

GI SPECIAL 3B41:



(Graphic via Soldier X)

Anti-War Soldier Speaks Out:

“WAR IS Money”

**“We’re Not There To Create
Peace.**

“We’re There Creating War”

I think there are two negatives in the whole soup. In the long run, we’re the ones that made the pre-emptive strike, and we’re the ones inside Iraq, so the logical solution and the cure to this problem is to leave Iraq.

Then there won’t be any IEDs killing American soldiers, there won’t be any RPG attacks. There wouldn’t be people cutting off people’s heads if we weren’t in Iraq.

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, Heretic 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.

IS THE best course for the U.S. to withdraw immediately?

THE SITUATION in Iraq is getting worse every day. The longer I was there, I saw more and more abuse of the Iraqi people by U.S. soldiers. I don't think the problem is going to go away with force of arms.

It's obvious that the longer we stay there, we build more and more enemies throughout not only Iraq, but the entire world.

If we're talking about "securing the nation" and what's best for Americans, it's obvious that the right thing to do is pull out. If we can get the United Nations or other more diplomatic solutions to the problem, that's better, but immediate withdrawal is the first step in resolving this whole problem.

If you talk to Iraqis, the difference between the American occupation and Saddam Hussein is that Iraq is a less-safe environment with the Americans there. We get attacked constantly, and the victims of those attacks are usually Iraqis, not Americans--through collateral damage.

Saddam Hussein had a dictatorship, but now, Iraqis are getting pulled over on the road and hijacked, and there are more gangs, more rapes, more murder. It's not safe to walk the streets at night for Iraqis. They're either going to get shot by an American or held up by an insurgent.

All they want is for the Americans to leave so they can solve their own problems.

People in America and the rest of the world were lied to at least four times to bring on this war. Obviously, the weapons of mass destruction issue is a farce--there are no weapons of mass destruction.

In fact, in my opinion, the only reason we went is because we knew for certain they didn't have weapons of mass destruction.

IN OTHER words, the U.S. invaded because it figured Iraq couldn't retaliate with chemical, biological or nuclear weapons.

WAR IS money.

If we went in and Iraq retaliated with nuclear arms, I think that would reflect very badly on the Bush administration, which is a lot more intelligent than the average American thinks. If the reasons we went in are exposed as false, then obviously, they're not the true reasons that the administration had for going in.

I think in many ways that the U.S. has succeeded with the Iraq mission. It's just that the American people don't understand or believe what the true goals of the Bush administration were.

After the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq's army was run down, there was horrible training, equipment was depleted. Basically, the military was crumbling. And chemical and biological weapon toxins have a certain shelf life. So any chemicals that Iraq had before the war would have been mostly useless by the time the weapons inspectors arrived a few years ago.

The idea that there was an immediate threat of a nuclear attack is ridiculous. We had a no-fly zone over Iraq, so to launch a ballistic missile, they would have had to set it up and prepare to launch it, without us attacking them and shooting it down. That's ridiculous, considering we had been launching bombing missions since the 1991 war up to the second occupation of Iraq.

So it's my belief that we attacked Iraq knowing that they didn't have capabilities to release a nuclear weapon, or even a biological or chemical weapon against our troops.

Another lie we were told was that the war was waged to destroy Saddam Hussein and the Baathist regime. If that was our only goal, it's obvious we completed it, and we still haven't pulled out.

Another lie was the supposed al-Qaeda and 9/11 links to the Baathist regime. The 9/11 commission--made up of five Republicans and five Democrats--concluded that the evidence of this link was false.

The fourth lie is Iraqi freedom.

In my opinion, we may have set up a constitution and had the first elections in Iraq, but I don't think we're going anywhere anytime soon.

We've increased our building and construction on bases--the infrastructure for soldiers to get there and operate in Iraq is increasing every day. We're spending billions of dollars to grow our bases and our military strength in Iraq, and there's no sign that we're going to pull out just because we "freed Iraq."

Those are the four lies that soldiers and the public have been given to enter Iraq for unjust reasons.

Gaining control of that nation, its oil and its people--even to create a capitalism there with consumers in a whole new nation for products of the West--is definitely a major goal.

HOW DOES the military shape the attitudes of soldiers toward Iraqis?

IRAQ IS a really easy victim for the U.S. to inflict war on. Most people are afraid of what they don't understand, and they attack what they're afraid of. Arabic people--their culture, their language, their history, their way of life--are alien to the average person in the U.S. When a soldier gets thrown into that environment, there's a lot of confusion there.

You go there with all these lies built up that you're going to help these people, and they're turning around and shooting at you. It doesn't take long before the average American soldier is going to have prejudice against the Iraqi people.

Soldiers don't understand why they're there, they've got a bunch of people shooting at them, and they're frustrated that they're in the situation at all. And they don't have the power to blame the right people--the people who are in charge--because soldiers can be brought up on disciplinary charges, kicked out of the military and sent to prison.

The only people left to hate are the Iraqi people, because soldiers are allowed to abuse them and shoot at them.

Every day, we see a man get pulled out of his car at a checkpoint, strip searched, thrown to the ground and abused by American soldiers. American soldiers are afraid of this man and afraid of car bombs, but meanwhile, this man is getting humiliated while his wife and children are watching from the car. That humiliation is occurring every day to the Iraqi people.

It's hard to say that it's the soldiers' fault because we're all victims of this war and thrown into this situation. Not a lot of people have an understanding of the big picture--to realize why the situation is affecting them the way that it is. So the average soldier takes out all that anger and aggression on the Iraqi people, especially after being there for a year, sometimes a year and a half--that's far too long.

HOW HAVE you come to understand the Iraqi resistance?

I THINK that to lump all the resistance in Iraq together is ignorance. The complexity of the resistance goes far beyond one definition. There are many resistance fighters, and they all have their own goals. There are certainly warlords out there who are only out for a dollar, and to gain control or power.

But the average farmer in Iraq who's resisting is grossly tired of the U.S. occupation. There are many different facets to the resistance--just as many different facets as there are in America. If you ask an average citizen why they support the war in Iraq, you'll get a different reason from 100 people down the line. It's the same in Iraq for people who resist.

To have compassion and understanding for all of them--that's an alternate form of humanity. It can't be seen as betrayal to the country to understand someone who's in a difficult place. Just because there are two sides in a war, it doesn't necessarily make one correct. I think that's where Americans get derailed.

There are men over there who are cutting people's heads off--that's obviously wrong, and nobody's going to support that.

But what we're doing over there is wrong in a lot of ways as well. So if someone feels sympathetic to the Iraqi people and some of the resisters, that doesn't mean that they condone cutting people's heads off.

I think there are two negatives in the whole soup. In the long run, we're the ones that made the pre-emptive strike, and we're the ones inside Iraq, so the logical solution and the cure to this problem is to leave Iraq.

Then there won't be any IEDs killing American soldiers, there won't be any RPG attacks. There wouldn't be people cutting off people's heads if we weren't in Iraq.

DO YOU think that the U.S. has an obligation to keep soldiers in Iraq in order to fix the problems that it created?

IN MY time in Iraq, I've seen more schools close than open.

I've seen more roads explode in front of me than I've seen fixed.

I've seen the infrastructure deteriorate every day that we're there.

We're not solving the problem by having soldiers there on the ground.

The way to solve the problem is instead of spending billions and billions of dollars on a military campaign on Iraq, maybe we should spend it in more diplomatic and helpful areas.

Staying there and trying to keep the peace is an oxymoron.

We're not there to create peace.

We're there creating war.

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

EXTREMELY HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENT: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Troops from the Third Battalion, Second U.S. Marines secure a house during a search of the city of Haditha, northwest of Baghdad, May 25, 2005. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

Four Mississippi Guard Soldiers Killed Monday

May. 25, 2005 HOLBROOK MOHR, Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. - Pfc. Bryan Edward Barron was expected home from Iraq in just three weeks for his daughter's first birthday. Now, his family is planning memorial services for the 26-year-old father of two.

Barron was one of four Mississippi Army National Guard soldiers killed Monday in Iraq. The Guardsmen died when a bomb exploded in Haswa, 30 miles south of Baghdad, Guard officials said Tuesday.

The soldiers were members of Company C, 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry based in Biloxi. The unit is part of the 155th Brigade Combat Team, which is made up of 3,500 Mississippi Guard soldiers and others from Vermont and Arkansas, said Lt. Col. Tim Powell, a Guard spokesman.

Ken Daniels told The Associated Press that Barron was his brother-in-law and he was one of those killed. He said Barron, a Gulfport resident, left behind two daughters.

Family and friends said another of the soldiers killed was Spc. Audrey Daron Lunsford, 29, of the Sardis area. Lunsford, who was married with an 8-month-old daughter, had served in the Army four years before joining the National Guard in December of last year.

Friends said Lunsford had worked for the Batesville Fire Department for a time and had been a member of the Sardis Police Department from December 2001 to August 2004.

The Rev. Steve Cannon, a Pentecostal minister in Batesville, said Lunsford had married his daughter, Vangi. He said the Lunsfords had lived in the Sardis area but that Vangi had returned to his home while her husband was serving in Iraq.

"He was a good husband to my daughter and an excellent father to my granddaughter," Cannon said. "He called me dad. His own dad died when he was young, so I was dad."

Another soldier, Sgt. Saburant "Sabe" Parker, was also killed.

His mother-in-law, Dimple Compton, said Parker, 43, was a 16-year veteran with the Guard and had previously served in Bosnia. Compton said the Foxworth resident had two daughters and a stepson. She said he worked at a lumber company in Angie, La.

Spc. Danny Varnado, of Gulfport, was the fourth soldier killed. His wife, Sharon, released a statement Tuesday night. She told the Sun Herald newspaper that Varnado had dreams of playing professional baseball.

Varnado, 23, played at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College before being deployed to Iraq in January and had signed a letter of intent to pitch for the University of West Alabama.

"He was a great leader on the ball field and on the battlefield. He had a smile and a sense of humor that could make anyone happy," she said.

The 155th Brigade Combat Team is made up of Mississippi Guard soldiers from 49 communities in the state and others from Vermont and Arkansas.

The unit is attached to the II Marine Expeditionary Force operating in the Karbala, Najaf and Babil provinces of Iraq. The soldiers trained at Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg before being deployed to Iraq in January.

TASK FORCE LIBERTY SOLDIER KILLED IN VEHICLE ACCIDENT NEAR TUZ

May 25, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
Release Number: 05-05-32C

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Liberty Soldier died of injuries sustained in a vehicle accident near Tuz at about 1:30 p.m., May 25.

The cause of the accident is under investigation and the name of the Soldier is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Four Iowa Guard Soldiers Injured By Bombs

May 25, 2005 By William Petroski, REGISTER STAFF WRITER, The Des Moines Register

Four soldiers from an Iowa Army National Guard unit have been wounded in Iraq in separate attacks involving roadside bombs, a military official said today.

One of the soldiers was seriously injured and has been transported to a military hospital in Germany. The three others were treated at U.S. Army medical facilities and have returned to duty.

The incidents occurred Friday and Sunday, and all four soldiers were members of Company C, 224th Engineer Battalion, based in Mount Pleasant with a detachment in Keokuk, said Lt. Col. Gregory Hapgood, the Iowa National Guard's public affairs officer.

The first incident happened at about noon Friday, north of Ar Ramadi.

While the troops were conducting operations to clear roads of explosives, three soldiers from Company C were wounded and their armored personnel carrier was destroyed, Hapgood said. The blast was caused by an improvised explosive device that was detonated in the immediate vicinity of their vehicle, he said.

The injured soldiers included:

Sgt. David Hinkle, 27, of Mount Union, who received shrapnel wounds and was evacuated to a U.S. Army medical facility in Taqaddum, Iraq, Hapgood said.

He has since been transported to the Lundstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for additional treatment, and he is expected to be flown to a U.S. Army medical facility in the United States within the next few days, Hapgood said.

Spc. Steven Flanagan, 21, of Marion, who was treated at a local U.S. Army medical facility and has returned to duty.

Spc. Jacob Shumaker, 20, of Wayland, also treated at a local Army facility and has returned to duty.

The second incident occurred at about 2:30 a.m. Sunday in Ar Ramadi, Hapgood said.

Sgt. Michael Mortimer, 24, of Montrose, was injured when a roadside bomb exploded adjacent to his armored personnel carrier while his unit was conducting route-clearing operations. Mortimer was evacuated to a U.S. Army medical facility in Baghdad for treatment and has since returned to duty.

The 224th Engineer Battalion arrived in Iraq in January and has conducted route clearing missions, convoy escorts and detainee operations. The battalion also removes physical obstacles, constructs protective positions, repairs bridges and roads, and does other work as needed, officials said.

Two Marines Wounded In Haditha Battle

May 25 (Bloomberg) & PowerOne Media & Aljazeera

About 1,000 U.S. Marines, sailors and members of Iraq's security forces encircled the western Iraqi city of Haditha today in the second offensive against insurgents in the region this month, the U.S. military said.

Six insurgents were killed and two Marines were wounded in a gun battle at 4 a.m. local time and evacuated, the military said. Residents identified one of the attackers as an imam, the U.S. said.

Haditha has no functioning police force, and U.S. military officials acknowledge that their presence has been light in the city but say Iraqi troops are expected to arrive soon. [Sometime next year?]

A small reconnaissance unit of Iraqi soldiers is participating in the attack, Lt. Col. Lionel Urquhart, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, added.

Shortly before the assault began, insurgents fired a mortar at a hydroelectric dam facility near Haditha where hundreds of Marines are based.

"Hold on, we'll be there in a minute," yelled Marine Sgt. Shawn Bryan, of Albuquerque, N.M., assigned to the 3rd Marine Battalion, from a platform on the dam as Marines scrambled into vehicles to try to locate the attackers.

"Right now there's a larger threat than should be in Haditha, and we're here to tell them that they're not welcome," Lt. Col. Lionel Urquhart, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, said.

["Not Welcome????????????? Remind me, whose country is it?" Ahmed Al-Habbabi, The Anti-Allawi Group.]

Baghdad IED Wounds One Soldier

5.25.05 PowerOne Media

A roadside bomb exploded next to a U.S. patrol in southern Baghdad, wounding one American soldier, U.S. military and police officials said.

U.S. Convoy Hit In Saidiyah; Casualties Reported

5/25/2005 Anatolia.com Inc.

An Iraqi civilian was killed and seven others wounded in another suicide car bomb attack near a US convoy in Saidiyah, also in the south of the capital, an interior ministry source said, adding that witnesses reported US casualties.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier walks past a car bomb which exploded as a U.S. military convoy was passing in the area, in Baghdad's southern neighborhood of Dora May 25, 2005. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

TROOP NEWS

James Webb – Wounded Iraq Veteran, Needs Help

James was medically discharged from the Army in February (he was in Ft Riley, Kansas and came here to the Atlanta area where his wife and children are). He started trying to get benefits at that time, and is working with a VA caseworker. He was told that it would take six to eight months to receive benefits.

From: Denise Thomas
To: GI Special
Sent: May 24, 2005
Subject: James Webb

James Webb is an Iraq war veteran who is in need of help. I did visit with him on Saturday May 21st.

His first injury occurred in Kuwait; he injured his back while trying to lift a tow bar. According to my daughter (also an Iraq war veteran), tow bars weigh around 100 pounds.

The second injury occurred in Iraq – he 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 re-injured other injuries and started to lose sensation in his legs. He walks with a limp, and has neurological problems and suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (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 9/11 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 it can only be treated with 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.**

They are in the process of moving out of their house and into an apartment. Their house will be in foreclosure 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 I have made calls to their auto finance company to get the deadlines extended -- no decision as of the close of the business day on Tuesday May 24th.

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

James was medically discharged from the Army in February (he was in Ft Riley, Kansas and came here to the Atlanta area where his wife and children are). He started trying to get benefits at that time, and is working with a VA caseworker. He was told that it would take six to eight months to receive benefits.

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

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

There has been a story about James in the New York Times, but he has not read it.

James and Michele do not care how public we make this information; they say they just need help.

If you would like to help please contact:
Denise Thomas agapedt@netscape.net
Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition (GPJC)
Georgia Military Families Speak Out (GA MFSO)

To help the Webbs, please send contributions to:
James Webb
c/o GA Military Families Speak Out
2241 Gaissert Road
Newborn, GA 30056

"Dozens Of Our Nation's Children Have Been Needlessly Murdered"

25 May 2005 By William Rivers Pitt, Thruout Perspective

Cindy Sheehan, who lost a son to this Iraq mess.....

"Members of Congress know that Iraq is a mistake," Sheehan wrote me on Tuesday night. "I know, because I have spoken to many members of the House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans alike, who all acknowledge that Iraq is a catastrophe.

"Eleven of America's children have been senselessly killed in the last 24 hours. Hundreds have been killed since the Duelfer Report that said that Iraq had no WMD and couldn't have had them for about a decade."

"Dozens of our nation's children have been needlessly murdered since the 'smoking gun' memo from Great Britain dated 23 July, 2002, was exposed at the beginning of this month," continued Sheehan.

"My son, Casey, was killed after 'Mission Accomplished' on 01 May 2003. How many innocent Iraqis have been killed? We don't know, because we don't count them."

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)

"I Am Steadfast And I Will Not Support The War And I Will Not Deploy"

From: Ward Reilly
To: GI Special
Sent: May 25, 2005

Subject: **From our CO friend Hamza...He needs our/your moral support.....**

[This is from another CO my friend G is working with...he requests that it be spread around...]

peace from Ward]

Hi,

*I've been corresponding with Hamza for a couple of months RE his CO application...**Here is his latest email...It sounds like his needs some reassurance...Feel free to contact him.** His email address is (<mailto:hamza-asadullah@lycos.com>)*

Thanks....G

Sorry for the delay in my reply. I've just returned from a month of training away from Ft. Polk. I have no news of my case at all. Im am growing somewhat impatient and have been thinking about all my options. As far as I know the packet is floating around somewhere up in the higher offices of Army command being read by scrutinizing generals.

I continue to be treated fairly and just as one of the guys. What troubles me now is that the NCOs treat me so well I feel that they are trying to get me to drop the application and stay.

My platoon sergeant doesn't seem to take my beliefs seriously. Either that or he doesn't really care what I say. I believe because he expects me to simply go along and deploy and fight for him anyway. On that matter I'm also rather discouraged. I've been told by so many NCOs including my First Sergeant that they have so much confidence in me to "do the right thing" that its almost as if they don't take me seriously.

My good record and work ethic have already been misconstrued and used against me to try and show the Squadron commander that I really like the Army and I actually want to stay.

He, LTC Rowe is his name, is the only one Ive spoken to so far who can see the facts as they are and believe me on my word.

Three things work against me now, and two of them are contrived.

First, the chaplain recommended against discharge, citing that my application coincided with our warning order for deployment and suggesting cowardice. When I confronted him on his clearly inferred allegation he denied it but the words are still there and his signature below them!

Second, my IO gave me a bad rec claiming that my lack of emotion in the interview conveyed a lack of sincerity.

I argued both points and successfully proved to LTC Rowe that these were empty arguments from the two captains and that they totally misread me. Unfortunately now im in the long waiting period filled with doubt, fear, self doubt, more fear, and rash and

reckless thinking. I need support now more than ever to remind me that I'm not crazy for saying that the life of the man who is trying to kill me is of equal value as my own and therefore I have no right to kill him! I am a pacifist.

I am constantly told that I'm not though. Everyone around me tells me "I think you're better than that. I think you have the integrity to stick to your commitment to the nation and the Army and blah blah blah" If I sent you my application would you read it and give me your comments?

You could circulate it too if you wanted to. Right now I want the whole world to know that **I am steadfast and I will not support the war and I will not deploy.** I can only send the app by snail mail so if you trust me with a mailing address I can send it off to you. Thanks for your support.

Hamza

A Fine Tradition

VETERAN FOR PEACE: Ellen Barfield Chapter 105, Baltimore, MD. Veterans For Peace Newsletter, Spring 2005

Baltimore Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter 105 is beginning to generate invitations to single classrooms or youth groups to speak about counter-recruiting, and is looking into getting a city council resolution on general access to the city schools.

A tradition has been established of holding a commemoration of the Viet Nam draft file burning of the Catonsville 9.

Chapter 105 will for a second year gather to vigil and speak out in Catonsville outside Baltimore, on the 17 May anniversary date when chapter namesake Phil Berrigan and 8 others poured homemade napalm on draft board files to disrupt the process of sending young people to die for lies.

Another Kentucky Anti-War Deserter

May 24, 2005 WTVQ Channel 36

Joshua Despain's turning point on the war in Iraq came January 8th, 2004.

That day, his Army platoon leader from the 82nd Airborne in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Sergeant Jeffrey Walker, was killed when his Blackhawk helicopter was shot down.

Despain says that moment made him question the reasons for the war and turned him into a deserter and an anti-war activist.

While on leave in May 2004, Despain decided he wouldn't go back to Iraq. He joined at least two other Kentucky servicemen who are classified as deserters, Army Specialist Levi Moddrelle of Stanford and Army Specialist Darrell Anderson of Lexington.

Disabled American Veterans Say VA Funding Bill "A Cruel Pretense And An Outrage"

5/16/2005 U.S. Newswire

To: National Desk

Contact: David E. Autry of Disabled American Veterans, 202-314-5219

WASHINGTON, May 16 /U.S. Newswire/ -- The proposed funding level for veterans medical care is "a cruel pretense and an outrage," according to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

Under legislation passed by the House Military and Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee funding for the veterans health care system would rise just 3 percent above the current level. **"That is nowhere near the 13 percent or 14 percent annual funding increase needed just to treat veterans already in the system, let alone the anticipated influx of those returning from Iraq and the war on terrorism," said DAV National Commander James E. Sursely.**

"The DAV and other major veterans service organizations are united in calling on Congress to provide \$31.2 billion for veterans medical care," said Commander Sursely.

"The funding situation is intolerable. Less than half way through the current fiscal year, many VA medical facilities are running out of money and face huge deficits. Their plight will only worsen as large numbers of troops returning home from the war in Iraq threaten to overwhelm already struggling facilities," Sursely said.

"This totally inadequate funding proposal is a cruel pretense and an outrage. It is a clear indication that the men and women who have served and sacrificed for our country are not a national priority," Sursely said.

"It is disgraceful that our government is refusing to adequately fund the veterans medical system while thousands of Americans are being injured and disabled in Iraq, Afghanistan, and all across the globe."

MORE: FROM DAV:

Pentagon Scum Want Troops To Pay For Their Own Catastrophic Disability Insurance: *And Lots Of Stuff Won't Be Covered*

Our government should bear that burden and not require servicemembers to indemnify themselves against getting hurt. Further, some disabilities that would be catastrophic would not even be covered. The legislation undermines the very foundation of how we historically have cared for those who wage our battles and places the burden squarely on the warrior.

[May 2005, Disabled American Veterans](#)

On Tuesday, April 19, 2005, Senators Larry Craig (R-Idaho) and Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), along with VA Secretary James Nicholson and a representative of the Department of Defense, announced the introduction of legislation to provide certain military members who suffer traumatic injuries to receive a lump sum payment for their disability.

To pay for this new benefit, servicemembers will be charged a monthly premium.

This is the first time that our government has sought to charge military members for a new benefit related to a service-connected injury.

The intended purpose of this legislation is to relieve the financial hardship experienced by servicemembers, who are receiving care and rehabilitation services at military medical facilities, and their families who want to be near their injured relative.

While DAV supports the need for a "family hardship allowance," we do not support charging the military member for this new benefit. DAV believes this is an abrogation of our government's responsibility "to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

DAV is also greatly concerned that this legislation had been put on a fast track, without benefit of congressional hearings or even substantive public discussion of the issues involved. There are also some rather disturbing inequities and potential unintended consequences that will or can develop as a result of the passage of this legislation.

Our government should bear that burden and not require servicemembers to indemnify themselves against getting hurt. Further, some disabilities that would be catastrophic would not even be covered. The legislation undermines the very foundation of how we historically have cared for those who wage our battles and places the burden squarely on the warrior.

Summing up:

All taxpayers should be responsible for payments needed to make the servicemember whole.

Estimated payments by servicemembers are approximately \$30 million per year with additional payments by DoD only if the benefits paid out exceed that amount.

Servicemembers who are catastrophically disabled during military service would be paid only if they have the "right" injury. Other equally disabled service members who have paid premiums would receive nothing.

There is clearly a need for additional income to all servicemembers who suffer a catastrophic disability.

Mandatory insurance paid for by servicemembers is not the appropriate manner in which to provide it.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

5/25/2005 Anatolia.com Inc. & PowerOne Media

Eight police commandos were wounded when a car bomb exploded near a school in the southern Baghdad district of Dura, an interior ministry official said.

In the restive northern commercial hub of Mosul, a police chief from the nearby town of Shorgat was shot dead by guerrillas as he walked inside the campus of Mosul University.

"Colonel Muklef Mussa, of the Facility Protection Service, a U.S.-trained civilian guard force, who was in Mosul for a law school night course was killed at 12:45 pm by armed men who escaped," said Mohammed Fathi, commander of the local police force.

An Iraqi soldier and an insurgent were killed near dawn in an exchange of gunfire close to Balad about 30 miles north of the capital, police said.

In the northern city of Dahuk, 400 kilometers (250 miles) northwest of Baghdad, a roadside bomb killed a traffic policemen and wounded 10, including seven policemen, said police Col. Nazim Silevani.

Gunmen shot dead army Capt. Ali Abdul-Amir as he left his house in the town of Khalis, 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Baghdad, army Col. Abdullah al-Shammari said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The White House is still very upset about (the Koran story). They said Newsweek should have retracted the story as soon they found out they got its facts wrong.

If we pulled back every time we got our facts wrong, we wouldn't even be in Iraq. -
Jay Leno

America

You really haven't been a virgin for so long.
It's ludicrous to keep up the pretext...
You've slept with all the big powers
In military uniforms,
And you've taken the sweet life
Of all the little brown fellows...

Being one of the world's big vampires,
Why don't you come on out and say so
Like Japan, and England, and France,
And all the other nymphomaniacs of power.

Langston Hughes

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

Losing In Iraq

Slowly reality has begun to seep back, not that anyone wants to actually talk about it. A reality that the U.S. will lose in Iraq as it lost in Vietnam. But of course this has no effect on U.S. policy.

May 18, 2005 Stewart Nusbaumer, Intervention Magazine

Travis Anderson of Hooper, Colorado had a bad week.

He was killed in Iraq.

Iraq has become our humdinger of failure, with approximately 2,000 Americans dead, U.S. soldiers and private contractors alike -- throwing into utter horror 4,000 parents, 5,000 brothers and sisters, 8,000 aunts and uncles, on and on.

The number of Iraqi dead is too ghastly to even guess. But we do know that in the last two weeks 400 have been slaughtered. In the last two weeks, thrown into utter horror has been 800 Iraqi parents, 1,000 Iraqi brother and sisters

And what do our media call all this carnage? "Growing unrest." That is a gang with a serious problem in understanding reality.

High on arrogance and low on experience, they are clueless that the most advanced military technology goes belly-up when bitterness has been brewed in the locals for decades, if not centuries. They are clueless that the best trained troops are useless when anger pushes an endless number of the enemy beyond reason. There is another reality out there that Washington cannot grasp, until Americans come home in body bags. And then Washington tries to hid that.

Sure the third-rate Iraqi Army crumbled, running faster than a jackrabbit, but gangs of tough rag-tag Iraqis and welcomed foreigners refused to succumb and are growing stronger in blasting away both Iraqis and Americans. Not unusual when the occupier of the country is the symbol of a region's collective humiliation, the target of their outrage. Whether justified or not, we're the devil for many people on this planet, certainly in the Middle East. And everyone wants revenge on the devil.

It is now obvious what led America into this latest quagmire, besides the old standby Superpower traits of super stupidity and boundless hubris. Our leaders misjudged Iraq.

Given the order, the U.S. military marched into the Middle East quicksand super-confident -- our generals are always super-confident -- that our mammoth, totally intimidating \$400 billion military budget would bag this job in no time. That's the way they think in Washington, the biggest budget always wins.

Although our Pentagon seems to remember the happy days of Grenada, does it remember the horrible mistake of Vietnam? Doubtful. It's nearly impossible to remember Vietnam and be super-confident.

So the third-rate Iraqi Army ran and the war began and our military was quickly in over its head. Our Super military is ill equipped -- un-equipped, actually -- to stop

daily suicide-bombers striking red “gold” on downtown streets, drive-by killers, and small group attackers who quickly melt into urban alleys and remote deserts, as Vietnamese melted into the jungle.

Slowly reality has begun to seep back, not that anyone wants to actually talk about it. A reality that the U.S. will lose in Iraq as it lost in Vietnam. But of course this has no effect on U.S. policy.

The simple truth is our military’s strengths are neutralized when facing a ruthless, smart unconventional opponent, inflamed with grievances and burning for revenge, fighting on their soil against a foreigner on their soil.

Our \$400 billion military becomes worse than irrelevant, it becomes a handicap. The enemy fights a war that our military is not capable of fighting; asymmetrical warfare throws unsophisticated clogs into the sophisticated spokes of our Superpower military.

Washington doesn’t graph these things well since they have nothing to do with getting reelected or making money.

So the palm trees confused the arrogant minds of Washington who see no use in history and have ultimate faith in physical intimidation.

But there would be no rolling over of Iraqis and the foreigners fighting in Iraq; they are not construction workers on an island called Grenada. These palm trees came from Vietnam.

Yes, Travis Anderson had a bad week. He was killed in Iraq.

And now his parents have a destroyed life. Is anyone listening? Can anyone remember? Can anyone say the words, “Travis Anderson?” Can anyone remember, “Vietnam?”

“Dislodge The Vicious Animals”

May 19, 2005 Mark Drolette, Online Journal Contributing Writer

I know the Bushies seek total global domination; you know it, too. It's no secret the corporate media in this country sold their collective soul long ago and are nothing more than Pravda West; you know that, also.

It's obvious to many (if not most) of us that our democratic system of government is dead in the water, and no amount of e-mails, letters, phone calls, peaceful marches, protests (what, in "free speech" pens?), non-violent sit-ins, boycotts—no amount—is going to revive it and dislodge the vicious animals fully engaged in raping this country. (Please don't tell me you still vote.)

I guess I actually do have one suggestion, though: Take full advantage now of the Second Amendment (the only one, oddly, that America's controlling fascists favor), and arm yourself—heavily—if you haven't done so already.

Learn all you can about firearms to prepare for the coming firestorm. Things are going to get very ugly in this country and we should all be prepared. (I assume it will look more like a civil war than a revolution, but the label matters not when someone is trying to kill you.) Stock up on essentials, like ammunition, water, and Chee-tos.

If you have some knee-jerk liberal bias toward possessing weapons, for heaven's sake, get over it. How can you say you support the Constitution if you cherry-pick your amendments?

On a far more practical level, how can one otherwise expect to—um, how do I say this?—"confront" our thoroughly corrupt and out-of-control government officials: pelt them with scads of really well-formulated arguments?

Because that sure has worked great so far.

Me, since I have no military or survival training, I have little doubt that when the lead starts flyin,' I'll go down in the first volley. But it won't be without first taking out as many of the bastards as I can who have pissed all over the Constitution, and that's a promise. [Unnecessary. Talk to the troops. The troops already have the weapons.]

What do these concluding paragraphs have to do with permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq? Nothing—and everything.

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Creator Of “Freedom Fries” Turns Against The War

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

May 25, 2005 Jamie Wilson in Washington, Guardian

It was a culinary rebuke that echoed around the world, heightening the sense of tension between Washington and Paris in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq.

But now the US politician who led the campaign to change the name of french fries to "freedom fries" has turned against the war.

Walter Jones, the Republican congressman for North Carolina who was also the brains behind french toast becoming freedom toast in Capitol Hill restaurants, told a local newspaper the US went to war "with no justification".

Mr Jones, who in March 2003 circulated a letter demanding that the three cafeterias in the House of Representatives' office buildings ban the word french from menus, said it was meant as a "light-hearted gesture".

But the name change, still in force, made headlines around the world, both for what it said about US-French relations and its pettiness.

Now Mr Jones appears to agree. Asked by a reporter for the North Carolina News and Observer about the name-change campaign - an idea Mr Jones said at the time came to him by a combination of God's hand and a constituent's request - he replied: "I wish it had never happened."

Although he voted for the war, he has since become one of its most vociferous opponents on Capitol Hill, where the hallway outside his office is lined with photographs of the "faces of the fallen".

"If we were given misinformation intentionally by people in this administration, to commit the authority to send boys, and in some instances girls, to go into Iraq, that is wrong," he told the newspaper. "Congress must be told the truth."

Vote Draino

[Thanks to Phil G. who sent this in]

May 5, 2005 Terry Jones, The Guardian. Terry Jones is a film director, actor and Python.

Personally, I'm voting Draino, the only party that promises to get people's drains unblocked within four calendar years of the blockage being reported. The Slightly Nazi (SN) party has heaped ridicule on the Drainos and claim it is impossible to unblock anyone's drains that quickly without increasing taxes and opening the floodgates to hordes of Aids-ridden, black Asian pederasts that want to work in our hospitals for nothing.

The Forget the Illegal Bombing (FIB) party has pledged to unblock everybody's drains by next weekend, give or take a decade, with more power for parents. Some analysts thought the FIB party's electoral chances might have been dented by its responsibility in murdering 100,000 citizens of another country that was no

threat. But the SNs endorsed the policy, and the Nice But Damp (NBD) party, while it originally opposed the idea, now thinks troops ought to carry on occupying their territory.

The mass killing of foreigners has little electoral impact compared with unblocking drains. "The average Joe wants to get away from all that gloomy stuff," the leader of the FIB party said. "What the people want to know is who is going to unblock their drains, when, and how much mess it will make. Killing all those foreigners in a country that is no concern of ours won't get people into the ballot box."

Of course, the whole nature of the campaign has changed since the publication of the attorney general's full legal advice. And yet the clear evidence that the leader of the FIB party lied in order to get parliament to agree to bombing Iraq doesn't seem to have done him much harm.

"You see," explained the FIB leader, "if I keep my eyes wide open without blinking, and use my really sincere voice, people will believe whatever I say... so long as I stick to drains."

I put it to him that his policy had been a disaster. "You said you were bombing Iraq to make [us] safer," I said, "and yet the only terrorist threat now comes from those in the Islamic world who object to you bombing Iraq."

"On the contrary!" he exclaimed. "The policy has been a tremendous success! Saddam Hussein is no longer killing his people!"

"But the US and the UK are doing all that for him."

"Look, I respect your position. All I ask is that you respect mine, I had to make a decision, I believed it was the right one. Look into my eyes, see how they don't blink, and listen to my voice... think about drains... Remember that is what counts."

"Here! Here!" said the SN leader. "Who wants to listen to all that negative stuff when there's an election coming up? Let's talk about drains."

"I agree," said the NBD leader. "Have I said the right thing?"

Of course the attempt by all three main parties not to talk about anything except drains has led to rampant voter apathy. And that's why I'm voting Draino. At least it doesn't claim to be able to run the country. All it claims to do is to unblock drains and where better to start than in the [Congress]?

FLASH...TOM DELAY ANNOUNCES NEW PBS PROGRAMMING FOR 2005

[Thanks to Liz Burbank for posting this one.]

5.10.05 By Rich Procter. Planetniner

THIS JUST IN...By way of addressing the major shift in America to Honest Republican Values and the Culture of Life, as embodied by Virtuous Wingnuts, PBS has just announced a revised schedule for a typical day of broadcasting.

MORNING CHILDRENS' BLOCK

SESAME STREET - New characters "Righteous Rabbit" and "Divinity Dawg" have Bert and Ernie arrested on suspicion of violating anti-sodomy statutes. Grover turns in Big Bird for using steroids, and Special Permanent Guest Resident James Dobson joins Cookie Monster in presenting the Letter of the Day, "C" for "Corporal Punishment," which he gleefully demonstrates on Zoe with a tire iron while Oscar the Grouch holds her down.

CLIFFORD GOES TO GITMO! - T-Bone tells Special Guest Attorney General Alberto Gonzales that Clifford the "Big Red Dog" has grown so big because he's been selling contraband plutonium to another "Big Red," Kim Jong

Gonzales has Clifford declared an "enemy combatant" and thrown in a cell in Gitmo, where interrogators perform "quite aggressive, but certainly within the bounds of legal, civilized questioning" using a blowtorch and a dental drill.

(Last Episode - Next Week, "Revelation Rug Rats Bring Down Fiery Death on Sandbox Unbelievers!")

EVENING PROGRAMMING

NEWS HOUR with Jeff "ThrillHammer" Gannon - **Tonight, "Democrats -- Deluded Traitors, or Criminally Insane Degenerate Abortion-Lovers?"**

Also - A Preview of Several Delightful, Successful New Wars, including Iran, Syria and A Country To Be Named Later.

Special Report - What Exactly Jesus Told Our President When He Said to Save Terry Schiavo Because Life Was Sacred, But It Was Okey-Dokey To Slaughter Juveniles on Death Row.

(Simulcast In Tongues)

"NOW" with Michael Savage - Tonight, Bomb-Sniffing Dogs in Iraq Are Dangerously Underfed, And Yet Democrats Refuse The President's Call To Be Rendered Into Dog Food - What's Wrong With This Picture?

FRONTLINE - "OPPRESSED! -- The War On Christians."

In this 6 part series, Special Assignment Reporter David Limbaugh hears actual testimony from Oppressed American Christians like Bob and Bobbie Jo Bobaliban, who were forced, at gunpoint, to remove their 23 ton "Ten Commandments" monument from the doorway of the local public library...and Reverend Tick Pritchert, who was refused the right (again at gunpoint) to handle water moccasins at a local PTA Meeting.

Includes an information panel at the end that will give the names, addresses of the infidel Senators, Representatives and Judges who allow this outrage, along with detailed instructions of the routes they take to and from work.

NOVA - "Intelligent Design - Good Science That's Hated By Bad, Bad People."

Host Rick Santorum explains the "controversy" over a bunch of crazed, anal-sex loving Hollywood elitist pervert heathen secular humanist infidels trying and failing to dispute the revealed word of Our Lord God who says right there in the Bible, for everyone to see, thank you very much, that God made the world in 6 24 hour days, in the year 4004 B.C.

Santorum has a few pointy-headed "intellectuals" on to dispute this obvious fact, but stands behind them making faces and going "Neener neener neener" which is, frankly, better than they deserve.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE - "STROM THURMOND, ENLIGHTENED AMERICAN DEMIGOD"

Host Trent Lott takes viewers through the mythic personal journey of Senator Strom Thurmond, a visionary lawmaker and culture warrior. **Lott begins with the statement he spoke to Mr. Thurmond on the occasion of his 100th birthday - "When Strom Thurmond ran for President, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either."**

What are these problems? Mr. Thurmond forthrightly confronted to these problems on July 17, 1948, when he orated to the American people, "And I want to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that there's not enough troops in the Army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the nigger race into our theatres, into our swimming pools, into our homes and into our churches."

Mr. Thurmond was at the time the Presidential nominee of the "Dixiecrat" party. He was also the father of Essie Mae Washington-Williams, his daughter by one of his - err, ummm...ahhhh..."African-American" servants, Carrie Butler. (NOTE -- This information will be listed in teeny-tiny print on some PBS web sites in northerly locations.)

THE SECRET LIFE OF JUSTICE KENNEDY

Reverend Pat Robertson hosts this shocking docu-drama. Using cutting-edge Fox News-style recreations and vividly imagined, highly logical suppositions, Robertson reveals the stunning secret life of a Supreme Court Justice you only thought you knew. By day, "Justice" Kennedy appears to be a sober jurist involved in (mis)"interpreting" the Constitution.

By night, Justice Kennedy is something quite different - a giddy, drooling Satanist known as "Frigax the Vile", performing late-term abortions in the backseat of his Toyota Prius as part of his personal Cult, "The Demonic Onez." Robertson not only reveals this hideous cover-up, but also proves that the "liberal media" has suppressed the story for almost 20 years. Parental Discretion Advised.

Coming Soon:

"COUNTDOWN TO RAPTURE!" with Reverend Tim LaHaye

"SOCIAL SECURITY ROADSHOW!" with President George W. Bush

"EVERYONE WHO DISAGREES WITH ME SHOULD BE TORTURED AND THEN
KILLED" with Ann Coulter (satire)

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Commands' "Recruiting For The Resistance" Campaign Comes To Haditha



An Iraqi detainee accused of having too much ammunition for a licensed weapon faces the wall, blindfolded, while **his mother, seated, and sisters plead with U.S. Marines through a translator, right, for his release** in Haditha, northwest of Baghdad May 25, 2005. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

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

Received:

A Message To Soldier X

From: CS
To: GI Special
Sent: May 24, 2005

I do hope 'Soldier X' gets out soon. He needs it.

[THANKS TO B FOR SENDING THIS IN. B WRITES:

Lt. Says Boingboing.net Gets It Wrong

From: 1LT Rogers
To: GI Special
Sent: May 24, 2005 6:19 AM
Subject: GI Special 3A90

On your website, you state that the picture of Kenny from South Park is an underground trench art being distributed by soldiers.

Being a soldier deployed to Iraq your information is incorrect. We as soldiers can purchase this piece of artwork on either t shirts or patches openly on our camps through vendors.

I thought you might like to get corrected information on your website and not to distribute false information.

[This is the item Lt. Rogers mentions:]



I ran into gamer-theorist-turned-military-consultant JC Herz at the Emerging Technology conference last month and she gave me a print out of this underground bit of infringing trench-art that's being circulated among soldiers stationed in Iraq. [April 1, 2005 boingboing.net](#)

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