

GI SPECIAL 3A89:



American bombing in Indochina was like an insane game of musical chairs.

Marilyn B Young

The Vietnam Wars 1945-1990

Toward the end of the Vietnam War, many B-52 bombing crews refused to fly, because they knew they were bombing civilian targets.

Mike Hastie

Photo and caption 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 his outstanding work. T)

**Doubting The Mission:
“They're Not Doing The Right Thing.
But You See, That's The Thing: They
Think They Are.**

“-- And We Can Say We're Doing The Right Thing, But Nobody Knows If We Ultimately Are.”

He's given it a lot of thought. "It's just the way the world works. I mean, their job is not in the best interests of the world. They're not doing the right thing. But you see, that's the thing: They think they are. And we can say we're doing the right thing, but nobody knows if we ultimately are. Are we going to change this part of the world? Are we going to change their government for the better or for the worse? Is it going to be better when we leave here? Is it going to be worse whenever we leave here? We don't know that. Nobody ever knows who's ultimately fighting for the better cause."

"I know the grief of his family is no less than the grief my family would've known if he'd gotten his shot off first," Karcher said. "He made a choice, just like I made a choice, to pick up arms and fight for something. That day, his choice cost him."

March 20, 2005, BY MATTHEW MCALLESTER, SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT,
Newsday

It was only in November that the men of the 3rd squad were young, quips of wit and dumb-luck fearlessness sparking from their mouths. In the white-hot center of the battle of Fallujah they were dousing their fear with good fortune and jokes.

An insurgent's rocket hit the roof of a building they were taking cover in, but a miracle beam in the ceiling saved their lives and they laughed and told stories as night fell, none of them even scratched by the fire and hot metal that had torn into two soldiers outside. In another house they had briefly occupied that week of the battle, one of them tried on a pair of red women's underwear and posed, a Cheshire cat for the camera.

That one is dead now, shot in the chest and neck a couple of days after the pictures were taken. His buddies were torn up, too - grenades rolling at their feet, bullets slicing into their bodies, outnumbered by insurgents shooting at them from all sides - only two of the eight making it out of the ambush without chunks of metal inside them.

Those men, a tight squad of seven infantrymen plus a medic, who went into that house in southern Fallujah on Nov. 13, crawling and running out moments later, bleeding and dying, are not the same now. It is not just their physical wounds and the loss of their friend; it is their scarred minds and the gaining of knowledge that most people would rather never acquire.

Their nights now can be filled with memories distorted into dreams; their mornings sometimes start with shaking, as if there were an earthquake in their guts, tremors spreading down their arms; in the evenings, they talk to each other in confidence, quietly, but not to those who weren't there because they wouldn't understand.

One man who was there and who does understand, the soldiers say, is Capt. Jonathan Fowler, the 2nd Battalion's chaplain. But forget about going to the Combat Stress team - the Army shrinks on base - because no soldier wants to be seen as weak or crazy.

So they deal with it in their own way. For the combat soldier, "it is as though every enemy dead is a human being he has killed, and every friendly dead is a comrade for whom he was responsible," writes Lt. Col. David Grossman, author of "On Killing," an authoritative book about the dynamics of killing, primarily in the military.

It was mainly the Marines who fought in Fallujah, but two heavily armored Army units - the 3rd squad is part of one of these units - used their tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles to scythe through the city.

Now, the 3rd squad and its battalion are in transit, expected home by the end of the month.

After a year that saw the 2nd Battalion of the 7th Cavalry fight in two of the biggest battles of the war so far - Najaf and Fallujah - they tell themselves they will not become a messed-up generation of American veterans - the Deer Hunters and Rambos - or like the vets who appear in newspaper articles, the ones who have gone home from Iraq and shot themselves in their backyards, beaten their wives or started bar fights out of nothings.

That's not going to happen to them, they say. But for some, it won't be so easy lying in soft beds with caring wives, jagged flashes of killing and dying in their minds.

Those who have been home on leave know that home isn't necessarily where they will find peace and clarity. Medical experts in the United States say that such returning veterans may be experiencing the first signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"You go to church," said Staff Sgt. Carlos Santillana the other day, recalling his two-week leave back home in Abilene, Texas, in early December. "And they're like, 'Hey, we'd like y'all to welcome back our hometown hero. He's been over there in Iraq.' And you're just thinking to yourself this is kind of an irony or an oxymoron. In the Bible it says thou shalt not kill. I'm a hometown hero and I just killed a whole bunch of people. And they're welcoming me back in a public place."

Santillana has killed more men than he has seen years. He is 25. He believes he's killed 26, perhaps 27 people. You count things like that - killing people, even the enemy.

In the weeks that have passed since the battle in Fallujah, one of the men who entered the building filled with insurgents has been buried; two have had surgery and one is living with a right hand that will never properly open and close again. Three returned to the squad after medical care. Only two were not injured that day. The unit is probably as combat-experienced as any in the battalion. Its men certainly are the most decorated, having received two of only three Silver Stars awarded to soldiers in the 800-soldier battalion over the past year in Iraq.

Sometimes, now, they seem all right - unfazed and resilient, cool and funny. Sometimes, they don't seem so great.

The thin-faced Santillana is close to Spc. Benny Alicea, who has just received a Silver Star for his extraordinary courage on Nov. 13 and who is still trying to find answers about what has happened.

"I just signed off on life," said Alicea, who watched his friend Spc. Jose Velez die in front of him on Nov. 13, who felt bullets going past his ear, who carries three bits of shrapnel around in his upper legs from that day. Velez won the squad's other Silver Star, posthumously. "That's the biggest problem I been having when I got back is that, hey I'm still here. At that point in time I literally just decided I'm dead. I just remember telling myself, hey - my wife's name is Cheryl - I love you, Cheryl. I told myself, this is my day, you just give up, you just decide you ain't going to make it, then you just accept it."

But none of the bullets or fragments of grenade killed him and Alicea was left holding an acceptance of his own death that he doesn't know what to do with.

"I don't even feel like I'm going home yet cause I pretty much didn't plan on going home," he said. "I don't know what you're supposed to do if you make it out of something like that."

Soldiers fighting in Iraq have seen more combat than any American troops since Vietnam. Of them, few have seen more than Santillana's squad. And just as that war damaged the psyches of thousands of young Americans, so the war in Iraq is mainlining trauma into those who have been there.

Lt. Dan Kilgore, 24, who commands the platoon of which Santillana's squad is a part, is responsible for more than 30 men. He saw a change in some immediately after Fallujah. "I've got some guys who act a lot different than they did before," he said. "Since Fallujah, people have been more cautious. Kinda jumpy," Santillana said. "Every time you hear a noise, somebody slams a door in the other trailer and you're dropping to the floor in your trailer and you're opening up the door in your trailer. And then you open up the door real slow and peek your head out. 'What was that?' 'I slammed the door.' 'Don't do that, it scared the hell out of me.' "

Velez was the only soldier from the battalion killed by the enemy in Fallujah. Santillana's squad and Kilgore's platoon are the hardest hit by his death. Some of the men can't stop thinking about the tubby kid with the thick glasses who wanted to fit in so much he volunteered right off to carry the squad's heavy machine gun, something no one wants to do. He was a gently playful guy who married his high school sweetheart and had an appetite that would lead him to demolish rations in the back of a Bradley mid-battle.

That day, Santillana's squad went alone into a house from which they believed a single insurgent was firing. There ended up being at least five insurgents in a single room, others swarming around the back and, worse, a sniper across the street. The Americans were instantly surrounded and overwhelmed. Within moments, they were forming a pile of injured in the street outside the building, some firing their rifles even as they bled into the mud. Velez unleashed every round he had as he tried to protect his

buddies. Then, the sniper found the exposed spot below his neck, and Velez lay dead on the street.

When the squad's survivors came back to Camp Taji after the battle, Alicea locked himself in his room for two days. The troops at Taji live in trailers, giving them some privacy. Alicea had bunked next to Velez.

"I blame myself 'cause maybe I should have stayed in that building firing and not come out," he said, sitting quietly in a trailer recently. There's a scar on his left cheek where the ricocheting fragment of a bullet cut him. "I knew I would have got hit. But maybe it would have made the situation outside of that room better."

With the unwarranted guilt have come its henchmen: memories and dreams. Alicea's dreams, like those of the other soldiers, are troubling him less often than they did. The remembrances stay. "I think about it and I start breathing heavy and I start shaking and everything," he said, his tight New England accent competing with the casual tones that so many infantrymen seem to pick up, like airline pilots over the intercom.

From the brute horror of the four, five or six minutes of that day - no one can quite remember how long it took for their lives to change - there is one image Alicea can't shake: Velez lying dead in the street as Alicea and the others fought for their lives. "I just got mad cause he had his face in the water, in the streets . . ."

Santillana went on his leave soon after Fallujah. His wife, Rebecca, has a master's degree in psychology and is his best friend. He tells her everything and she understands, telling him of studies she's read, saying all the right things, listening. When he would get up in the middle of the night in December to bleach his memories with television shows or root around for tools in his freezing cold garage, she would come and find him and lead him gently back to bed, where he would start shadow-boxing with the past again.

He asked one thing of her: never to wake him up. One day they were in Austin, visiting her brother. Santillana lay down on the floor of the guest room and fell asleep. Rebecca forgot his request and shook his shoulder. "And I, like, sat up real quick and I'm just sitting there shaking and I'm just looking and . . . I knew it was her but I didn't know it was her - it was like I just wanted to swing at whoever it was who was waking me up."

Santillana paused, gazing at the floor of the trailer. "I can't believe I almost, I can't believe I even thought about hitting my wife."

Back home, he drove the Texas highways looking for concealed roadside bombs, wanting to steer down the median, away from the edges where the bombs are. He wanted to swerve when passing under a bridge to fool anyone overhead who might be about to drop a grenade on his vehicle.

He watched his kid brother playing a combat video game and yelled out when his brother didn't look before turning a corner in a tight situation. Santillana didn't like to sit in a restaurant with his back to the room. In an IHOP, someone dropped

a plate. He ducked. Agonizing over what Christmas gifts to buy, paying the bills; these things seemed irrelevant and tiresome.

One man who was caught in the ambush in the house in Fallujah had a job different from the others. Spc. Scott Cogil is the platoon's medic and, as so often, he was with Santillana's squad when they burst into the house. Cogil's job is to save lives and, in those few minutes, one of the squad died in front of him. No one, including Cogil when he's thinking straight, believes Velez could have been saved. Cogil just won the Bronze Star for his bravery, for saving Sgt. Akram Abdelwahab's life and for firing back at the enemy as much as anyone there.

Guilt isn't always logical. Velez used his fighting skills to save lives, Cogil feels. Cogil feels he owed it to Velez to use his medical skills to save him. He owed him. "It was my responsibility to take care of him," said the soft-voiced 21-year-old, whose parents split up days before he rode into Fallujah. He paused and his voice lowered further. "And I didn't do it."

There are traces of that day in his dreams, too. "Sometimes it'll be like I'm at home and all of a sudden we'll have a picnic and someone will be coming down the hill attacking us and I won't have a weapon," he said. "Like other people get hurt but I never get hurt. I never get hurt. People are, like, dying and stuff."

Cogil and Santillana were the only ones not injured in the fight. Cogil talks like he almost wishes he had been, or perhaps wonders what's so special about him that he wasn't. "How come I never got hurt? Everybody else got hurt. I was right behind him (Velez). I was in front of him. I was with him all the time. Bullets hit all around me and never hit me."

The days after Fallujah passed slowly, building up to the last one. The men went out on patrol, never seeing an enemy that only days before February's awards ceremony took another soldier. This time, a huge hidden bomb ripped up from beneath an Abrams tank, the toughest vehicle the army has, killing the driver. He was the battalion's 12th lost soldier. And in the unit's final days in Iraq, on Feb. 25, they lost a 13th - a 22-year-old specialist rifleman from Dewey, Okla., named Adam Brewer. He was killed by another bomb.

"For me personally, this one was harder than the last," Maj. Scott Jackson, the 2nd battalion's second in command, said in an e-mail from Taji on Feb. 28. "I can't explain why for sure, part is due to the proximity to the end of our tour here, part is due to the cumulative losses within the battalion, and a large part I can't put a label on."

Toward the end, when they weren't out on patrol, they were fixing their prematurely aged Bradleys and tanks, eating good food at the chow hall where sports banners hung from the ceiling, working out, listening to music - Santillana shifted his previously hard-core tastes to flute and bagpipe music - and thinking about what was and what was to come. And sometimes, they thought about the men they had killed in Najaf and Fallujah in the past year.

None of them feel they did wrong by killing. It was a job - it was us or them - but that does not necessarily insulate a person from the pain of having ended another's life.

"They're doing their job and we're doing ours but ultimately we gotta come out ahead," Santillana said.

He's given it a lot of thought. "It's just the way the world works. I mean, their job is not in the best interests of the world. They're not doing the right thing. But you see, that's the thing: They think they are. And we can say we're doing the right thing, but nobody knows if we ultimately are. Are we going to change this part of the world? Are we going to change their government for the better or for the worse? Is it going to be better when we leave here? Is it going to be worse whenever we leave here? We don't know that. Nobody ever knows who's ultimately fighting for the better cause."

Santillana said he didn't give much thought before to those he killed. The death of a friend, Velez, humanized those he was killing.

"You don't stop what you're doing, but you just for a second you wish there were another way. Would you all listen to some peace talks or some -- ? Can you all find an easier way to do this besides me having to kill you?"

Most soldiers in the 2nd battalion have been involved in killing, said Jackson - whether through the sights of an M-16, while driving the Bradley that fires explosive rounds or, as with Jackson during Fallujah, targeting a house with a bomb. The battalion's operations officer, Maj. Tim Karcher, killed a man on the first night of the battle. This reporter was in his Bradley, watching on a night-vision screen in the back compartment, when Karcher ordered his gunner to shoot at the man, who was so close you could see what he was wearing. The man had appeared unarmed at first and Karcher held his fire. Soon after, the man reappeared, pointing a rocket-propelled grenade launcher at the Bradley.

When the Bradley's rounds hit, the man seemed to disappear. It wasn't completely clear that he had been killed, although his chances were minimal. Five or six days later, Karcher made a point of going back to the house, to the gateway where the man had stood. The body was gone but there was a smear of dried, blackened blood on the wall next to the gate.

"I wondered if I was thinking about something I didn't need to think about," Karcher said the other day. "I probably just needed to know." He is fine with his decision, but he knows that moment caused pain somewhere.

"I know the grief of his family is no less than the grief my family would've known if he'd gotten his shot off first," Karcher said. "He made a choice, just like I made a choice, to pick up arms and fight for something. That day, his choice cost him."

It's just too early to tell what the cost will be for the victors of Fallujah. Santillana, Alicea and Cogil all believe they will adjust to life back home. Santillana probably will become a recruiter, partly to avoid putting his family through another year like the last. Alicea is thinking about trying to join the Special Forces, where he can work in an even smaller close-knit group; besides that, his focus will be on Cheryl.

Cogil wants out of the army. The decorated war hero doesn't like being shot at, doesn't want to go through it again. He'll go back to Ft. Hood, finish out his time in the army, go

to college and visit a house in Rantoul, Ill., missing the father who left home while Cogil was at war.

The men say they'll visit Velez's grave in his hometown of Lubbock, Texas. The platoon is looking for a tattoo artist skilled enough to stain Velez' face into the hide of anyone who wants it there for life. There are hopes - or are they anxieties?

The three men hope people back in the United States will refrain from asking them over and over how they are, what it was like over there and whether they have killed, the questions that come like machine-gun rounds wherever they go. They hope they will fit in with their families again. They hope they won't fall apart.

"I'm scared to death that for some reason maybe some day something will snap and I won't be able to control it," Santillana said. He has only seen his son Jaden for four months of the child's life. "I'm scared because I don't want that to happen. I, I, I love my family and I don't want them to have to leave me not because they can't love me anymore but leave me because I'm not physically capable of being around them, because I'm losing my mind, punching holes in the walls and -- low-crawling around my house doing stupid --, waking up in the night screaming and hollering. So far I've done a little bit of that."

Santillana and his buddies could snap, or they could keep it together. Only the coming months will tell. Perhaps one lesson from the ruined, dirty streets of Fallujah will help them navigate the clean, ordered streets of America more than any other: Years before most young men, they have seen what matters in life.

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

40 Wounded By Abu G. Resistance Attack

Apr 3, 2005 (Reuters) & Aljazeera

The number of U.S. soldiers wounded in a battle with insurgents outside Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison rose to more than 40 on Sunday, from an earlier count of 20, the U.S. military said.

Most of the injuries were light, but several were serious, according to Lieutenant Colonel Guy Rudisill, spokesman for detainee operations in Iraq. All of the wounded were being treated at the prison's medical facility.

At least one insurgent was confirmed killed in the battle late on Saturday, but the colonel said he expected the true toll was far higher after intense fighting that lasted around an hour and involved U.S. helicopters and heavy weapons.

A group of between 40 and 60 insurgents attacked the prison after dark, ramming a suicide car bomb into a perimeter building, he said. Another car bomb detonated shortly afterwards, as U.S. troops were tending to the wounded from the first.

The attack followed a day of sporadic violence as six people were killed elsewhere in Iraq following a period of declining attacks that had raised hopes the violence is on the wane.

The anti-occupation fighters appeared to be focusing their efforts on bigger, better organized operations.

U.S. Marine Killed In Hadithah

April 3 (Xinhuanet)

A US Marine was killed on Saturday in a blast in Iraq's western city of Haditha, the US military said Sunday.

"A Marine assigned to the Second Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, was killed Saturday, April 2, by an explosion while conducting combat operations in Haditha," the military said in a statement.

The military gave no further details on the incident, but witnesses told Xinhua Saturday that clashes broke out as the US troops swept the city searching for fighters.

Mercenary Killed, Others Wounded

April 3, 2005 Agence France-Presse

A foreigner, with western features, working as a private guard, was killed and others in his convoy were wounded when they were ambushed near Balad from Baghdad, said police Colonel Hameed Ahmed.

The dead man's body lay 20 metres from a sports utility vehicle that was on fire, Ahmed said.

A Trip Down Memory Lane: The Bush Buddies Said The War Was Over After The February 2004 Casualty Reports

Military Fatalities: By Month

Period	US	UK	Other*	Total	Avg	Days
3-2005	36	1	3	40	1.29	31
2-2005	58	0	2	60	2.14	28
1-2005	107	10	10	127	4.1	31
12-2004	72	2	3	77	2.48	31
11-2004	137	4	0	141	4.7	30
10-2004	63	2	2	67	2.16	31
9-2004	80	3	4	87	2.9	30
8-2004	66	4	5	75	2.42	31
7-2004	54	1	3	58	1.87	31
6-2004	42	1	7	50	1.67	30
5-2004	80	0	4	84	2.71	31
4-2004	135	0	5	140	4.67	30
3-2004	52	0	0	52	1.68	31
2-2004	20	1	2	23	0.79	29

Now they're playing the same old tune because casualties dropped in March 2005. Check out what happened next in 2004. Guess what. The resistance was regrouping for the next waves of attacks.

Command that underestimates the opponent is a centuries old problem for would-be Imperial conquerors. It ends badly, for them. And it ends far far worse for the troops they mislead.

Check out <http://icasualties.org/oif/> An excellent source of information and battle reports. And they do need a bit of financial help to keep going. T

U.S. Military Vehicle Hit In Al-Ghazaliya

4.3.05 Aljazeera

In al-Ghazaliya district, west of Baghdad, a US military vehicle was destroyed in a rocket-propelled grenade attack that was carried out by armed fighters.

TROOP NEWS

Britain To Pull Out 5,500 Troops From Iraq “Within A Year”

April 3, 2005 Press Trust of India

Britain plans to reduce the size of its military force in Iraq from 9,000 to 3,500 soldiers within a year and increase its troops in Afghanistan in a renewed bid to hunt down Osama bin Laden and other senior Al-Qaeda figures reportedly hiding close to the country's border with Pakistan, a leading London newspaper said on Sunday.

British troops are based in five locations in southern Iraq, including Camp Abu Naji in Al Amarah, which is home to a battle group of about 1,000 armoured infantry troops. The remainder of the 9,000 troops are split between the three camps in Basra and the logistics base at Shaibah, 40 kms south of the city.

The Rumsfeld Doctrine: If You Can't Solve A Problem, Make It A Bigger Problem

April 2005 Richard Becker, Socialism and Liberation

What explains this recurrent “stupidity” on the part of people who hold doctorates from the best universities? Above all, it is their class position. They really have nothing but contempt for the “common people,” for the workers and the oppressed of the world, including those who live in this country.

‘Enlarging the problem’

Unable to solve the “problem” of popular resistance to the occupation of Iraq, the Bush administration’s new foreign policy team has adopted Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld’s 2003 advice—“If a problem cannot be solved, enlarge it”—moving forcefully to expand its intervention in the Middle East.

Since the beginning of George W. Bush’s second term, the United States has stepped up its aggressive maneuvering in the region, targeting Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Sudan.

These Are The Idiots Who Sent You To War

April 2, 2005 Walter C. Uhler, walter-c-uhler.com

Was it just me? Or did every reader of Ron Suskind's book, *The Price of Loyalty*, about former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill smile knowingly when he or she read pages 116–120 of the March 31, 2005 Report of The Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction?

Readers of Suskind's book already were familiar with a much more hilarious misuse of imagery intelligence by President Bush and the right-wing ideologues who filled most of his cabinet positions.

Suskind dutifully captures Treasury Secretary O'Neill's details of the first meeting of the "principals" (department heads) of President Bush's National Security Council. That January 30, 2001 meeting, like so many others prior to al Qaeda's attacks on September 11, was devoted to Iraq, not Osama bin Laden.

CIA Director George Tenet commenced his briefing on the latest intelligence on Iraq by unrolling and flattening a long scroll, the size of an architectural blueprint, on the briefing table. O'Neill was there and recalls: "It was a grainy photograph of a factory. Tenet said that surveillance planes had just taken this photo. The CIA believed the building might be 'a plant that produces either chemical or biological materials for weapons manufacture.'" [Suskind p.72]

According to O'Neill, "Soon, everyone was leaning over the photo...Cheney motioned to the deputies, the backbenchers, lining the wall. 'Come on up,' he said with uncharacteristic excitement, waving his arm. 'You have to take a look at this.'" [Ibid]

With a dozen people now gazing intently at the surveillance imagery, including the President, O'Neill dropped the proverbial turd in the punchbowl: "I've seen a lot of factories around the world that look a lot like this one. What makes us suspect that this one is producing chemical or biological agents for weapons?" [p. 73]

I have visions of poor Cheney clutching his chest—the air rushing out of his lungs and his pacemaker about to implode—upon hearing poor (but subsequently, Medal of

Freedom awardee) Tenet concede that there was "no confirming intelligence" about the materials being produced. [Ibid] It's called "buffoonery in high places," but it received the same devastating blow that Bush's self-serving Commission delivered on March 31, 2005 to the CIA's pre-war CW conclusions.

When the NSC met on March 1, the highlight of that meeting was the heated exchange between Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell. Rumsfeld complained that loose UN economic sanctions were permitting Iraq to purchase dumptrucks possessing hydraulic cylinders, which might be used as launchers for rockets.

Powell replied: "For Christ's sake, if somebody wants a cylinder to erect a rocket, they don't have to buy a \$200,000 dumptruck to get one! (Bob Woodward, Plan of Attack, p.15)

Such nonsense by the senior leaders of the Bush administration preceded the IC's nonsense about the aluminum tubes and chemical warfare imagery, as well as most of the mobile biological weapons labs fiasco.

Pablo Paredes And The Culture Of Life

In the 13 days between the time that Ms. Schiavo's feeding tube was removed and the time she passed, 14 of our nation's children were killed in Iraq. I haven't heard one peep about this injustice from our propaganda media or our self-righteous, self-proclaimed "pro-life" politicians.

But trust me, since my own son killed was Iraq, I know the parents are weeping and screaming and crying out to God in despair and sorrowfully wondering why their child's life was cut way too short. The families and friends of our murdered nation's lifeblood are crying real tears that won't be easily soothed or dried anytime soon.

Dear Friends,

I am so angry at the level of hypocrisy spewing out of the mouths of our so-called leaders, and I am so heartbroken at the senseless and needless deaths of Casey and everyone else...

One of the only constructive ways I can deal with it is by writing. And you all are the recipients of my therapy...I hope you don't mind.

Love

Cindy Sheehan

Co-founder of Gold Star Families for Peace

www.gsfp.org

Pablo Paredes And The Culture Of Life

Pablo Paredes is a soft-spoken, humble, gentle young man who has a very calm and intelligent demeanor. Pablo is also one of the most courageous young men I have ever met.

Last year, Pablo, a Navy Petty Officer, refused to board his ship which was bound for the Persian Gulf and transporting a group of Marines to fight in Iraq. He said at the time, “I don’t want to be part of a ship that’s taking 3000 Marines over there knowing a hundred or more of them won’t come back.” He stood on the dock wearing a shirt that said, “Like a cabinet member, I resign.”

Pablo is facing a Special Courts Martial for violating the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Without getting technical (which I can’t anyway), he is mainly being charged with going AWOL. My argument would be that with our government’s new found respect (at least for the rhetoric) of the “culture of life” that all charges should be dropped against Pablo and that he should go free.

On March 31st, after Terri Schiavo was finally allowed to mercifully leave this earth, George Bush said this (yes, with a straight face): “I urge all those who honor Terri Schiavo to continue to work to build a culture of life where all Americans are welcomed and valued, **especially those whose lives are at the mercy of others.**”

On March 31st, Press Secretary, Scott Mc Clellan also reiterated the fact that has been stated repeatedly this week: **George Bush supports those who defend life.**

I don’t know how many times I have heard in the last 13 days since Ms. Schiavo’s feeding tube was removed that America should exemplify a “Culture of Life.”

I guess the framing and spinning issue would be: Who defines what life is worth defending? I have searched the archives of quotes since the Schiavo circus began on March 18th, and I haven’t seen one quote where one duplicitous politician has said “all life is precious.” Such a statement could surely bounce back and bite them in the behind and they know it.

However, I will proceed on the assumption that our leaders meant “all” life is precious. Not just life that can be cynically used as a political tool to hopefully boost poll numbers. Not just life that can be used to raise money from citizens who are duped into believing that the slimy snake oil salespeople who run our country right now truly care for anyone other than themselves and their special interests.

I know I am operating under a false assumption, but someone has to start calling the hypocrites on the carpet for the words they actually utter.

Pablo Paredes’ actions were life affirming. Pablo really and truly believes in his heart that every Marine in his care deserves to have life.

Pablo believes that since this occupation of Iraq is based on deliberate lies and is also based on a frightening and tragic parade of mistakes, miscalculations and bull-stuff, that this aggression in Iraq is immoral. The UN has called the occupation illegal. Pablo was defending life by his actions and he should receive the support and admiration of our country's leadership, not be court-martialed for his defense of life.

In the 13 days between the time that Ms. Schiavo's feeding tube was removed and the time she passed, 14 of our nation's children were killed in Iraq. I haven't heard one peep about this injustice from our propagandist media or our self-righteous, self-proclaimed "pro-life" politicians.

Am I the only person in America who finds this ironic? I haven't seen Tom DeLay crying his theatrical tears on command for the young people who had viable lives and actual futures that were killed in Iraq in the same time period he was so expediently concerned about Terri Schiavo.

But trust me, since my own son killed was Iraq, I know the parents are weeping and screaming and crying out to God in despair and sorrowfully wondering why their child's life was cut way too short. The families and friends of our murdered nation's lifeblood are crying real tears that won't be easily soothed or dried anytime soon.

We can only speculate on the numbers of Iraqis who were tragically killed in the same time period. We can only imagine their pain and suffering, because we aren't allowed to know the numbers or see the images of a war-torn and devastated country.

Where are the religious leaders and Focus on the Family people? Why aren't they holding candle-light vigils outside of our government buildings demanding an end to the occupation of Iraq? Why aren't the same people fervently praying for an end to our government-sponsored torture chambers?

Pablo knew that if he participated in delivering troops to Iraq he would also be responsible for delivering an early death to some innocent people. Pablo in his good conscience could not live with that burden.

I don't know how many of those 3000 brave Marines that Pablo refused to transport to their possible deaths have been killed or wounded so far in Iraq. Pablo Paredes knew that their lives were at the mercy of others: arrogant and reckless individuals who got our nation into a war that never made any sense and makes less sense as time goes by.

I hope that more people in this country, like Pablo, who value life, will stand up and remind our leaders that they support a "Culture of Life."

Let's remind our leaders that they don't get to pick and choose which life we should consider valuable.

Let's be the ones who take back our destinies from the careless liars who have our lives at their mercy.

Let's hold them accountable for the lives of the innocent people that their policies are killing and destroying everyday. Let's support all of our young men and women who are refusing to go and kill, or be killed for this abomination in Iraq.

Let's be like Pablo Paredes and stand up for life!!!

You can support Pablo at: <http://www.swiftsmartveterans.com/>

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.

Shortchanging Soldiers & Their Families: Bush Regime Cutting More Benefits To Hide War Costs

March 28, 2005 Army Times Editorial

Thanks to the Pentagon's war-budget shell game, those who sacrifice the most are being forced to sacrifice even more.

The tab for operations in Iraq is running \$4 billion a month, and the mission in Afghanistan requires another \$800 million a month.

But rather than build those costs into the defense budget, the Bush administration low-balled the actual Pentagon budget in hopes that an emergency supplemental spending bill would get through Congress without the months of scrutiny imposed on regular budget measures. The strategy seems to be working — the \$81 billion supplemental request has cleared the House — but soldiers are paying the price for this financial monkey business.

By shortchanging the 2005 budget, the services have put garrison commanders in a difficult bind: Money for base operations at military installations, for example, is running at about 70 percent of requirements.

The result: Commanders are shutting down gymnasiums, pools and other soldier- and family-friendly programs and facilities. Some posts have even cut off Tuition Assistance funding.

That's simply unfair.

Troops are paying enough of a price, in both time and blood, in this war; they shouldn't have to sacrifice their benefits, as well.

It's inexcusable that soldiers and their families should be required to give up programs and services that provide a baseline quality of life because Pentagon budget masters wanted to minimize the cost of the war for political purposes.

More disappointing still is that rather than fighting for their troops' benefits, officials inside the Army and the Installation Management Agency are content to point out that plans call for restoring funding for base operations to 90 percent of requirements — eventually.

Even if it happened tomorrow, why should anyone be satisfied with funding that's still 10 percent short of requirements?

That's really no different than providing armor for 90 percent of combat troops. It might be an improvement, but it's not a success.

Call it what it is: Not good enough.

Branch Insignia Needed

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
4.4.05

This is in response to recent letters on officers wearing branch insignia on the new Army Combat Uniform. One pointed out that enlisted soldiers don't wear branch insignia on the current battle dress uniform or the ACU. That's true, and I think it's wrong.

When I was enlisted, I spent a lot of time on liaison teams. When you walk into a strange tactical operations center, branch insignia is helpful in identifying and remembering the players. That won't, by itself, make or break an operation, but it's very handy.

It would be even better if the enlisted were also identified by branch. When you need some help with your radio, you can ask a Signal Branch soldier for help instead of wasting time asking a soldier from another branch. Plus, enlisted soldiers do wear branch insignia on the Class A and dress blue uniform.

We should be consistent — all or none.

Another letter said the Army has transformed into "an Army of one," the implication being that branch insignia sets an individual apart from the group and that is bad.

Let's carry that idea out to its logical conclusion: Jump wings, diver badges and aviator wings need to come off the combat uniform. Ditto for the drill sergeant

and recruiting patches. That kind of stuff sets soldiers apart from the group. Unit patches? That's just free intelligence for the enemy. They've got to go.

So what do we really need on the combat uniform?

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mark A. Pfenning
Cheyenne, Wyo.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Mortar Round Marks Election Of Speaker

04/03/05 ObviousNews.com

A mortar round struck near Iraq's foreign ministry, shooting a cloud of smoke into the sky, shortly after parliament elected a speaker, according to an AFP reporter and an interior ministry official. Sunni Arab Elected Iraq Parliament Speaker

The round hit just outside the Green Zone, the sealed off enclave that is home to parliament and the US embassy, just before 1 pm

Smoke was seen rising close to the foreign ministry, which is just down the road from the Green Zone, an AFP reporter witnessed.

Insurgents had fired mortars into the Green Zone during the parliament's previous two sessions.

Iraqi Legislators Withdraw And Resign

Apr. 3 (UPI)

Iraqi state television said Sunday an unspecified number of legislators have either pulled out or resigned from the National Assembly.

The channel quoted a member of the Shiite bloc in parliament, Hammam Hammoudi, as saying the legislators resigned either for security reasons or to protest their exclusion from the government being formed.

He said the National Assembly would discuss finding others to replace them.

Assorted Resistance Action:

April 3, 2005 Agence France-Presse & Aljazeera

In the main northern city of Mosul, two traffic policemen were killed by insurgents at around 11.30 am local time in the western al-Islah al-Zirahi district, Police Major Mohammed Fathi said.

An Iraqi government employee was killed at 1:30 pm in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad's western al-Bayaa neighbourhood, the interior ministry said.

The body of two army officers were discovered north of Baghdad.

Lieutenant Colonel Ziro Khalil Yunis was shot once in the stomach. He was in civilian clothing and carried Iraqi army and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan identification cards, said Ahmed Abdullah Rajab of the Medical City Hospital.

A corpse was also discovered near Himreen in Salahuddin province, said Major Mohammed Wadi, adding that police believed the corpse was that of a captain kidnapped one month ago with five other soldiers in Salman Bek.

Two Iraqi policemen have been killed and four others wounded in an attack east of the Iraqi city of Ramadi, Aljazeera has learned.

A bomber exploded a booby-trapped truck targeting a building used as a military post by US snipers.

US forces immediately closed entrances and bridges leading to the city.

In al-Saydiya district, south of Baghdad, armed fighters assassinated an Iraqi police officer.

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

Iraqi Sunni Clerics Deny Decree On Police

Apr. 2 (UPI)

Iraq's Association of Muslim Scholars denied Saturday issuing a religious decree allowing Iraqis to join of the Iraqi police forces and army.

The country's only Sunni religious authority said in a statement that reports of 64 clerics issuing a fatwa, or edict, allowing or urging Iraqis to join national security and military forces to protect Iraqis and their property were not linked to the association.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Search And Evade

“The best way to survive an ambush is to avoid an ambush,” Lt. Col. Kevin Stoddard, head of Product Manager Crew Served Weapons, said. April 04, 2005
Matthew Cox, Army Times staff writer.

[For information on how to achieve this desired outcome, find “Search And Evade” at: <http://www.chss.montclair.edu/english/furr/Vietnam/heinl.html>

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.

Like The Crusaders Before Them, The US Forces Are Prisoners In Their Own Fortresses

From the "Green Zone" in the centre of Baghdad, the US authorities and their Iraqi satellites can see little of the city and country they claim to govern. Sleeping around the gloomy republican palace of Saddam Hussein, they can stare over the parapets or peek through the machine-gun embrasures on the perimeter wall - but that is as much as most will ever see of Iraq.

02 April 2005 By Robert Fisk, The Independent UK

I drove Pat and Alice Carey up the coast of Lebanon this week to look at some castles. Pat is a builder from County Wicklow, brave enough to take a holiday with his wife in Beirut when all others are thinking of running away. But I wanted to know what he thought of 12th-century construction work.

How did he rate a Crusader keep? The most beautiful of Lebanon's castles is the smallest, a dinky-toy palisade on an outcrop of rock near the village of Batroun. You have to climb a set of well-polished steps - no hand-rails, for this is Lebanon - up the sheer side of Mseilha castle and then clamber over doorsills into the dark, damp interior.

So we padded around the battlements for half an hour. "Strongly made or they wouldn't be still here," Pat remarked. "But you wouldn't find any company ready to put up the insurance. And in winter, it must have been very, very cold."

And after some minutes, he looked at me with some intensity. "It's like being in a prison," he said.

And he was right. The only view of the outside world was through the archers' loopholes in the walls. Inside was darkness. The bright world outside was cut off by the castle defences. I could just see the splashing river to the south of the castle and, on the distant horizon, a mountainside. That was all the defenders - Crusaders or Mamlukes - would have seen. It was the only contact they had with the land they were occupying.

Up at Tripoli is Lebanon's biggest keep, the massive Castle of St Gilles that still towers ominously over the port city with its delicate minarets and mass of concrete hovels. Two shell holes - remnants of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war - have been smashed into the walls, but the interior of the castle is a world of its own; a world, that is, of stables and eating halls and dungeons. It was empty - the tourists have almost all fled Lebanon - and we felt the oppressive isolation of this terrible place.

Pat knew his Crusader castles. "When you besieged them, the only way to get inside was by pushing timber under the foundations and setting fire to the wood. When they turned to ash, the walls came tumbling down. **The defenders didn't throw boiling oil from the ramparts. They threw sand on to the attackers. The sand would get inside their armour and start to burn them until they were in too much pain to fight. But it's the same thing here in Tripoli as in the little castle. You can hardly see the city through the arrow slits. It's another - bigger - prison.**"

And so I sat on the cold stone floor and stared through a loophole and, sure enough, I could see only a single minaret and a few square metres of roadway. I was in darkness. Just as the Crusaders who built this fortress must have been in darkness.

Indeed, Raymond de Saint-Gilles spent years besieging the city, looking down in anger from his great fortress, built on the "Pilgrim's Mountain", at the stout burghers of Tripoli who were constantly re-supplied by boat from Egypt. Raymond himself died in the castle, facing the city he dreamed of capturing but could not live to enter.

And of course, far to the east, in the ancient land of Mesopotamia, there stand today equally stout if less aesthetic barricades around another great occupying army. The castles of the Americans are made of pre-stressed concrete and steel but they serve the same purpose and doom those who built them to live in prisons.

From the "Green Zone" in the centre of Baghdad, the US authorities and their Iraqi satellites can see little of the city and country they claim to govern. Sleeping

around the gloomy republican palace of Saddam Hussein, they can stare over the parapets or peek through the machine-gun embrasures on the perimeter wall - but that is as much as most will ever see of Iraq.

The Tigris river is almost as invisible as that stream sloshing past the castle of Mseilha. The British embassy inside the "Green Zone" flies its diplomats into Baghdad airport, airlifts them by helicopter into the fortress - and there they sit until recalled to London.

Indeed, the Crusaders in Lebanon - men with thunderous names like Tancred and Bohemond and Baldwin - used a system of control remarkably similar to the US Marines and the 82nd Airborne. They positioned their castles at a day's ride - or a day's sailing down the coast in the case of Lebanon - from each other, venturing forth only to travel between their keeps.

"You can see why the Crusaders couldn't last here," Pat said as we walked out of the huge gateway of the Castle of Saint Gilles. "I wonder if they even knew who they were fighting."

I just resisted asking him if he'd come along on my next trip to Baghdad, so I could hear part two of the builder's wisdom.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Mercenary Corporation Memo Says Killing Iraqis Is "Fun"

April 3, 2005 Mark Townsend, The Observer

One of the biggest private security firms in Iraq has created outrage after a memo to staff claimed it is 'fun' to shoot people.

Emails seen by The Observer reveal that employees of Blackwater Security were recently sent a message stating that 'actually it is "fun" to shoot some people.'

Dated 7 March and bearing the name of Blackwater's president, Gary Jackson, the electronic newsletter adds that terrorists 'need to get creamed, and it's fun, meaning satisfying, to do the shooting of such folk.'

The controversial wording of the Blackwater bulletin appears to be an attempt to criticise the 'righteous outcry' that followed a recent statement from a senior US Marine general who, on returning home from Iraq, claimed it was 'fun to shoot some people'.

Called Blackwater Tactical Weekly, the newsletter was sent to environmental activist Frank Hewetson as well as the firm's staff. Last year Hewetson was offered a job by Blackwater with a salary of up to £85,000 plus health benefits to work with its 'military crisis operations support team.' Although he declined, Hewetson remains on the firm's database.

Among its various roles in post-war Iraq, Blackwater has guarded provincial outposts for the Iraqi coalition provisional authority and had the contract to keep former chief US envoy Paul Bremer alive.

Defence experts have described Blackwater as a major player in the field of private arms with an important role to play in aiding American security in the war on terror.

Other Blackwater emails seen by The Observer, from last year, indicate the large market for civilian contractors in war zones. 'We will probably require at least 3000-4000 professionals above and beyond what we have in the Blackwater employment and resource system,' states one.

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

Iraqi Collaborators' Unit Falls From Grace In Typical Fuckup

April 3, 2005 By James Janega, Chicago Tribune (KRT)

HAQLANIYAH, Iraq -- During its short life, the Iraq Freedom Guard of maybe 100 fighters had a distinguished record in Anbar province. **[From the occupation point of view, that is.]**

But on an afternoon last month, the Freedom Guard's fall from grace led to the deaths of two unit soldiers and more questions about how reliable an ally Iraq's nascent armed forces are.

Seeking to make a point not fully understood by Marine commanders with whom they worked, guard fighters finished weeks of missions in Anbar by marching without clearance to violent Haqlaniyah, a small town on the Euphrates River. Just hours before U.S. troops were to attempt to root out an insurgent cell in the town, Iraq Freedom **[translation: occupation]** Guardsmen confronted several young men.

Then, a roadside bomb blew up next to the Iraqi unit.

Besides the soldiers who died, three other Freedom Guardsmen were wounded, and the Americans who followed that night arrived to find the town abandoned.

A central issue in the Iraqi military has been discipline. **While army units have generally been well received by local residents and U.S. military officials, Anbar residents have decried the Iraqi National Guard as thieves who mistreat residents and steal from houses they search. [This is called “winning the hearts and minds of the people,” an expression first used by the U.S. occupation in Vietnam. And we all know how that one ended.]**

In the northern reaches of Anbar -- the Euphrates corridor from Haditha to Hit, including Haqlaniyah -- locals have accused the Freedom Guard of the same poor behavior, something American commanders who work alongside them deny. **[Hey, what do the locals know. They just live there.]**

On March 22, they apparently took things too far.

The unit persuaded their American liaison to let them finish their mission in Anbar province by pressing south into a settlement across a gorge from Haqlaniyah.

The liaison was a Marine captain who has since left Iraq. Lawson said the Iraqis had asked to travel north but instead made the move south.

Third Battalion commander Lt. Col. Lionel Urquhart said he was later told the Iraqis wanted to celebrate the conclusion of their operation with a tribal dance nearer their enemies. Lawson and Capt. Lance Langfeldt, a tank officer who followed them, said they were told the guardsmen sought revenge for a member killed earlier by area insurgents.

Marines who watched said the Freedom Guard roughed up several young men along their march. Then, soon after the Iraqis danced in the street and fired their weapons toward Haqlaniyah -- a remote-controlled bomb exploded a few feet from them.

The blast knocked Langfeldt down into his tank. One Freedom Guardsman was killed immediately and another died on the trip to the American base near Haditha. The unit was evacuated and badly shaken.

Clearly frustrated, the Marines say the future of Iraq remains in the hands of such forces. [Some truth at last. Indeed so. Which is why the resistance wins the war.]

**“Take 15 Bush Supporters And
Throw Them In A House In The
Suburbs Of, Say, Falloojeh For At
Least 14 Days.”**

April 03, 2005 Baghdad Burning, Girl Blog from Iraq...

Two years ago, the major part of the war in Iraq was all about bombarding us with smart bombs and high-tech missiles. Now there's a different sort of war- or perhaps it's just another phase of the same war.

Now we're being assailed with American media. It's everywhere all at once.

I've been enchanted with the shows these last few weeks. The thing that strikes me most is the fact that the news is so... clean. It's like hospital food. It's all organized and disinfected. Everything is partitioned and you can feel how it has been doled out carefully with extreme attention to the portions- 2 minutes on women's rights in Afghanistan, 1 minute on training troops in Iraq and 20 minutes on Terri Schiavo!

All the reportages are upbeat and somewhat cheerful, and the anchor person manages to look properly concerned and completely uncaring all at once.

Furthermore, I don't understand the world's fascination with reality shows. *Survivor, The Bachelor, Murder in Small Town X, Faking It, The Contender...* it's endless. Is life so boring that people need to watch the conjured up lives of others?

I have a suggestion of my own for a reality show. Take 15 Bush supporters and throw them in a house in the suburbs of, say, Falloojeh for at least 14 days. We could watch them cope with the water problems, the lack of electricity, the check points, the raids, the Iraqi National Guard, the bombings, and- oh yeah- the 'insurgents'.

We could watch their house bombed to the ground and their few belongings crushed under the weight of cement and brick or simply burned or riddled with bullets. We could see them try to rebuild their life with their bare hands (and the equivalent of \$150)...

I'd not only watch that reality show, I'd tape every episode.

CLASS WAR NEWS

**“What's Going On Here Is An
Attack On The Working Class”
“He Needs To Get The Hell Out Of
Here!”**

3.18.05 By GINGER ADAMS OTIS, The Chief, New York City

The event held March 7 at the 21 Club on West 52nd St. had all the spectacle of a Hollywood premiere—an exclusive location, boisterous crowds, flashing camera lights and a stream of sleek, dark luxury cars.

The only thing missing was the star of the hour—action-hero-turned-California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger — who chose to arrive through a side-door service entrance rather than face the people clamoring for him out front.

“Arnold, Arnold take a stand, don’t be such a girlie man,” chanted the crowd of public employees including city firefighters, paramedics, and correction officers, as limo after limo pulled UP to the gilded art deco entrance of the 21 Club and disgorged Republican supporters, who spent \$1,000 a head for the privilege of joining the “Governator” inside.

“He won’t face us,” said Andy Doyle, director of the Los Angeles County Firefighters Local 1014. ‘Everywhere he goes, we go. We’re getting on a bus tonight to follow him to Washington and we’ll protest there, too. Two months ago, when we were digging people out of mudslides with our hands, he loved California firefighters -- now he can’t even look me in the eye.’

Mr. Doyle is part of a loose coalition made up of California nurses, firefighters, police officers, teachers, correction officers and other public employees determined to fight Governor Schwarzenegger’s proposed plan to privatize their pensions and eliminate death benefits for the families of civil servants who die in the line of duty.

They’ve been following him as he travels around the country trying to raise at least \$50 million from corporate donors to promote his plan to change state government, and to line his war chest for a possible re-election run in 2006.

“What’s going on here is an attack on the working class,” shouted Uniformed Fire Officers’ Association President Peter Gorman, who took up a bullhorn to rally the New York workers who came out to show support for their California counterparts. “And we’re going to show Schwarzenegger that this is a labor city and a labor state with a working-class agenda, and he needs to get the hell out of here!”

Firefighters, paramedics, and correctional officers from all over New York— some from as far away as Buffalo—cheered loudly in response.

Schwarzenegger is over here talking to Pataki,” said Firefighter Steve Closs, who works in a midtown firehouse. “I don’t like it. Cutting pensions, taking away benefits, leaving families with almost nothing—the stock market crashes and what do you have? It’s no good for anybody.”

Received:

Disciplinary Hearing for CCNY Anti-Recruiters April 8

From: NYCLAW
Sent: April 03, 2005
Subject: 4.8: Disciplinary Hearings for CCNY Anti-Recruiters

From: "Ronald B. McGuire" <ronmcguire@att.net>
Date: Sun, 3 Apr 2005 09:55:52 -0400

Friends:

The City Defense Campaign is urging supporters to attend the disciplinary hearings of the three City College students and staff member who were arrested and suspended without hearings by CCNY President Gregory Williams for peacefully protesting against military recruiters at a college jobs fair.

The hearings for the students, Hadas Thier, Justino Rodriguez and Nick Gergren will be on Friday, April 8th at 10 AM. CUNY has not yet informed the students of the room number. The hearing for Carol Lang, the staff member who was arrested in her office two days after the demonstration will be on Thursday, April 14th at 10 AM in room 50, Shepard Hall.

Anyone interested in helping the campaign to defend Carol and the students can get further information and contact the City Defense Campaign at <http://www.citydefensecampaign.org/>.

City College is at 138th Street and Convent Avenue. The nearest subway stops are 137th Street on the 1/9 lines or 145th Street on the A-B-C-D lines. The campus is a short walk from those stations and there are free purple buses to CCNY from the 145th Street and 137th Street stations.

In Solidarity, Ron McGuire

"Soulstice Experience! EVERY Day Is The Longest Day, For Those At War"

From: "Ward Reilly" <wardpeace@hotmail.com>
Sent: April 03, 2005

June 18th, 2005.. MARK YOUR CALENDAR, PLEASE! National anti-war action in New Orleans...

"SOULstice Experience! EVERY day is the longest day, for those at war"

WE NEED VETERANS AND ACTIVISTS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY!!!

Stop The War NOW! Troops Home NOW! 9-11 Truth NOW!

Dear friends,

We wanted to check in with everyone and let you know that the initial organizing for the SOULSTICE EXPERIENCE is nearing its conclusion. Hopefully, in the coming days, we will be able to reveal the general plan for the action and begin running the ramps on the details. Please understand that a level of secrecy is required at this stage of planning, but that all will be revealed in the very near future.

We are off to a strong start with involvement now pledged from the core organizers of the Jazz Funeral for Democracy and many new friends signing on from as far away as Maryland and Kansas. We continue to email notices to progressive groups daily and hope to establish SOULSTICE EXPERIENCE as a national event.

We need your help in this regard. Please get the word out at every opportunity.

We will also need volunteers willing to take responsibility for the following: , hosts for sign painting parties, someone to assist our out of town friends upon their arrival in New Orleans (including tourist services such as negotiating attractive group rates at cool hotels), people to oversee leaflet posting in various communities and neighborhoods,

We have already lined up "volunteers" to handle the stage, the music, the speakers, the permits, the marches, children's area, art exhibits, and media relations. Those people will be identified in the coming days in the event you would like to assist in one of those capacities.

More later.

ONWARD!

Annie & Buddy Spell, Ward Reilly, Bob Smith, Sheik Richardson, Marty Rowland
LOUISIANA ACTIVIST NETWORK

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/qi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/qispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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