, took the issue to the Senate.

"I remain concerned that those responsible for complying with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act are not fully educated about their obligations and that the problem is nationwide," Roberts said.

The senator has asked the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which regulates national banks, to post the law on its Web site and include it in any publications it sends to banks.

Kevin Mukri, a spokesman for the Comptroller of the Currency, said the agency has not received Roberts' letter. But he said national banks are very familiar with all federal laws and regulations.

"I have not heard of this being an issue," Mukri said. [You hear it now, asshole. So quit the bullshit and stop it.]

Keira Welter said she still is concerned about what will happen when her husband comes back from Iraq. The legal protection generally ends within 90 days after the date of discharge from active duty, though she expects to be caught up on mortgage payments by then.

"I want my credit to be cleaned up," she said. **"I want them to restore the late fees and I want to make sure this never happens again."**

MAKE MORALE MAIL FREE

Letter To The Editor,
Army Times

I am writing to ask readers to help the spouses of deployed soldiers.

During World War II, sending letters to soldiers who had an APO address was free.

Now, we have to pay to send our deployed soldiers letters and packages not only containing home-baked cookies and Hove letters, but also necessities like toothpaste, soap, bottled water and new socks. Many spouses of deployed soldiers are spending hundreds of dollars on postage over a six-month deployment.

I hope that in light of the world situation, the idea of a free letter or package to our soldier-spouses will not be overlooked. I urge you to contact the president or find out who your state senators are at <http://www.firstgov.gov> and e-mail, write or call them to let them know that something like a simple letter can make all the difference to the deployed soldier.

Elizabeth Grasher-Blackwood
Fort Campbell, Ky.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Newly Repaired Iraq Pipeline Blown Up: Oil Exports From Kirkuk Shut By Incessant Attacks

27 March 2005 AFP

Attackers have blown up a pipeline 60km west of Kirkuk, just a day after repairs to the route connecting the lucrative oil field to a major refinery in Baiji.

Northern Oil Company fireman Abd Allah Hamad Ali confirmed the morning attack on Sunday. **"The pipeline was only just repaired yesterday, but it has been attacked again."** Firemen and police were putting out the blaze, he said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

War Stories

The greatest revelation I had in Vietnam, was the realization that I was the enemy in Vietnam.

From: Mike Hastie, Vietnam Veteran

To: GI Special

Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2005 8:03 AM

Subject: War Stories?

To G.I. Special,

Day after day, I watch the U.S. government trash American soldiers in Iraq, and Iraqi civilians from all walks of life.

The lies of this war are worse than Vietnam.

This war is turning into a slaughter house.

And, most of the American people don't have a clue.

As I write this, every time I hit a key on my computer, the U.S. government is committing an atrocity.

The greatest revelation I had in Vietnam, was the realization that I was the enemy in Vietnam.

When I left Vietnam in September 1971, most of the soldiers in my unit knew the Vietnam War was a lie. The Vietnamese were dirt poor, and by the time President Nixon pulled out, we had turned Vietnam into a garbage pit.

The U.S. government dropped eight million tons of bombs on Southeast Asia. It is the most bombed area in the world.

Over three million people in Southeast Asia were killed. Multiply that number by five to get the number of people wounded. (That is a conservative number.)

58,000 American soldiers were killed. 300,000 American soldiers were wounded. Between forty and fifty thousand Americans committed suicide when they returned from Vietnam.

Between forty and fifty thousand Americans have died from Agent Orange exposure.

The U.S. government dropped 20 million gallons of Agent Orange on what was then South Vietnam. The number of Vietnamese who have died from this weapon of mass destruction is in the hundreds of thousands. The U.S. government defoliated an area about one-seventh the land mass of then South Vietnam.

The Vietnam War broke America's soul. It damaged the American psyche worse than any war in U.S. history. And, since 1975, our government has done everything it can to bury this war. And, they have done a damn good job of doing it.

How do I know this, because very few people born in the last 30 years know anything about the Vietnam War. It's dead and gone. And now, we have the same vulgar war going on in Iraq.

I usually don't get down and dirty when I write about the Vietnam War, and how it relates to the war in Iraq, but it's time.

I will quote Tim O'Brien's book, "The Things They Carried." He was a combat soldier in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970.

"A true war story is never moral. It does not instruct, nor encourage virtue, nor suggest models of proper human behavior, nor restrain men from doing the things men have always done.

"If a story seems moral, do not believe it. If at the end of a war story you feel uplifted, or if you feel that some small bit of rectitude has been salvaged from the larger waste, then you have been made the victim of a very old and terrible lie.

"There is no rectitude whatsoever. There is no virtue. As a first rule of thumb, therefore, you can tell a true war story by its absolute and uncompromising allegiance to obscenity and evil. You can tell a true war story if it embarrasses you. If you don't care for obscenity, you don't care for the truth; if you don't care for the truth, watch how you vote. Send guys to war, they come home talking dirty."

Years after I came back from Vietnam, I wound up in a padded cell of a psychiatric hospital. I was so filled with rage, I wanted to kill Dick Nixon.

As a medic in Vietnam, every time I remembered seeing an American soldier take his last breath, I wanted to rub Nixon's face in their blood.

This man was a monster.

As I found myself in the corner of that padded cell, I felt raped by a country I once loved so much. It's like I could feel Dick Nixon's dick clear up my ass. Wasted!

When I was in Vietnam, George Bush was sticking cocaine up his nose. FUCK YOU!!!!!!

"Send guys to war, they come home talking dirty."

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran**



Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington DC, 1986

Not only did the Vietnam War destroy my husband and our marriage, but it deeply wounded our children. I can't begin to tell you the pain and grief that horrible war brought into our lives. It became an unpredictable living hell. Day by day, inch by inch, our dreams were finally gone. I pray my former husband will find peace someday, wherever he may be. It seems like yesterday we graduated from high school together. He was a

*good boy. I still wish we could have spent our lives together.
God only knows we tried*

C.J.H
Seattle, Wash
March 1989

Photo and caption above from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (Contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) for more of this outstanding work. T)

“Will We Leave Them To Remember, While We Forget?”

From: niko leka

To: news@theherald.com.au

Cc: GI Special

Sent: March 17, 2005

Subject: It's a strange solace, when you read uncensored dispatches from the front line

It's a strange solace, when you read uncensored dispatches from the front line. The time when I most feel at peace in this nightmare we are living in, is when I read material from the GI Special site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>.

The bitterness and sadness of what US GI soldiers are going through reflects better than any mirror possibly could the bitterness and sadness of the Iraqi population under the occupation.

Each lengthy issue prints the reminder, halfway through: "If you don't like the Resistance, End the Occupation!".

I'm starting to think, what will happen, when those occupying forces finally limp home, too wounded to carry on.

Will they join the resistance? And will we have what it takes, to join them?

Or will we leave them to remember, while we forget?

Niko Leka
Mayfield

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.

Reality Vs. Silly Left Fantasies: U.S. Oil Industry Crushed Neocon Plan To Privatize Iraq Oil Industry;

[Guess what. When matched against the power of the oil industry, neo-conservatives have no clout at all. What they say doesn't go. And big oil wants government ownership of the oil industry in Iraq. Duh.]

Ari Cohen, of the neo-conservative Heritage Foundation, told Newsnight that an opportunity had been missed to privatize Iraq's oil fields. He advocated the plan as a means to help the US defeat Opec, and said America should have gone ahead with what he called a "no-brainer" decision.

Mr Carroll hit back, telling Newsnight, "I would agree with that statement. To privatize would be a no-brainer. It would only be thought about by someone with no brain."

Mar 17, 2005 Greg Palast Reporting for BBC Newsnight

MACON, GA.- The Bush administration made plans for war and for Iraq's oil before the 9/11 attacks sparking a policy battle between neo-cons and Big Oil, BBC's Newsnight has revealed.

Two years ago today - when President George Bush announced US, British and Allied forces would begin to bomb Baghdad - protestors claimed the US had a secret plan for Iraq's oil once Saddam had been conquered.

In fact there were two conflicting plans, setting off a hidden policy war between neo-conservatives at the Pentagon, on one side, versus a combination of "Big Oil" executives and US State Department "pragmatists."

"Big Oil" appears to have won. The latest plan, obtained by Newsnight from the US State Department was, we learned, drafted with the help of American oil industry consultants.

Insiders told Newsnight that planning began "within weeks" of Bush's first taking office in 2001, long before the September 11th attack on the US.

An Iraqi-born oil industry consultant Falah Aljibury says he took part in the secret meetings in California, Washington and the Middle East. He described a State Department plan for a forced coup d'etat.

Mr Aljibury himself told Newsnight that he interviewed potential successors to Saddam Hussein on behalf of the Bush administration.

The industry-favored plan was pushed aside by yet another secret plan, drafted just before the invasion in 2003, which called for the sell-off of all of Iraq's oil fields. The new plan, crafted by neo-conservatives intent on using Iraq's oil to destroy the Opec cartel through massive increases in production above Opec quotas.

The sell-off was given the green light in a secret meeting in London headed by Ahmed Chalabi shortly after the US entered Baghdad, according to Robert Ebel. Mr. Ebel, a former Energy and CIA oil analyst, now a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, flew to the London meeting, he told Newsnight, at the request of the State Department.

Mr Aljibury, once Ronald Reagan's "back-channel" to Saddam, claims that plans to sell off Iraq's oil, pushed by the US-installed Governing Council in 2003, helped instigate the insurgency and attacks on US and British occupying forces.

"Insurgents used this, saying, 'Look, you're losing your country, your losing your resources to a bunch of wealthy billionaires who want to take you over and make your life miserable," said Mr Aljibury from his home near San Francisco.

"We saw an increase in the bombing of oil facilities, pipelines, built on the premise that privatization is coming."

Privatization Blocked By Industry

Philip Carroll, the former CEO of Shell Oil USA who took control of Iraq's oil production for the US Government a month after the invasion, stalled the sell-off scheme.

Mr Carroll told us he made it clear to Paul Bremer, the US occupation chief who arrived in Iraq in May 2003, that: "There was to be no privatization of Iraqi oil resources or facilities while I was involved."

The chosen successor to Mr Carroll, a Conoco Oil executive, ordered up a new plan for a state oil company preferred by the industry.

Ari Cohen, of the neo-conservative Heritage Foundation, told Newsnight that an opportunity had been missed to privatize Iraq's oil fields. He advocated the plan as a means to help the US defeat Opec, and said America should have gone ahead with what he called a "no-brainer" decision.

Mr Carroll hit back, telling Newsnight, "I would agree with that statement. To privatize would be a no-brainer. It would only be thought about by someone with no brain."

New plans, obtained from the State Department by Newsnight and Harper's Magazine under the US Freedom of Information Act, called for creation of a state-owned oil company favored by the US oil industry.

It was completed in January 2004, Harper's discovered, under the guidance of Amy Jaffe of the James Baker Institute in Texas. Former US Secretary of State Baker is now an attorney. His law firm, Baker Botts, is representing ExxonMobil and the Saudi Arabian government.

Questioned by Newsnight, Ms Jaffe said the oil industry prefers state control of Iraq's oil over a sell-off because it fears a repeat of Russia's energy privatization. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, US oil companies were barred from bidding for the reserves.

Jaffe said "There is no question that an American oil company ... would not be enthusiastic about a plan that would privatize all the assets with Iraq companies and they (US companies) might be left out of the transaction."

In addition, Ms. Jaffe says US oil companies are not warm to any plan that would undermine Opec, "They (oil companies) have to worry about the price of oil."

"I'm not sure that if I'm the chair of an American company, and you put me on a lie detector test, I would say high oil prices are bad for me or my company."

The former Shell oil boss agrees.

In Houston, he told Newsnight, "Many neo-conservatives are people who have certain ideological beliefs about markets, about democracy, about this that and the other. International oil companies without exception are very pragmatic commercial organizations. They don't have a theology."

“So Why The Hell Are We Afraid Of Them? ... For They Are Afraid Of Us.”

March 20, 2005, From speech delivered at antiwar rally in Sydney's Hyde Park.
TBRNews.org

Throughout my career I have reported, often undercover, from countries ruled by repressive regimes where dissidents would read me reports in the press that were no more servile and false than the reporting you read every day in the Murdoch papers in this country.

In Eastern European states, for example, the papers had tame correspondents in Moscow who would parrot the Kremlin line. Now read the Washington correspondent of the Sydney Morning Herald, Michael Gawenda, and there is no difference. **The same parroting of Bush's dangerous absurdities, such as his claims of bringing democracy to the Middle East - when the very opposite is true.**

Considering this, we might ask: Is there no shame?

Honorable exceptions aside, supine journalists, like cynical opposition politicians, like corporate academics, represent unaccountable, violent power and a corrupt democracy that today offers us no more choice than between a McDonald's and a Hungry Jack's. But they do not represent us. And they don't speak for us. And they don't speak for humanity. And they don't speak for democracy. And they don't speak for all the moral deficiencies by which most people live their lives. In fact, they speak for the very opposite.

I may have first understood this when I reported from repressive Czechoslovakia, with its Stalinist regime, in the 1970s. The dissenters who spoke out in that country seemed so few, yet I wondered why the regime went to such lengths to silence them and attack them and sneer at them, usually via the state press.

I put this question to the great protest singer Marta Kubisova, whose thrilling voice sang the anthems of the Prague Spring in 1968.

Meeting me in secret, she replied by reading to me the words of one of her most defiant songs, written by a banned Czech group called the Plastic People of the Universe. I have abridged it slightly.

**"They are afraid of the old for their memory,
They are afraid of the young for their innocence
They afraid of the graves of their victims in faraway places
They are afraid of history. They are afraid of freedom.
They are afraid of truth. They are afraid of democracy.
So why the hell are we afraid of them?
... For they are afraid of us."**

OCCUPATION REPORT

Occupation Terrorists Shoot Peaceful Demonstrators Demanding Their Wages; Four Dead

March 27, 2005 By EDWARD HARRIS (AP) & (KUNA)

Bodyguards for Science and Technology Minister Rashad Mandan Omar fired on a crowd of protesters in front of the ministry's offices demanding their full wages, said Hamid Balasem, an engineer at the ministry.

About 50 were demonstrating, saying they had only been paid in part, Balasem said.

Four protestors died and many others were injured when the gunmen opened fire randomly against a peaceful demonstration organized by installations protection policemen and Technology ministry employees here on Sunday.

A protestor who witnessed the firing told KUNA that ministry of technology guards and the minister bodyguards have opened fire against the protestors who demanded pay raise.

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

Received:

Concerning Steve Welter Story, Above, Under "Troop News"

From: GDWard8384@aol.com
To: thomasfbarton@earthlink.net
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2005 1:11 PM
Subject: Sgt. Steve Welter

I read your article on Steve Welter.

I would like to contact Mrs. Welter by phone or letter. I'm a Sovereign living in New Mexico. My reason is to provide information to Steve and his wife of how to discharge the debt without loss due to foreclosure. This information is free however it requires them to study the data and obtain support and advice from some local group that is studying how to become a sovereign. They can contact me by phone 505-821-3285 or fax me at the same phone number or e-mail me at gdward8384@aol.com if they are interested. My address is listed below.

glenn david ward
c/o8751 Modesto Avenue northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87122

Received:

Sgt. Didn't Like Recent Article

12 Mar 2005

From: Sgt. D

I dont know who the fuck you people think you are using my name in the vien of your pussy ass website, but i will find out and DO SOMETHING. email me any fucking time, and any fucking place. i WILL BE THERE. FUCKING BITCH ASS PUNKS WITH SAND IN YOUR PUSSIES. this is in referance to what you said about tony perrys of the la times' article about fallujah. Cmon, man the fuck up!

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: www.qifightback.org,
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for purely educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. Go to: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml> for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.