

GI SPECIAL 3B28:



**Military Judge Says:
“Any Seaman Recruit
Has Reasonable Cause”
To Believe Iraq War
Illegal:**

**Pablo Paredes Sentenced:
Supporters Claim No Confinement, No
Punitive Discharge A Victory**

Navy petty officer Pablo Paredes was sentenced today to for missing movement stemming from his refusal to board the Iraq-bound ship USS Bonhomme Richard last December 6. The sentence included two months restriction, three months hard labor without confinement, and reduction in rank to E-1.

The sentencing came the day after his conviction by a judge trial in a special court martial held May 11, 2005, at the 32nd Street Naval Station in San Diego.

Paredes had based his defense on his belief that the war in Iraq is illegal, and that he had a duty to avoid participating in it. He said that he wanted to “put the war on trial.” This defense was not accepted by the judge.

However, during the sentencing portion of the hearing, the judge did allow testimony about the legality of the war, about the “reasonableness” of Paredes’ opinion in that regard, and about his sincerity as a conscientious objector to war.

Paredes’ lawyer, Jeremy Warren, called Prof. Marjorie Cohn as an expert witness on international law. Cohn testified that the war in Iraq is illegal because it meets neither of the two standards incorporated into the United Nations Charter. The two standards are self-defense, collective or individual, and authorization by the Security Council. The U.N. Charter has been ratified by Congress and, thus, is the “law of the land,” Cohn testified. She testified further that the overwhelming preponderance of opinion among international law experts is that the war in Iraq is illegal.

During a lengthy and testy cross-examination, Cohn was repeatedly asked by the prosecutor whether it was her opinion that “any seaman recruit” could decide for themselves whether such wars as Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq were illegal and, thus, have a duty not to serve in them.

Cohn responded that none of those wars met either of the standards in the U.N. Charter that would confer legality upon them, and, so, were illegal. Since they were illegal under the Charter ratified by Congress, participation in them would constitute a violation of the “law of the land.”

At the conclusion of Cohn’s testimony, the judge, exasperated by the prosecutor’s efforts, said, “I think the government has successfully proved that any seaman recruit has reasonable cause to believe that the wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq were illegal.

Paredes’ supporters in the courtroom were astounded at the judge’s remarks and left the courtroom elated.

When court re-convened today, the previous day’s elation had turned sober in anticipation of Paredes’ sentencing. During the sentencing portion of the court martial, the prosecution had proposed 9 months confinement, maximum forfeiture of pay, reduction in rank to the lowest pay grade, and a bad conduct discharge. But when, after an hour of deliberation, the judge returned and pronounced the sentence, Paredes’ supporters’ joy re-emerged.

According to Paredes' attorney Jeremy Warren, the sentence was an "affirmation" of the right of members of the military to speak out publicly on issues like the war in Iraq.

Larry Christian, who testified on Paredes' behalf, said, "This is a huge victory. It recognizes, even if only by implication, the legitimacy of acting against an illegal war based on sincere and reasonable beliefs."

The sentences of restriction and hard labor are to run concurrently and will begin when appropriate paperwork is completed, which is expected to take up to a month. Until then, Paredes will operate on a normal schedule at the Temporary Processing Unit to which he is assigned.

Defense attorney Jeremy Warren said Paredes passed up deals that would have minimized his punishment in exchange for a guilty plea.

"He's not backing down from what he did or why he did it," Warren said.

On Wednesday, the courtroom was packed with reporters and anti-war activists. Paredes' supporters included Fernando Suarez del Solar of Escondido and Cindy Sheehan of Vacaville, who both have spoken out against the war since their sons were killed in Iraq.

In the days before the court-martial, Paredes seemed unfazed by the prospect of a conviction following the military equivalent of a civilian misdemeanor trial.

"The president of the United States has a DUI under his belt," Paredes said, referring to the president's 1976 drunken driving arrest in Maine. "I think I'll make it with a misdemeanor."

[For Pablo Paredes statement to the court, see the Troops News section below.]

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

SOLDIER KILLED NEAR MUSAYIB

05/12/05 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number: 05-05-15C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- **A Soldier assigned to the 155th Brigade Combat Team, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), died May 12 when an improvised explosive device detonated near the soldier's vehicle. The incident took place during combat operations about nine miles east of Musayib.**

TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER KILLED IN BOMB ATTACK

05/12/05 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number: 05-05-17C

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- **A Task Force Baghdad Soldier died from wounds suffered when his vehicle struck a roadside bomb in east Baghdad at approximately 1:00 p.m., May 12.**

TASK FORCE LIBERTY SOLDIER KILLED, ONE WOUNDED BY IED NEAR SAMARRA

05/12/05 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number: 05-05-16C

TIKRIT, Iraq -- **One Task Force Liberty Soldier was killed and another wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated next to their combat patrol near Samarra at about 2:45 p.m., May 12.**

The wounded Soldiers were evacuated to a Coalition Forces medical facility, where one Soldier died of wounds sustained in the attack.

TWO MARINES KILLED IN AL QA'IM 14 Wounded

05/12/05 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number: 05-05-14C & May 12, 2005 (CNN)

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- **Two Marines assigned to Regimental Combat Team 2, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), were killed 11 May when their amphibious assault vehicle struck an explosive device in Al Qa'im during Operation Matador. Operation Matador is a combat operation in northwestern Iraq.**

Fourteen others were wounded when a bomb struck their armored vehicle Wednesday evening.

So far, five Marines have been reported killed in the operation.

Lejeune Marine From Ohio Latest Combat Victim

May 12, 2005 AP, CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

A Camp Lejeune-based Marine from Ohio was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq, the fifth death related to the base this week.

Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 29, of Galion, Ohio, died in western Iraq from a severe leg wound he received when the vehicle he was in struck the bomb, according to a military report given to his family.

Three Treasure Valley Marines Seriously Wounded

May 11, 2005 By Scott Logan, KBCI-TV Boise

The call on Sunday left Bob Brumpton of Eagle in a state of shock.

"I always knew it could happen," he said, "that my son could be wounded or killed. But to actually hear that he had been wounded, it left my wife and I just hanging on."

The call came from the United States Marines Corps, and informed the Brumptons that their 31-year-old son, Staff Sgt. Chad Brumpton, had been seriously wounded near the Syria-Iraq border.

"He has multiple fractures in both legs and his left hand is broken," Brumpton said. "He's in pretty bad shape and in a lot of pain. They have him heavily sedated."

Two other local Marines, Lance Cpls. Joseph Lowe and Mitch Ehlke, were also seriously injured when their M1-A1 Abrams tank, commanded by Staff Sgt. Brumpton, hit a huge land mine Sunday, according to Marine Corps spokesmen.

Brumpton said another Marine risked his life to pull his three wounded comrades from the tank.

"My son and I are very close," said Brumpton, who spoke quietly and calmly, but conceded he was torn up inside. "It's a terrible feeling when your son is hurt bad and you can't be there, can't help, can't reach out for him."

Brumpton said his son is now at a military hospital in Germany where he spoke to him on the phone last night. "But he was pretty drugged up. They don't want him to move because he's in so much pain."

The three Marines are reservists with Charlie Company, 4th Tank Battalion, based at Gowen Field in Boise. They have been attached to the 2nd Marine Division while serving in Iraq.

Michiana Soldier Injured

05/12/2005 WNDU-TV South Bend

A Michiana soldier has been seriously injured in the war in Iraq.

Nineteen-year-old Private First Class Jonathan Replogle was hurt Wednesday in a Humvee accident. He and another soldier were airlifted to the U.S. army hospital in Germany.

Just a couple of weeks ago, NewsCenter 16 did a story about Jonathan. Students at Muesel Elementary in South Bend, where Jonathan's mom is a teacher, put on a special musical program in honor of our troops.

Replogle is expected to be flown Friday to Walter Reed Hospital in Maryland, where he will undergo further evaluation and surgery.

Car Bomb Hits U.S. Convoy: Casualties Not Reported

May 12, 2005 (CNN)

A car bomber targeted a U.S. military convoy along a highway in western Baghdad. There was no word on American casualties.

"That's The Last Of The Squad"

“In 96 Hours Of Fighting And Ambushes The Squad Had Just Ceased To Be”

May. 12, 2005 By Ellen Knickmeyer, The Washington Post

HABAN, Iraq - The explosion enveloped the armored vehicle in flames, sending orange balls of fire bubbling above the trees along the Euphrates River near the Syrian border.

Marines in surrounding vehicles threw open their hatches and took off running across the plowed fields, toward the already blackening metal of the destroyed vehicle. Shouting, they pulled to safety those they could, as the flames ignited the bullets, mortar rounds, flares and grenades inside, rocketing them into the sky and across pastures.

Gunnery Sgt. Chuck Hurley emerged from the smoke and turmoil around the vehicle, circling toward the spot where helicopters would later land to pick up casualties. As he passed one group of Marines, he uttered just one sentence: "That was the same squad."

Among the four Marines killed and 10 wounded when a bomb exploded under their amtrac on Wednesday were the last battle-ready members of a squad that four days earlier had battled foreign fighters holed up in a house in the town of Ubaydi. In that fight, two squad members were killed and five wounded.

In 96 hours of fighting and ambushes in far western Iraq, the squad had just ceased to be.

Every member of the unit -- one of three squads that make up the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment -- had been killed or wounded, Marines here said. All told, the 1st Platoon, which Hurley commands, had sustained 60 percent casualties, demolishing it as a fighting force.

"They used to call it Lucky Lima," said Maj. Steve Lawson, commander of the company. "That turned around and bit us."

Wednesday was the fourth day of fighting in far western Iraq, as the U.S. military continued an assault that has sent more than 1,000 Marines down the ungoverned north bank of the Euphrates River. Of seven Marines killed so far in Operation Matador, six came from Lima Company, 1st Platoon.

Lima Company drew Marine reservists from across Ohio into the conflict in Iraq. Some were still too young to be bothered much by shaving, or even stubble. They rode to war on a Marine amtrac, an armored vehicle that travels on tank-like treads.

On Monday, when the Marine assault on foreign fighters formally began, the young Marines of the squad from 1st Platoon were already exhausted. Their encounter at the house in Ubaydi that morning and the previous night had been the unintended first clash of the operation, pitting them against insurgents who fired armor-piercing bullets up through the floor. It took 12 hours and five assaults by the squad -- plus grenades, bombing by an F/A-18 attack plane, tank rounds and rockets at 20 yards -- to kill the insurgents and permit recovery of the dead Marines' bodies.

Afterward, they slept in the moving amtrac, heads back and mouths open. One stood up to stretch his legs. He fell asleep again standing up, leaning against the metal walls.

Squad members spoke only to compare their knowledge of the condition of their wounded. Getting the latest news, they fell silent again. After one such half-hour of silence, a Marine offered a terse commendation for one of the squad members shot at Ubaydi: "Bunker's a good man."

Everyone had plenty of warning that the Marines were coming.

By the time the squad from Lima Company crossed north of the Euphrates, whole villages consisted of little more than abandoned houses with fresh tire tracks leading off into pastures, or homes occupied only by prepubescent boys or old men.

After a day of uneventful house searches, this correspondent had just gotten off the Amtrac and the reconstructed squad from 1st Platoon was rolling toward the Euphrates in a row of armored vehicles, headed for more house searches, when the vehicle rolled over the explosive.

Marines initially said they believed the blast was caused by two mines stacked on top of each other. But reports from Marines that they had seen an artillery round and two hand-held radios near the blast site raised suspicions that the explosion was caused by a bomb that had been activated remotely, Lawson said.

Hurley and others pulled their comrades out of the Amtrac as flames detonated - or "cooked off," in military jargon - its ammunition. As Marines carrying stretchers ran to the Amtrac, bullets snapped out of the burning hulk and traveled hundreds of feet. The Marines ran back through the fusillade, carrying out the wounded. "C'mon, c'mon, c'mon," some shouted, desperate to get the wounded out.

"We passed right over it. We passed right over it," one of many Marines in the convoy ahead of the burning Amtrac said of the explosive, puzzling over why he was still alive.

The four dead were trapped inside the vehicle, Lawson said.

"That's the last of the squad," Cpl. Craig Miller, whose reassignment last month had taken him out of the unit, said as he surveyed the scene. "Three weeks ago, that would have been me."

Late Wednesday, helicopters flew out Hurley and the remaining members of 1st Platoon for time off. They are to return after the platoon is remade, Marines said.

Another Lima Company platoon commander ordered his men to bed early, in preparation for the next day's operations.

Mourning could wait. "We don't have time," the commander said.

MORE:

"We're Fighting An Invisible Enemy" "They're Like The ... CIA."

"We took constant mortar fire from over here. Anybody who comes over that bridge gets lit up," said 3rd Platoon commander Lt. Joseph Clemmey, 26, of Worcester, Mass. "This was supposed to be the mission from God, and so far we've been out here and we haven't seen nothing. This was the climactic moment we were all waiting for, and no one is here."

May 12, 2005 By Solomon Moore. L.A. Times Staff Writer

The Marines of Kilo Company were on the fourth day of an offensive against insurgents in western Iraq, but they had seen little action Wednesday until a loud boom rocked this Euphrates River village, followed by the frantic screams of young troops.

They stopped their convoy and looked back to see an amphibious vehicle engulfed in flames. They knew that about 18 Marines from Lima Company of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, were in the vehicle.

Within minutes, the vehicle's gas tanks exploded, setting off mortar shells, grenades, bars of C-4 plastic explosives and thousands of machine-gun rounds inside. Rockets randomly shot out of the vehicle. The explosives would crackle and thunder for the next hour.

Some troops ran through thick, black smoke and pulled out wounded men, lining up some of them within feet of the fire.

Some of the wounded suffered third-degree burns. Seared flesh hung from their bodies. Most of the wounded had severe burns on their arms and faces. Others had shrapnel wounds. A 3-inch shard of metal protruded from one Marine's abdomen.

Lt. Sam McAmis, who commanded a Marine platoon in the operation, recounted trying to pull a wounded sergeant from the fire, but the man's ammunition pouch was stuck in the vehicle's hatch. McAmis said he yanked him out.

"When he came out, my hand was inside his leg, inside his muscle," he said.

Another wounded man inside was not as lucky.

"One of my lance corporals went in to try to get some more people, but there was too much fire," McAmis said. "One Marine had burns over his face. The last thing he did was reach his hand out and an explosion went off" — killing him.

Sgt. Dennis Wollard of Biloxi, Miss., who survived the explosion, sat glassy-eyed and bare-chested against a building on the edge of the field. He lamented that he couldn't save all the men inside.

"I was at the back door," Wollard said. "I couldn't get 'em all. There had to be six still in there. I don't know how they could've gotten out."

Another Marine, speaking with a senior officer, held back tears. "I couldn't get to them all, sir. It was just too hot," he said, shaking his head.

As the Marines treated their wounded comrades, retired Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North, the Iran-Contra scandal figure, filmed the operation with a digital video recorder issued by his employer, Fox News. North, who was dressed in Marine camouflage, is traveling with Kilo Company.

About half an hour after the explosion, two Black Hawk helicopters swooped down to take the wounded to the base at Al Qaim near the Syrian border.

The Marines in Abu Hardan stood near the blast scene. Some appeared stunned. Others were angry.

"It was my fault, it was my fault!" shouted a Marine who identified himself as the driver of the amphibious vehicle. He appeared to be uninjured.

Kilo Company had spent most of Wednesday sweeping through this village of farms and two-story stone houses along the Euphrates.

They wanted to take control of the Ramana Bridge, where Marines this week took heavy fire from insurgents. Immediately after entering the town, they found a house with a red van parked in a carport. Wires hung out of the gas tank, often a sign of a vehicle bomb.

"We took constant mortar fire from over here. Anybody who comes over that bridge gets lit up," said 3rd Platoon commander Lt. Joseph Clemmey, 26, of Worcester, Mass. "This was supposed to be the mission from God, and so far we've been out here and we haven't seen nothing. This was the climactic moment we were all waiting for, and no one is here."

Two eight-wheeled light armored vehicles broke out of the convoy to train their heavy guns on the vehicle.

"Yeah!" one eager Marine called out.

A few moments later, the guns pounded the van into flames. The rounds burst holes through the front of a nearby house.

A few blocks to the south, rebel fighters fired on Marines. Troops manning tank-mounted machine guns fired back. The rounds blasted holes through a house on the far side of a field.

Clemmey ordered his men to search the people and put them in a walled-off garden.

Clemmey's platoon was followed by a tank. Its main barrel bore its moniker: Stink Fist.

"Remember," Clemmey shouted to his troops in a New England accent, "anyone who has not left the city can be considered hostile."

Marines fanned through waist-high wheat fields looking for mines and bombs. Locked doors were kicked in or blown through with explosive charges. Cabinets were opened and clothes bags emptied in the search for weapons and bomb-making equipment.

But the city was deserted.

"We're fighting an invisible enemy," said Sgt. Jeffrey Swartzentruber of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. "They're like the ... CIA."

Notes From A Lost War:

“Hard To Surprise Insurgents” “They Knew About Missions” Resistance Routinely Tipped To U.S. Occupation Moves

12 May 2005 By Ian Simpson (Reuters)

In a war where intelligence is as important as guns, leaks of information from Iraqi soldiers are undermining the battle against insurgents, senior U.S. and Iraqi officers say.

Officers told Reuters it was almost impossible to keep secrets among soldiers who have members of their family or tribe on the other side.

The result is operations that turn up mounds of weapons and explosives but few suspects, because tipped-off rebels flee before raids even begin.

"We still don't have secure operations. When we go on a mission, this gets leaked out to the people," said Colonel Thayer Dhia Ismail Abid al-Tamimi, who heads an Iraqi battalion in Diyala province.

Even meetings among his fellow battalion commanders cannot stay secret in his area near the city of Muqdadiya, about 110 km (70 miles) northeast of Baghdad, said Tamimi, whose unit has been praised by U.S. officers for its professionalism.

An example of the damage from a likely tip-off came last week when Tamimi's U.S.-trained 205th Battalion helped sweep a date palm grove used as an insurgent hideout.

Soldiers found artillery shells, an anti-aircraft gun and other munitions, but caught only one suspected rebel.

Major Mark Borowski, a U.S. operations officer who accompanied Tamimi's unit on the raid, said it was hard to surprise insurgents because they knew about missions as soon as U.S. or Iraqi security forces left their bases.

"It's tough to get the people, it's very hard to keep the word from getting out. Everybody knows each other," he said.

"There is no doubt there is corruption in units. When the information gets out there is no stopping it," said Major Dean Wollan, intelligence officer for the 3rd Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade, which oversees part of Diyala province.

"The real hard-case insurgents and foreign fighters, they are really good," he said, adding the United States had studied such groups as the Irish Republican Army to see how to break up guerrilla networks. **[Try studying Vietnam. Or Afghanistan during the Russian occupation disaster. Then run, do not walk, to the nearest exist, while still breathing. Game over.]**

Occupation Command Caught In Another Criminal Act: Al-Qaim Hospital Attacked, Patients Killed

12 May 2005 IRIN

Families are fleeing the Iraqi town of al-Qaim following the start of an offensive on 2 May by US troops.

The main hospital in al-Qaim was reportedly attacked during the fighting, according to local doctors. Eight people were reported to have been killed inside the building by the hospital's deputy director.

"The hospital was the main place for us to receive our patients and now we have set up mobile medical posts between houses to treat injured civilians that have been increasing since the fighting started. We don't have any medical supplies, as the ones we had were in the hospital," Mustafa al-Alousi, deputy director of the hospital, told IRIN.

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



May 6, Mosul (AFP/Cris Bouroncle)

TROOP NEWS

**Parades Statement To The Court-
Martial:
“I Consider Myself In Solidarity
With All Service Members”**

I followed my conscience, and I will not, under any circumstances, become weary of doing what is right.

The below statement is Pablo Paredes' statement read to the court.

Your Honor, and to all present,

I'd like to state first and foremost that it has never been my intent or motivation to create a mockery of the navy or it's judicial system. I do not consider military members adversaries. I consider myself in solidarity with all service members.

It is this feeling of solidarity that was at the root of my actions.

I don't pretend to be in a position to lecture anyone on what I perceive as facts concerning our current political state of affairs. I accept that it is very possible that my political perspective on this war could be wrong. I don't think rational people can ever engage in debate if neither is willing to accept the possibility that their assertions, no matter how researched, can be tainted with inaccuracy and falsehoods.

I do believe that accepting this, in no way takes away from one's confidence in their convictions.

I am convinced that the current War on Iraq is illegal.

I am also convinced that the true causality for it lacked any high ground in the topography of morality. I believe as a member of the armed forces beyond having a duty to my chain of command and my President, I have a higher duty to my conscience and to the supreme Law of the land. Both of these higher duties dictate that I must not participate in any way, hands on or indirect, in the current Aggression that has been unleashed on Iraq.

In the past, few months I have been continually asked if I regret my decision to refuse to board my ship and to do so publicly. I have spent hour upon hour reflecting on my decision, and I can tell you with every fiber of certitude that I possess, that I feel in my heart I did the right thing.

This does not mean I have no regrets. I regret dearly exposing the families of Marines and Sailors to my protest. While I do not feel my message was wrong, I know that those families were facing a difficult moment. This moment was made in some ways more difficult by my actions and this pains me. That day on the pier I restrained myself from answering the calls of coward and even some harsher variations of the same term.

I did so because I knew this wasn't the time to engage these families in debate. I felt that I became in many ways a forum in which to vent their fears and sadness and I did not want to turn that into a combative situation, in which the families were distracted more by our debate, than simply empowered by their ability to chastise my actions. All that being said I still feel my actions made some people very unhappy, and made others feel that I was taking away from their child's or their husband's goodbye. I regret this.

I also regret the pain and stress I have caused those near and dear to me. I will not go into detail as I do not seek the pity of the court.

I know that my lawyers feel it is ill-advised for me to say these things and I am aware of that.

My lawyers have had a difficult time with me.

They also felt it was ill advised for me to plead not guilty.

It is this I truly want to explain, both to them and to the court. I realize I did not board the Bon Homme Richard on December 6th and that I left after ship personnel and pier Master At Arms refused to arrest me. Given these confessions one may find it hard to understand why would anyone admit to the action but not plead guilty to the crime.

It is this question that has also been the topic of much reflection for me. I never denied my actions nor do I run from their consequences, but pleading guilty is more than admission of an action, it is also acceptance that that action was wrong and illegal.

These are two things I do not accept.

I feel, even with all the regrets and difficulties that have come as a result of my actions that they were in fact, my duty as a human being and as a service member.

I feel in my mind and heart that this war is illegal and immoral. The moral argument is one that courts have little room for and has been articulated in my CO application, it is an argument that encompasses all wars as intolerable in my system of morals.

The Legal argument is quite relevant, although motions filled and approved have discriminated against it to the point it was not allowed into this trial.

I have long now, been an ardent reader of independent and in my opinion less corrupted forms of media, such as truthout.org, Democracynow, books from folks like Stephen Zunes and Chalmers Johnson, articles from people like Noam Chomsky and Naomi Klein. These folks are very educated in matters of politics and are not on the payroll of any major corporate news programming, such as CNN or Fox News Network.

They all do what they do for reasons other than money, as they could earn much more if they joined the corporate controlled ranks. I have come to trust their research and value their convictions, in assisting to form my own. They have all unanimously condemned this war as illegal, as well as, made resources available for me to draw my own conclusions.

Resources like Kofi Annan's statements on how under the UN charter the Iraq War is illegal, resources like Marjorie Cohn's countless articles providing numerous sources and reasons why the war is illegal under international as well as domestic law.

I could speak on countless sources and their arguments as to the illegality of the War on Iraq quite extensively but again, I don't presume to be in a position to lecture anyone here on law. I mean only to provide insight on my actions on Dec. 6th. I understood before that date very well what the precedent was for service members participating in illegal Wars.

I read extensively on the arguments and results of Nazi German Soldiers as well as Imperial Japanese Soldiers in the Nuremburg and Tokyo trials, respectively.

In all I read I came to an overwhelming conclusion supported by countless examples: that any soldier who knowingly participates in an illegal War can find no haven in the fact that they were following orders, in the eyes of International Law. Nazi aggression and Imperialist Japan are very charged moments of history and evoking them evokes many emotions and atrocities, so I want to be very clear that I am in no way comparing our current government to any of the historical counterparts, I am not comparing the leaders or the acts of their militaries. I am only citing the trials because they are the best example of judicial precedent for what a soldier/sailor is expected to do when faced with the decision to participate or refuse to participate in what he perceives is an illegal war.

I think we would all agree that a service member must not participate in random unprovoked illegitimate violence, simply because he is ordered to.

What I submit to you is that I am convinced that the current War is exactly that.

So if there is anything I could be guilty of, it is my beliefs. I am guilty of believing this war is illegal. I am guilty of believing war in all forms is immoral and useless, and I am guilty of believing that as a service member I have a duty to refuse to participate in this War because it is illegal.

I do not expect the court to rule on the legality of this War, nor do I expect the court to agree with me, I only wish to express my reasons and convictions surrounding my actions.

If these merit, the fullest extent of punishment that military law provides then I will accept this and live in peace with the fact that whether or not military law was on board with my actions I followed my conscience, and I will not, under any circumstances, become weary of doing what is right.

Actions Spread Across USA To Defend Benderman And Paredes

May 11, 2005 By Charles Jenks

May 10th was a national day of action on behalf of Kevin Benderman and Pablo Paredes.

Support actions are being organized in 20 cities, including San Diego, Baltimore, Buffalo, Burlington, Charlotte, Deerfield, Helena, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New Haven, New York City, Orlando, Ventura, Providence, Rochester, San Francisco, Springfield, and other cities and towns across the country.

Four demonstrations of support are being organized in western Massachusetts.

On January 5th, 2005, Sgt. Benderman refused to deploy for a second tour of duty with his Third Infantry Army Division in Iraq. "U.S. military personnel," Benderman said, "are increasingly killing non-combatants. On my last deployment in Iraq, elements of my unit were instructed by a Captain to fire on children throwing rocks at us."



May 10th gathering in downtown Greenfield, MA organized by Traprock Peace Center.
(photo © 2005 Charles Jenks)

Rochester New York Stands Up For Paredes And Benderman

May 11, 2005 Rochester (New York) Democrat & Chronicle

About 20 members of local antiwar groups, such as Rochester Against War and Metro Justice, showed their support of National Day of Action outside East High School on Tuesday.

The local protest was offered in support of two servicemen who refused to go back on active duty in Iraq, Pablo Paredes and Kevin Benderman. The men, from the Navy and Army, respectively, face military jail and forfeiture of pay and benefits if they are found guilty in courts today in San Diego and Fort Stewart, Ga.

"All across the country, people are expressing solidarity," said Jessica Carmona-Baez, an organizer with Rochester Against War.

Shit-Brains In Command File Silly New Charges Against Sgt.

Benderman After Court-Martial Found To Be Prejudiced Against Him

May 12, 2005 By Russ Bynum, Associated Press

FORT STEWART, Ga. — An Army Sgt. who refused to deploy to Iraq while he sought conscientious objector status faced new charges Thursday for collecting combat pay while he remained in the United States.

Army prosecutors added two counts of larceny against Sgt. Kevin Benderman.

The new charges came as Army prosecutors had to start over Thursday in seeking a court-martial for Benderman. A military judge halted his court-martial Wednesday after ruling previous proceedings may have been prejudiced against the soldier.

William Cassara, Benderman's civilian defense attorney, called the charges "silly." He said the payments were caused by an administrative error and Benderman had reported it to the Army.

As Scandals Spread, Recruiters Ordered To Stand Down

May 12, 2005 By Joseph R. Chenelly, Army Times staff writer

Major Gen. Michael Rochelle has ordered a one-day stand-down for all Army recruiters May 20 to address the stressful recruiting environment, a spike in recruiting improprieties and to reaffirm the oath they took as soldiers.

All three components of the Army are well short of their year-to-date goals. Most recently, the active duty Army reached just 58 percent of its goal for April.

On top of the shortfalls, several allegations of recruiter misconduct have recently garnered media attention nationally.

Rochelle also ordered every recruiter to "reaffirm" the Army oath of enlistment or oath of office.

MORE:

Lying Recruiter Scum Threatens To Arrest Local Man If He Doesn't Show Up

5.12.05 Channel 11, Houston

The Army will set aside a full day on May 20 as the day to have every recruiter across America review Army recruiting policies and standards. It's an effort to stop overly aggressive recruiting tactics. Nationwide, the Army wants to make sure men and women who become soldiers do so without being threatened.

The announcement comes just one day after the 11 News Defenders exposed a Houston Army recruiter threatening to arrest a local young man if he didn't report that day to the army recruiting station.

Sgt. Thomas Kelt left this message on that young man's cell phone: "Hey Chris, this is Sgt. Kelt with the Army man. I think we got disconnected. Okay, I know you were on your cell probably and just had a bad connection or something like that. I know you didn't hang up on me. **Anyway, by federal law you got an appointment with me at 2 o'clock this afternoon at Greenspoint Mall, okay?** That's the Greenspoint Mall Army Recruiting Station at 2 o'clock. **You fail to appear and we'll have a warrant. Okay? So give me a call back.**" [OK, but bring 10 or 15 friends along and do what the situation calls for. Time to teach this piece of shit an enduring lesson.]

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW 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)

\$82 Billion Just Voted Won't Be Enough For War:

Bush Wants Another \$50 Billion By August Or Before

The soaring wartime costs may raise eyebrows, but Congress will have to foot the bill *unless lawmakers want to force an end to the U.S. military operation in Iraq simply by cutting off funds.*

May 12, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

The \$82 billion in wartime supplemental funding that was approved May 10 by Congress still won't be enough to pay for military operations through the rest of this fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30.

Congressional aides report that the services have indicated they will need even more money by August — possibly even earlier — to cover rising operational and maintenance costs of the protracted war in Iraq.

The exact amount is unknown because defense and service officials have just started their review, but lawmakers expect a request for about another \$50 billion, aides said.

The soaring wartime costs may raise eyebrows, but Congress will have to foot the bill *unless lawmakers want to force an end to the U.S. military operation in Iraq simply by cutting off funds.*

Colombians Really Pissed As Gun Running, Drug Dealing U.S. Soldiers Escape Prosecution

May 12, 2005 By Kim Housego, Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia — Colombian lawmakers angered over the arrests of U.S. soldiers in drug- and arms-smuggling plots said Wednesday they want Washington's ambassador to appear before the country's national congress

"We are obviously very concerned about the allegations and want the ambassador to keep us updated," he told The Associated Press. "Let's not forget that these soldiers are accused of very grave crimes. Their actions endanger the Colombian people."

The rare act underscores the seething anger many Colombians feel over the arrests of five U.S. soldiers for allegedly smuggling cocaine on U.S. military aircraft from Colombia and the arrests last week of two Green Berets accused of selling thousands of rounds of ammunition to right-wing death squads.

All the soldiers have diplomatic immunity and were flown to the United States.

The lawmakers, in addition to seeking updates and details on the suspects' legal proceedings in the United States, want Wood to explain Washington's refusal to lift their immunity and allow them to face charges in Colombia, according to committee documents obtained by the AP.

In the same hearing, they plan to ask Interior and Justice Minister Sabas Pretelt whether the government should review the 1974 treaty between the two nations that grants immunity to American troops in Colombia.

Hundreds of American troops are based in Colombia.

OOPS!

May 11, 2005 Newport News Daily News,]

British and U.S. authorities are investigating how an intruder from West Africa managed to sneak about the Norfolk-based aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman in England last month.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

High Ranking Collaborator Officers Killed

May 12, 2005 (CNN)

Brig. Gen. Iyad Imad Mahdi with the Ministry of Defense was on his way to work when he was killed in a western neighborhood, police said.

Col. Jamal Ahmed Hussein was killed in the al-Amin neighborhood as he headed to the Interior Ministry.

Assorted Resistance Action

5.10.05 Anatolia.com Inc. & Anadolu News Agency & Associated Press

Two policemen and a civilian were killed in clashes between Iraqi security forces and insurgents late Wednesday near Sharkat, some 35 kilometres (20 miles) north of Baghdad.

Thirteen soldiers were wounded, the security sources said, without giving a toll for the rebels.

Elsewhere, **four soldiers were killed in overnight fighting with rebels near Baiji**, further north, the sources said.

May 10, 2005 Energy Security reports an attack on an oil pipeline complex near Kirkuk.

A series of large explosions have been reported near the Japanese headquarters in the Iraqi city of Samava. Six hundred Japanese soldiers are stationed there.

According to the Japanese Kyodo news agency, blasts were heard last night near the base, but no official announcement has been made.

A car bomb exploded near a busy local market and cinema in eastern Baghdad on Thursday, killing at least 17 people and wounding 65, police said.

When police tried to close the area, about 150 angry young men demonstrated against what they regard as poor security in the area, prompting police to fire in the air to disperse them, Aboud said.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Knock, Knock . . . guess who? G.W. Bush



(studio@verizon.net)

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

***What Will They Say, 30 Years From
Now?***

**Asshole Federal Prosecutor Goes
After Anti-War 4 After Local D.A.
Drops Charges**

[Note from Ben Chitty, Vietnam Veterans Against The War: NOTE: All of the St. Patrick's Four are children of long-time friends of Vietnam Veterans Against the War.]

May 8, 2005 by David Rossie, Binghamton (New York) Press & Sun-Bulletin

War comes home in a number of ways. We see it in the joyous return of veterans whose lives have been spared, and in the funerals of those who were less fortunate. We see it in the Memorial Day and Veterans Day parades. And we see it in our friends and loved ones who forever bear the scars -- some visible, some unseen but no less real -- that war leaves.

And sometimes war causes casualties without ever leaving home.

That is what has happened to four young people whose friends and supporters have dubbed them The Saint Patrick's Four, because their protest was staged March 17, 2003 -- St. Patrick's Day.

The four were among a group of about 20 anti-war activists who gathered outside a military recruiting office at the Cayuga Mall in Lansing, near Ithaca, days before the Bush administration launched its invasion of Iraq. The four: Clare Grady, Daniel Burns, Teresa Grady and Peter De Mott, then entered the office where they sprinkled a small amount of blood, which they said was their own, and were consequently arrested.

They were charged with third-degree criminal mischief, but not convicted. Their trial in Tompkins County Court ended in a mistrial when the jury was unable to reach a verdict.

The county district attorney then dropped the charges, but for reasons best known to himself persuaded a U.S. attorney to charge the four under federal statutes.

Now the four face a September trial in U.S. District Court in Binghamton. The charges: Injury and damage to government property; entering a military station for unlawful purposes, and then re-entering the property after being removed. If convicted, they could face prison time and fines. The federal judge should toss the case after opening arguments.

The defendants have said they acted out of conscience in opposition to an unjust and illegal war, and it would be unfair, it says here, to doubt their motives. They certainly had nothing to gain from what they did.

Defenders of our misadventure in Iraq bridle at comparisons with Vietnam, but they are becoming impossible to ignore.

Civilian protest is but one example. Homefront protests against our involvement in Vietnam were far more explosive and widespread, and they helped bring that sorry episode in our history to an end. That may not happen this time, given Americans' sheep-like acceptance of this administration's lies and deceptions that led up to the war and the lies and deceptions that continue.

So acts of protests such as that staged by the St. Patrick's Four, while understandable, probably will prove unproductive. A government that condones torture and lies about the human toll that has resulted from its actions is not going to be swayed by public opinion.

Last Saturday, on the 30th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, NPR's Scott Simon interviewed Holley Watts, a Red Cross volunteer and author of a book, Who Knew? Reflections on Vietnam, based on her experiences during the war there.

It was a poignant interview and at the end Simon asked Watts if she thought the loss of all those men and women whose names appear on the memorial in Washington, and the deaths of countless Vietnamese was worth it. After a long pause Watts replied, almost in a whisper, "No."

The guess here is that 30 years from now someone will ask another author if the blood sacrifice of Americans and Iraqis was worth it. I won't be here to hear it, but I think I know what the answer will be.

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.

And We All Know How It Ended For The Crusaders....

May 11, 2005 Jay H, The Anti-Allawi Group,

The US strategy is a classic Medieval Crusader/colonial one: invade a hostile land and build a series of seemingly impregnable fortresses/outposts that are defended by superior weaponry.

Their "knights" will make occasional raiding forays out into the provinces to chastise the unruly populace to force them to kowtow to the foreign occupation. The occupiers necessarily utilize local mercenaries to supplant their occupation forces.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Death To America!” Anti-Occupation Demonstrations Spreading: “America Is Our Enemy And We Don’t Want Them In Afghanistan”

About two dozen students clambered onto the roof of nearby building and burned an American flag to applause and cries of “God is great!” from the crowd below. Dozens of police — some armed with sticks, others with assault rifles — looked on.

May 12, 2005 By Stephen Graham, Associated Press, KABUL, Afghanistan

At least three more anti-U.S. protesters were killed Thursday in clashes with police, officials said.

In the capital, Kabul, students burned an American flag, while crowds attacked a government outpost and the offices of two international relief organizations just to the south, injuring one aid worker and leaving a trail of destruction, officials said.

The unrest came a day after riots in the eastern city of Jalalabad left four people dead — the worst anti-American protests in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

While most of the protesters appeared to be students, officials have suggested that elements opposed to the country's U.S.-backed re-emergence were stirring the violence, which has also targeted the United Nations and American troops.

Said Paul Barker, director of CARE International, one of the largest international relief groups in Afghanistan, "There are probably people around the country inciting this." [Right. Afghans who hate being occupied and ruled by the USA, for example. Again the old Imperial elitist arrogance that people can't act for their own liberation unless somebody "incites" them. Fuck this stooge for Bush and the horse he rode in on.]

In bloodiest incident, police fired on hundreds of anti-U.S. demonstrators in the town of Khogyani to prevent them from departing toward Jalalabad, about 20 miles to the north, local police chief Maj. Gul Wali said.

Wali said three of the protesters died and one was injured. He claimed many at the gathering were armed. [If so, the time to use their arms on the occupation cops is long overdue.]

In Mohammed Agha district of neighboring Logar province, Barker said a group of high school students assailed the CARE office early Thursday morning, beating one staff member and destroying equipment. The office of another foreign group next door was set on fire, he said.

Logar Gov. Amanullah Hamimi said protesters also broke the windows of the district mayor's office and that unidentified men had destroyed a nearby mobile phone mast during the night with rockets.

In Kabul, more than 200 young men marched from a dormitory block near Kabul University chanting "Death to America!" and carrying banners including one stating: "Those who insult the Quran (Koran) should be brought to justice."

At the entrance to the university, a man with a clipped beard and spectacles read a resolution calling on U.S. President George W. Bush to apologize and opposing long-term U.S. military bases in Afghanistan.

About two dozen students clambered onto the roof of nearby building and burned an American flag to applause and cries of "God is great!" from the crowd below. Dozens of police — some armed with sticks, others with assault rifles — looked on.

Ahmad Shah, a political sciences undergraduate, said the students had decided to protest after hearing of the deaths in Jalalabad on Wednesday.

“America is our enemy and we don’t want them in Afghanistan,” Shah said as the students ended their protest and returned to classes on Thursday morning. “When they insult our holy book they have insulted us.”

Police said 150 students staged a similar brief demonstration at another high school in the city, but reported no violence.

Peaceful demonstrations have been reported in at least five other Afghan provinces.

There was at least one protest in northwestern Pakistan on Thursday, which passed off peacefully, and Islamic parties have called for demonstrations across the country on Friday.

Afghan President Humid Kara, [that’s what the story says, this is not a satire] who is currently on a visit to Europe and travels to Washington later this month to seek long-term American military and economic aid, has called repeatedly for all the Afghan prisoners to be sent home.

Received:

**From: AH
To: GI Special
Sent: May 12, 2005 4:29 PM**

The marines named 'Operation Matador' correctly but, missed the fact that they were the bull.

Received:

Kamikaze Canine

**From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: May 11, 2005**

Washington, 5/11/05

An aviator dog with a long history of eccentric behavior was shot down today by F-16 fighter jets as he piloted an antiquated aircraft three miles from the White House. According to eyewitnesses, the dog jumped or fell out of the aircraft just before it crashed in a Virginia suburb and is presumed to be dead.

"Good riddance to the terrorist menace," commented President Bush from a safe location, interrupting a vigorous exercise session with his Secretary of State. Thrusting

resolutely into the air, the President declared: "No freedom-hating hellhound can stop my divine mission! Our corporations will prevail!"

The authorities are working around the clock to locate the deranged dog's remains. According to unnamed sources, the dog is now thought to be the revenge-maddened brother of Saddam's dog Fuckbush, a bewhiskered beagle recently captured after a fierce battle and currently being interrogated at an undisclosed location.

Calm is gradually returning to Washington, along with the countless government officials who are trickling back from the neighboring states where they initially fled in terror for their lives. Many have tearfully gathered around the Capitol to raise their voices in a moving rendition of "Home of the brave."

Today's disturbing event, anonymous government officials have asserted, underscores the fact that courage in the highest circles is only one among many virtues that make the US government the envy of the world. "It's all in a day's work," said an official modestly, "it shows we are delighted to share risks with our troops, and sets them a shining example."

Meanwhile, a visibly shaken Vice President Cheney was overheard muttering, "The son of a bitch nearly got us!" as he emerged from a men's room deep within the bowels of the doomsday-proof presidential bunker . Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, standing rock-solid and wearing no body armor at all, shrugged off the danger and cheerfully quipped, "Corporate freedom isn't free!"

The latest unconfirmed reports from Virginia suggest that the terrorist suspect has just been whisked away by a gang of midgets. The FBI is investigating.

Web Copies

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

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/qispecial,

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

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