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**IRAQ VETERANS
AGAINST
THE WAR**



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**"I Think They Are
Shafting Everybody"
Disability Boards Fucking Over
Wounded Vets**

"I think the Army Physical Evaluation Board is broken," Waple said. "The DoD would rather buy another cruise missile than medically retire someone. Systemically, what we've seen in the last seven years, they just seem to give a zero, 10, 20 percent disability so they are no longer on the DoD payroll. It is almost like a fix is in somewhere."

May 14, 2005 By KEVIN MAURER, The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. -- On good days, Cpl. Richard Twohig doesn't throw up or have to spend 12 to 14 hours hiding in bed with the shades drawn. The bad days come about once a week. The headaches are so bad, his knees buckle from the pain. Sometimes, his wife, Sang, has to help him into bed.

Twohig is a former Ranger and paratrooper who used to hunt, fish and play sports. He would dive under the hood of his car and make repairs or chase his 2-year-old son, Damon, or 5-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, around the yard.

Now, even on good days, too much noise or light brings on the headaches. Just the clanking of the weights at a fitness center on Fort Bragg makes him nauseated. His short-term memory constantly fails him, forcing him to have simple questions repeated. He has a constant ringing in his ears.

"I don't feel like a man anymore. I can't do normal stuff," Twohig said.

The Army determined that Twohig was less than 30 percent disabled. In order to maintain his Defense Department benefits, he had to meet the 30 percent level.

The difference is significant: If he loses the benefits, he gets a taxable \$12,000 severance payment from the Army and health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. His family has no health care coverage. If he is 30 percent disabled, though, he gets a monthly military retirement check and he and his family are eligible for health care at military hospitals.

Twohig is appealing the ruling on his disability. Civilian lawyers who handle such appeals say the odds are against him.

Those lawyers say that there is a systemic problem and more and more injured soldiers are being shuffled off the Defense Department books to the VA. The lawyers - including Mark Waple of Fayetteville, who is representing Twohig - say they are reluctant to take cases to the Army Physical Evaluation Board because they rarely win.

"I think the Army Physical Evaluation Board is broken," Waple said. "The DoD would rather buy another cruise missile than medically retire someone. Systemically, what we've seen in the last seven years, they just seem to give a zero, 10, 20 percent disability so they are no longer on the DoD payroll. It is almost like a fix is in somewhere."

Over the past 10 years, Waple has worked on 21 soldier disability cases. He won four. David Sheldon, a Washington lawyer, said the Army Physical Evaluation Board is the toughest one among all the service branches from which to get a fair hearing. "They have a boots-on-the-ground mentality," he said. "You are a soldier. You have to buck up and go on with your life."

Sheldon said he believes the Defense Department doesn't have the money to continue to pay soldiers who can't fight, so it has an incentive to transfer them to the VA.

Twohig was injured in May 2003, a few weeks after major combat ended in Iraq. He was a team sergeant in the 1st Battalion of the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment. He was part of a quick reaction force - a group of soldiers on call to respond to attacks - in Baghdad when the unit received a call to help an Iraqi police station that was taking fire.

He and the rest of his men climbed on top of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and raced to the scene. The armored personnel carrier took a sharp right turn at 45 mph. Twohig was thrown off and landed on his head.

His next memory is of medics helping him on board a helicopter headed to a hospital in Baghdad. After being treated in Iraq, he was transferred to Germany a few days and then to Fort Bragg's Womack Army Medical Center. He was diagnosed with post-concussive syndrome with intractable headaches and a mood disorder with depressive symptoms.

Sang said a different man came back from Iraq.

"He wasn't there mentally, physically and emotionally," she said.

She is a certified nursing assistant, but she can't work more than three hours a day.

"It's like I don't want to leave him alone," she said.

Sang makes sure he takes his medication - four pills a day - which fights the pain and alleviates the nausea. Twohig is moody and has bouts of depression.

The 82nd Airborne Division recommended that Twohig, who is 25, be medically retired.

An informal review of his records by the disability agency awarded him 20 percent disability. He requested a formal hearing before a three-man panel at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. On March 4, after more than two hours of testimony from Twohig and his mother, two board members - board President Col. James Babbitt and civilian board member Larry Grubb - said that Twohig did not present any objective information to prove that the headaches were a result of the accident, according to the transcript of the hearing.

The board ruled that his disability was 10 percent.

Twohig's mother, Marine Maj. Belinda Twohig, said what happened to him is an injustice. "It is sad to see that soldiers have to fight an uphill battle against the disability board," she said.

She is a Naval ROTC instructor at Florida A&M and sat on a Naval disability board.

"I was appalled. Being a Marine and having been in the military for 26 years, when young men and women are injured, especially in combat, they should be taken care of," she said.

Lt. Col. Nick Gnemi, the third member of Twohig's board, believes that he is entitled to 30 percent disability. He said that there is objective evidence that Twohig has headaches because of the accident, according to his minority opinion.

It is rare that there is a minority opinion in these cases, Waple said.

"The process is not arbitrary or capricious, but is run by a strict set of written rules and procedures for the review, documentation and rating of soldier's impairments," Garvey said.

Twohig said the Army told him when he joined that they would take care of him, and taking care of his family is part of that.

"I didn't expect them to mistreat me or anybody, even if I didn't go to Iraq," he said. "I think they are shafting everybody."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TASK FORCE LIBERTY SOLDIER KILLED, ONE WOUNDED BY IED

May 17, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
Release Number: 05-05-21C

TIKRIT, Iraq - One Task Force Liberty Soldier was killed and another wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated next to their combat patrol about 30km south of Tikrit at about 7:00 a.m., May 17.

The wounded Soldier has been returned to duty.

Brunswick-Based Soldier Killed In Kuwait Accident

May 17, 2005 Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. - A Georgia Army National Guard sergeant has been killed in an accident in Kuwait.

Sgt. Chuck Gillican III, 35, was a member of the Brunswick-based 118th Field Artillery, a part of the 48th Brigade Combat Team, which is deploying to Iraq. Gillican died Saturday.

Gillican apparently was killed in Kuwait in a collision between a 32-ton Paladin howitzer and a 70-ton tank recovery vehicle. He was part of the brigade's advance party.

Gillican's father, Charles Gillican, said he was informed of his son's death shortly after midnight Saturday by a chaplain and an officer who came to his home.

"I heard the knock on the door. I looked out and I saw the men in uniform. I knew exactly what it was," he said.

Gillican is survived by a wife, Tammi, two stepdaughters and a daughter, his father said.

2 Marines From Area Wounded: "As A Parent, I'm Glad He's Out Of The Fight"

May 17, 2005 By Tom Troy, BLADE STAFF WRITER

In the split second that he had to think about the live grenade that landed a few feet away from him, Marine Lance Cpl. Neil Burkhardt thought to himself: "Oh, this is going to hurt."

It did, causing wounds to his shoulder and foot. The Toledo Marine was one of the lucky ones.

The Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, 4th Division, based in Columbus, is believed to have suffered eight dead and up to 30 wounded in a furious weeklong offensive in western Iraq that began May 8.

Corporal Burkhardt, 23, a 2000 graduate of Bowsher High School, is one of at least two northwest Ohioans belonging to the company wounded in the fighting.

Lance Cpl. Michael J. Strahle, 20, of Bryan, a member of the same company, was hit in one of his elbows and in the abdominal area, but his injuries do not appear life-threatening, according to his mother, Jody Strahle.

"He's just worried about his guys," she said. "He hasn't been told anything yet" about some of his fellow Marines being killed.

"According to what he told us, an insurgent threw a grenade from across the street and it landed six feet away," said his father, James Burkhardt, an attorney in the city of Toledo's law department. "He thought, 'Oh, this is going to hurt.' There was no time to react. It was instantaneous."

He said his son suffered shrapnel wounds in the shoulder and the foot and may need surgery on the foot. He's being cared for at the Marine base at Qaim.

Mr. Burkhardt and his wife, Diana, talked to their son Saturday. He told them he's fine but is grieving for the loss of his friends.

"As a parent, I'm glad he's out of the fight. My wife and I feel for every soldier over there," Mr. Burkhardt said.

Corporal Burkhardt enlisted in the Marine reserves Sept. 10, 2001, calling home to ensure his mother, "Don't worry, Mom, nothing's going to happen."

He was three credits away from graduation from Miami University of Ohio when his unit was called up in December. Corporal Burkhardt arrived in Iraq March 1.

Corporal Strahle is recovering from his injuries at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Mrs. Strahle and her husband, Michael, recently flew to Bethesda to be with their son as he recovers in the medical center's intensive care unit. She said doctors think he'll have to be in the hospital for at least a couple of weeks.

She said they've been able to talk to their son and he's in generally good spirits.

Manassas Soldier Injured In Explosion

May 17, 2005 By LILLIAN KAFKA, Media General

A Manassas man is recovering from serious injuries sustained from a roadside blast in Iraq last week.

Spc. Matthew James, 23, was hospitalized in Landstuhl, Germany, in serious but stable condition, according to his father, Paul James of Manassas.

The soldier was performing convoy duty in Ramadi on May 10 for Camp Liberty, near Baghdad.

While his son was manning a .50-caliber machine gun, an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle, according to Paul James.

"His battalion commander told me it was a huge explosion -- one of the largest they've seen as far as an IED," said Paul James.

Another soldier, a close friend and mentor of Matthew James, was killed in the blast.

Paul James said his son was thrown from the vehicle.

The explosion broke his foot, cracked his skull and caused blunt force trauma to his body, his father said.

Last week the soldier, a member of the 327th Signal Battalion, was alert and "getting feisty with the medics," said Paul James.

Soldier Injured In Iraq Training

5.17.05 Associated Press

BURLINGTON, Iowa. The U-S Army is investigating a training accident in Iraq that injured an Iowa Army National Guard soldier from Burlington.

Sergeant Jeff Bailey is with Company A of the 224th Engineer Battalion. Military officials say he was injured last month in a grenade range incident.

The Fairfield unit was deployed in January and is stationed near the city of Ramadi in the Sunni Triangle.

Two Halliburton Military Supply Workers Killed

5.16.05 Reuters

Islamic militant group Army of Ansar al-Sunna said it shot dead two Iraqis working for a subcontractor for a unit of U.S. company Halliburton, according to an Internet video posted on Tuesday. The two men said on the tape they had been delivering medical supplies to U.S. bases in Iraq.

"I advise all Arabs and especially Iraqis not to deal with U.S. forces because this is religiously forbidden," said one of the men on the video posted on a Web site used by Islamists.

Burlington County Mercenary Killed By Sniper

May 17, 2005 By MARK PERKISS, Staff Writer

A Northern Burlington Regional High School graduate serving his third tour of duty in Iraq as a private security guard after fighting in Afghanistan with the U.S. Army was killed by a sniper last week.

Thomas W. Jaichner, 33, who grew up in Bordentown City and lived with his wife in California, was killed Tuesday while on assignment in Ramadi, Iraq, guarding an American diplomat.

**EXTREMELY UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
NO DISCERNABLE MISSION:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers at scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad May 14, 2005. A bomber blew up an Iraqi police patrol. Photo by Akram Saleh/Reuters

**How Bad Is It?
Reporter In Operation Matador Says
Hillbilly Armored Marine Force Too
Thin To Go After Resistance**

And it's a place where, I mean, insurgents apparently operate pretty freely. But from what -- I mean, just from what the local residents tell our reporters and what

the Marines say, and the Marines just -- the U.S. military just doesn't have the resources now to go in on a Fallujah-style operation and clean out that town.

May 16, 2005 MacNeil/Lehrer Productions

MARGARET WARNER: Ellen Knickmeyer, welcome. Thanks for joining us.

MARGARET WARNER: And then you wrote a gripping account of the combat in Ubaydi, including the fact that the insurgents seem incredibly well-equipped in the form of armaments; in some degree better than the Marines?

ELLEN KNICKMEYER: Right. Right. **The Marines had everything, all the kinds of weapons that the insurgents did, and more, but Marines on a firefight don't carry all those weapons around with them, so they initially they were out-shot by the insurgents.**

MARGARET WARNER: The New York Times reported that the Marines have gone on a crash program to equip and armor themselves because they're so upset about having the lack of sufficient armor.

Were the Marines that you were embedded with, did they ever complain to you about their equipment?

ELLEN KNICKMEYER: You know, about the armor, they didn't complain, but they did say they had just welded on a bunch of metals and so the vehicles that we were riding around in, they had just attached steel plates to them, or put steel plates on the bottom of the floor, to guard against mines and stuff. It's something they had to do themselves.

MARGARET WARNER: **Then finally, when they did get north of the Euphrates to these villages where they thought the foreign fighters were hiding, they didn't find many.**

ELLEN KNICKMEYER: No, they didn't. It was disappointing to the Marines themselves. They said we went through villages, you know, village after village, and what we would find is, like, some of the families that had already -- maybe half the families in some of the villages had already fled. They were afraid that if the Marines coming, then at the least it meant fighting.

And some of the places, the fighting-aged men had gone and all the weapons seem to have been gone. And we didn't really know what to make of that because Iraqi households usually have an AK- 47 to protect themselves.

ELLEN KNICKMEYER: Marines say, and local residents along the Euphrates say, that a lot of the foreign fighters and a lot of the insurgents are holed up in Husaybah, which is a town right on the Syrian border.

And it's a place where, I mean, insurgents apparently operate pretty freely. But from what -- I mean, just from what the local residents tell our reporters and what

the Marines say, and the Marines just -- the U.S. military just doesn't have the resources now to go in on a Fallujah-style operation and clean out that town.

With the resources it has, the U.S. Marines say that the U.S. is concentrating its resources in Fallujah and other cities; trying to calm them down.

TROOP NEWS

Kazakhstan Minister Says Time To Bring The Troops (27) Home

17 May 2005 Aljazeera.Net & (Itar-Tass)

Kazakhstan's Defense Minister Mukhtar Altynbayev at a meeting of the sergeants' corps of the Kazakh army called for pulling out the Kazakh troops from Iraq.

"It's time to think about stopping the work of our contingent in Iraq," Defence Minister General Mukhtar Altynbayev was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

He suggested that a new group of servicemen might not go to Iraq that after the expiration of the term of the current Kazakh assignment there.

The Defence Ministry press service confirmed that Altynbayev had spoken in favour of a pullout during a meeting with army officers, though a spokesman said it was the minister's "personal opinion".

Kazakhstan currently has 27 soldiers serving in Iraq, where a contingent was first deployed in August 2003. The unit is charged with clearing mines and providing water to Iraqis.

US Iraq Military Vets "Are On DU Death Row, Waiting To Die."

29 April 2005 By James Denver, Vive le Canada

American use of DU is "A crime against humanity which may, in the eyes of historians, rank with the worst atrocities of all time." US Iraq Military Vets "are on DU death row, waiting to die."

"I'm horrified. The people out there - the Iraqis, the media and the troops - risk the most appalling ill health. And the radiation from depleted uranium can travel literally anywhere. It's going to destroy the lives of thousands of children, all over the world. We all know how far radiation can travel. Radiation from Chernobyl reached Wales and in Britain you sometimes get red dust from the Sahara on your car."

The speaker is not some alarmist doomsayer. He is Dr. Chris Busby, the British radiation expert, Fellow of the University of Liverpool in the Faculty of Medicine and UK representative on the European Committee on Radiation Risk, talking about the best-kept secret of this war: the fact that by illegally using hundreds of tons of depleted uranium (DU) against Iraq, Britain and America have gravely endangered not only the Iraqis but the whole world.

For these weapons have released deadly, carcinogenic and mutagenic, radioactive particles in such abundance that-whipped up by sandstorms and carried on trade winds - there is no corner of the globe they cannot penetrate-including Britain. For the wind has no boundaries and time is on their side: **the radioactivity persists for over 4,500,000,000 years and can cause cancer, leukemia, brain damage, kidney failure, and extreme birth defects - killing millions of every age for centuries to come. A crime against humanity which may, in the eyes of historians, rank with the worst atrocities of all time.**

These weapons have released deadly, carcinogenic and mutagenic, radioactive particles in such abundance that there is no corner of the globe they cannot penetrate - including Britain. Yet, officially, no crime has been committed.

For this story is a dirty story in which the facts have been concealed from those who needed them most. It is also a story we need to know if the people of Iraq are to get the medical care they desperately need, and if our troops, returning from Iraq, are not to suffer as terribly as the veterans of other conflicts in which depleted uranium was used.

MORE:

Capitalism At Work:

New Orleans Paper Won't Publish Story About DU Testing For Troops "Because The Bill Won't Cost The State Any Money"

From: Don Kline
To: GI Special
Sent: May 16, 2005

PRESS RELEASE: Bob Smith, Chair Depleted Uranium Awareness Committee P.O. Box 480 Franklinton, Louisiana 70438 (504) 581-1086

On May 12th, Peter Kovacs, the Managing News Editor of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, the region's major daily newspaper, in a telephone conversation with veterans advocate Bob Smith, and a Times-Picayune political analyst stated that a story concerning a bill giving the right for service women and men from Louisiana to a best practices health-screening test for exposure to depleted uranium would not be published.

The reason Kovacs gave was because the bill was not costing the state any money.

Kovacs went on to say that the Times Picayune criteria for newsworthiness was how much it would cost.

The fact that the bill supports the troops' health concerns is not the criteria.

Four other media outlets in the region have already covered the story expressing concerns for the troops.

On Tuesday, May 3rd, The Louisiana State House of Representatives passed a bill to give the right to all Louisiana Servicemen and women returning from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom for testing for depleted uranium contamination. Louisiana is the first state in the nation to have their House pass this type of bill. The vote was 101 to 0 in favor.

The Louisiana Brigade, with approximately 4,500 National Guardsmen, is expected to return home from Iraq between October and December 2005.

DU is radioactive and can cause leukemia, DNA breakdown, various other cancers, and birth defects in offspring of soldiers who have come into contact with it.

The VA and the DOD have been conducting testing that is not sensitive enough to detect whether a soldier has been contaminated.

This bill would have helped alleviate that by pressuring the State's Adjutant General to insure that the test mandated by DOD orders and Army regulations would be executed.

The "money" criteria used by the New Orleans Times-Picayune is shocking in light of the fact that the country is at war and legislation supporting the troops health concerns is of utmost importance.

A 15-Month Enlistment? Bullshit. Check Army's Fine Print

May 17, 2005 DeWayne Wickham, USA Today

Anyone who sees the Army's 15-month mini-tour enlistment option as a quick way to earn some GI benefits and then retreat back into private life could be in for a big surprise.

Those who take advantage of the Army's offer should know that their actual commitment to Uncle Sam will be at least eight years, during which time they could be recalled to active duty. And last Friday, a federal appeals panel ruled that the Army can use its "stop-loss" authority to keep people in the service even beyond their eight-year obligation.



Allegations Of Kidnapping In Controversial Army Recruiting Incident

2005-05-16 Allan and Abbie Phillips, MarkCrispinMiller Blogspot

May 5, 2005

Re: Army Recruitment Malfeasance

Dear Congressman Howard Berman,

We are writing on behalf of our friend Maria Iris and her son, Ever Jandres. We have known this family for over 10 years. Ms. Iris does not speak English. Ms. Iris is extremely distressed over what she describes as the dishonest and completely aggressive behavior by army recruiter Jesus Lopez in his effort to enlist her son against her wishes.

She reports that both she and her son were directly lied to by army recruiter Jesus Lopez. Thus far, she has been completely stonewalled by the recruitment office in her many efforts to get information regarding her son and his current whereabouts.

What we know:

1) Both Ms. Iris and her son Ever Jandres are from El Salvador. Both have green cards as reported in the enclosed Case Work application.

2) Ms. Iris lost one son in a traffic accident several years ago.

3) Ever Jandres is an affable, eager to please 24 year old who is learning disabled and probably has a borderline low IQ. His mother reports that he suffered from epileptic seizures from toddler hood to the onset of adolescence. He and his mother are extremely close and depend on each other.

4) For the last several weeks, Ever has been frequently solicited both at home and at his work (a Chevron gas station) by army recruiter Staff Sergeant Jesus Lopez Febo. Ms. Iris thinks that they went together to the bank, and also for a medical examination.

5) Ever kept referring to the recruiter as his "friend".

6) Ms. Iris clearly tried to discourage the recruiter, the recruiter continued to go to Ever's work place.

7) Last week, according to Ms. Iris, The recruiter invited Ever to go to Arizona for 3 days to observe basic training. The recruiter promised directly to both Ms. Iris and Ever that he would be home by Friday, April 22, so that he could go to work that evening. Mrs. Iris still did not agree.

8) The recruiter came to pick up Ever at 4:00am, and told him not to wake up his mother. He did sign a paper at that time - but he thought that he was giving permission to go to Arizona for 3 days.

9) Ever did not show up on Friday. He called home on Sunday, April 24 in a hysterical state, saying that he was not in Arizona, but was sent to South Carolina, and that they would not let him leave, nor speak on the phone for more than a minute.

10) All efforts to contact the recruiter were fruitless. Several family members tried to speak to the recruitment office and were told that they could not be given any information. I (Allan Phillips) also called and was told the head of the recruiting office would call me back. He never did.

11) Finally, Ms. Iris herself went in person to the office. She also was told that they could not give her any information. She forced her way into the office of the Station Commander, Sergeant First Class Todd A. Pooler. He finally told her that Ever was enlisted properly, never lied to (her word against theirs) and that the

recruiter, Jesus Lopez would not be allowed to speak with her, and had gone back to school.

12) This Sunday, May 1, Ever was able to make another 30 second phone call. He was finally able to tell his parents that had been sent to Fort Jackson in South Carolina. **He continues to sound very agitated and terrified, does not understand why he is in this predicament, and continues to state that he was lied to. The family related that they understood him to be under some form of punishment at the army facility.**

Needless to say, as U.S.citizens both my wife and I are alarmed and upset at the actions of this Army recruitment office. We are also at a loss as to how to rectify and assist this poor family in their current situation.

They and their son have been victimized by the Army recruiter and the U.S. Army seems to have colluded in this.

Attached please find a recent article from the New York Times, which has documented many other similar cases. **Clearly this is an insidious activity which has received "tacit" approval by the U.S. Army.**

Congressman Berman, we appreciate any help you or your office can provide. Obviously time is of the essence.

Sincerely,
Allan and Abbie Phillips

Fayetteville March 19; The South Weighs In On The War Undeniable Credibility: (Better Late Than Never)

May 16, 2005 From: RegimeChanger.Com
Subject: **The article run in Norfolk (sorry for delay) but might prompt some good thoughts!**

03/29/05 by D.D. Delaney, Port Folio Weekly, Norfolk VA

If the eyes and ears of Bush, Inc., saw and heard what I did on March 19 in Fayetteville, NC—an economically depressed town hosting Fort Bragg, one of the largest military bases in the U.S.—they've since reported back to their boss that he should be worried about his grip on hearts and minds in America.

The feds were there, all right. Otherwise, who were those guys in windbreakers standing with uniformed escorts on hill sides and roofs of high-rises along the march route? Or videotaping among the crowd at the rally in Rowan Street Park, their

expensive cameras contrasting with their thrift-store threads which showed no press or organizational ID badges?

What they observed (and recorded), on the second anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, was the largest anti-war demonstration in Fayetteville history—as many as 5,000 people, according to organizers, bound together in a cohesive, uncompromising spirit such as I, for one, have never experienced before, though I've been to rallies, marches, vigils, and protests since the mid-1960s.

These people were not just petitioning the government to change course. They were saying this government no longer has their allegiance, a message not just spoken in defiance—there would be nothing new in that—but with a devastating emotion of indictment against those in the seats of power, coming from a crowd whose critical core numbered present and former military members and their families seething with a sense of betrayal shatteringly heartfelt, deep, and undeniably credible.

This mood, powerful to feel, was, of course, impossible to quantify. You had to have been there, in the thick of the crowd, to know for sure that some kind of shift in moral authority has occurred. Despite all the pressures government has exerted to control and contain it, the vitality of the American spirit in ordinary citizens of many different persuasions seemed empowered, strengthened, and renewed.

Maybe it's an awakening uniquely Southern. The North Carolina Peace and Justice Coalition, organizers of the demonstration, suggest as much in a welcome message published in its 12-page newsprint guide to the weekend's events: "We know that the legacy of Southern resistance is rich. We must build upon this foundation if we...are all going to be free."

In that spirit, as a contingent of pall-bearers bore flag-draped replicas of coffins representing the 50 Americans from Fort Bragg killed in Iraq, the Cabala Drum Corps, a youthful anarchist group from Greenville, NC, sustained an energetic medley of rhythms, more for dancing than marching, for the hour or more it took for the procession to move to the rally site from its starting place at the Cumberland County Health Center. "It's good to hear the tribal beat again," grinned a woman whose alternative history, like mine, reaches back to a previous era of anti-war solidarity.

Still, providing a jarring reminder that the clash of civilizations is within our borders as much as without, a few counter-demonstrators, with the support of some property owners along the march route who stood guard at their curbs to keep demonstrators (though not police on horses) off their lawns, shouted insults at the passing peace parade from an intersection where they'd stationed themselves.

"War IS the Answer" read one man's sign, listing the military defeats of Nazis, Communists, and Terrorists as proof. "If You Think Bush Is Bad, Try Saddam Hussein," read another. A Cuban-American's sign said "*Gracias a Bush.*"

Later, from a hill overlooking the rally in the park below, the counter-demonstrators, who'd held their peace for the most part until nearly the end, began jeering through bull

horns when a group of activist women from Code Pink came to the microphones on the amphitheater stage to speak. "Code Pink kills our troops!" they chanted, while a Pink spokeswoman returned fire through the rally's powerful public address system. "Let us learn from the people of Spain," she cried, "who threw out a government that lied to them and brought their troops home. We can do it, too!"

The counter-demonstrators continued their disruption through the next speaker, Patricia Roberts, whose son Jamaal Rasher Addison, of Decatur, GA, was killed at Nasiriyah, Iraq, "in an explosion in a building," she said, her voice thick with outrage, "where he was looking for *weapons of mass destruction*."

Daniel Berg, father of civilian contractor Nicholas Berg, the first victim to suffer beheading at the hands of Iraqi insurgents, told the crowd in a voice shaking with emotion, "I should have spoken out sooner against the war. It's too late for me, but it's not too late for you."

Jimmy Massey of Waynesville, NC, a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War—discharged with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder after 12 years in the Marine Corps—called for "taking our country back by taking back our high schools" from military recruiters who omit the grim realities of war in the rosy picture of military service they paint for young people.

Tom Barton of New York City, a health-care worker, union officer, and member of Veterans for Peace, predicted that "members of the armed forces are turning against this war in increasing numbers," bringing about "a rebellion (which)...is necessary and will be sufficient" to end it.

Camilla Mejia, a veteran of the Florida National Guard who recently completed a year's jail sentence for refusing to return to Iraq following leave, and Deidre Cobb, of Hampton, who is now awaiting her separation papers from the Army after she refused to fire her weapon or be vaccinated for Anthrax following her deployment order, both spoke as conscientious objectors who, in Mejia's words, "will not fight your dirty war for oil."

Cynthia Brown, a Durham, NC, "economic justice activist" who ran unsuccessfully in the 2002 Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate seat vacated by Jesse Helms, equated the "loss of economic security" reflected in disappearing jobs with "a revolving door to the military. People should not be forced into war to achieve economic security," she said.

Nancy Lessen and Charley Richardson, Massachusetts co-founders of the over 2000-member Military Families Speak Out, drew extended cheers from the crowd with their summation of the main theme of the day:

"Support our troops, bring them home now, and take care of them when they get here."

While pleased with the historic turn-out, organizers were not entirely satisfied. "We had room for more people," said Lou Plummer of Fayetteville, active in Military Families Speak Out, one of the day's principal sponsors.

(The bus chartered from Hampton Roads was cancelled in favor of a van and a couple of private cars when too few people booked seats.)

“Why aren’t the Christian ministers in all Fayette County here?” asked Chuck Faber, director of Fayetteville Quaker House, another co-sponsor. “Why aren’t their flocks?” “We still have work to do when we get back home,” said Brown, “so we don’t have to come back to protest this war for the next four or five years.”

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 RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

17 May 2005 Aljazeera.Net & (KUNA) & Reuters

Insurgents killed four Iraqi soldiers in clashes outside a power plant in Mosaic on Tuesday, army sources said.

In Baghdad's Sadr City neighbourhood, two carloads of armed men killed an Iraqi Defence Ministry employee.

The victim, Sergeant Alan Jabber Risen, was shot and killed in al-Flash Street in Sadr City, a predominantly Shia area in the eastern part of the capital, police Lieutenant-Colonel Hagfish Mann said.

In another incident, a senior Iraqi anti-corruption official was shot and killed, also on Tuesday, in southern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

Three unknown armed men opened fire at loam (0600 GMT) on the vehicle of Alana al-Din Weir al-Unaided, a high-ranking official with Iraq's Commission on Public Integrity (CPI).

He died on the spot, but his driver escaped unharmed from the ambush in al-Durra neighbourhood, the source said.

Iraqi military forces found the dead bodies of three Iraqi soldiers in the town of Salem, in western Iraq. An Iraqi Army source told reporters that two of the soldiers were shot dead, and the third was beheaded.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

A Reporter Comes Home From Iraq:

“Why Is It That This Story Of Human Effort For Self- Determination By Violent Means Cannot Be Told In America?”

If the roles were reversed, do you think for a moment that our men wouldn't be stockpiling arms and attacking any foreign invader with the temerity to set foot on our soil, occupy our buildings of government and write us a new constitution?

Wouldn't we as women be joining with them in any way we could? Wouldn't the divisions between us -- how we feel about President Bush, whether we're Republican or Democrat -- be put aside as we resisted a common enemy?

2005-05-09 Molly Bingham, Courier-Journal

Every one of the people involved in the resistance that we spoke to held us individually responsible for their security. If something happened to them -- never mind that they were legitimate targets for the U.S. military -- they would blame us. And kill us.

We soon learned that they had the U.S. bases so well watched that we had to abandon our idea of working on the U.S. side of the story -- that is, discovering what the soldiers really thought about who might be attacking them.

There were so many journalists working with the American soldiers that we believed that that story would be well told. **More practically, if we were seen by the Iraqis going in and out of the American bases, we would be tagged immediately as spies, informants and most likely be killed.**

As terrifying as that was to manage and work through, there was another fear that was just as bad. What if the American military or intelligence found out what we were working on? Would they tail us and round up the people we met? Would they kick down our door late one night, rifle through all our stuff and arrest us for "collaborating with the enemy?"

Bear in mind that there are no real laws in Iraq. At the time that we were working, the American military was the law, and it seemed to me that they were pretty much making it up as they went along.

I was pretty sure that if they wanted to "disappear" us, rough us up or even send us for an all expenses paid vacation in Guantanamo for suspected al-Qaeda connections, they could do so with very little or even no recourse on our part.

I could go into a long litany of the ways in which the American military has treated journalists in Iraq.

Recent actions indicate that the U.S. military will detain and/or kill any journalist who happens to be caught covering the Iraqi side of the militant resistance, and indeed a number of journalists have been killed by U.S. troops while working in Iraq.

This behavior at the moment seems to be limited to journalists who also happen to be Arabs, or Arab-looking, but that is only a tangential story to what I'm telling you about here.

The intimidation to not work on this story was evident.

Dexter Filkins, who writes for The New York Times, related a conversation he had in Iraq with an American military commander just before we left. Dexter and the commander had gotten quite friendly, meeting up sporadically for a beer and a chat. Towards the end of one of their conversations, Dexter declined an invitation for the next day by explaining that he'd lined up a meeting with a "resistance guy." The commander's face went stony cold and he said, "We have a position on that."

For Dexter the message was clear. He cancelled the appointment.

If you look closely, you will notice there is very little, maybe even no direct reporting on the resistance in Iraq. We do, however, as journalists report what the Americans say about the resistance. Is this really anything more than stenography?

And many American journalists often refer to those attacking Americans or Iraqi troops and policemen as "terrorists." Some are indeed using terrorist tactics, but calling them "terrorists" simply shuts down any sense of need or interest to look beyond that word, to understand why indeed human beings might be willing to die in a violent struggle to achieve their goal.

Pushing them off as simply "insane, wild Arabs" or "extremist Muslims" does them no service, but even more, it does the U.S. no service. If we as Americans fail to understand who attacks us and why, we will simply continue on this same path, and continue watching from afar as a war we don't understand boils over.

The gatekeepers -- by which I mean the editors, publishers and business sides of the media -- don't want their paper or their outlet to reveal that compelling

narrative of why anyone would oppose the presence of American troops on their soil.

Why would anyone refuse democracy?

Why would anyone not want the helping hand of America in overthrowing their terrible dictator?

It's amazing to me how expeditiously we turn away from our own history. Think of our revolution.

Think of our Founding Fathers. Think of what they stood for and hoped for. Think of how, over time, we have learned to improve on our own Constitution and governance. But think, mostly, about the words I just used: It was our decision and our determination that brought us where we are now.

Recall Patrick Henry's famous speech encouraging the Second Virginia Convention, gathered on March 20, 1775, to fight the British, "Give me liberty or give me death!"

Why is it that we, as Americans, presume that any Iraqi would feel any differently?

If the roles were reversed, do you think for a moment that our men wouldn't be stockpiling arms and attacking any foreign invader with the temerity to set foot on our soil, occupy our buildings of government and write us a new constitution?

Wouldn't we as women be joining with them in any way we could? Wouldn't the divisions between us -- how we feel about President Bush, whether we're Republican or Democrat -- be put aside as we resisted a common enemy?

Then why is it that this story of human effort for self-determination by violent means cannot be told in America?

Are we so small, so confused by our own values that we cannot recognize when someone emulates our own struggle? Even if it is the U.S. that they are struggling against?

I want to be careful to explain that I am not saying that the Iraqis fighting against us are necessarily fighting for democracy, but they are fighting for their right to decide for themselves what their nation looks like politically.

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.

Hypocrisy In Action

Fuck Democracy: The Empire Needs The Uzbek Torturer; White House Shits On The Dead

The western news agenda has moved the dead of Andijan from the "democrat" to the "terrorist" pile. Karimov remains in power. The White House will be happy.

May 16, 2005 Craig Murray, The Guardian

The bodies of hundreds of pro-democracy protesters in Uzbekistan are scarcely cold, and already the White House is looking for ways to dismiss them.

The White House spokesman Scott McClellan said those shot dead in the city of Andijan included "Islamic terrorists" offering armed resistance. They should, McClellan insists, seek democratic government "through peaceful means, not through violence"

Comment:

5.17.05 From James Patton, Anti-Allawi Group:

Ha ha ha - the hypocrisy of these guys makes me sick sick sick.

They should, McClellan insists, seek democratic government "through peaceful means, not through violence".

And what?

Washington sought democratic government in Iraq "through peaceful means" and "not through violence"?!?!?!?

Talk about the pot calling the kettle black. If only these sick minded people could look in a mirror and see their own hypocrisy.

General Phuccumoll Loves Our Troops

[Thanks to Z for sending this in. He writes: the magazine mentioned is Atlantic, June 2005; the article is: 'How We Would Fight China,' by Robert B. Kaplan. Solidarity, Z]

*****NEWSFLASH*****

5/16/05, Washington,

"Oh God, I treasure them!" General Will I. Phuccumoll growls, his battleship-gray eyes flashing. "I love those troops to death!" Reclining in his king-size Pentagon armchair upholstered in calf leather, the brilliant West Point graduate (IQ 260) exhales a cloud of aromatic smoke vaguely reminiscent of Guantanamo Bay. "They're absolutely the best

goddamned troops on this whole fucking planet—they carry out every order to perfection!”

Overcome with emotion, General Phuccumoll silently shakes his head. The general's oak-paneled walls are adorned with gold-framed paintings of various glorious warriors: Richard the Lionhearted, Saint George, Attila the Hun, Ivan the Terrible, and Generals Franco and Pinochet.

Displayed among them with a charming incongruity is an autographed photograph of a smiling lady with white curls and sparkling pearls whose inscription reads: “From one beautiful mind to another: Light up those camel jockeys for me, won't you Will? Hugs & kisses, BB.”

“You know what the greatest human virtue is?” demands the general, his eyes glittering sharp as ice-picks. “Obedience! That's right, obedience. Tell people to do pushups, they'll do pushups. Tell them to clean the shithouse, they'll clean the shithouse. Tell them to kill, they'll kill. Tell them to die, they'll die. That's obedience for you! I couldn't do fuck-all without it, but thanks to the will of God almighty I command it. It's so damned beautiful, it brings tears to my eyes!”

“The war? Oh the war is going just great! Terrific. Couldn't be better. It's a wonderful war.”

The general's handsome chin thrusts upward with utmost confidence, his stogie tilted at an irresistibly rakish angle. “The enemies of freedom are on the run everywhere and won't stop running till they fall off the edge of the world and right into hell. It's fabulous, a dream come true! And the people believe wholeheartedly in our mission, you see. That's the second most important virtue: faith. I couldn't do shit without faith.”

“By the way, seen this?” General Phuccumoll tosses a well-thumbed magazine across his gigantic gleaming desk. “It tells how we'd fight China. A brilliant analysis by a wild and crazy genius! And you better believe it: it's an absolutely winnable war! Those dumb shit Japs couldn't do it—so what? We kicked the crap out of the Japs and Krauts, basically clobbered the Gooks and Dinks, and are now creaming the Ragheads. Hell, with that kind of mileage, a war with Chinks would be a cakewalk, we can chop them up before breakfast, no problem. All you need is faith.”

General Phuccumoll pours himself a tall glass of Chivas Regal and downs a manly gulp before resuming in a more somber tone.

“You know there are some perfidious cocksuckers who question our motives, as if the Pentagon were some goddamned global death squad owned and operated for the profit of the rich, or some shit like that. I totally loathe fuckers who think like that: they're a menace to faith and obedience, enemies of free enterprise, and ought to be locked up to let freedom ring. Damn right, put the treacherous bastards behind razor wire for good!”

Suddenly the general's cell phone comes alive and starts to play “Stars and Stripes Forever.” Phuccumoll talks briefly, signs off and grins from ear to ear.

“Know who that was? The little colored lady who runs the State. Ooh, such a fox! She'll go far, believe you me! Everybody's got the hots for her: General Letrick, General

Moters, General Mills, General Mayhum, General Hoare... and yes, goddamn it, Phuccumoll!!”

OCCUPATION REPORT

Iraqis Who Helped U.S. Say Never Again: They Got Butchered For Their Trouble

May 17, 2005 Philadelphia Inquirer

While the U.S. military hailed last week's Operation Matador as a success that killed more than 125 insurgents in Iraq, local tribesmen said it was a disaster for their communities.

They now say they are leery of ever again assisting U.S. or Iraqi forces.

In interviews, influential tribal leaders and many residents of the remote border towns said the 1,000 U.S. troops who swept into their territories in the weeklong campaign that ended over the weekend did not distinguish between the Iraqis who supported the United States and the fighters battling it.

U.S. & Iraqi Collaborators Must Hide New Headquarters From Resistance

May 17, 2005 By Joseph Giordano, Stars And Stripes

The reconstituted Iraqi army took another step Sunday toward leading stabilization efforts in its own country, opening its first national headquarters since the U.S.-led invasion.

The Iraqi Ground Forces Headquarters was inaugurated by a “small group of Iraqi and Coalition dignitaries” at an undisclosed location in Baghdad, according to Multi-National Force-Iraq officials Monday.

“We are celebrating today a historical event and the rebuilding of the Iraqi army. Having the headquarters of our ground forces here is an indication of the Iraqi army controlling its own destiny,” Iraqi Ground Forces commander Gen. Abdul Qadir

Jassim said, according to the statement. **[Having to hide the location certainly is an indication of the destiny in store for collaborators.]**

Come On, Look Busy **U.S. General Advises Collaborator Officials**

By Jonathan Finan and Bradley Graham Washington Post Foreign Service Saturday, May 14, 2005; A12

BAGHDAD, May 13 -- After nearly three weeks of unrelenting attacks by insurgents, U.S. military officials are urging Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari to respond with strong and decisive action or risk erosion of confidence and a widening sense of insecurity among Iraqis.

Army Gen. George Casey, the top U.S. officer in Iraq, conferred with Jafari on Thursday and Friday in meetings that other U.S. officials said focused on reviewing options and encouraging a firm government response to the violence.

More significant than what the government might do, one senior military officer said, is the fact that the government be seen as doing something.

"The perception of governance is important," he said.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

BOLIVIA

**Hey George:
Get Your Fucking Hands Off Our Natural Gas**



Bolivia.indymedia.org



El Alto Press Agency:

"The leaders of the Regional Workers' Federation (COR) and the El Alto Federation of Neighborhood Committees (FEJUVE) announced that until the indefinite civic/labor strike is carried out, the El Alto International Airport will be blockaded, and the Senkata plant of [the Bolivian state oil company] YPFB will be physically occupied."

Uzbek Tyrant Loses Control Of Korasuv; Sympathy For Protesters Spreads To Capital

17 May 2005 By Peter Boehm and Daniel Howden, The Independent UK

Authorities in Uzbekistan have lost control of a key border town in the eastern Ferghana valley, despite a brutal clampdown that has so far claimed the lives of an estimated 700 people.

The hardline government of Islam Karimov, an ally of London and Washington in the "war on terror", has dispatched an armoured force into the restive area in the east of the country.

Saidjahon Zaynabitdinov, head of Appeal, a local human rights advocacy group, said troops had killed about 200 demonstrators on Saturday in Pakhtabad, just outside the city of Andijan, where witnesses saw security forces kill up to 500 civilians the previous night.

Security forces loyal to the regime of Mr Karimov had last night sealed off the town of Korasuv on the border with Kyrgyzstan.

Heavily armed police set up roadblocks on the approach to Korasuv and officials admitted they had lost control of the town, which is an economic lifeline to the more affluent and liberal Kyrgyzstan .

"There is no police in there and there is no civil administration there," a police official said.

Sympathy for the protesters has spread as far as the capital, where a small gathering of people risked the wrath of the authorities to lay flowers in commemoration of the bloodiest days of fighting in the country's post-Soviet era.

"It was a black day in Uzbek history. We are ashamed," said Tashpulat Yuldashev, a political analyst. "We dissidents have been long been afraid of standing up to express our discontent. But this time we can't stay silent," he said.

Many of the activists were wearing black armbands and ribbons.

The rebellion in the Ferghana valley has given the country's fragmented and disorganised opposition movement a fresh momentum to unite and openly express opinions, Mr Yuldashev added. Opposition parties are banned from running in elections.

State television has so far ignored the uprising, while Western and Russian broadcasts have been cut off since the clashes began on Friday.

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)

Web Copies

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

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial,

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

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