

GI SPECIAL 3B38:



(Graphic by D)

**“You Go Out There
Every Day, And You’re
Going To Kill ‘Sand
Niggers’”**

May 6, 2005 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker

FOR U.S. troops in Iraq who oppose the war for oil and empire they were sent to fight, speaking out can be dangerous. But three soldiers--whose pen names are hEkLe, Heretic and Joe Public--found that their consciences made it more difficult not to speak out.

Each spent about a year in Iraq. Throughout their tours, they earned a reputation for reporting the truth--on their Web log at ftssoldier.blogspot.com--about what was taking

place in occupied Iraq. Their dispatches have also been featured in Thomas Barton's GI Special, a daily Internet newsletter for soldiers and military families, available on the Web at www.militaryproject.org.

In mid-April, Joe Public spoke to Socialist Worker's ERIC RUDER about his experiences, observations and opinions of the U.S. occupation. Here, we print excerpts of the conversation.

JOE PUBLIC:

HOW DO you think the war and occupation are viewed by most people in the U.S.?

I BELIEVE that the current climate in which people are seen as unpatriotic if they refuse to support the nation is something that parallels the nationalism that happened in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s. Being called "unpatriotic" because you refuse to support your government is not something that someone should be subjected to.

In the media, there's a one-sided representation of the war that corresponds to what the U.S. government is attempting to put forward. As such, the feelings of the soldier and also of the Iraqi national are not being represented, because the U.S. government has such control over the media.

What's taking hold in Iraq is not "democracy." It's just our own fascist tendencies, to be quite honest.

I think that forcing our own notion of government into power and forcing our beliefs on these people is not what should happen.

And the power mongers in Iraq--the people who know that if they take power now, they'll be able to maintain power for 30 years--they're the ones at the forefront of this government.

Throughout all of it, America has backed them, because no matter what, as long as we can install our government within their system, we're going to be able to get that 20 cents off every dollar at the gas pump.

WHAT SHOULD people know in order to fill in the blanks in the media's account?

IT'S NOT that people ignore the story of the common soldier. It just happens to be that the common soldier is so brainwashed at this point that they're more than willing to give the story that the government wants everyone else to hear--which is why our Web site or other similar sources stand out.

They're taking a kid who is 17--whose mom had to sign a waiver--and putting him through basic training. Now he's 19, he's going to war and he doesn't know anything else, aside from his mother and the Army. You take this kid and put him in a situation like this, and he has no choice but to comply with the ideas that have been given to him.

It's the lack of outside ideas within the Army itself that leads to this kind of general malaise.

The overwhelming hatred for Islam is, I believe, pure bigotry on the part of the U.S. government, and I refuse to accept that.

I myself am an atheist, and I believe placing one person's god over someone else's is inherently wrong. I believe that racial bigotry and religious bigotry permeates this entire war and is played out through the media every night. These are inherent wrongs in the system.

Everyone's path to the divine is their own choice, and to say that your path to the divine is wrong because your god doesn't comply with my god's needs is nonsense. Hatred is only hatred--it doesn't matter where you find it or how you find it.

Racism is just inherent to the system. You go out there every day, and you're going to kill "sand niggers." You look at these people as animals, because that's how they're treated by the military and that's how you're taught to view their lifestyle.

I don't believe that all commanders inherently believe that the people they're fighting are racially or culturally inferior.

But up high, most of these people are officers because that's the career they chose. And because of their "career path," they have no other choice but to believe that these people are inferior to them; that they are subservient; and that our mission is to make them fall in line with "American democracy."

WHAT IMPACT has the war had on you personally?

I grew up in a PTSD household. My mom was married to a Hell's Angel who beat the shit out of her. Every time she heard a Harley, she'd cringe and crawl under the counter. That was just part of growing up. Now, here I am, and every time I hear a door slam, I'm going to fall on the floor. There's nothing I can do about that.

The thing I'd like to bring up isn't me or my friends, but the young soldier--the 17-year-old who joined the Army with his mom's signature, who's being forced to believe what the government believes, and who's being mentally ripped from any cradle they could have had.

They're forced into this mentality where there is no evil except for the evil they're fighting--because dehumanization of the enemy is the single thing anyone is taught.

That was what Hitler taught. He's pioneered the idea to teach to the lowest level, and in the American Army, everyone is taught at the lowest level.

People like us escaped the system because we were able to think for ourselves, outside of the system. But there are those who can't, and here, they're brainwashed and alone. Then come home, torn up, torn apart, hopeless. These are the people you hear about who are homeless, being just completely mind-fucked.

The American government has placed itself in a situation where it has irreconcilable differences with the enemy, and because of these irreconcilable

differences, the enemy has no choice but to win--because the enemy can't escape the war zone.

And all we can do at this point is try to get through alive. It's just straight out of Apocalypse Now. These soldiers only serve one year, but the soldiers on the other side have only one choice--their home has been invaded.

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

U.S. Soldier Killed In Tikrit: Kirkuk Accident Takes Another; Two Wounded

5.22.05 By PAUL GARWOOD, Associated Press

A suicide car bomber also blew himself near a U.S. convoy and police station in Tikrit, 80 miles north of Baghdad, killing one American soldier and wounding two others along with and two Iraqi policemen, the military said.

Also Sunday, a U.S. soldier was killed in a vehicle accident near Kirkuk, 180 miles north of the Iraqi capital, the military said.

Bomb Kills Single Dad

Walker's body will be flown to his home Tuesday. His family still plans to throw a party on May 29 to celebrate Walker's 23rd birthday.

May 22, 2005 By JULIE PACE, Tampa Tribune

TAMPA - Andrea Pringle had been busy planning a party. Her 22-year-old son, Antwan Walker, was coming home to celebrate his birthday after serving a year in Iraq.

"Coming home - that was all he could talk about," Pringle said.

On Thursday, Pringle got a call from her brother. He said there was a man at her house who needed to talk to her.

In that moment, she knew.

Pringle said an Army representative told her that her son, an Army sergeant, had been killed the previous day by a bomb blast in Ramadi.

An East Bay High graduate whose family and friends called him Twan, Walker joined the Army after graduating in 2000.

The country wasn't at war then, and Pringle said her son joined to earn money for college.

She said the decision fit his character. "Twan had a lot of goals in life," Pringle said. "He was very ambitious and very smart."

Walker called his family from Iraq often but didn't want to talk about war. Instead, he talked about coming home to start a career in real estate. He constantly reminded his mother to make sure his beloved Chevrolet Tahoe would be ready to drive when he returned.

But mostly, Walker talked about his three children, who he had raised alone after his divorce. Walker's parents and aunts helped while Walker was overseas. "He was such a good dad," Pringle said. "All he wanted to do was make a good life for his kids."

But last month, Walker wanted to talk about the fighting. He told his mother five soldiers he had been traveling with had been killed. After the incident, Walker's phone calls became more frequent.

"The last two weeks, we had been talking every day," Pringle said. "Sometime he'd call two or three times a day."

Pringle said telling Walker's children about their father's death has been the most difficult part of the past few days. She said Walker's 2-year-old twins, Antwan Jr., and Antwannaja, are too young to understand, but 4-year-old Antwanette knows her dad isn't coming home.

Walker's body will be flown to his home Tuesday. His family still plans to throw a party on May 29 to celebrate Walker's 23rd birthday.

2 Bomb Attacks Target US Military Convoys: Casualties No Announced

2005-05-22 (Xinhuanet)

Two car bomb attacks targeted two US military convoys in north of Baghdad on Sunday, police said.

"A suicide bomber drove an explosive-laden vehicle into a US military convoy parking at Qadesiyah police station in Tikrit, destroying a US Humvee and wounding two policemen," police Col. Ahmed Hassan told Xinhua.

The attack took place at about 11:00 a.m. (0700 GMT), prompting the US troops to seal off the area situated in northern Tikrit, some 170 km north of Baghdad, he said.

It was not clear whether there was any casualties among the US soldiers, he added.

Elsewhere, another bomb-laden car, parking at the side of a road near Balad railway station, detonated at about 12:00 a.m. as a US military convoy passed by," Hassan continued.

There was no information about any US casualties in the blast of Balad, some 80 km north of Baghdad, he said.

**OBVIOUSLY:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



ALIVE!

A bomb explodes in the district of New Baghdad. (Reuters)

CH-47 Down Near Samarra:

“Minor” Injuries

May 22, 2005 MNF-Iraq Release A050522a

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- An engine problem forced pilots of a CH-47 helicopter to conduct an emergency landing early May 22 south of Samarra.

All personnel on board are safe, with only minor injuries.

The 42nd Infantry Division dispatched a quick reaction force to secure the site. An investigation into the cause of the incident is being conducted. More information will be released as it becomes available.

TROOP NEWS

Wounded Iraq War Veteran Needs A Lot Of Help Now

[This is outrageous. To help out, please contact Denise Thomas by control/clicking on her name in blue just below. T]

To: GI Special

From: [Denise Thomas](#) Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition (GPJC) Georgia
Military Families Speak Out (GA MFSO)

Subject: James Webb -- Wounded Veteran

Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2005

This is an Iraq war veteran who needs a lot of help. I did visit with him yesterday, Saturday May 22nd.

His first injury occurred in Kuwait; injured his back while trying to lift a tow bar

Second injury occurred in Iraq -- injured his back and hip in a blast. He had intense pain but had to return to duty the next day because of stop loss, and because there was no one to replace him.

His third injury occurred during a firefight; he reinjured other injuries and started to lose sensation in his legs. He still has neurological problems and suffers from PTSD.

He was exposed to biological/ chemical contaminants in Iraq that engineers pulled out of the ground -- none of the soldiers had protective suits. He does not know the extent of the damage that this exposure may have caused.

He was told that he had to fill out his own paperwork to receive a Purple Heart so he said he wouldn't bother. He believes this is how the military discourages soldiers from claiming Purple Hearts.

He was stationed in the Fallujah / Ramadah area where there was an infestation of sandfleas and sandflies. These insects are known to deposit a toxin on human skin and it builds up over time. He lived in one of Saddam's old death camps and saw the mass graves.

He joined the military after 911 because he wanted to help. His Grandfather was in the Army and his uncle was in the Navy -- that had an influence on him.

Total time in Iraq - one year and seven days.

His wife suffers from pancreatitis and can only treat it by pain management. She has a good paying job, but misses a lot of days due to illness. They have three children living with them (two are teenagers), and James has another child living with the mother.

The are in the process of moving out of their house and into an apartment. Their house will foreclose at the end of this month. He is about to lose his car and has made arrangements with the car company to catch up. He does not know how he will honor that arrangement:

\$500 due on May 25th \$550 due on May 31st

If he can catch up his car payments, his sister will take over payments and switch vehicles with him to eliminate his car payments. They do not know how they will pay their basic bills when they move.

James' mother has been helping financially but has reached her limit. Her mother is dying in a hospice.

He was medically discharged from the Army in February (he was in Ft Riley, Ks and came here to Covington where his wife and children are), and he started trying to get benefits then. He was told that it would take 6-8 months to receive benefits.

He and his wife Michele stated that they will even need food soon.

He attempted suicide in early September. Five others in his brigade also attempted suicide.

He does not care how public we make this information, they say they just need help.

Denise Thomas Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition (GPJC) Georgia Military Families Speak Out (GA MFSO)

Caught In Blizzard: **Soldiers Die, All Officers Survive:** **Chile Relatives Rage Against Army**

[Thanks to CS, who sent this in.]

Angry relatives of 45 Chilean soldiers who disappeared in a fierce Andes snowstorm two days ago have accused army officers of abandoning them.

Sixteen of the troops have been confirmed dead.

Rescuers are still looking for the remaining 29, but army chiefs say they are unlikely to be found alive.

A number of officers have been sacked, and military and civilian investigations have been launched into the tragedy.

A total of 433 troops were hit by the unexpected blizzard on Wednesday on the slopes of the Antuco volcano in the Los Barros range, about 360 miles south-east of the capital, Santiago.

Army chief Gen Emilio Cheyre said hope for the missing men was all but lost.

"I'm convinced they are dead," he said. "Only by a miracle will we find any alive."

But grieving relatives who came to identify the bodies of those confirmed dead said they had been neglected by the officers who were supposed to look after them.

"My son and his companions were abandoned by the officers," Reuters news agency quoted Gloria Bastias, who lost her son Jonathan, as saying.

"They were coming down together in a group and people were falling. The officer just let 28 kids fall and went on to the shelter."

She said a survivor had told her how her son fell into the snow and how recruits had struggled with officers.

All the officers on the expedition appear to have survived.

The relatives have been waiting in a gym at the nearby town of Los Angeles since Wednesday for news of the missing.

Tired Of Endless War,

Officers Plotting Their Own Exit Strategy: "What's The End Point?"

"I still don't know if we can make it," said a senior Army officer at the Pentagon. "You tell me what Iraq is going to look like next year."

May 22, 2005 By Mark Mazzetti, L.A. Times, KILLEEN, Texas

Army Capt's Dave Fulton and Geoff Heiple spent 12 months dodging roadside bombs and rounding up insurgents along Baghdad's "highway of death" — the six miles of pavement linking downtown Baghdad to the capital city's airport. Two weeks after returning stateside to Ft. Hood, they ventured to a spartan conference room at the local Howard Johnson to find out about changing careers.

Lured by a headhunting firm that places young military officers in private-sector jobs, the pair, both 26, expected anonymity in the crowded room.

Instead, as Fulton and Heiple sipped Budweisers pulled from Styrofoam coolers next to the door, they spotted nearly a dozen familiar faces from their cavalry battalion, which had just ended a yearlong combat tour in Iraq.

The shocks of recognition came as they exchanged quick, awkward glances with others from their unit, each man clearly surprised to see someone else considering a life outside the military.

"This is a real eye-opener," said Fulton, a West Point graduate who saw a handful of cadets from his class. "It seems like everyone in the room is either from my squad or from my class."

More than three years after the Sept. 11 attacks spawned an era of unprecedented strain on the all-volunteer military, it is scenes like this that keep the Army's senior generals awake at night. With thousands of soldiers currently on their second combat deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan and some preparing for their third this fall, evidence is mounting that an exodus of young Army officers may be looming on the horizon.

It is especially troubling for Pentagon officials that the Army's pool of young captains, which forms the backbone of infantry and armored units deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, could be the hardest hit.

Last year, Army lieutenants and captains left the service at an annual rate of 8.7% — the highest since 2001.

Young captains in the Army are looking ahead to repeated combat tours, years away from their families and a global war that their commanders tell them could last for

decades. Like other college grads in their mid-20s, they are making decisions about what to do with their lives.

And many officers, who until recently had planned to pursue careers in the military, are deciding that it's a future they can't sign up for.

The officers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan just wrapped up a year of grueling counterinsurgency operations — a type of combat the U.S. largely avoided after its struggle in Vietnam and that many in the Pentagon believe is the new face of war.

These officers have, in most cases, more counterinsurgency experience than any of their superiors. And they are the people the Army most fears losing.

"The undefined goals of the war on terror are making it really hard for the Army to keep people right now," Fulton said.

"I still don't know if we can make it," said a senior Army officer at the Pentagon. "You tell me what Iraq is going to look like next year."

Meanwhile, the Army is dispatching combat units to Iraq and Afghanistan after soldiers have had just one year at home, a pace that is taking a toll around the country.

Timothy Muchmore, a civilian Army official at the Pentagon and a retired tank officer, said he was worried about an exodus of young officers. He summed up the problem this way:

"You take a junior officer, you send them overseas for a year. They win a lot of medals, and they're a hero. But when you send them back a second time, the odds go up that they won't make it home alive and it becomes even harder on their family. Are they any more of a hero for having served a second time? No."

After the session was over, Heiple and Fulton were wary about what they had just heard. And it was not that the average starting salaries of \$50,000 to \$70,000 were much more than they had earned in Iraq when combat pay and bonuses were included.

Instead, one of their biggest concerns about working in the civilian world was that it was "cheesier" and less serious than what they currently do for a living.

"I kind of worry that the corporate world is a lot like 'Office Space,' " said Heiple, referring to the 1999 movie that parodied American office park culture.

Mid-level officers around the country are confronting the same choice. The 1-34 armor battalion of the 1st Infantry Division returned last year to Ft. Riley, Kan., after a year in Iraq's so-called Sunni Triangle, the region of heaviest conflict.

The battalion is expecting to return to Iraq later this year, and many young officers are choosing to get out before then.

Even in Iraq, he said, senior commanders were keenly aware of those officers who might be considering leaving the military and applied various degrees of pressure to persuade them to remain in uniform.

Yet Capt. Vincent Tuohey, another member of their battalion just back from Iraq., who was promoted to captain upon returning to Ft. Hood, said he was not sure whether he would stay in the Army when his commitment ended next year. He said he was tempted to work on Wall Street.

It's not the money he's after. It's the fact that an Army that was gutted after the Cold War was promising him a future of perpetual deployments fighting a war that could last for decades.

That is not a future he is sure he can commit to.

"What's the end point?" he asked. "When do you declare victory?"

Sadistic Ghouls At DoD Looking For A Vaccine So Hurt Troops Can Keep Fighting

May 30, 2005 Fortune

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is working on a variety of "human enhancement" programs, including a vaccine against pain so that soldiers can operate at peak intensity for long periods.

\$5 Bln Extra Needed To Replenish Iraq Materiel, Pentagon Says How Much For The Dead And Maimed?

May 19, 2005 Bloomberg.com,

The Army and Marine Corps need about \$5 billion extra to replace combat equipment damaged, lost or worn out in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Pentagon says. Most of the money—about \$4.2 billion—is to restock tanks, medical supplies, tents and other gear, while \$768 million more would buy new helicopters, combat vehicles and trucks, according to a report to Congress.

Marvelous News!

May 19, 2005 Seattle Times

Oregon state officials ordered a halt to the processing of nerve-gas-filled rockets at the Army's Umatilla Chemical Depot because of a troubling series of fires that broke out in a sealed off processing room.

The three fires, the latest of which briefly flared yesterday for about three seconds, fed on rocket fuel rather than the sarin-nerve agent that, **for the most part**, already had been drained out.

The Rising Economic Cost Of The Iraq War Close To That Of The Korean War: \$5 Billion Each Month.

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in. He writes: "A few billion here, and a few billion there, and pretty soon you're talking about some real money." the late Senator Everett Dirksen.]

5.19.05 By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON – Fighting in Iraq has been prolonged and remains intense enough that it has pushed the total cost of US military operations since Sept. 11, 2001, close to that of the Korean War.

The cost of the US military in Iraq is running about \$5 billion a month, estimated the former Pentagon comptroller earlier this year.

Fighting in Iraq "is lasting longer, and is more intense, and the cost to keep troops in the theater of operations is proving to be much greater than anyone anticipated," wrote Rep. John Spratt (D) of South Carolina, ranking minority member of the House Budget Committee, in a recent Democratic report on war costs.

Overall, Congress has approved about \$192 billion for the Iraq war itself, according to an analysis by the Congressional Research Service. Another \$58 billion has been allocated for Afghanistan, and some \$20 billion has gone for enhanced air security and other Pentagon preparedness measures in the US.

That totals \$270 billion for all military operations since 2001, according to the CRS analysis.

The cost of war in Iraq by itself has already far exceeded the \$85 billion inflation-adjusted price tag of the 1991 Gulf War, notes Mr. Kosiak. Plus, that war was largely paid for by contributions from US allies.

As for all military operations combined, add in the \$50 billion in war spending the Senate Armed Services Committee last week added to the fiscal 2006 defense budget bill, and

the total will surpass \$320 billion in US funds. **"That's close to the Korean war level of \$350 billion (in today's dollars)," says Kosiak.**

Unsurprisingly, operations and maintenance constitute the single largest extra expense of the Iraq war. Almost half of the just-passed emergency spending bill's defense funds went for ground operations, flying hours, fuel, and travel.

Iraq fighting has been particularly grinding, noted Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at a Senate budget hearing in February. On average, combat vehicles are experiencing four and a half years of peacetime wear in one year.

"A Bradley fighting vehicle that usually runs about 800 miles a year - that's in peacetime training - now sometimes is being driven in the range of 4,000 miles in Iraq," said Secretary Rumsfeld.

About half of the remaining emergency defense funds was devoted to personnel. The rest went largely to weapons procurement, such as replacement of six National Guard UH-60 helicopters lost in Iraqi and Afghan operations.

Pentagon Uses Its Spidery Sense For The Troops: Rumsfeld Comics Debut



With great power comes great responsibility: Donald Rumsfeld flexes with Spider-Man and Captain America. (By Jason Reed -- Reuters)

At one time the G-man assigned to oversee the Avengers was a humorless arrogant prig who was always lecturing them; at another, it was an affable functionary with a high tolerance for extralegal activities. Who, if either of these, better resembles Rumsfeld we leave for readers to judge.

[Thanks to Karen Ahern, who sent this in.]

April 29, 2005 By Hanna Rosin, Washington Post Staff Writer

It's clobberin' time! How else to explain yesterday's midday appearance, down in the Pentagon basement, of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (normal human strength, no known superpowers), wedged between Spider-Man and Captain America, trying his best to melt that icy glare of his into a boy-am-I-glad-you-guys-showed-up kind of smirk?

Either Marvel Comics is really hard up for readers and needs an ultra-dynamic, Pentagon-heavy publicity gimmick to boost its sales, or Rumsfeld is finally ready to admit that only a superhero can extricate us from Iraq.

The official explanation for this partnership (The Titanic Three? The Terrific Trio?) is this: Marvel Comics has created a custom "Support Our Troops" comic book starring the New Avengers and the Fantastic Four for "America Supports You," a Defense Department campaign. One million copies will be distributed to service members in the United States and overseas.

But as any friend of the Avengers can tell you, the official explanation sometimes can't be trusted.

From the military's perspective the benefits of the collaboration are obvious.

According to a Marvel executive, soldiers in Iraq have written letters to Marvel complaining they can't get enough comic books. It makes a certain sense: If you are a soldier in Sadr City it must be soothing to dream that Spider-Man will swing down from a nearby rooftop and ensnare your unseen attackers in his web.

Or that you yourself are endowed with some superpowers.

How useful would it be to gulp down some of that Super-Soldier serum that makes Captain America a master of hand-to-hand combat, able to lift 800 pounds and duck at the speed of lightning? Or to be able to stretch yourself into a thin-walled square like Mr. Fantastic does, should the Green Zone fail you?

From the Avengers' point of view the partnership is a little more tricky.

Marvel plot lines tend to unfold in a real-ish world; the superheroes live in New York and work with various government agencies to combat threats. The U.S. government welcomes the Avengers' help, but only in a grudging sort of way. They were trusted enough to gain access to official U.S. military computer networks. **But then in a later story arc the Senate held a series of hearings to determine whether they were a threat to national security. As far as the feds are concerned, a superhero sometimes can't be trusted either.**

At one time the G-man assigned to oversee the Avengers was a humorless arrogant prig who was always lecturing them; at another, it was an affable functionary with a high tolerance for extralegal activities. Who, if either of these, better resembles Rumsfeld we leave for readers to judge.

The story opens with some soldiers who stumble on a UFO-looking ship and call for help. Iron Man and Mr. Fantastic, the two scientist-superheroes, show up. They pry open the ship to find hostile aliens inside, and then KOOM! THWIP! etc.

Yesterday's news conference unveiling the comic book had less of the KOOM! thrill and more of the Santa Claus-comes-to-the-mall feel. Hundreds of Pentagon employees brought their children down to the commercial mini-mall in the basement to "Meet the Superheroes," as the event was billed.

Rumsfeld, after urging the young crowd to be "quiet, very quiet, very quiet," introduced the superheroes and said he hoped "we all remember what this is about: supporting our troops."

A man dressed in a Spider-Man costume gamely squatted and did that web-squirt thing with his hands dozens of times to pose for photographs, while the Captain America look-alike flexed his muscles and kept his expression deadly earnest. At some point Rumsfeld too did a little muscle flex for the cameras, only he couldn't keep a straight face.

Sam Burns from Arlington came with his aunt as a special surprise for his 13th birthday. He posed with both superheroes for photos in his white Oxford shirt and a tie. He used to read comic books but now he prefers novels such as "The Archer's Tale," about an English soldier in the mid-1300s who fights the French to avenge his father's death. His less literate friends prefer video games.

"None of my friends really read comics anymore," he says

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Escape Tunnel Discovered At U.S. Prison Camp

May. 22, 2005 BY MARK WASHBURN, Knight Ridder Newspapers

UMM QASR, Iraq - (KRT) - **The weight of a fuel truck collapsed the roof of an escape tunnel being dug out of Camp Bucca**, where more than 6,000 suspected terrorists and insurgents are being held.

Prison authorities said Sunday the shaft was discovered Thursday when one of the truck's tires plunged into the earth between the two main fences on the camp's perimeter.

No one escaped. A small number of ringleaders involved in the attempt were placed in isolation, authorities said.

The 300-foot burrow, about wide enough for a man to crawl through, was four feet underground and poorly constructed, said Capt. Jerry Baird Jr. of Nebo, N.C., part of the HHC 105 MP Battalion of the North Carolina Army National Guard from Asheville.

On Friday, the initial excavations for another tunnel project were also discovered, Baird said.

Infrared cameras, ground monitors, sensors and guard towers monitor the two and three-quarter-mile perimeter of Camp Bucca, where 6,474 men were being held Sunday in nine compounds. The camp, one of the largest detention facilities in the world, is in southern Iraq near the Kuwait border.

Authorities also dig trenches with backhoes around the fences looking for tunnels, but find their adversaries are quick learners.

"We try to be proactive and dig," said Maj. Robert Kricko of Greenville, Tenn., the camp's executive officer. "They figure out how deep we can dig and they dig deeper."

Boredom and an idle labor force contribute to the camp's security problems, authorities say. Programs to teach literacy and math have recently been launched and a movie night may be started this week as a reward for good behavior, said the camp's public affairs officer, Capt. Diana Stumpf of Asheville.

"We're not going to show 'The Great Escape,'" she said. [How about Apocalypse Now? Or maybe The Battle Of Algiers? Born On The 4th Of July? Platoon? Battleship Potemkin? FTA?]

Assorted Resistance Attacks

22 May 2005 Aljazeera.Net & (CNN) & AFP

Four commandos and a civilian were killed in a bomb attack in Samarra, 125km north of the capital, police said.

"Two more commandos were killed in a rocket attack on a police station in the city centre moments later," the same source said.

In Baiji, further north, six other members of the commando battalion al-Raad (Thunder) were shot dead in intense fighting that broke out in the key oil refinery town's industrial zone, police Colonel Saad Nufus said.

A high-ranking official in Iraq's Ministry of Trade was assassinated Sunday en route to his office in the capital, Iraqi police said.

Drive-by attackers killed Ali Mossa Selman, director general of the Trade Ministry's Commercial and Financial Control Department when they opened fire on his car in the western Baghdad neighborhood of al-Iskan, police said.

They also killed Selman's driver during the attack, police said.

In a second attack on Sunday, attackers dressed as Iraqi soldiers hit two Iraqi Finance Ministry vehicles, killing three ministry employees, an Iraqi police official said.

The attackers took both vehicles, one of which as carrying an unknown amount of Iraqi currency, the official said.

Two guards were wounded in the attack, the official said, which took place north of Baghdad on a road between Kirkuk and Tikrit.

Two policemen were wounded by a car bomb in Tikrit, in central Iraq, security officials said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“SUPPORT OUR TROOPS?”

"The point of public relations slogans like "Support our troops" is that they don't mean anything... That's the whole point of good propaganda. You want to create a slogan that nobody's going to be against, and everybody's going to be for.

Nobody knows what it means, because it doesn't mean anything. Its crucial value is that it diverts your attention from a question that does mean something: Do you support our policy? That's the one you're not allowed to talk about." Noam Chomsky [Wrong on last point. Millions are talking about it, including the troops.]

“FREE” SPEECH?

To understand free speech means freedom to speak what others do not like and even cannot stand to hear?

Tolerating what you like is hardly a major achievement. Hitler tolerated what he liked. So did Stalin. Idi Amin did too. So did Genghis Khan, the Shah, and Henry Kissinger. Free speech only becomes an issue when someone says what others don't want to hear." Michael Albert

“Never Enough Troops To Occupy A Nation That Doesn’t Want To Be Occupied”

As George C. Herring reflected in *America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, “Failure never comes easily, but it comes especially hard when success is anticipated at little cost.”

May 19, 2005 P.M. Carpenter, Pmcarpenter.blogs

Just as familiar is this chestnut: “The US army (is) also too thin on the ground.” Again, the difference between the Iraq situation and Vietnam is one without a distinction.

True, in Iraq, Washington never planned enough troops. So we’re losing. In Vietnam the brass was forever citing a precise number of troops to achieve victory, which Washington gave them. We still lost. The old right -- the neocons’ predecessors -- concocted the myth that Washington starved the military in Vietnam and that was the reason we lost.

But the fact is, there are never enough troops to occupy a nation that doesn’t want to be occupied. Ask the Roman Empire, the British Empire, the Soviet Empire....

“The greatest failure of the US in Iraq is not that mistakes were made but that its political system has proved incapable of redressing them.”

There you go. That just about says it all.

During Vietnam, Washington’s political system was enmeshed in the ideology of battling communism. It failed to comprehend the war’s nationalist roots and its fundamental construct of a civil war rather than expansionist aggression. So whatever wasn’t working was better than what they perceived as the alternative. And of course policy makers and the military always dangled victory in Vietnam. Let’s keep at it a little longer and we’ll have this mess cleaned up.

Ideology, entrenched thinking, false hope and fear of admitting failure and reversing course -- the combined causes of lasting pain in Vietnam.

As George C. Herring reflected in *America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, “Failure never comes easily, but it comes especially hard when success is anticipated at little cost.”

We Will Rape Your Women, Heck We Will Rape Our Women, But We Would Never Flush The Koran

May 18, 2005 James Glaser. **Jim Glaser, a Marine Corps Vietnam War veteran and Commander of VFW Post 3869, works to educate the American public on the consequences of war.** His personal website is JamesGlaser.org.

Colonel David H. Hackworth wrote, "By April 2004, rapes and assaults of American female soldiers were epidemic in the Middle East. But even after more than 83 incidents were reported during a six-month period in Iraq and Kuwait, the 24-hour rape hotline in Kuwait was still being answered by a machine advising callers to leave a phone number where they could be reached." This is how we treat American women. This is a reflection on our "culture and values."

It is widely reported that many American military women serving in Iraq, need guards in order to take a shower because of fear of sexual assaults by their fellow soldiers. Washington wants the world to believe that some of these same troops would never flush a Koran.

The whole world has seen the photos of American troops sexually humiliating and torturing Iraqi terror suspects. We have all read reports of prisoners being beat to death in American run prisons in Afghanistan, but we want the world to know we would never flush the Koran down a toilet.

American citizens were horrified when they saw the photos from Abu Ghraib Prison, but we were only shown the tame ones. Senator Richard J. Durbin saw the photos our government wouldn't let us see and he said, "There were some awful scenes. It felt like you were descending into one of the rings of hell, and sadly it was our own creation."

Congressman Martin T. Meehan said, "I was obviously shocked and horrified to discover that the new photos are even more gruesome than those we have seen in the media."

Now Washington wants the world to believe that our values and culture are such, that we would never desecrate a Holy book. Torture, sexually humiliate, and sexually assault, Yes. Desecrate, No

In both Iraq and Afghanistan there have been independent and Arab news sources broadcasting the horror of Bush's Wars. Horrors the American people will never see here at home. The rest of the world sees the carnage taking place every day in Iraq. The bodies of children and their mothers are shown where they died. The horror of an Iraqi hospital can be seen all over the world, except in North America.

In North America, we are not even permitted to see our own Military Hospitals on television, nor the flag draped coffins of our troops who have died in Combat.

Washington and even George Bush himself will try and spin this latest charge against our country, but today the United States has too much baggage from what we have already done, for anyone to take Bush's denials seriously.

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Collaborator PM Thanks Resistance Supporters

May 21, 2005 Daily Star

Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari Jaafari said "The situation in Iraq will not last for ever." "The Iraqi people will never forget those who stand by it in troubled times."

U.S. More Successful Recruiting For Iraqi Resistance Than For U.S. Military

20 May 2005 Written by Kevin Zeese, DemocracyRising.US

The U.S. Army has missed its recruiting goals for the last three months.

At the same time the resistance in Iraq is growing.

Is the U.S. military more successful in recruiting for the resistance than it is for the U.S. Army?

The level of insurgent activity in Iraq today is four or five times higher than it was in early summer 2003 when there were 10-13 attacks per day. Currently, there are approximately 50 per day.

A report released by the Project for Defense Alternatives explains why the resistance to U.S. occupation is expanding - the root cause is the U.S. occupation itself.

The report, *Vicious Circle*, notes U.S. occupation offends many Iraqis every day. They face:

- Constant foreign military patrols - about 12,000 per week;
- Ubiquitous (and too often deadly) vehicle check-points;
- Raids -- 8,000 total since May 2003; and
- Citizen round-ups -- 80,000 detained since April 2003.

Perhaps the most invasive are house raids by U.S. forces. The International Committee of the Red Cross described how the raids are conducted in a February 2004 report:

"Arresting authorities entered houses usually after dark, breaking down doors, waking up residents roughly, yelling orders, forcing family members into one room under military guard while searching the rest of the house and further breaking doors, cabinets, and other property. Sometimes they arrested all adult males in the house, including elderly, handicapped, or sick people.

Treatment often included pushing people around, insulting, taking aim with rifles, punching and kicking, and striking with rifles. Individuals were often led away in whatever they happened to be wearing at the time of arrest - sometimes pajamas or underwear... In many cases personal belongings were seized during the arrest with no receipt given....

"In almost all incidents documented by the ICRC, arresting authorities provided no information about who they were, where their base was located, nor did they explain the cause of arrest. Similarly, they rarely informed the arrestee or his family where he was being taken or for how long, resulting in the defacto disappearance of the arrestee for weeks or even months until contact was finally made."

These invasive house searches continue. Last week, U.S. marines went from town-to-town along the Syrian border searching houses and finding nothing - but certainly seeding the ground for new resistance fighters.

The other common occupation-encounter is checkpoints. These are a constant reminder of occupation, can be intimidating and violent. Iraq Body Count, which surveys press reports of Iraqi war deaths, records a minimum of 90 civilians killed at U.S.-manned road-blocks between March 31, 2003 and April 21, 2005 - no doubt a conservative estimate.

<p style="text-align: center;">OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Still No Oil For Blood

May 21, 2005 (Reuters)

William Taylor, the U.S. official overseeing American rebuilding work in Iraq, said few foreign investors will consider coming to Iraq unless they see signs of economic recovery in the major oil producer.

"Even oil companies, which usually go to dangerous places, are waiting," he said.

Silly Collaborator PM Wants Foreign Capitalists To Risk Losing Their Money

May 21, 2005 Daily Star

Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari later visited TOBB, an umbrella group uniting regional chambers of commerce, and urged Turkish businessmen not to shy away from Iraq despite the dangers.

"Capital is timid when it enters a country, but it has to be brave," Jaafari said.

[Wrong. There was nothing timid about U.S. Imperial capital when it entered Iraq, riding on the backs of 150,000 invading U.S. troops. Soon followed by bankruptcy. If Bush's Occupation Iraq Inc. were a business, the banks would have closed the whole losing enterprise down a long time ago, and the Bush gang would be in prison for stock fraud. And premeditated murder. Of Iraqis and U.S. troops. Capital is timid about putting money into a known loser.]

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

FIVE YEARS TOO LATE

May 20, 2005 Gush Shalom ad in Ha'aretz

This week, the Israeli police showed that it is able to clear blocked roads without opening fire, without killing or even wounding one single person.

Even when all the main roads throughout the country were blocked simultaneously by thousands of settlers in an organized and well-planned operation.

Even then, the Israeli police was capable of opening all the blocked roads within one hour, without opening fire even once.

All due respect!

Unfortunately, this discovery came five years too late for the 13 Arab citizens of Israel who were shot to death by Israeli policemen who argued that "there was no other way to open the blocked roads."

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Explains Why People Don't Understand How His Fans Think

Bush said "I think they're inspired by an ideology that is so barbaric and backwards that it's hard for many in the Western world to comprehend how they think." ROBERT HILLMAN May 20, 2005 (KRT)



Democrats? Republicans? Never Mind, Drive On: War Profiteers Just Keep Lapping It Up

2005-05-19 Pierre Tristam, Daytona Beach News-Journal

In 1962 the Pentagon contracted with a four-company combine known as RMK-BRJ to build every sea port, every airport, several military bases and the American embassy in South Vietnam. It was one of those no-bid, no-audit, no-problem contracts that makes the Pentagon every lucky contractor's magic kingdom.

In 1966, a 34-year-old Republican representative from Illinois stood on the House floor and, citing the RMK-BRJ consortium, justly condemned President Johnson's administration for handing out illegal contracts to friends and campaign supporters. "Under one contract, between the U.S. Government and this combine, it is officially estimated that obligations will reach at least \$900 million by November 1967," the representative said. The sum would be equivalent to \$5 billion today. "Why this huge contract has not been and is not now being adequately audited is beyond me. The potential for waste and profiteering under such a contract is substantial."

Why the RMK-BRJ contract wasn't being audited shouldn't have been such a mystery to the representative, one of the sharpest on Capitol Hill. Democrats dominated Congress with a 295-140 majority in the House and a 68-32 majority in the Senate, their most crushing numbers since Franklin Roosevelt's first term. Deafness to critics is the privilege of supermajorities.

The indignant representative was Donald Rumsfeld, now the secretary of defense.

That makes him responsible for the latest magic kingdom contracts -- the ones that have yielded \$11 billion so far in revenue from the Iraq and Afghan wars to Kellogg, Brown & Root, the Halliburton subsidiary that's been doing work similar to RMK-BRJ's, plus feeding, housing and transporting troops around Iraq and the Middle East. Incidentally, Brown & Root (but not yet Kellogg) was part of the Vietnam combine.

Halliburton-type profiteering only seems like a Republican specialty.

But the immutable law of war is that while unlucky people die, lucky ones make a killing.

Assuming that John Kerry had won the election last November, it's almost impossible to imagine that the list of 150 American contractors doing \$49 billion worth of work in Iraq and Afghanistan would have changed substantially. (The Center for Public Integrity, www.publicintegrity.org, lists every contract by name and amount.)

Besides, Halliburton may be a juicy target, but it's as good as a foil. It keeps attention away from the heart of the issue.

The Soviets reliably self-destructed, but we're still spending somewhere between \$30 billion and \$50 billion a year on the war on drugs, an equal amount on the war on terror at home, and double those amounts on various wars abroad.

All this is a little simplistic, I know, but not nearly as simplistic as the bread and butter of every profiteer's dividends -- that patriotic daze and those armchair fears that, at this rate, are damaging the country more than any drugs or terrorists ever will.

MORE:

Help For Iraqis Is On The Way!

5.22.05 By Ima Flack, Psyops News Service

In Washington, the White House announced a new \$486 billion contract has been awarded to Demopublican Enterprises, Inc., who plan to bring the Iraq educational system into the modern era.

For centuries, the people of Iraq have communicated by writing backwards in squiggly lines that civilized people are unable to read. The grant will replace this outmoded means of communication with a modern alphabet, exactly like that used in the USA.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Secret Raids of Alberto Gonzales:

Operation Falcon -- 10,000 Swept Up

May 18, 2005 By MIKE WHITNEY, CounterPunch

There's only one way to make sure that the machinery of state-terror is operating at maximum efficiency; flip on the switch and let er rip. That was thinking behind last month's massive roundup of 10,000 American citizens in what was aptly-christened Operation Falcon.

Operation Falcon was a massive clandestine dragnet that involved hundreds of state, federal and local law-enforcement agencies during the week of April 4 to April 10, 2005. It was the largest criminal-sweep in the nation's history and was brainchild of Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and his counterpart in the US Marshal's office, (Director) Ben Reyna.

The secret-raids "produced the largest number of arrests ever recorded during a single initiative," Reyna boasted.

The details are mind-boggling. Over 960 agencies (state, local and federal) were directly involved acting on 13,800 felony warrants and spending nearly \$900,000 on the operation. As the conservative Washington Times noted, "The sweep was a virtual clearinghouse for warrants on drug, gang, gun and sex-offender suspects nationwide."

It's clear that the Marshal's office knew where the vast majority of the suspects were or they never would have had such stunning success rounding them up; which, of course, begs the question, "Why did they wait to apprehend alleged' murderers, when they already knew where they were hiding?"

According to the press releases, which celebrated the dazzling display of law enforcement, the raids netted "162 accused or convicted of murder, 638 wanted for armed robbery, 553 wanted for rape or sexual assault, 154 gang members and 106 unregistered sex offenders." (CNN)

Okay, that's roughly 1,000 criminals; what about the other 9,000? Traffic tickets, late child-support payments, jay-walking???

"We're really amazed. We had no idea we'd apprehend more than 10,000 bad guys," said one federal law enforcement official who asked not to be identified. "We didn't know what to expect, but the response from law enforcement personnel everywhere was truly amazing." (CNN)

The media's approbation does little to disguise the real purpose of Operation Falcon. (which is an acronym for "Federal and Local Cops Organized Nationally.")

The Bush administration is sharpening its talons for the inevitable difficulties it expects to face as a result of its disastrous policies. With each regressive initiative, the governing cabal seems to get increasingly paranoid, anticipating an outburst of public rage. Now, they're orchestrating massive round-ups of minor crooks to make sure that every cog and gear in the apparatus of state repression is lubricated and ready to go.

Rest assured that Attorney General Gonzales has absolutely no interest in the petty offenders that were netted in this extraordinary crackdown. His action is just another indication that the noose is tightening around the neck of the American public and that the Bush team is fully prepared for any unpleasant eventualities. They want to make sure that everyone knows that they're ready when its time to thin out the ranks of mutinous citizens.

(Note: to date, the US Marshall's office has issued no public statement to the press as to whether the 10,000 people arrested in operation Falcon have been processed or released.)

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.iraq-news.de/>, <http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>,

www.williambowles.info/qispecial,

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

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

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