

GI SPECIAL 3B44:

ENOUGH BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Ken Kozakiewicz (left) in an evacuation helicopter after hearing that his friend, the driver of his Bradley Fighting Vehicle, was killed. May 24, 2005 Ikhadduri's Photostream

“The Army, They Lied To Me From The Beginning”

May 26, 2005 WESH, TORONTO

Thirty-five years after Vietnam, Canada is still a safe haven for those fleeing service in the U.S. military.

"I did it for the best of my family, for the best of my conscience," said Pfc. Joshua Key, of the U.S. Army.

The Keys are a typical, young, all-American family with four beautiful children.

"I felt like we (were) the most wanted family in America because you know everybody's eyes are looking for you," Key said.

Key and his family fled to Toronto. "Now, we're technically refugees in Canada," his wife, Brandi, said. "I know that I'll never be able to go home," Joshua Key said.

Key is a deserter from the Army.

"If you do get apprehended, if you do get caught, you're always going to be considered a coward, you're always going to be considered a deserter and that's going to follow you for the rest of your life," Key said.

He served eight months in Iraq's volatile Sunni triangle with the 43rd combat engineer company. He raided homes and flushed out terrorists. As a soldier, he decided the war in Iraq was unjustified.

"It's wrong, it's very immoral. We're there under lies and different pretenses that were fabricated," Key said.

To the Army, he's a wanted criminal.

"I went to fight for my country. To me, the Army, they lied to me from the beginning," Key said.

"My husband is not a coward for he went and fought," Brandi said. During a two-week leave in 2003, Key abandoned his unit.

Once in Canada, the Keys sought out immigration attorney Jeffry House. "They shouldn't be punished because they are making a moral choice that has a lot to be said for it," House said.

Out of a small office in downtown Toronto, House sorts through mounds of paperwork for the 10 American soldiers he represents.

"These are people that to me seem so innocent of any wrongdoing that I feel like I have to go the last mile for them," House said.

"The last thing we wanted to do was leave our country. That was the last thing I intended to do, the last thing I wanted to do," Key said.

If Key comes back to the U.S., he would face a court martial, which could land him in prison for five years. Theoretically, the ultimate punishment for deserting could be death, although that is highly unlikely.

"We're refugees of Canada, that's how I see it," Key said.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Memorial Graduate Is Killed:

Scheduled For Discharge In October 2004



**Army Cpl. Mark Maida of Madison adopted a puppy, Maxine, in Haswah, Iraq.
(Maida family photo)**

5/28/05 George Hesselberg, Wisconsin State Journal

U.S. Army Cpl. Mark Maida, 21, a 2001 graduate of Madison Memorial High School, was killed Thursday in Iraq, his family said Friday.

Maida, the son of Ray and Diane Maida, died 40 miles south of Baghdad when his Humvee struck a homemade bomb.

Covelli, in a prepared statement, said Maida joined the Army shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, and began duty Oct. 31.

He had served his three-year contract, was scheduled for discharge in October 2004, and had been accepted to Madison Area Technical College for the fall semester.

The military, however, activated its "stop-loss policy," which allows the government to keep soldiers beyond their contract. Maida was deployed to Iraq on Jan. 9 for a 12-14 month tour, the family's statement said.

"Mark grew up on Madison's West Side in the Orchard Ridge neighborhood. He loved adventure and enjoyed sky diving as much as his role as uncle to his four nieces and nephews. Known for his terrific sense of humor, he loved making his family and friends laugh. His music was a source of joy to his parents. Mark enjoyed the outdoors, hunting and fishing," the family's statement said.

Survivors include his father, Ray, a retired Madison police detective; and his mother, Diane, a nurse at a Madison hospital; two brothers and a sister.

256th Soldier Seriously Wounded; Bullet Severed Spinal Cord



Christopher Brandon Sullivan

May 27, 2005 KLFY

An Acadiana woman is on a plane, racing towards a reunion with her son. He's a member of the 256th who was seriously wounded while fighting in Iraq.

Romona Guidry spoke with Eyewitness News just minutes before boarding a plane for Germany and an American military hospital where her son is in the fight of his life.

22-year-old Christopher Brandon Sullivan was on patrol when he was shot in the neck.

The bullet severed his spinal cord.

Romona Guidry spoke to us at the Lafayette airport Friday afternoon as she was waiting for a flight that will take her to see her son, Brandon.

But, Romona wasn't waiting alone.

Other family members, including Brandon's mother-in-law were there lending support, trying to remain positive and struggling to make sense of what's happened. Brandon's loved ones are asking for your support and your prayers.

Brandon's family has been told he faces an uphill battle that will require months of therapy.

Brandon's young wife, Mandy, is already at his side and is praying for the day she can bring him back home.

If you would like to help Brandon and Mandy, an account has been set up in their name Mandy or Brandon Sullivan at Iberia Bank in Rayne.



U.S. Marine Sgt. David Winberg. Winberg was killed in Iraq, Wednesday, May 25, 2005, his family said through a spokesman. The military had not released details of his death early Friday. Winberg, 24, was from Louisville and was a graduate of Louisville Trinity High School. (AP Photo/Family Photo)

Bomb Flares Up U.S. Fuel Tank

May 28 (KUNA)

Fire flared up in a US army fuel tank on Saturday after it was hit by a bomb north of Baghdad, but there was no immediate report of casualties.

Eyewitnesses told KUNA that an explosive charge went off while an American military convoy drove by in Al-Tarmiya district north of Baghdad.

According to the witnesses, the American tanker burst in flames as American troops cordoned off the area preventing civilians from coming near the scene.

Resistance Attacks U.S. Patrol In Fallujah

May 27, 2005 Reuters & Aljazeera

Some 17 people were injured in Falluja on Thursday evening after an coalition patrol came under fire from resistance fighters, eyewitnesses said. Casualties arriving at the local hospital said the patrol of Iraqi National Guards and U.S. troops, returned fire indiscriminately, hitting locals and their homes.

MORE:

Famous Last Words

May 25, 2005 by Tom Lasseter, Knight Ridder Newspapers

"The insurgents are trying to get back into Fallujah, with little success, but they are operating in and around (nearby) Ramadi and up the Euphrates valley," Marine Lt. Col David Lapan wrote in an e-mail from his base in Fallujah. Soldiers and Marines retook that city in bloody battles with insurgents in November.

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

TROOP NEWS

Congressman Says Active Duty Troops Are Stingy, Greedy Assholes

COMMENT:

[When reserves and National Guard troops are mobilized for extended deployments, many, losing their civilian income, also lose their ability to pay their home mortgages, can't keep their kids in college because of tuition costs, have other severe problems supporting their families, and some have had to declare bankruptcy.

[The legislation here would make up for some of the money they lose when their civilian income stops.

[The politician opposed to doing it, and others of his kind, say it would hurt the morale of regular army troops because they get paid less. Meaning he is saying the regular army troops are greedy, stingy assholes who would hate the reservists because they and their families weren't going to the poor house.

[That is a disgusting, filthy slander.

[If anything, it would raise morale, because every serving troop has a reserve obligation, and they would see that if they got called up when they were in the reserves, there would also be help for them.

[Not only does Rep. John Kline insult the common sense and common decency of every serving member of the armed forces, it's one more example of how these chiseling politicians really hate the troops, and see them as just so much expendable cheap labor to use for maintaining the Evil Empire.

[The real enemy is in Washington DC running the Imperial government, not in Iraq. Time to come home and take care of that problem. T]

May 23, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

Reservists mobilized for longer than 18 months would get up to \$3,000 a month in extra pay to make up for differences between their military and civilian salaries under a compromise plan approved by a House panel.

The proposal, part of the 2006 defense authorization bill approved May 11 by the House Armed Services personnel panel, is far from a sure thing.

Paying more to National Guard and reserve members who are mobilized than to full-time active-duty troops is controversial and has drawn stiff opposition from the Pentagon in the past.

And there are indications the subcommittee approved the plan to discourage other lawmakers from trying to get more generous benefits attached to the bill.

Rep. John McHugh, R-N.Y., the personnel subcommittee chairman and chief sponsor of the income-protection proposal, said that if the House Armed Services Committee does not include some kind of financial aid for the Guard and reserve in the bill, he expects pressure from Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif., to adopt a more sweeping package.

Lantos' proposal requires the federal government to make up the difference between military and civilian pay for any federal worker who is mobilized, and provides a tax credit to private-sector employers who make up salary differences for their workers.

One lawmaker opposed to the idea is Rep. John Kline, R-Mo., who said paying reservists for lost income would end up hurting active-duty morale.

Paying reservists more than active-duty troops for doing the same work would be an “immediate disruption” and would “unravel” the trust that has built up between active and reserve forces through training and deployments, Kline said.

[How about the fact that the political scum in Congress opposed to doing the right thing for reservists also pay themselves huge salaries, keep raising their own pay, get to keep all the money they get from campaign contributors when they retire, and live like Lords. What does *that* do for morale? What an asshole.]

The final package approved by the subcommittee is a compromise. McHugh wanted income-replacement payments to begin after 12 months of mobilization. Kline said that would give extra payments to every reservist mobilized for duty in Iraq, since Army policy calls for minimum 12-month tours to that war zone. He proposed, and McHugh quickly accepted, a modification that would start payments after 18 months of mobilization.

MORE:

“I Came Very Close To Having To File Bankruptcy”

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, who sent this in.]

22 Mar 2005 Operation Truth

“reservesfc” an Airman from VA, submitted 9-13-04:

“I believe many people were affected as financially as I was, or worse. In the end, I think this aspect of the deployments have NOT been relayed as much as they should be.

Let me preface this by pointing out that yes, I understand deployments are a fact of life for reservists. However, in my case, and countless thousands of others, I was called back from the IRR.

While I am not minimizing the financial impact on drilling reservists and national guardsman, I think a case can be made that it is much more significant on those IRR soldiers that were deployed that had NOT been receiving a military paycheck for many years.

I was an active duty soldier for 10 years when I got out in 1999. I had done tours in Korea, throughout Europe, and I am a veteran of Desert Storm. I got out to pursue a career as a VA State Trooper. I joined the reserves for 6 years and went off to Trooper school.

About a year later, I received a job offer I simply could NOT resist. The only problem with taking the job was that my job would NOT allow me to be a reservist (I must quantify this as they restrict reserve access legitimately).

So, I filed the appropriate paperwork, and was released from the remainder of my commitment. **Unbeknownst to me, the Army placed me into the IRR for the remainder of my contract.**

Two years later, I received orders to active duty.

Yikes. Looking at the pay scale, I was up against a \$40,000 pay cut. My wife began having to come up with many extra hours in over time to try and cover some of the damage, and we took out 2nd mortgages to cover the rest.

I came very close to having to file bankruptcy.”

“You Want To Charge Me A Fee For Something 58,000 Guys Died For In Vietnam”

5.2.05 By Graham Rayman, Staff Writer, Newsday

The 2004 VA budget was \$63.6 billion. The Bush administration's fiscal 2006 budget contains a \$70.8 billion request.

But the current budget also contains proposals to institute an annual fee of \$250 and raise the co-pay for medicine from \$7 to \$15 for non-disabled veterans in higher income categories. Critics have charged that those measures could effectively cut off care for tens of thousands of veterans.

“None of us are pleased about that,” said Bill Baessler, vice president of Suffolk County chapter 11 of the Vietnam Veterans of America. “You want to charge me a fee for something 58,000 guys died for in Vietnam,” he said. “We did our part and did it to the best of our ability, and now the government has to do its part.”

Baessler, who served four years in the Air Force, including one year with the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing at Danang, said care at the Northport VA is good, but funding is always a concern. -

Injured Marine Fights For Wounded Soldiers' Pay: “His Combat Pay Was Cut While He Fought For His Life”

May 28, 2005 By Noelle Straub, Boston Herald

WASHINGTON - Winthrop Marine Lance Cpl. James Crosby's effort to give combat-wounded soldiers special pay while they recover moved closer to becoming law with a U.S. House vote last week.

"It will make such an impact," said Crosby's father, Kevin. "My son is in constant pain 24 hours a day. No amount of money can ever make up for that, but at least there's something for these people and their families who have been torn apart."

A rocket attack in Iraq last year left the younger Crosby, 20, paralyzed from the waist down.

When he left Iraq, his combat pay was cut while he fought for his life.

The measure, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Edward Markey (D-Malden), would give \$430 a month to soldiers who are wounded and evacuated from the combat zone.

The special pay would continue until a soldier receives a new form of insurance for traumatic injuries received in combat - no less than a lump sum of \$25,000 and as high as \$100,000, depending on the injury's severity.

The original bill was named the Crosby-Puller Combat Wounds Compensation Act in honor of Crosby, 20, and Lt. General Lewis "Chesty" Puller, the most decorated Marine in history.

Gold Star Mothers For Peace: "Today I Am Angry!! "Today I Want To Scream"

May 26, 2005
From Nadia

Today, my son and only child, would be 35 years old, and I have a problem with that, I feel sad, looking at my 3 years old grand daughter, thinking of my grand son, who is missing his dad more each day.

Today I am angry!!

Today I am tired to be a "nice lady" today I want to scream.

I need to hear Patrick's voice saying on the telephone from Iraq: "I love you mom, don't worry, I will be home soon"

I miss seeing his tall and loving stature giving me a hug and always reassuring everyone.

I have difficulties going to visit his work, where his desk is occupied by someone else.

I have a problem living without him!

Next month on the 22 his life was taken his blood spilled on a foreign soil, next month it will be a year!!!

May 26, 2005 10:07 PM
Dear Nadia,

Anger is good babe, anger can be cleansing and healing like fire.

Let's use our anger and direct towards the people who killed our loved ones.

I am hugging you!

Love
Cindy

Command Assholes At Ft. Steward Dream Up Idiotic Charges Against Sgt. Benderman



Sgt. Kevin Benderman, center, his wife Monica, right, and his attorney Bill Cassara walk into a Article 32 investigative hearing May 26, 2005 at Fort Stewart, Ga. (AP Photo/Stephen Morton)

"It's vindictive," Cassara said of the larceny charge. "The only reason the government has brought it against him is a decision to pile on charges against Sgt. Benderman."

May. 26, 2005 RUSS BYNUM, Associated Press, FORT STEWART, Ga.

Attorneys for an Army Sgt. who refused to deploy to Iraq argued Thursday against a new court-martial for the soldier, saying prosecutors trumped up charges of desertion and larceny from what was at worst "a three-day AWOL."

Sgt. Kevin Benderman, 40, would face up to 17 years in prison if Fort Stewart commanders send his case to a general court-martial for a second time.

Benderman refused to deploy with his 3rd Infantry Division unit for a second tour of duty Jan. 8, days after he told commanders he was seeking a discharge as a conscientious objector.

Army prosecutors say Benderman not only deserted his unit to avoid hazardous duty, but also stole government money by accepting \$2,922 in combat pay and related deployment bonuses while he remained in the U.S.

William Cassara, Benderman's civilian defense attorney, blamed the unearned payments on a common accounting error. He also argued Benderman at worst had been absent without leave, a lesser charge than desertion, because he reported for duty the Monday after the weekend deployment.

"At the most, the government can prove Sgt. Benderman went home for the weekend," Cassara said in his closing argument at the investigative hearing. "When you get past all the histrionics, this case is about - at most - a three-day AWOL."

Maj. David Bedard, the presiding officer at the hearing, will recommend whether the evidence against Benderman warrants a court-martial. The final decision will be left to Col. John Kidd, Fort Stewart's garrison commander.

On the larceny charge, DeJesus said Benderman should be prosecuted because he never reported the payments to his commanders, who discovered he was receiving the money last month. "He was stealing from the U.S. government," DeJesus said. "The amount is noticeable. It's not an extra \$50. It's more like an extra \$750 to \$1,000" per paycheck.

A Fort Stewart finance officer, Capt. Kristen Lewis, testified Thursday that erroneous paperwork listing Benderman among deploying soldiers most likely caused him to receive combat pay.

Lewis said soldiers do not sign up for deployment bonuses individually, and 75 to 100 other non-deploying troops had received unearned combat pay because of similar errors.

Staff Sgt. Reynaldo Cordova, who oversees payroll for Benderman's unit, testified he asked Benderman in April whether he had noticed the extra money in his checks.

"He said, 'No, because my wife handles all my financial affairs,'" Cordova said.

Benderman did not testify during the hearing. Cassara, his attorney, said Benderman would have to be "brazen or stupid" to think he could get away with stealing while the Army built a desertion case against him.

Prosecutors added larceny charges against Benderman on May 12 - the day after the judge scuttled his pending court-martial out of concern the previous investigative hearing may have been biased against Benderman.

"It's vindictive," Cassara said of the larceny charge. "The only reason the government has brought it against him is a decision to pile on charges against Sgt. Benderman."

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 Know I Helped Destroy The Country,” Anti-War Marine Says

May 28, 2005 By Yoshiaki Nohara, The Daily Herald Co., Everett, Wash

SNOHOMISH - Linda Jackman's only son is stationed at Fort Mead, Md. The 23-year-old Marine sergeant, who does decoding, will probably be deployed to Iraq in the fall, said Jackman, 56, of Marysville.

Jackman said she is against the war. "I passionately believe that we're going in a wrong direction," she said. "I feel very patriotic when I say this. I love my country."

On Thursday evening, Jackman and about 30 people listened to Michael Hoffman, a Marine veteran who participated in the 2003 Iraq invasion, at the Snohomish Public Library. Local peace groups sponsored the talk.

Hoffman is on a nationwide tour for Iraq Veterans Against the War, which he created in July after returning from Iraq. The grass-roots group has about 200 members, he said.



Hoffman, 25, blasted the war, saying the Bush administration has misled the country based on lies, including the presence of weapons of mass destruction. "I didn't believe in the intelligence. I didn't believe in pre-emptive war," he said.

The combat experience fundamentally changed him, Hoffman said. "I know I helped to destroy the country. That haunts me at night," he said.

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.

Chilean Rage Growing Over 45 Soldiers' Deaths: "Their Officers Deserted When The Blizzard Hit"

[Thanks to CS, who sent this in.]

A mother of one of the victims told Reuters that survivors told her that officers had abandoned recruits who fell in the snow.

25 May, 2005 By Clinton Porteous, BBC News, Santiago & May 24 Gustavo González, IPS-Inter Press Service

Santiago office worker and mother Adela Ortega says those to blame for the death or disappearance of 45 Chilean soldiers in a severe blizzard in the Andes should be behind bars.

"After the death of so many young people, at the very least they should be in jail," she said.

Like most Chileans, Adela Ortega blames the army officers who gave the order for the battalion to march despite the severe weather conditions.

Sports shop owner, Manuel Ureta, said he felt great sorrow for the young conscripts who had died.

"The young men had no experience, they did not know what to do, they were in the care of the officers," he said.

As the full extent of last week's tragedy emerges, there is growing anger against the army, and particularly the officers in charge of the battalion who ordered the troops on the perilous 17 mile trek.

Of the 45 dead or missing, all but one was a conscript. The young men joined the army in early April for their year of compulsory military service.

Candidates for the December presidential election have already called for the end of compulsory service, saying the army should be able to attract career soldiers through better pay and conditions.

Three officers have been sacked over the blizzard tragedy and two investigations - one internal and one external - are under way.

Army Commander-in-Chief Juan Emilio Cheyre said the battalion should never have been ordered to march in the weather conditions.

The army now says prison is a possibility for some of the officers in charge. "There is a military justice investigation which will determine if, in an extreme case, some of them go to jail," Lt Col Enrique Bodecker told the BBC.

The army is also trying to recover from the public relations disaster that followed the blizzard.

Parents desperate for news were denied information, and housed in a giant freezing gymnasium in the southern Chilean city of Los Angeles.

There were scenes of near-riots as angry parents smashed windows and accused the army of withholding information and lying.

The overwhelming belief was that the old attitude of the once-all powerful army that led the 17-year military government was emerging at the time of crisis.

Fuelling the anger was the belief that young, poor conscripts had been sent out to march by their officers, and then deserted when the blizzard hit.

A mother of one of the victims told Reuters that survivors told her that officers had abandoned recruits who fell in the snow.

Dozens of teenagers died in the blizzard when they should have sat out the storm in the safety of a mountain refuge.

Not only did their officers ignore warnings of severe weather, but the young men were sent out on the training exercises with light clothing completely inadequate to cold weather conditions and snow.

Cheyre announced Sunday that the victims' families would be paid 5,400 dollars in life insurance and 4,900 dollars in reparations, and that they would have the right to a monthly pension amounting to around 260 dollars.

The non-governmental Corporation of Citizen Rights has called for a reconsideration of compulsory military service.

The group also argued that the civil justice system, and not only the military courts, should investigate the tragedy in Antuco, as well as the deaths of other recruits in recent years in Chile.

Compulsory military service in Chile "has a long history of violence," said Ramis. "There have been many cases of unclarified deaths. Obligatory conscription provides no solution for Chile's youth and is not in keeping with a democratic society."

He pointed out that the deaths of three young soldiers - Pedro Soto in 1996, Orlando Morales in 2002 and Raúl Aedo in 2003 - have not yet been cleared up.

And just this month, César Soto was killed by a shot to his head during training exercises on May 4, Alejandro Ríos drowned in a lake on May 9, and Mauricio Riquelme was shot in the stomach and died on May 10.

It is mainly young people from lower-income sectors who end up doing military service in Chile, since only 20,000 (including 1,000 women) recruits a year are needed, while around 120,000 Chileans turn 18 every year.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

**WELCOME TO BASRA:
HAVE A NICE DAY**



Iraqis burn British, Israeli and U.S. flags in Basra May 27, 2005.
(AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

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

**“Armchair Warriors Watch Out... No
More Excuses!”**

[Thanks to AH who sent this in. He writes: Armchair warriors watch out... No more excuses!]

May 26, 2005 Imad Khadduri , Free Iraq

[The news story:]

*May 25 (Bloomberg) Six insurgents were killed and two Marines were wounded in a gun battle at 4 a.m. local time, the military said. **Residents identified one of the attackers as an imam, the U.S. said. The attacker identified as an imam by locals in today's gun battle opened fire on the Marines and Iraqi Security Forces with an AK-47 Assault rifle, the military said.***

[From Imad Khadduri:]

71 years old Sheikh Ismael Ashish, Imam of Saif al-Haq mosque in Haditha, was martyred on Tuesday.

He took a direct hit in the chest as he ran like a twenty years old fighter wielding an anti-armour RBKC.

He was a leader in the Resistance. He marshaled Anbar Resistance fighters to join in the fight against the American assault on Najaf last year.

Assorted Resistance Action: Deadly Attack On Sinjar Base

May 28, 2005 By Hamid Ahmed, Associated Press Writer & BBC MMV & Reuters & AFP & Aljazeera

At least six people have been killed in a triple car bombing in northern Iraq near the Syrian border.

At least 58 people are said to have been wounded in the most recent attacks, which happened as soldiers entered the base at the start of the working day.

The bombs exploded near a military base in Sinjar, about 120km (75 miles) north-west of Mosul, officials said.

Many of those killed and injured are civilians working at the Iraqi base, a director of Sinjar hospital said.

"The first car exploded at 0820 (0420 GMT) at the entrance to the base used by Iraqi soldiers and border guards," said police Colonel Qassem Jaber.

"A few minutes later, the second bomb exploded in the same place."

In the city of Tikrit, north of Baghdad, two members of Oil pipeline protection force were killed when a suicide bomber blew up his motorcade near the force's patrol.

That attack came just hours after a car bomber killed seven people, including three police officers, and wounded 24 others in the town, spokesman Lieutenant Mahmud al-Azzawi said.

An ambulance driver carrying the wounded to hospital had also been shot and killed, but it was not immediately clear by whom.

In the al-Jihad neighbourhood west of Baghdad, a real estate broker Samir Abd al-Razzaq, was shot dead by armed men near a bookshop.

The reasons for the killing remain unknown, however, a police chief Hamid Hamad and a government employee accompanying Abd al-Razzaq were wounded.

Another Iraqi soldier was killed when a mixed US-Iraqi patrol was targeted by a car bomber in the oil refinery city of Baiji, north of Baghdad, police lieutenant Hassan Salah said.

South of Baghdad, outside the town of Hilla, fighters stopped a car carrying five Iraqi soldiers and opened fire, killing four of them and seriously wounding one, a spokesman for the Hilla police said.

A Lebanese interpreter working for US forces was killed overnight in the capital in a drive-by shooting, an interior ministry source said,

Late on Friday night, an Iraqi youth in Mosul was killed after a bomb targeted Iraqi police.

Idris Ali Muhammad Quba, secretary-general of the Iraqi National Forces and Popular Congress, told Aljazeera that a bomb targeting a police convoy exploded about 10.30pm local time. Several police officers were wounded, he said.

After the blast, police opened fire randomly, killing a youth, Quba said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Greetings From Hiroshima!

It's no news to the readers of GI Special that empires have never given a shit about the lives of innocent civilians, or about the lives of their own soldiers.
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From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: Saturday, May 28, 2005 11:50 AM

Greetings from Hiroshima!

Today this is a lively and bustling city, but its hard not to think of the horrific bombing of nearly 60 years ago. When you go to the Peace Memorial Museum and walk among the humble objects on display, the scale of the atrocity and the sheer pain of it can be overwhelming. For instance, you see the tricycle of a three-year old boy who was riding it in his yard on that sunny summer morning... You think of the hundreds of thousands of men women and children who were there when the heat twice that of the sun exploded over their city. In the Peace Park a single surviving building has been preserved from that time: the Industrial Exhibition Hall, its pitiful, skeletal hulk outlined against the sky.

As you know, the official line that the bomb had to be dropped to end the war quickly is a load of BS. The US government knew that the Japanese government--itself a perpetrator of countless crimes against civilians--was willing to surrender if the US would merely guarantee not to kill Japans worthless emperor.

The US refused, and dropped the bomb not to defeat Japan, which was already defeated, but to intimidate the hell out of its own ally (and future competitor): Russia. Many of the scientists who worked on the terror weapon were from Europe, and so it's been said that the atomic bomb was built by the Europeans and dropped by the Americans on the Japanese to scare the Russians.

It's no news to the readers of GI Special that empires have never given a shit about the lives of innocent civilians, or about the lives of their own soldiers.

Japans present Prime Minister Koizumi, who acts like Bushs cocker spaniel while trying to turn Japan into USs imperial sidekick, is a menace to humanity as is our White House asshole.

Millions of Japanese despise him and his idiotic ass-kissing and posturing.

We share a common interest in trying to get our troops home from Iraq.

It will honor the innocent victims of Hiroshima, Nanking, and all other militarist bloodbaths if we can unite to end this latest outburst of imperial homicidal lunacy as swiftly as possible and start building a world where we all can live humanely and in peace as brothers and sisters.

Solidarity,
Z

SAME OLD SAME OLD

“They also do a disservice who deny that much has been achieved; that the military program, the economic program, the social program, the informational program, and the technical programs have all accomplished much, have indeed built the springboards of victory.” AMBASSADOR TO VIETNAM HENRY CABOT LODGE

**“When You Bury Your History,
Resurrecting The Truth Sounds
Like A Lie”**

I believe this war is on its way out. The U.S. will not pull out right away, because that would not look good on a resume.

From: Mike Hastie, Vietnam Veteran

To: GI Special

Sent: May 26, 2005

I read a very good article in the June issue of The Progressive. It is by Robert Fisk. He is a war correspondent for The Independent of London. He has lived in Beirut for almost thirty years. He is not a drive-by journalist, like most of the journalists in Iraq.

He blatantly states: "Most of Iraq is in a state of anarchy."

I believe this war is on its way out. The U.S. will not pull out right away, because that would not look good on a resume.

There is no way the U.S. can control the destiny of 25 million people.

So, it's "Peace With Honor" again.

Only this time, it's far worse than Vietnam.

When we pulled out of Southeast Asia, 50 million people hated us. This time, a billion people around the world hate us.

I see nothing but very dark days ahead for America. It is only a matter of time before U.S. corporate interests around the world get targeted like never before. The U.S. military will not be able to stop it, I don't care what kind of weapons we think we have.

The days of wine and roses are coming to an end in this country.

When I was in Vietnam, I saw the hatred in the faces of the Vietnamese people. That same hatred is happening in the Muslim World.

When 911 hit this country, I was not surprised, because 911's occurred in Vietnam everyday.

If the American people knew what their government did in Southeast Asia, they would have panic attacks.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran

When you bury your history, resurrecting the truth sounds like a lie.

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.

Soldiers “Pawns Of Methodical Deception”

26 May 2005 By Norman Solomon, Truthout Perspective

It has become popular to describe the U.S. invasion of Iraq as some kind of anomaly, a departure from Washington's previous record of seeking peaceful alternatives to war and refusing to engage in aggression.

Such depictions amount to a kind of pseudo-historical baby food, chopped up and strained so it can be stomached.

But during the last half century -- when, for days or months or many years, U.S. troops and planes assaulted the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Grenada, Panama, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq again -- the rationales from the White House were always based on major falsehoods, avidly promoted by the U.S. mass media.

In the light of real history, the U.S. soldiers who are honored each Memorial Day were pawns of methodical deception. Media spin and the edicts of authorities induced them to kill "enemy" combatants and civilians, for whom Pentagon buglers have never played a single mournful note.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

“Leaders Who Fill Their Pants At One Tiny Blip On A Radar Screen”

[Thanks to e eto, who sent this in.]

May 25, 2005 By WILLIAM S. LIND, CounterPunch

Two weeks ago, a small, single-engine plane inadvertently strayed into the closed air space above Washington. The result was panic.

Both the White House and the Capitol were evacuated, with police shouting "Run! Run!" at fleeing staffers and visitors. Senators and Congressmen abandoned in haste the

floors of their respective Houses. Various RIPs (Really Important People) were escorted to their Fuehrerbunkers. F-16s came close to shooting the Cessna down.

The whole episode would have been funny if it weren't so sad. As an historian, I could think of nothing other than the behavior of an earlier profile in courage, the Persian king Darius, at the battle of Issus. As the Roman historian Arrian described it,

“The moment the Persian left went to pieces under Alexander's attack and Darius, in his war chariot, saw that it was cut off, he incontinently fled - indeed, he led the race for safety . . . dropping his shield and stripping off his mantle - even leaving his bow in the war-chariot - he leapt upon a horse and rode for his life.”

Not surprisingly, Darius's army was less than keen to fight to the death for its illustrious leader. As one British officer said, commenting on U.S. Marines' love of running for exercise, "We prefer our officers not to run. It can discourage the troops."

I suspect that more than a few of our soldiers and Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan, enjoying as they do a daily diet of IEDs, ambushes and mortarings, were less than amused at watching Washington flee from a flea.

More importantly, what message does such easy panic send to the rest of the world?

Osama bin Laden has whole armies trying to kill him, but as best I know he has shown no signs of fear. Here again we see the power of the moral level of war.

In cultures less decadent than our own, few men are likely to identify with leaders who fill their pants at one tiny blip on a radar screen.

When the same people who have sent our kids to die in Iraq and left our borders wide open run in panic because of a Cessna, the American people get the message: Washington is "them," not "us."

At some point, that gap may grow wide enough to swallow the state itself. Kings who become cabbages, like Darius, end up history's losers.

Breaking News: **Bush Tells Truth**

May 25, 2005 By BRIAN CLOUGHLEY, CounterPunch

On May 5 Bush declared “Iraqis are sick of foreign people coming in their country and trying to destabilize their country.”

Yes indeed: Iraqis are certainly sick of foreign people coming to their country and trying to destabilize their country. The foreigners of whom they are sick of are American troops.

BEHOLD SATAN, SPAWN OF DARKNESS



(Kevin Lamarque/Reuters)

"He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it." The Gospel according to St. John, VIII, 44.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Bolivia: Army Officers Call For Revolution

5.26.05 From: "Karen Lee Wald (by way of Tom Condit

AT NOON WED 5/25

All ATMs are shut down due to the crisis and banks are closed.

La Paz and El Alto (next door) have been taken over by about 10K campesinos (my folks), miners, poor community grps, teachers, vendors etc since yesterday -marches toward La Paz started last week arriving yesterday - the intl airport is closed - so far violence limited to gasification and water trucks in the center of the city

BUT Mesa as recently as two hours ago was stuck in the Presidential Palace (fondly called El Palacio Quemado here) unable to escape to Sucre - his family already left the country over the weekend.

Social movements have given him and Congress till Friday to re-write and approve a new law of nationalizing all gas/oil resources - BUT, he's trying to escape to Sucre (the actual capital which has already declared him persona non grata) and Congress disbanded themselves last week under threat of popular attack

AND then there is the whole eastern part of the country threatening to secede

MORE:

May 26, 2005, Reuters

LA PAZ, Bolivia (Reuters) -- **The head of Bolivia's armed forces denied on Wednesday that the military was preparing for a coup as the government vowed to prosecute two officers who called for the ouster of President Carlos Mesa.**

Protests convulse South America's poorest nation. Leftist peasant groups are calling for a new constitution and the nationalization of Bolivia's natural gas reserves, while provinces rich in natural resources demand more regional autonomy.

On Wednesday, Lt. Cols. Julio Herrera and Julio Cesar Galindo, on behalf of a "generational movement of military personnel," told local media a military-civilian government should replace Mesa.

Armed forces Commander in Chief Adm. Luis Aranda called the statements "irresponsible and untimely" and Defense Minister Oscar Arredondo vowed to try the two officers in military court, describing the situation as an "isolated incident." Aranda said. "There is subordination and respect in small and large military units." **[That can change with amazing speed.]**

In a broadcast on radio station Erbol, Herrera called for complete control over hydrocarbons and a constitutional assembly "to decide what steps to take." The demands reflected those of the Indian protesters who flooded La Paz on Tuesday.

"The government we want to build is with the participation of all sectors, and if this revolution triumphs, there will only be two military officers in the future Cabinet," Herrera said.

The capital was tied up for a third day with marches by peasants, miners, teachers, university students and residents of the militant neighboring city of El Alto.

Security forces tightened their grip on the Plaza Murillo in downtown La Paz to keep thousands of protesters from occupying the government palace and congressional building.

Mesa, a political independent with few friends in Congress, has vowed to stay in power to the end of his term in August 2007, despite the growing unrest. He returned to La Paz on Wednesday from the city of Sucre but made no statement.

Evo Morales, Bolivia's leading opposition figure and head of the Movement Toward Socialism party, called on his followers to "defend democracy if there are military coup attempts."

He urged the Bolivian Congress to "deepen democracy" by convening a constitutional assembly and then issued a surprise proposal that "the oil fields be occupied to exercise the Bolivian state's property rights over all the wells."

MORE:

"Neither Thirty Percent, Nor Fifty Percent Royalties - Nationalization!"

26 May 2005 Agence France-Presse

Thousands of angry protesters filled the streets of downtown La Paz, hurling rocks, waving clubs and demanding for the third day straight the nationalization of the country's oil and gas industry.

Protesters from the nearby city of El Alto marched unopposed to join thousands of indigenous Bolivians, miners and farmers, angry at the government of President Carlos Mesa for - in their eyes - failing to stand up to multinational energy companies.

Some protesters brandished whips to force street vendors and merchants to close business.

Bolivia, a nation of nine million people, has an estimated 48.7 trillion cubic meters of natural gas, the second-highest reserves in South America after Venezuela.

Food and fuel is beginning to lack in the capital, isolated from the rest of the country by land since protesters have blocked the country's main roads.

Monday morning marked the end of the almost two hundred kilometre, four-day march of around six thousand peasants, coca growers, and others from Caracollo to El Alto. This march was led by the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, under the leadership of Evo Morales.

MAS, and ostensibly all the groups involved in the march, are demanding an increase in royalties paid by transnational petroleum companies to the Bolivian state for natural gas exploitation from eighteen to fifty percent.

The demand was provoked by President Carlos Mesa Gisbert's promulgation of a new hydrocarbons law which dictates only eighteen percent royalties with a thirty-two percent tax that critics say will be easy to avoid paying.

While the march was met with something like a spirit of solidarity in El Alto, the radicalized population of this mostly indigenous, massive shantytown let the MAS-led marchers know that they were demanding, "neither thirty percent, nor fifty percent royalties - nationalization!"

More:

Morales Betrays The Movement

25 May 2005 By Jeffery R. Webber, ZNet

The divisions in the crowd and between Morales and the other speakers were palpable, however.

Participants included the Departmental Federation of Peasant Workers of La Paz, the Federation of Peasant Women "Bartolina Sisa," the National Council of Ayllus and Marcas, the Federation of Colonizers of La Paz, representatives of the indigenous people of the departments of Beni and Santa Cruz, the Federation of Petroleum Workers of Bolivia, the Landless Movement of Bolivia, and the Bolivian Workers Central, among others.

Of the sixteen core speakers, Morales was the only one who refused to call for the nationalization of gas, instead focusing on demands for a Constituent Assembly, and denouncing right-wing demands for "autonomy" from the oligarchy of the department of Santa Cruz.

While Morales was speaking, the crowd of miners and affiliates of the Bolivian Workers Central (COB) around me were consistently trying to drown him out with calls for "Nationalization!" and "Close the Parliament!"

Received:

Don't Blame Gold Star Families For Peace

Sent: Saturday, May 28, 2005 2:16 AM

Subject: HELP!!!! Gold Star Mom denied Membership

Dear Friends,

Please pass the word along that American Gold Star Mothers is different from Gold Star Families for Peace.

American Gold Star Mothers was the org that denied the non-citizen mom membership.

Gold Star Families for Peace found her phone number and we are trying to contact her to join us.

I have been getting a lot of mail asking me why we didn't let her in GSFP...We think it's crap that the other organization did not let her in.

Thanks
Cindy Sheehan

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/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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