

GI SPECIAL 3B46:

NO ONE'S ENLISTING. NO ONE'S RE-ENLISTING. WE'RE SHORT OF CANNON FODDER BUT
HERE'S WHERE WE'LL GET MORE TROOPS



5-19-05-B

“What Has Our Country Become”

“Creed Was Broken, No Man Left Behind, He Was”

From: Deneise

To: GI Special

Sent: May 30, 2005

Subject: Re: GI Special 3B45: Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Says Bush, Rumsfeld Are Traitors

Hey, I know a lot more now.

After my son came back with injuries his medical reports were lost, the chain of command like 1 Sgt (a Ranger at that) and Sgt. didn't care because they were getting out in a few months so the buck was passed and then he didn't get a medical review - he lost his home and back-money problems due to all this.

Three Captains in a change of command, so therefore it is harder to see that anything is done.

When you call then they just want to blow smoke up your ...

First, the law was broken by the military, Second, Creed was broken, no man left behind, he was.

Third, who cares?

Does anyone care about the soldiers that are not getting what they need to get?

Where is the VA and what has our country become -- everyone over here is fighting verbally at each other.

This is an outrage not to mention I don't trust anyone anymore - but he is finally getting some direction from retired Veterans – I just wanted to update you now on this.

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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Copter Crashes In Diyala; Four Americans & Iraqi Killed; Second Copter Forced Down By Gunfire

05/30/05 AP & (Xinhuanet)

An Iraqi helicopter crashed Monday in the eastern province of Diyala, killing all five people on board, a source in Iraq's Defence Ministry told Xinhua.

Earlier in the day, a US helicopter was reportedly forced to make an emergency landing in Tel Afar city in northern Iraq after coming under gunmen fire.

"An Iraqi helicopter crashed today in Jalulaa region of eastern Iraq's Diyala province, and the Iraqi pilot, as well as a US officer and three soldiers were killed," said the source who asked not to be identified.

The same source explained that three bodies of the killed have been found and the other two bodies are still being searched.

It did not say where the crash occurred in Diyala, located northwest of Baghdad. It added that it was reported to a joint communication center in the town of Khanaqin, near the Iranian border.

It is not immediately clear the reason behind the crash, but the Dubai-based Al Arabiya TV reported that the chopper crashed after hitting a barrier when it was flying at a low altitude.

S. Korean Military Shelled

2005/05/30 (Yonhap)

Four shells fell near the South Korean military contingent in Iraq early Monday (Korean time), but there were no immediate reports of any casualties, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said.

The shells, two rocket shells **and two rounds from high-angle guns**, were presumed to have been fired at the South Korean military in the northern Iraqi town of Irbil, JCS officials said.

MORE:

They Saw It Coming

Korea Herald, May 25, 2005

South Korean troops in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil have been training about 400 Iraqi soldiers and police since February, an action that could incite Iraqi insurgents to target the Korean contingent, the Defense Ministry said in Seoul.

Baghdad:

“Sustained Attack” By Resistance Captures Occupation Weapons

2005/05/30 New York Times News Service & LA Times

Armored sport utility vehicles and pickup trucks carrying Iraqi police and national guardsmen sped through the capital, drawing fire and scattering civilian drivers trying to put distance between themselves and the targeted convoys. Small-arms fire from insurgent ambushes in several Baghdad neighborhoods crackled throughout the day

The most daring assault appeared to have been a sustained attack on the detention center run by the Interior Ministry's major crimes unit in Amariya, where suspected insurgents are held before being moved to the Abu Ghraib prison.

The ministry said the assault there involved at least 50 insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades, mortar shells and machine guns.

According to an unconfirmed account by an Amariya resident who was reached by telephone, insurgent bands roaming the district after the battle claimed to have captured weapons from the detention center's armory.

The largest Iraqi-led counterinsurgency operation since the downfall of Saddam Hussein set off a violent backlash on Sunday across Baghdad.

While Iraqi police and soldiers were scrambling to seal off the capital, some U.S. officials expressed concern that the crackdown would lack "precision" and further erode public support for al-Jaafari's government, which took power April 28. [Duh.]

More Notes From A Lost War:

The Resistance Rules Anbar Province:

“(Commanders) Can't Use The Word, But We're Withdrawing,’ Said One U.S. Military Official”



A U.S. soldier in a Humvee passes by a demonstration in front of the main mosque in Ramadi May 30, 2005. The demonstration demanded the release of religious and tribal leaders who were arrested in the last weeks. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

"You can't get all the Marines and train them on a single objective, because usually the objective is bigger than you are," said Maj. Mark Lister, a senior Marine air officer in Al Anbar province.

May 24, 2005 By Mark Mazzetti and Solomon Moore, LA Times Staff Writers

The U.S. military's plan to pacify Iraq has run into trouble in a place where it urgently needs to succeed.

U.S. officials in Washington and Baghdad agree that Al Anbar province — the vast desert badlands stretching west from the cities of Fallouja and Ramadi to the lawless region abutting the Syrian border — remains the epicenter of the country's deadly insurgency.

Yet U.S. troops and military officials in the embattled province said in recent interviews that they have neither enough combat power nor enough Iraqi military support to mount an effective counterinsurgency against an increasingly sophisticated enemy.

"You can't get all the Marines and train them on a single objective, because usually the objective is bigger than you are," said Maj. Mark Lister, a senior Marine air officer in Al Anbar province. "Basically, we've got all the toys, but not enough boys."

Just three battalions of Marines are stationed in the western part of the province, down from four a few months ago. Marine officials in western Al Anbar say that each of those battalions is smaller by one company than last year, meaning there are approximately 2,100 Marines there now, compared with about 3,600 last year.

Some U.S. military officers in Al Anbar province say that commanders in Baghdad and the Pentagon have denied their repeated requests for more troops.

"(Commanders) can't use the word, but we're withdrawing," said one U.S. military official in Al Anbar province, who asked not to be identified because it is the Pentagon that usually speaks publicly about troop levels. **"Slowly, that's what we're doing."**

Some Pentagon officials and experts in counterinsurgency warfare say the troop shortage has hamstrung the U.S. military's ability to effectively fight Iraqi insurgents.

This was evident during this month's Operation Matador, the U.S. offensive near the Syrian border designed to stem the flow of foreign fighters and their weapons into Iraq. For seven days, Marines rumbled through desert villages and fought pitched battles against a surprisingly well-coordinated enemy.

"It's an extremely frustrating fight," said Maj. Steve White, operations director for the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment. **"Fighting these guys is like picking up water. You're going to lose some every time."**

Yet as soon as the operation concluded, the Marines crossed back over the Euphrates River and left no U.S. or Iraqi government presence in the region — generally considered a major mistake in counterinsurgency warfare.

"It's classically the wrong thing to do," said Kalev Sepp, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., who last fall was a counterinsurgency advisor to Army Gen. George W. Casey, the top U.S. general in Iraq.

"Sending 1,000 men north of the Euphrates does what? Sometimes these things can be counterproductive, because you just end up shooting things up and then leaving the area."

Military officials in Iraq and Washington said there was little reason to expect that insurgent fighters would not return to the villages.

"The right thing to do would have been to sweep the area with U.S. troops, and hold it with Iraqi troops," said a military official and counterinsurgency expert at the Pentagon who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not an official Pentagon spokesman.

Yet, there were no Iraqi troops to leave in the area.

Just one platoon of Iraqi troops is stationed in the far west Al Anbar province, garrisoned at a phosphate plant in the town of Qaim. But those troops were on leave during the week of Operation Matador, taking their paychecks home to their families.

Iraqi trainees and recruits have been killed en masse in shootings and suicide bombings. Consequently, U.S. and Iraqi commanders have been forced to rely largely on Shiite troops to patrol the Sunni-dominated province.

"There are areas where there is relatively little reconstruction because of insurgent activity. You go out to Al Anbar province, for example. It's pretty grim out there in terms of what has been done versus what could be done," Army Gen. John P. Abizaid, chief of U.S. Central Command, said last week. During Operation Matador, U.S. troops were surprised to find a large insurgent presence in towns south of the Euphrates in western Al Anbar, such as Ubaydi, where the heaviest fighting of the operation took place.

That the Marines were unaware that there were so many insurgents in that city after having dispatched numerous civil affairs missions there indicates the complexity of the region as well as the military's limited knowledge of the area.

"We're here and they're there," said Maj. Todd Waldemar, head of civil affairs for the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines, a reserve unit stationed at the Haditha Dam in Al Anbar.

"We kind of walk around in a security bubble, so to speak, that makes it kind of hard for us to figure out exactly what's going on."

MORE:

Endgame

May 24, 2005 Nicolas J S Davies, Online Journal Contributing Writer

U.S. forces all over Iraq are hunkered down in fortified bases reminiscent of Dien Bien Phu or Khe Sanh, defended by armored sorties and air strikes against surrounding areas, and supplied by heavily armed convoys and airlifts.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Across Kabul, There's A Palpable Tension In The Air”

May 22, 2005 BY LEELA JACINTO, Newsday Inc.

At street corners across Kabul, there's a palpable tension in the air.

Days youths in the capital city are openly debating an issue that has simmered under their society's skin for more than three years: the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.

"It's a problem, a daily problem in class these days, discussing this issue," says 21-year-old Ahmed Siyar, a student in Kabul University's law and political science department. "The students are always asking the teachers why do the U.S. troops

want to be here? How long will they be here? They want to know the position of the teachers."

Siyar tells me that he gets branded a Western lackey because he talks about the need for U.S. and international troops. "All they can think about is, it's an invasion."

Like most internationals in Kabul, I was stunned by the ferocity of the demonstrations, but not that they broke out. Earlier this year, I worked at an Afghan news agency funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, training local journalists on the job. In public, the trainees were diplomatic and eager - almost too eager - to please, as you might expect in a U.S.-sponsored program. But in private conversations over tea and cigarettes, I got some idea of the great mistrust with which they view America.

As Ahmed Siyar is finding in Kabul University's political science department, most of the younger reporters see things in black and white and want U.S. troops out of Afghanistan.

Across ethnic, tribal, age and gender lines, the reporters and editors I worked with staunchly oppose permanent U.S. military bases here. One reporter told me that U.S. troops should stay for three to four years "maximum." And several Afghans wished that their president could, just for once, stand up to the Americans.

In Kabul circles, there are code words for the brash, haughty, security-obsessed U.S. troops and officials. Former U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad was routinely called "the viceroy of Afghanistan," while Afghan President Hamid Karzai is simply "the puppet." The floodlit, heavily fortified U.S. Embassy in the heart of Kabul is "the real powerhouse." It was Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice - not Karzai - who announced that parliamentary elections finally would take place in September. And it was Khalilzad - not Karzai - who confirmed reports of amnesty negotiations with ex-Taliban officials.

A few days after the riots, a young reporter who supports the presence of U.S. troops, "but not for long," told me he was appalled by the violence but glad that protesters had made a point.

Karzai Clinically Insane

Washington Post, May 25, 2005

Afghan President Hamid Karzai asserted that his government faced no serious threat from either revived Taliban forces or drug traffickers.

TROOP NEWS

Wounded Suffering In 100 Degree Heat: No Air Conditioning; Iraq? No, Germany!

May 29, 2005 WorldNow and KLFY

Christopher Brandon Sullivan was shot in the neck and severed his spinal cord while fighting over in Iraq.

He is now healing from the injury and battling pneumonia in a German hospital.

We've been told the hospital has lost air conditioning and is about 100 degrees inside.

How Bad Is It? Barren At Basic: Recruiting Shortfall Echoes In Quiet Training Center: “Parents Don’t Want Their Kids To Join The Army Because They’re Getting Killed”

In April, the Army filled an average of 50 percent of its recruit training classes, versus 92 percent for the same month last year.

May 30, 2005 By Gina Cavallaro, Army Times staff writer

FORT BENNING, Ga. — Three long rows of young soldiers stood in front of unloaded M249 squad automatic weapons for the first time.

Unable to resist touching the cold steel during orientation, the soldiers were ordered to step back an arm’s length.

It was Week 7 of basic training.

“Does anybody know what posthumous means?” Staff Sgt. Andre Allen asked the 150 infantrymen-in-training, members of F Company, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment.

A basic training company here should be packed with as many as 250 men, but what has been a chronic recruiting shortfall this year means the mission to train about 24,500 infantrymen at Benning by the end of fiscal 2005 is looking more elusive every day.

As of May 5, the Infantry Training Brigade had been forced to cancel 14 “training cycles,” or companies, representing about 3,200 soldiers programmed to go through 14-week, one-station unit training.

But since January, the training center has been forced to cancel cycles because there were not enough soldiers to make up even a small company.

“Parents don’t want their kids to join the Army because they’re getting killed,” said F Company Staff Sgt. Peter Garwood, who has been a drill sergeant at Benning for two years.

In April, the Army filled an average of 50 percent of its recruit training classes, versus 92 percent for the same month last year.

At F Company, the 150 soldiers in training is an even lower number than the bare minimum of 185 the ITB likes to have to fill a training cycle.

But the standard of training is as rigorous as usual, and the enthusiasm and sense of duty among the soldiers, even with the prospect of heading to Iraq as few as 27 days from graduation, hasn’t wavered.

“They need help. That’s why I joined. I want to get over (to Iraq) as soon as possible,” said Pvt. Robert Blevins, 21, of Niagara Falls, N.Y., who left what he called a dead-end job at a steel plant after earning his general equivalency diploma. His 18-year-old brother is coming in, too, and will be in training at Benning in two months.

“My friends wanted to join before, but now they don’t want to join because there’s a war going on,” Blevins said. “Personally, I think they’re cowards.”

Equally committed but admittedly “a little bit” nervous, Pvt. Daniel Hough chased cows, broke horses and fixed fences on a ranch near Kamiah, Idaho, and later operated a forklift at a sawmill before joining the Army.

“I have a lot of friends who have been in Iraq. They’ve said the casualties are not as bad as they say, as bad as the media makes it out to be,” Hough said. Still, he said his friends think he’s stupid for joining the Army. And, at 26, he’s not a typical recruit.

In this company, one-third of the soldiers have GED certificates, and almost all have had some work experience before coming to Benning.

That’s according to company commander Capt. Justin Bosanko, who said this cycle is the smallest he’s seen in the six months he’s been on the job.

Bosanko said he's worried that if the number of recruits doesn't pick up, he will start to lose training resources. But he does like the higher drill-sergeant-to-trainee ratio.

Unit To Deploy For 3rd Time

Honolulu Advertiser, May 23, 2005

The 3rd Marine Radio Battalion from Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, is preparing for its third deployment to Iraq.

Of the approximately 200 Marines making the latest nine-month trip, 75 have been to Iraq at least once before with the battalion, and 30 have been there twice. The unit, which provides communications for intelligence units and Arabic linguist support, is one of only three in the Marine Corps and is in high demand.

[Russian Roulette. 12 months was the max required for Vietnam, and no one could be forced to stay for a day longer, ever, for any reason. Period. Wise policy. A fair number of troops explained the reason they hadn't killed their officers was because they knew if they made the year, they never had to come back, which trumped the risk of military prison. Today's Imperial politicians are idiots in comparison with the Vietnam era Imperials, which, of course, is demonstrated by their invading Iraq to begin with.]

3000 Troops A Month Looking For A Way Out

5/24/2005 The Guardian (UK)

Staff who run a volunteer hotline to help desperate soldiers and new recruits looking to get out or else having discovered at basic training that military life is not for them, say the number of calls has increased by 50 per cent since 9/11.

Last year alone, the GI Rights Hotline received more than 30,000 calls.

At the moment the hotline is receiving up to 3000 calls a month and the volunteers say that by the time a soldier or new recruit dials the help line he or she has almost always decided to get out by one means or another.

Supporting Dissent Is Not Enough;

Defend Sgt. Kevin Benderman

5.24.05 By Camilo E. Mejia, Zmag. **He is an Iraq war veteran, war resister, and member of Iraq Veterans Against the War.** He served nine months in confinement for refusing to return to Iraq after a two-week leave.

Just about a year ago I was tried by a special Court-Martial at Fort Stewart, Georgia. The charge: desertion with the intent to avoid hazardous duty.

My case received a lot of attention from the media, mainly because I was the first Iraq veteran to have been to combat, returned on a two-week furlough, and publicly refused to return to Iraq while denouncing the war as illegal, and who then surrendered himself to military authorities. For the first time since the invasion of Iraq the military had to deal with the delicate issue of public dissent within the ranks.

The command at Fort Stewart restricted me to the base, and never allow me to leave even to confer with my attorneys, and requests to travel with them to Florida, and to meet with them off the base, all to help them prepare a better case, were all denied.

I was housed in a barracks building with about ten rooms, yet I was the only one there. Between my surrender and the Court-Martial, reporters were told they could interview me off base, while I was told I could give interviews, but was prohibited from leaving the fort.

On the day of my trial, access to the base was restricted to military personnel, my attorneys, and a few family members. Everyone else was directed to gate number three, but the signs leading to that gate were taken down during the three days of my trial. The entire block of the courthouse was barricaded, and there were civilian and military police officers patrolling the area, and they had trained dogs sniffing the area.

Reporters were contained in a media center about a mile away from the courthouse, and everyone's computers, cameras, recording devices, and cell phones were confiscated prior to entering the courtroom.

All of our pretrial motions were struck down, and many key witnesses and crucial pieces of evidence were not allowed in the case. Violations of army regulations by my unit, and violations of international law and the supreme law of the land by the military, were readily ignored, and the prosecution was allowed to bring the entire case down to the question of whether I got on a plane or not, thus receiving an easy, undeserved victory.

Before the end of the trial, members of my unit had already been to my barracks room. When my relatives got to my quarters to claim my belongings, immediately after the sentencing, the room had been swept clean. But the raiders forgot to take the lock they cut in order to get to my wall-locker. My mother later used that lock in a press conference to show the military had packed my things even before they could know I

was going away. An officer then quickly approached my mother to kindly escort her to where my possessions had been taken.

But not even a year after being sent to a confinement facility in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where I spent nine months of a twelve-month sentence, I found myself in San Diego's 32nd Street Naval Station, where Petty Officer 3rd Class Pablo Paredes was being tried by a special Court-Martial. The charges: Unauthorized Absence and Missing Movement.

His case, like mine, received much attention, not because of the nature of his charges, but because on December 6th of last year, Pablo publicly denounced the war as criminal and illegal while refusing to board his ship, the USS Bonhomme Richard, before it left for the war in Iraq.

The military judge found Pablo guilty of Missing Movement but not guilty of Unauthorized Absence, and even though the sentence included two months of hard labor and three months of restriction within the base, Pablo received no jail time, and no punitive discharge from the Navy. The same day of Pablo's Court-Martial, a military judge from Fort Stewart, found that Army Sergeant Kevin Benderman, another public war resister, had been sent to trial by a biased hearing officer, and temporarily dropped the general Court-Martial against him, a type of trial that could have sent him to jail for up to five years. Another investigation, to be conducted on May 26, will determine by what type of Court-Martial Kevin is tried.

These findings represent important accomplishments for the antiwar movement, as they seem to indicate that military authorities are handling public dissent within the ranks with a bit more caution, as more members of the military are speaking out against the occupation. It would be interesting to see if these are isolated cases, or if the military is indeed making an effort to uphold the law.

America is going through a historical transformation, from disguised to almost openly admitted (and defended) imperialism. In a time when peaceful protesters are being put in cages, or free speech zones, in a time when international law is being ignored or circumvented in order to conduct and justify torture, in a time when schools are being forced to make their students' files available to the war machine, in a time when the fear and pain of the nation are being used to fabricate support for a criminal war of imperial domination, it becomes imperative that members of the armed forces act upon their principles.

An empire cannot survive without an imperial military, a military whose members do not question the orders of their superiors, a military whose members who choose to refuse, do so quietly to save their skins, a military whose members rather die and kill against their moral judgments than question the authority of their command.

It is too easy to just tell service men and women to follow their conscience, whatever that means; this advice puts the burden back on their shoulders and brings no sacrifice to the adviser.

But peace does not come easily, so I tell all members of the military that whenever faced with an order, and everything in their mind and soul, and each and every cell in their bodies screams at them to refuse and resist, then by God do so. Jail will mean nothing when 'breaking the law' became their duty to humanity.

Pablo's trial not only marked an important step towards resistance, but it also brought doubt to the minds of many sailors who were present during his Court-Martial.

They may not yet agree with the antiwar movement, some probably never will, but for the first time many of them witnessed an open debate about the immorality of the Iraq invasion and occupation.

Perhaps for a moment doubt brought a sense of humanity back into their hardened system of military values. This would not have been possible had Pablo not put his physical freedom on the line. His sacrifice was small compared to the sacrifice of the over 100,000 Iraqi dead, but perhaps it is the unity of small sacrifices, like Pablo's, that can bring about major changes into the heart of our nation.

We probably should stop fearing so much for our personal safety and start looking more closely at the sacrifice of others, perhaps we will be inspired and empowered to put more of ourselves on the line for the benefit of those who are really suffering. The light of others should not blind the path to our own resistance.

Perhaps a good place to find our own light will be the trial of war resister Sgt. Kevin Benderman. Maybe I'll see you there, maybe we can shine together.

To find out more information about Kevin Benderman's Court-Martial, or to contribute to his defense, please visit: www.bendermandefense.org.

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.

“The Recruiters Could Offer Me \$50,000 In Cash. I Would Laugh At Them”

5.30.05

Letters To The Editor
Army Times

It's funny to me that some politicians think bonuses are not good for Army recruits and those who re-enlist.

Are they kidding? Recruiters can't make their goal with bonuses.

I joined the Army without any bonuses seven years ago to help protect the United States. If I knew what I know now, I would have thought differently.

The recruiters could offer me \$50,000 in cash. I would laugh at them. I didn't join the Army to fight for another country's freedom.

It's also funny to me that politicians say there's never going to be a draft.

All that means is they're planning on overusing and recycling troops now. They'll do that because they say we volunteered to join the military.

But man, if I only knew.

Ian Remsburg
Lancaster, Pa.

“How Many More Will It Be Next Year?”



Wasserman holds the American Flag during a memorial service for vets on Sunday, May 29, 2005 at the Vietnam Veteran Memorial in New York. Iraq Veterans For Peace, Veterans For Peace, and other banners are to his left. Arthur (Photo/ Howard Schnapp)

May 29, 2005 BY JOSHUA ROBIN AND GLENN THRUSH, STAFF WRITERS,
Newsday, Inc.

For one group of veterans with memories of battle, Memorial Day in this year of war has taken on fresh urgency.

More than 835 American soldiers were killed in Iraq since last Memorial Day.

Sunday afternoon, the eve before the nation was to salute its fallen, an organization called Veterans for Peace gathered in Lower Manhattan and asked How many more will it be next year?

"Those of us who have served in war have a responsibility to remember those we lost," said one speaker at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. "We also have a responsibility to tell the people in this country what the realities of war are: There is no glory in war."

About four dozens veterans participated, which also drew others opposed to the Iraqi war. The united group then marched to Battery Park, where they threw flowers into the surf to remember the fallen.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Reorganizes Command And Control At Algiers Meeting

May 25, 2005 By Syed Saleem Shahzad, Asia Times

Recent meetings of the so-called Higher Committee for National Forces (a grouping of Iraqi resistance bodies) and the 16th Arab National Congress held in Algiers played a pivotal role in building consensus among various Iraqi communist, Islamic, Ba'athist and nationalist groups on several issues, such as the right of Iraqis to defend themselves against foreign aggression and imperialism, and the right of Iraq to demand a political process untainted by occupation and which reflects the uninhibited will of the Iraqi people for a pluralistic and democratic Iraq.

The groups also condemned the continued occupation of Iraq and the establishment of any permanent US bases in the country, the privatization of the Iraqi economy and foreign corporations' unrestricted access to Iraq's resources.

On this common ground, the central command of the resistance reorganized its activities, a key to which was merging mohallah-level (street-level) Islamic groups scattered in their hundreds across Iraq to work toward a common goal - defeating the occupation. In turn, these militias would co-opt common folk into their struggle, so that, literally, the streets would be alive with resistance.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Basra Out Of Control, Says Chief Of Police

May 31, 2005 Rory Carroll in Basra, The Guardian

The chief of police in Basra admitted yesterday that he had effectively lost control of three-quarters of his officers and that sectarian militias had infiltrated the force and were using their posts to assassinate opponents.

Speaking to the Guardian, General Hassan al-Sade said half of his 13,750-strong force was secretly working for political parties in Iraq's second city and that some officers were involved in ambushes.

Other officers were politically neutral but had no interest in policing and did not follow his orders, he told the Guardian.

"I trust 25% of my force, no more."

The claim jarred with Basra's reputation as an oasis of stability and security and underlined the burgeoning influence of Shia militias in southern Iraq.

A former officer in Saddam Hussein's marine special forces, he was chosen to lead Basra's police force by the previous government headed by Ayad Allawi and he started the job five months ago.

"Some of the police are involved in assassinations," said Gen Sade. "I am trying to sort this out, for example by putting numbers on police cars so they can be identified."

If there is trouble at Basra, university staff still phone the police, said Professor Saleh Najim, dean of the engineering college. "But you can't be sure they will do their duty."

Assorted Resistance Action:

29 May 2005 Dow Jones Newswires & By Patrick Quinn Associated Press & 5.30 CBS Worldwide

The U.S. military said there were about 143 car and suicide car bombings in May, a new record. That figure was close to an AP count of over 100 since April 28.

Two bombers blew themselves up Monday in a crowd of police officers south of Baghdad, killing up to 30 people. Officials said about 100 others were wounded.

The two bombers struck shortly after 9 a.m. in Hillah, 60 miles south of the capital, wading into a crowd of about 500 policemen who were demonstrating outside the mayor's office to protest a government decision to disband their special forces unit, police Capt. Muthana Khalid Ali said.

The bombers staggered the detonations to maximize casualties, said Col. Adnan Abdul Rahman, who was contacted by telephone in Baghdad. Policeman Jiwad Kadhim Hamid said the explosions took place about 100 yards away from each other and about a minute apart.

"I just saw a ball of fire and flying pieces of flesh. After that, confused policemen started firing into the air," he said.

The blasts blew out windows of the mayor's office, a court house and school, covering the road with shards of glass and rubble. Iraqi police and soldiers cordoned off the area. Shoes and pieces of clothes worn by the victims were flung across the road.

Two Iraqi police sergeants employed by the Iraqi Cabinet were killed while driving to work Sunday by guerrillas in another car, police said.

The attack happened Baghdad's southern Dora neighborhood, said police Capt. Firas Qaiti.

Guerrillas killed a senior Kurdish official, Maj. Gen. Ahmed al-Barazanchi, the director of internal affairs of Kirkuk province and a former police chief. He died in hospital early Monday after being shot late Sunday, said Ismail al-Hadithi, Kirkuk's deputy governor.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

'Nations go to war when there is something to be got by it'. General William Tecumseh Sherman

"Oh Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; ...help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land.... We ask it, in the sprit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love." Mark Twain, on the U.S. invasion and occupation of the Philippines (1899)

Occupation Declares Death Penalty Will Be Punishment For Resistance

[In May, the Occupation government in Baghdad declared resistance to the U.S. occupation would be punishable by death.]



Nguyen Van Troi, a young electrical worker sentenced to death for an attempt to kill [U.S. Secretary Of Defense Robert] McNamara, spoke to correspondents immediately before his execution in Saigon on October 15, 1964.

He was completely self- possessed.

“You are journalists,” he said, “and so you must be well informed about what is happening. It is the Americans who have committed aggression on our country, it is they who have been killing our people with planes and bombs. . . .

“I have never acted against the will of my people. It is against the Americans that I have taken action.”

When a priest wanted to give him absolution he refused, saying; “I have committed no sin. It is the Americans who have sinned.”

He would not have his eyes covered before execution. ‘Let me look at our beloved land.’

He died with the greatest calm. When the first volley hit him he called out: “Long live Vietnam!”

Nguyen Van Troi has become a popular hero, in both north and south Vietnam, among those who oppose the United States.

[From "Vietnam, Vietnam, by Felix Greene, Fulton Publishing, 1966. Thanks to Michael Letwin for this item.]

Breaking The Ties That Bind, Stifle And Choke

Efforts to stifle debate or confine the movement within political limits judged to be "acceptable" failed--because the course of events and demands of the struggle itself radicalized more and more people, leading them to look beyond the liberal orthodoxy.

In the end, this is what made it possible for the movement against the Vietnam War to change the face of American society.

May 27, 2005 By PAUL D'AMATO, Socialist Worker [Excerpts: Full article at: socialistworker.org]

THE VIETNAM antiwar movement emerged as a response to the escalation of the U.S. intervention in Vietnam into a full-scale war.

All told, the October 1965 call saw 60 protests involving about 100,000 people around the country.

However, the question of whether larger protests were effective continued to emerge--pushed by liberal organizations. For example, Richard Fernandez, director of the Northwest Interfaith Movement, argued that "large rallies" were "kind of an ecumenical service where the already committed came... I thought they very rarely drew brand-new people."

Though he claimed that "local protests" were more important than national mobilizations, Fernandez's real agenda was shown by his conclusion--that the movement's main focus should be on lobbying Congress, with the aim (never successful) of convincing enough lawmakers to withdraw authorization for the war budget.

[Bullshit then, bullshit now. The Imperial elite would like nothing better than to see people pissing away their time and energy lobbying to convince the Imperial elite why the Imperial elite should give up the Empire. Those who rule America certainly have nothing whatever to fear from that. In fact, they should give grants to people who push the anti-war movement into this futile waste of time.

[And maybe they do. There are people today who will take their money, always for the best of reasons. You may know some of them. They may appear before you as "leaders of the anti-war movement," while kissing ass in the foundation world, being nice house pets for the Empire, while posturing before you as righteous

militants. Shall we start naming names? Isn't it about time? Let's take the fucking gloves off before these assholes put us all in the ditch. T]

These sentiments were echoed by SANE--always worried about mass protest. When the group called a national demonstration for November 27, 1965, it announced that "kooks, communists and draft-dodgers" weren't welcome.

Worried about the turnout, however, SANE invited SDS to participate. SDS President Carl Oglesby explained that the group's choice was to "sit on the sidelines and let the march fail and give Johnson and his crowd the opportunity to crow over the death of the peace movement, or else go in there and try to make it work."

The discussions between Oglesby and SANE organizers highlighted the debate in the antiwar movement over the question of immediate withdrawal and the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination.

Oglesby, for instance, had a "huge fight" with SANE leader Stanford Gottlieb after Oglesby offered the slogan "Vietnam for the Vietnamese." "I thought," said Oglesby, "that was a pretty normal thing for people to say, and there was no problem with it, but he saw it as...an implicit endorsement of the communist side. This was the kind of thing I was up against."

At the demonstration itself, Oglesby made a pointed speech addressing the questions facing the movement.

"The original commitment in Vietnam was made by President Truman, a mainstream liberal," Oglesby said. "It was seconded by President Eisenhower, a moderate liberal. It was intensified by the late President Kennedy, a flaming liberal. Think of the men who now engineer that war--those who study the maps, give the commands, push the buttons, and tally the dead: Bundy, McNamara, Rusk, Lodge, Goldberg, the president himself. They are not moral monsters. They are all honorable men. They are all liberals."

Oglesby speculated about a meeting between the "dead revolutionaries" of 1776 and the modern liberals prosecuting the war in Vietnam--in which the latter complained that Vietnamese rebels couldn't be fighting a "revolution" because they used terror and got help from foreign fighters.

"What would our dead revolutionaries answer?" Oglesby said. "They might say: 'What fools and bandits, sirs, you make then of us. Outside help? Do you remember Lafayette? Or the three thousand British freighters the French navy sunk for our side? Or the arms and men, we got from France and Spain?"

"And what's this about terror? Did you never hear what we did to our own Loyalists? Or about the thousands of rich American Tories who fled for their lives to Canada? And as for popular support, do you not know that we had less than one-third of our people with us? That, in fact, the colony of New York recruited more troops for the British than for the revolution? Should we give it all back?"

Oglesby concluded: "Revolutions do not take place in velvet boxes. They never have. It is only the poets who make them lovely. What the National Liberation Front is fighting in Vietnam is a complex and vicious war. This war is also a revolution, as honest a revolution as you can find anywhere in history. And this is a fact which all our intricate official denials will never change."

Such views remained in the minority among the antiwar movement when Oglesby gave his speech. But by now, they spoke for a core of activists who rejected the "common-sense" conceptions that had dominated the early days of the movement. Eventually, as the struggle spread, such ideas became accepted in the mainstream of the movement.

Efforts to stifle debate or confine the movement within political limits judged to be "acceptable" failed--because the course of events and demands of the struggle itself radicalized more and more people, leading them to look beyond the liberal orthodoxy.

In the end, this is what made it possible for the movement against the Vietnam War to change the face of American society.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION REPORT

***A. So Much For That Sovereignty
Bullshit***

***B. Commands' Most Imbecilic Act
Of The Month***

**U.S. Arrests Head Of Sunni
Collaborator Party;
Fake "Prime Minister" Complains
Nobody Told The Fake "Government"**



The wife of Mohsen Abdul Hamid, who did not give her name, stands in the bedroom of their house in Baghdad's western Khadra district May 30, 2005. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, who is Kurdish, expressed "surprise and discontent" about the arrest, saying the presidential council was not informed that it would occur. "This way of dealing with such a distinguished political figure is unacceptable," the president said in a statement. [Obviously ignoring Talabani's pack of traitors is acceptable, or he would have denounced that also.]

5.30.05 CBS Worldwide & Reuters

Mohsen Abdul-Hamid, head of Iraq's largest Sunni Arab political party and short-time president of the now-dissolved U.S.-backed Iraqi Governing Council, was taken from his home in western Baghdad at about 6 a.m. by military forces, party officials said.

His relatives said U.S. troops broke down the door of the family home and put a bag over Abdul-Hamid's head before taking him away.

The U.S. military later confirmed it had mistakenly arrested Abdul-Hamid, questioned him and released him shortly after.

Abdul-Hamid was taken by U.S. troops from his home in the western Baghdad suburb of Khadra along with his three sons and four guards, Islamic Party Secretary-General Ayad al-Samarei said.

Al-Samarei accused American soldiers of raiding Abdul-Hamid's home and confiscating items, including a computer.

"This is a provocative and foolish act and this is part of the pressure exerted on the party," al-Samarei said.

"At the time when the Americans say they are keen on real Sunni participation, they are now arresting the head of the only Sunni party that calls for a peaceful solution and have participated in the political process," he added.

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Abdul-Hamid's Iraqi Islamic Party had in recent weeks taken steps to become more involved in the political process after boycotting the country's Jan. 30 parliamentary elections, which were dominated by parties drawn from Iraq's majority Shiite population.

"The U.S. administration claims it is interested in drawing Sunnis into the political process but it seems that their way of doing so is by raids, arrests and violating human rights," the party said in a statement on Monday.

Abdul-Hamid's wife, Awatif Ibrahim, told Associated Press Television News that U.S. troops raided our house and my son's house, using bullets and stun bombs. And they arrested him (her son) and they also detained my husband, Mohsen Abdul-Hamid, head of the Iraqi Islamic Party."

The party also released a statement alleging the arrest and demanding Abdul-Hamid's immediate release, saying he "represents a large sector of the Iraqi people."

Abdul-Hamid, in his late 60s, is regarded as a moderate Islamic leader. He has been involved with the party since the 1970s and headed it since 2003.

Occupation Cops Overwhelmed

Los Angeles Times, May 25, 2005

Iraq has spiraled into a swirl of violence where crime, insurgency and intensifying sectarian attacks are overwhelming a poorly equipped police force trying to keep order amid the confusion.

Welcome To Liberated Iraq: Another Newspaper Closed Down, Editor Arrested

May 22 BBC World Monitoring

Al-Dustur publishes on the front page a 600-word editorial by Chief Editor Basim al-Shaykh commenting on the closure of the Iraqi newspaper Al-Yawm al-Akhar and the arrest of its chief editor by the authorities.

The writer criticizes the "oppressive" measures taken against a "prominent journalist," urging the Iraqi judiciary to consider the current critical stage and act accordingly and to abandon "personal interests."

U.S. Wins Iraq War Proof? Visa Cards Come To Baghdad!

Los Angeles Times, May 25, 2005

The Trade Bank of Iraq issued the country's first credit and debit cards, from Visa International, at a ceremony in Baghdad. [OK, so they had credit cards in Vietnam too. But let's look on the bright side. Wherever that is.]

Iraqi Troops Just Love Cat Meat, And Spying On The Occupation

London Daily Telegraph, May 24, 2005

The warriors of Iraq's new army excel at wearing balaclavas, eating raw cat meat and driving into battle at hair-raising speeds. But with its pick-up trucks, troops in baseball caps and bandanas and weakness for macho swaggering, it is still, as one American colonel described it, a "Third World army."

Soldiers steal equipment. Desertions continue. Many units are infiltrated by insurgents despite rigorous attempts to screen recruits.

Iraq Can't Explain Missing \$69 Million In Fuel Oil, Audit Says

New York Times May 24, 2005

Iraqi officials cannot explain what happened to \$69 million worth of fuel oil produced in the second half of 2004, according to a report by United Nations-appointed auditors, raising fears that it was smuggled out of the country for private gain.

[Sure the "Iraqi officials" can explain it. It's in their bank accounts in safe places where they can use it after they have to run for the border, or get the copter off the embassy roof. Bush went to Iraq to steal the wealth of the Iraqis, why complain if his collaborator stooges do the same? That's the mission: foreign and domestic politicians filling their bank accounts. War is good business; invest your kid.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Bolivia: Can Workers And Soldiers Form A Revolutionary Government?

May 24 & 25, 2005 Luis A. Gómez, The Narco News Bulletin

Two lieutenant colonels (officials who normally have direct command over military units) appeared on a La Paz television station this morning. The officials, who spoke at length of the crisis Bolivia is living, openly called upon the people (and on all their comrades in arms) to join the mobilizations, turning against the high military command and the Bolivian political class.

Lieutenant Colonels Julio Herrera and Julio Galindo kept coming back to the same message: they demanded the installation of what they called a “civic-military government” of transition, which brought the soldiers into the defense of the natural resources and the formation of a new government. Herrera, according to a report on the Radio Erbol website today, said: “Initially, the government we want to form is one with the participation of all sectors of society, not a military government. We want the president’s resignation and the closure of the Congress.”

A few hours later, in the Plaza de los Héroes, a red banner appeared with black letters repeating almost the same message, which – and this is no coincidence – greatly resembled Monday’s fiery speech by Jaime Solares, executive secretary of the Bolivian Workers’ Federation (COB), during the social movements’ assembly in that same square.

A little before 11 in the morning, the High Command of the Armed Forces gave a statement disowning Herrera and Galindo’s arguments, advising both officials that they would be sanctioned for their “irregular military careers.” Nevertheless, rumors flew all day, greatly worrying the administration of President Carlos Mesa.

A young Aymara fighter asked us about the coup as well... this correspondent showed him a flyer that they have been passing out among the mobilizations.

Directed to “all Bolivians and Latin American brothers,” and signed “Civil-Military Alliance,” the document speaks of how “civilians and young soldiers, ‘BOLIVIANS UNITED,’ will share in the glory of liberating Bolivia from a government that has sold out to foreign interests.”

Gualberto Choque, leader of the peasant farmers of the Department of La Paz and, as such, leader of the rural Aymara people, said it yesterday: “This is a time of war.”

Although nobody listened to him, it was a warning. This morning at 9:30 more than 10,000 Aymara peasant farmers, from the twenty highland provinces, came down from El Alto’s Ceja neighborhood into La Paz. **“This is not about demonstrations or**

speeches, brother,” Choque told Narco News. “Now we are going to take the Palace of Government.”

It was almost noon, under a scorching sun, when we arrived with our Aymara brothers to the southern intersection of Comercio and Colon Streets, twenty meters from the wall of the Congress building. There the battle really began. The people decided to push towards the building where so many laws against them have been passed. And the police, who could barely resist them, began shooting at the leaders.

In the fight, they were unable to take Eugenio Rojas, who managed to get loose with the help of his comrades.

But in one of the nearby buildings, the headquarters of various legislative committees, snipers’ guns appeared, infuriating the people, who threw sticks of dynamite at the building’s windows. Then the first tear gas grenades appeared, and the shots from the low-caliber (“non-lethal”) bullets began to embed themselves in the clothes and bodies of the most powerful war machine in the Andes.

At this point, kind readers, we can establish a difference between yesterday’s march and today’s: the Aymara did not come to demonstrate, they came to fight to reclaim that which rightly belongs to them, and, tired of promises and lies, to take control of their own lives.

Then, just across from where the confrontations began, in the intersection of Comercio and Yanacocha once again, the miners’ cooperatives from Caracoles appeared, who were now expected according to the plan.

They repelled the police with dynamite and reached the Plaza Murillo along with the Aymara. In the plaza were two tanks and an emergency military guard... and the first entrance could be repelled with gas and rubber bullets. At this time, there were more than 15,000 Aymara farmers, plus the miners, completely paralyzing the historic center of La Paz.

The war seems to have started, as Gualberto Choque said... sticks, stones, and dynamite fly through the air.

And while the Bolivian president spoke in defense of the National Congress and repeated for the nth time that he would not resign, his Minister of Government, Saúl Lara, had taken charge of filing conspiracy charges against the two lieutenant colonels who last week called for a military uprising, as well as against social leaders Jaime Solares (executive secretary of the Bolivian Workers' Federation, or COB) and Roberto de la Cruz, an Aymara member of the El Alto city council.

With this move, the government seems to not only be cracking down on the civic-military plot we spoke of a few days ago, but also, while they're at it, criminalizing all the other mobilized opposition groups....

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