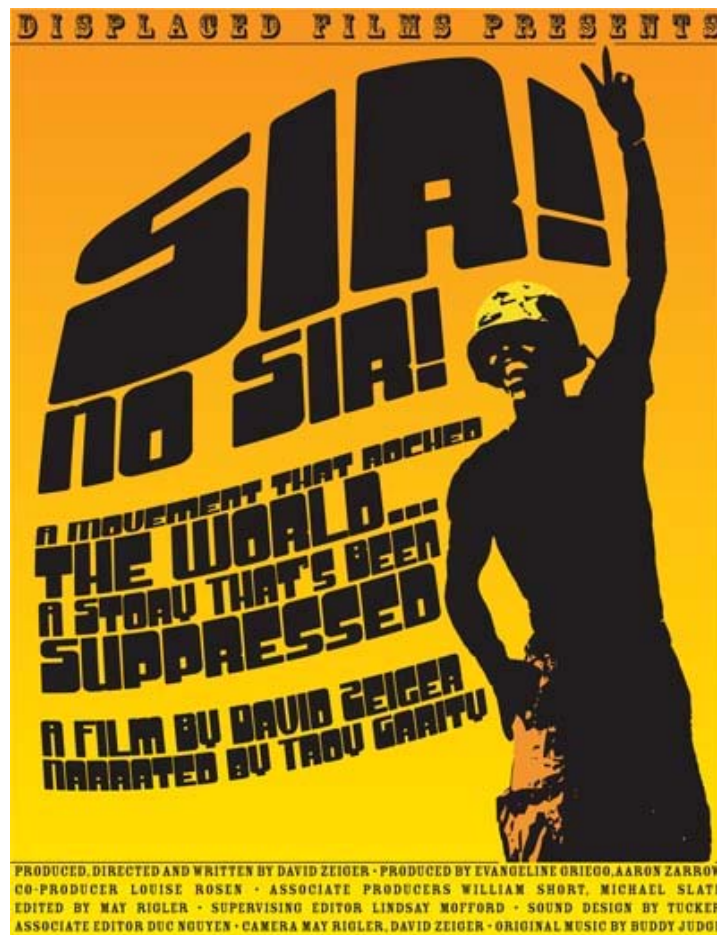


GI SPECIAL 3B50:

Sir! No Sir!
**THE FILM ABOUT HOW U.S. TROOPS
REBELLED AGAINST THE
GOVERNMENT AND STOPPED AN
IMPERIAL WAR:
COMING SOON TO A BASE NEAR
YOU!**



**GI ANTI-VIETNAM WAR
MOVEMENT RECAPTURED IN
SIR! NO SIR!:
FEATURE DOCUMENTARY TO
PREMIERE AT LOS ANGELES FILM
FESTIVAL**

From: David Zeiger
To: GI Special
Sent: June 03, 2005 1:08 PM
Subject: **Sir! No Sir! premiere**

Here is the info about the premiere of "Sir! No Sir!" at the Los Angeles film festival. This is a big event, and a big venue (600 seats), and it's extremely important that we fill the place to the rafters to give the film the strongest launch into the world possible. Lots of press and film industry people will be there. So whatever you can do to help will be tremendous.

Thanks, I look forward to catching up with you when we bring the film to NY.

**Please Join Us For The World Premiere Of
Sir! No Sir!
At The Los Angeles Independent Film Festival
Sunday, June 19, 7 Pm
Directors Guild Theater
7920 Sunset Blvd
Second Screening Thursday, June 23, 5:00 Pm
Tickets At [Http://Www.Lafilmfest.Com](http://www.lafilmfest.com)
Info At [Http://Www.Sirnosir.Com](http://www.sirnosir.com)**

Opening narration of *Sir! No Sir!:*

"There is no more appropriate time than now to tell the riveting, incendiary story of the GI Antiwar Movement during the Vietnam War. Help us launch this crucial film into the world by spreading the word and attending the premiere.

“In the 1960's an anti-war movement emerged that altered the course of history.

“This movement didn't take place on college campuses, but in barracks and on ships.

“It flourished in army stockades, navy brigs and in the dingy towns that surround military bases. It penetrated elite military colleges like West Point.

“And it spread throughout the battlefields of Vietnam.

“It was a movement no one expected, least of all those in it. Hundreds went to prison and thousands into exile.

“And by 1971 it had, in the words of one colonel, infested the entire armed services. Yet today few people know about the GI movement against the war in Vietnam.”



Vietnam: They Stopped An Imperial War

What The Film Is About:

Sir! No Sir!, a new feature-length documentary film by David Zeiger – Troy Garity narrates – will have its world premiere at the Los Angeles Film Festival. Showings are Sunday, June 19 at 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, June 23 at 5:00 p.m. at the Director's Guild of America, 7920 Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles.

Like the Vietnam War itself, the GI antiwar movement started small and within a few years had exploded into a force that altered history.

Like the times from which it grew, the movement involved organized actions and spontaneous resistance, political groups and cultural upheaval.

Today, at a time when American troops are again fighting a protracted, questionable war, this military insurgency is all but eliminated from collective memory. Even though it profoundly impacted American society, it rarely appears in historical accounts.

The first film ever to retell the story of resistance to the war within the military, *Sir! No Sir!* features news reports from local and national television broadcasts and archival images, many only recently declassified, from newspapers and magazines, and the government.

Recently shot interviews with individuals involved in the struggle include Hollywood activist Jane Fonda; soldiers imprisoned for refusing to fight, train other soldiers or ship out to the frontlines; Vietnam veterans who became antiwar activists or joined the over 500,000 soldiers who the Pentagon listed as deserters during the war; the leader of the Presidio 27 mutiny; and soldiers who went on strike while in Vietnam among others.

Exclusive footage from documentary coverage of the movement includes FTA, the feature-length film about Jane Fonda and Donald Sutherland's antiwar stage review that traveled to military bases around the world; Vietnam veterans hurling their medals onto the Capitol steps; refusal by troops to engage in combat at Firebase Pace (responsible for speeding up the final withdrawal of U.S. ground forces); never-before-seen Super-8 and 16mm film footage of events in the GI movement shot by GIs and civilian activists; and an audio recording made by Richard Boyle, journalist and author of *The Flower of the Dragon* and the Oliver Stone film *Salvador*.

***Sir! No Sir!* loosely divides the war and movement into four chapters, each reflecting the mood, politics and culture of the years it depicts as American society became increasingly polarized:**

1965-1967: A Few Malcontents:

As the Johnson administration turns what was initially a small "Police Action" into an all-out war and the peace movement begins, isolated individuals and small groups in the military refuse to participate and are severely punished:

Lt. Henry Howe is sentenced to two years hard labor for attending an antiwar demonstration; the Ft. Hood 3 are sentenced to three years hard labor for refusing duty in Vietnam; Howard Levy, a military doctor, refuses to train Special Forces troops and is court-martialed as Donald Duncan, a celebrated member of the Green Berets, resigns after a year in Vietnam; and Corporal William Harvey and Private George Daniels are sentenced to up to ten years in 1967 for meeting with other marines on Camp Pendleton to discuss whether Blacks should fight in Vietnam.

1968-1969: They Thought the Revolution was Starting:

The war escalates as the peace movement becomes an international mass movement, and soldiers begin forming organizations and taking collective action: The Ft. Hood 43, Black soldiers who refused riot-control duty at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, are sentenced for up to 18 months each; the largest military prison in Vietnam, Long Binh Jail (affectionately called LBJ by the troops), is taken over by Black soldiers who hold it for two months; The Presidio 27 – prisoners in the stockade on the Presidio Army Base in San Francisco – are charged with mutiny, a capital offense, when they refuse to work after a mentally ill prisoner is killed; underground newspapers published by antiwar GIs appear at almost every military base in the country; the American Serviceman's Union is formed; antiwar coffeehouses are established outside of military bases.

In Vietnam, small combat-refusals occur and are quickly suppressed, but on Christmas Eve, 1969, 50 GIs participate in an illegal antiwar demonstration in Saigon. Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) is formed.

1970-1973: Sir, My Men Refuse to Fight:

Opposition to the war turns militant and the counter-culture rises to its peak: Tens of thousands of soldiers desert and flee to Canada, France and Sweden; thousands of soldiers organize and participate in Armed Forces Day demonstrations at military bases; drug use is rampant and underground radio networks flourish in Vietnam as Black and white soldiers increasingly identify with the Antiwar and Black Liberation movements; combat refusals and “fragging” of officers in Vietnam are epidemic.

Thousands are jailed for refusing to fight or simply defying military authority, and nearly every U.S. military prison in the world is hit by riots.

Jane Fonda's antiwar review, The FTA Show, tours military bases and is cheered by tens of thousands of soldiers; the Pentagon concludes that over half the ground troops openly oppose the war and shifts its combat strategy from a ground war to an air war; the Navy and Air Force are both riddled with mutinies and acts of sabotage.

VVAW holds the Winter Soldier Investigation, exposing American war crimes through the testimony of veterans, and stages the most dramatic demonstration of the Vietnam era as hundreds of veterans hurl their medals onto the Capitol steps.

Epilogue: The Birth of the Spitting Image

As the U.S. military and its allies flee Vietnam in disarray in the Spring of 1975, the government, the media, and Hollywood begin a 20 year process of erasing the GI movement from the collective memory of the nation and the world.

Ronald Reagan's “Resurgent America” campaign re-writes the history of the Vietnam War and erases the GI movement; by 1990, over 100 theatrical films have been produced about the Vietnam War, none of which portray the GI antiwar movement or any opposition to the war by soldiers; the myth that antiwar activists

routinely spat on returning soldiers is spread as part of the buildup to the 1990 Gulf War.

David Zeiger – Producer/Director

For more information or jpeg photos contact:

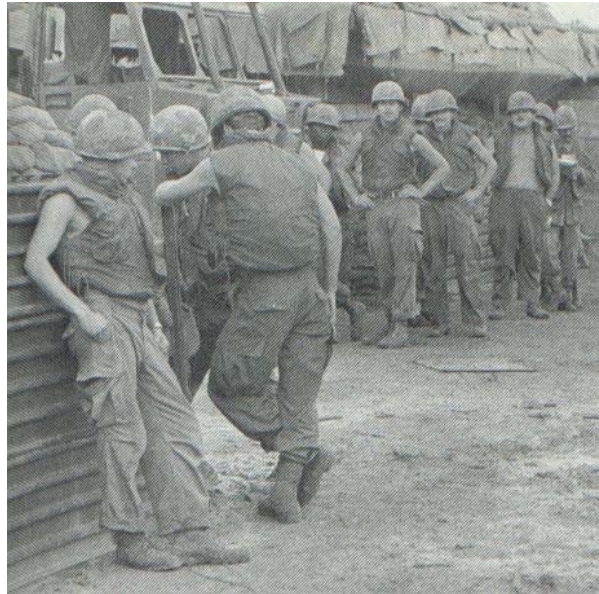
Tim Fisher

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"Fragging" And "Combat Refusals" In Vietnam



From: Military Law Task Force Website: <http://www.nlg.org/mltf/>

The question of crimes such as "fragging", "combat refusals", desertion and AWOL within the Vietnam conflict is one which brings emotions to the fore. Many veterans deny that "fragging" or "combat refusals" occurred, whilst others feel desertion and AWOL was merely a means of resisting what was felt to be an unjust and illegal conflict.

One partial reason for such sharp differences in the perceptions of veterans: support for the war back home, and the perceived prospects for victory, declined sharply during the seven years of heavy American involvement in Vietnam.

Indeed, military leaders themselves recognized a crisis among Vietnam soldiers in the war's last years. In an article called ["The Collapse of the Armed Forces"](#) published in the

Armed Forces Journal in June, 1971, Colonel Robert Heintz declared that the army in Vietnam was "dispirited where not near mutinous."

Combat Refusal. Where soldiers refused to obey orders this became known as a "combat refusal". In a report for Pacifica Radio, journalist Richard Boyle went to the base to interview a dozen "grunts" from the First Cavalry Division. The GI's had been ordered on a nighttime combat mission the previous night. Six of the men had refused to go and several others had objected to the order. This is also referred to in *"NAM - The Story of the Vietnam War (Issue 8)"* where a photograph can also be found and captioned "These battle-weary troops from the 1st Air Cav had just staged a "combat refusal" at the PACE firebase.

"They'll have to court-martial the whole company," one soldier told Boyle. "I say right away they can start typing up my court-martial."

The GI's told Boyle they objected not only to what they saw as a suicidal mission but to the war effort itself. Their commanding officer wouldn't let them wear t-shirts with peace symbols, they complained. "He calls us hypocrites if we wear a peace sign," one GI said. "[As if] we wanted to come over here and fight. Like we can't believe in peace, man, because we're carrying [an M-16] out there." Rough figures for "combat refusals" are indicated in column b. below.

Another soldier piped in: "I always did believe in protecting my own country, if it came down to that. But I'm over here fighting a war for a cause that means nothing to me." Historians say so-called "combat refusals" became increasingly common in Vietnam after 1969. Soldiers also expressed their opposition to the war in underground newspapers and coffee-house rap sessions. Some wore black armbands in the field. Some went further.

Fragging. When one American killed another American, usually a superior officer or an NCO, the term "fragging" came into use. Although the term simply meant that a fragmentation grenade was used in the murder, it later became an all encompassing term for such an action. It is known that "fraggings" did occur during Vietnam, but the precise number is uncertain.

"During the years of 1969 down to 1973, we have the rise of fragging - that is, shooting or hand-grenading your NCO or your officer who orders you out into the field," says historian Terry Anderson of Texas A & M University. "The US Army itself does not know exactly how many...officers were murdered. But they know at least 600 were murdered, and then they have another 1400 that died mysteriously. Consequently by early 1970, the army [was] at war not with the enemy but with itself." Rough figures for "fraggings" are indicated in column a. below.

Desertion and Absence Without Leave (AWOL)

Figures for the Vietnam Conflict are also not known but figures for all US forces throughout the world are known. They are indicated in columns c. and d. below. The original source for these figures is [here](#).

Year	Fragging	'Combat Refusal' convictions	World-wide figures for US Forces		Vietnam Drug Offences
			AWOL	Desertion	
	a	b	c	d	e
1965			Not available	Not available	0.25 per 1000
1966			Not available	Not available	0.25 per 1000
1967			46.8 per 1000	13.2 per 1000	0.25 per 1000
1968		82	138.5 per 1000	15.7 per 1000	4.5 per 1000 (marijuana) 0.068 per 1000 (opium)
1969	239	117	46.9 per 1000	21.1 per 1000	8000 arrested
1970	383	131	66.3 per 1000	25.8 per 1000	11058 drug cases (1146 hard drugs)
1971	333	Not provided	84.0 per 1000	33.9 per 1000	7026 hard drugs
1972	58	Not provided	74.9 per 1000	27.5 per 1000	
1973			77.0 per 1000	24.6 per 1000	

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

George's Recoats In Samarra: **Attacks Leave U.S. Troops With Little Choice But To Suspect Everyone**

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in. He writes: Shades of Vietnam.]

Samarra, Iraq -- Sgt. 1st Class Louis D'Angelo is angry.

Stomping on clothes, frying pans and construction tools strewn on the floor, D'Angelo storms into the living room where frightened Iraqi children cling to women in black abayas.

"They don't have weapons? They don't have weapons?" D'Angelo bellows, holding up two clips for a Kalashnikov semiautomatic rifle he has just found in the family's bedroom.

Soldiers from D'Angelo's unit, 2nd Platoon of the B Company of the 3-69 Armored Battalion, 42nd Infantry Division, are searching the downtown Samarra house of a suspected insurgent, Jamal Faluh Jasem, whom U.S. troops have arrested at least once for weapons possession. Jasem is not home.

They go from room to room, sifting through the family's meager possessions, tossing them on the floor. One of the women huddling on the living room carpet, they learn, is the sister of two other suspected insurgents, Ali Turki and Abu Basset Turki. But those men are not here either.

This angers D'Angelo further. Marching into a small bedroom, he spots three burlap bags lying in the corner. He rips the bags open with a pocket knife and spreads the spilled flour evenly across the floor with his combat boot, looking for hidden weapons. Nothing.

"We've been here since January," D'Angelo says, his voice raspy with rage. "I had two people shot. My track guy was hit with a VBIED (vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, or car bomb), and we hit two land mines. With all that consideration it gets more personal."

Last week, two suicide car bombs blew up outside the southern wall of Patrol Base Uvanni, situated in the center of the town. Simultaneously, insurgents lobbed mortar rounds and rocket-propelled grenades at the base from the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The impact also threw a U.S. medic off the bunk, cutting his face. The organizers of the attack, like most of Samarra's elusive insurgents, were never found.

Attacks such as this leave increasingly frustrated U.S. soldiers with little choice but to suspect everybody.

At Jasem's house, soldiers of the 2nd Platoon have unearthed several rounds of Kalashnikov ammunition, a homemade shoulder-mounted missile launcher, a coil of copper wire and what looks like a detonator for a home-made bomb in the family's backyard. In a house next door, they find a rocket-propelled grenade.

"That's one less sniper bullet for us to get shot with, one less RPG round for us to get hit with, one less coil of wire for IEDs (homemade bombs), " says D'Angelo.

He turns to Pfc. Matthew Ghadban :

"Go in the sh-tter there and check it out. Look in the washer. These people hide stuff everywhere."

Ghadban tosses towels on the bathroom floor, and feels through a quarter- full burlap sack with sugar.

In the living room, Capt. Ryan Wylie interrogates Jasem's wife, Kaukem Abbas. She denies that her husband has anything to do with insurgents.

"I swear on the Quran that we have no weapons here," Abbas says, as other women try to hide their mouths behind their abayas. They look apprehensively at Wylie, who towers above them. He asks them to identify the men on documents Wylie's soldiers have found in a square tin in the bedroom. The women appear to know nothing about the men's whereabouts.

There's nothing more Wylie can learn here.

He hands Jasem's wife \$80, in U.S. bills, to compensate for the gate the platoon mowed down with a Bradley fighting vehicle earlier to get into the courtyard. The soldiers clamber into their Bradleys and take off. The vehicles raise clouds of fine dust as they rattle through downtown Samarra, past the 9th century Malwiya spiral minaret that dominates the city's skyline.

Now comes another part of the unit's mission.

In an alley a few blocks away, the Bradleys screech to a halt. Pungent black liquid seeps down the gutter that bisects the alley. Children and some adults stand in the gates, watching the Americans dismount from their Bradleys and fan out into the street, shaking hands and handing out notepads, toothpaste and crayons to children.

As Lt. Ronald Hudak chats up local residents in fluent Arabic he had learned since his February deployment, and Cpl. Ed Capps tosses a soccer ball with a rowdy pack of kids, soldiers enter the tallest residential building in the neighborhood and walk up the steep, narrow stairs to the rooftop. From there, they scan the horizon for enemy fighters. Inadvertently, they scare two women, who run to a second-floor room and stand, rooted, in the corner.

Below, several soldiers kneel in the shade of sandstone buildings, holding their M-16 and M-4 rifles at the ready. D'Angelo surveys the alley from the turret of his Bradley.

The military calls this "cordon and talk," an attempt to win the hearts and minds of Samarra residents while aiming to minimize casualties in the process.

"You just say, 'shoku-moku' -- 'wassup?' " Hudak explains. "If they share an emotional connection with us, they overcome their fear, and maybe tell us where insurgents are. If you show up at their house and ask them: 'Where are the terrorists?,' they say: 'I don't know.' " **[Lt. just doesn't get it. Everybody is an "insurgent." Oh well, the Brits didn't get it in 1776 either. That's just the facts of life when you invade and occupy somebody else's country. Every patriot will either fight you or protect those who fight you. They are right to do so. Only been going on for thousands of years.]**

Before tossing handfuls of candy in the air, Ghadban makes the children chant, in unison, a rapper's name: "Suge Knight, Suge Knight!"

Spc. Shimson Welch tells the kids to chant the name of the veteran American porn star, Ron Jeremy.

Imad Fleih Asam, who runs a small grocery store, throws a bottle of cold Coca-Cola to Sgt. Michael Johnson, the gunner on one of the Bradleys. "America good," Asam says. "I love America."

How sincere this is, Wylie does not know.

"These people are all about surviving, and they'll say whatever they think you want them to say," says Wylie. "They know their life will be better if they show us they are friendly to us, but they also know they have to appear, if nothing else, condoning of the terrorists." **[How dismal. Jesus. What insight. "They also know they have to appear, if nothing else, condoning of those terrorist traitors George Washington and Patrick Henry." Hey Capt., you're a fucking Recoat. Get it? Any light dawning at all?**

[Know what an Empire is? You know, as in French Empire, British Empire, Russian Empire? Heard of that? Who the fuck do you think you serve, and what the fuck do you think your troops are dying for? There is nothing new, repeat, nothing new, about Imperial wars of conquest. There is nothing new, repeat, nothing new, about every decent honorable citizen, of whatever nation the Empire wants to get its greedy hands on, fighting back to expel the invader. Duh.]

A couple of hours later, having run out candy and soccer balls, the 2nd Platoon heads back to base.

In a makeshift war room there, Lt. Nathan Adams examines the ordnance the soldiers have found, trying to match up the rocket-propelled grenade with a military manual on small missiles, guessing how long the sand-caked missile launcher had been lying in the ground.

Suddenly, a loud snap goes off on the eastern side of the base, followed by a hollow boom to its west. One, two, three mortar rounds hit near the base, the last one just behind an abandoned school yard 200 yards outside the base's walls. Dust and smoke rise from behind the pink school building. A rocket-propelled grenade hits somewhere outside the base with a smaller pop.

"Overshot," Wylie comments, calmly. "Must be letting rookies shoot nowadays."

A few minutes later, the base is shaken as two mortar shells explode inside Uvanni's anti-blast walls, spewing shrapnel.

"Get in! Get in!" somebody shouts.

In the war room, Wylie hears that the attack likely came from the area the 2nd Platoon had been searching earlier in the day. **Wylie looks for an explanation.**

"What if this is Abu Basset, who came back and got pissed off that we'd knocked down his gate?"

[No. He's pissed off that you're in his country fucking with his family in order to grab his country's resources for some greedy Imperial assholes half a world away. This is not rocket science. Ever heard of the Declaration Of Independence? The 4th of July is coming up. Try reading it. Through the eyes of an Iraqi patriot. He's even got another George to contend with, so the words fit and you won't have to stretch your imagination.]

A, B, C

Iraqis are resisting the occupation out of nationalism, not a fondness for terrorism -- just as the Vietnamese resisted American occupation out of nationalism, not a fondness for communism. U.S. policy makers didn't "get it" then, and they deliberately don't get it now.

Nationalism is a prideful force that paradoxically thrives on oppression. The more an outsider oppresses it through the foolish process of occupying its disciples, the more the outsider feeds it. Again, the American public learned this simple lesson once, though the lesson took 10 agonizing years to learn. This time around, can't we settle for two? June 03, 2005 P.M. Carpenter, pmcarpenter.blogs.com

***Welcome To Liberated Iraq:* Bush's Recoat Officer Threatens A Kid With Prison For --- Guess What?**

June 06, 2005 By Alex Neill, Army Times staff writer

OUTSIDE CAMP TAJI, Iraq — *Just another day in the neighborhood. A neighborhood where enemy snipers lay in wait, insurgents plant explosives and terrorists roam the roads on suicide missions.*

The soldiers of the 1st Squadron of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment face those threats every time they roll out of camp on a mission here on the northern outskirts of Baghdad, as do all soldiers when they go “outside the wire.”

An Army Times reporter and photographer rode along with soldiers of 1st Platoon, Bravo Troop of the 1/11 in what the soldiers deemed a fairly routine patrol.

1412: Rolling through the narrow streets of the town of Enteeser, the Humvee drivers have to keep a close watch for children darting out from the mud-walled dwellings and donkeys milling about.

At the gates of one home, two children stand greeting the passing troops. One gives them the thumbs up.

The other extends a different digit, one familiar to all American commuters. Lt. Adam Horton orders the vehicles to stop.

He jumps out and approaches the offending kid, who begins a retreat.

“You want to go to jail?” Horton says through Farris, the interpreter.

Soon Farris explains the boy did not understand what the gesture meant and was sorry.

The kid motions an obvious sign of apology.

“I don’t want to see you doing that again,” Horton says.

[Fine. You won’t. You made pretty clear what U.S. “democracy” is all about, and whose country this is you’re stumbling around in. Guess he’ll have to liberate himself. Next time he’ll have an RPG. Or maybe one of his relatives will. If it was your kid, and some invading arrogant foreign asshole officer threatened him with prison for a hand gesture, you’d be man enough to do the right thing, wouldn’t you? You’d go hunting, wouldn’t you? Wouldn’t you?]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Bomb Blast Kills 2 GIs

June 4, 2005 Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan - **A bomb exploded next to a U.S. military convoy in eastern Afghanistan, killing two American soldiers and wounding a third, the military said Saturday.**

An Afghan interpreter was also wounded in the attack on Friday in Urgun district in Paktika province, the military said. The wounded were evacuated by helicopter to a U.S. base for treatment.

After a winter lull, loyalists to the ousted Taliban regime and other militants opposed to the U.S.-backed government of President Hamid Karzai have ramped up their insurgency with bombings and other attacks.

Notes From A Lost War:

“The People Support The Taliban”

"It's not supposed to be like that here," said Capt. Mike Adamski, a battalion intelligence officer. [Famous last words dept.]

June 4, 2005 By CARLOTTA GALL, The New York Times

GAZEK KULA, Afghanistan - For weeks, sightings of Taliban fighters were being reported all over the rugged mountains here. But when Staff Sgt. Patrick Brannan and his team of scouts drove into a nearby village to investigate a complaint of a beating, they had no idea that they were stumbling into the biggest battle of their lives.

On May 3, joined by 10 local policemen and an interpreter, the scouts turned up at a kind of Taliban convention - of some 60 to 80 fighters - and were greeted by rockets and gunfire. The sergeant called for reinforcements and was told to keep the Taliban engaged until they arrived. "I've only got six men," he remembers saying.

For the next two and a half hours, he and his small squad, who had a year of experience in Iraq, cut off a Taliban escape. Nearly 40 Taliban and one Afghan policeman were killed.

"It's not supposed to be like that here," said Capt. Mike Adamski, a battalion intelligence officer. "It's the hardest fight I saw, even after Iraq."

During the last six months, American and Afghan officials have predicted the collapse of the Taliban, the hard-line Islamists thrown out of power by American forces in 2001, citing their failure to disrupt the presidential election last October and a lack of activity last winter.

But the intensity of the fighting here in Zabul Province, and in parts of adjoining Kandahar and Uruzgan Provinces - roughly 100 square miles of mountain valleys

in all - reveals the Taliban to be still a vibrant fighting force supplied with money, men and weapons.

With a ready source of men, and apparently plentiful weapons, the Taliban may not be able to hold ground, but they can continue their insurgency indefinitely, attacking the fledgling Afghan government, scaring away aid groups and leaving the province ungovernable, some Afghan and American officials say.

"There are three to four healthy cells, with 30 to 60 fighters in each; that's 120 to 240 people altogether," said Captain Adamski, estimating the total Taliban strength in the area, though accounts from local people indicated higher numbers. [Basic law of guerrilla warfare: The Imperial officers always underestimate the opposition. Corollary: Their troops pay the price.]

In the battle on May 3, the 60 to 80 Taliban fighters encountered by Sergeant Brannan and his scouts were well armed and well prepared, with weapons caches and foxholes dotting an orchard where the heaviest fighting took place. The Taliban fought to within 150 yards of American positions and later hit one of two armored Humvees with a volley of rocket-propelled grenades that set it on fire, Sergeant Brannan said. Specialist Joseph Leatham, in the turret, kept firing as the vehicle burned, allowing his comrades to get out alive.

When the first American helicopter arrived as reinforcement, it came under fire and was forced to veer away. "I had one magazine left," Sergeant Brannan said. "I had enough for another 15 to 20 minutes."

In all, the battle lasted seven hours. Ten Taliban fighters were captured, and five Afghan policemen and six American soldiers were wounded. The Afghan informer, who walked for three hours to see the American troops when he heard in late May that they were in Gazek Kula, said a local Taliban commander, Mullah Abdullah, had led the Taliban in the fight. The mullah escaped with his deputy, Sangaryar, by jumping in the river and floating downstream, the informer said.

After the battle, he said, the Taliban sent out word that local men should help bury the dead. Mullah Abdullah and his deputy were there as they buried 19 bodies, 14 of them representing the commander's entire fighting unit.

But news of the fight traveled fast, and dozens more fighters crossed from Pakistan to shore up the Taliban ranks, the informer said. Mullah Abdullah now had a new force of 40 men. Three other leading Taliban commanders in the province - Mullah Muhammad Alam, Mullah Ahmadullah and Mullah Hedayatullah - had more than 200 fighters between them, with more reserves in Pakistan, he said.

The informer said that he knew Mullah Abdullah well and that the mullah had been a guest in his house. But in late April the mullah and his men detained him, accusing him of spying for the Americans. They seized his satellite phone and rifle and threatened to kill him, but let him go because of shared tribal links.

Sgt. First Class Kyle Shuttlesworth, 45, a veteran soldier who is counting the days to retirement, said that the American forces here had tracked many men infiltrating from

Pakistan, but that since they crossed unarmed, the Americans had no cause to detain them. **"We are trying to work out where they get their weapons," he said.**

The villagers said the Taliban passed through every so often and demanded food. **"The Taliban come only for one night," Wali Muhammad, 33, a wheat trader, said. "They are not a security problem."**

"Twenty days ago there were 10 Taliban in this room," a former policeman, Abdul Matin, 40, told the Americans sitting on the floor over a glass of tea in his home.

They came in a group of 100, he said, and spread out around the village. They had satellite phones and plenty of money, offering one man \$2,000 to work as an informer. They were gone before dawn and have not been back since, Mr. Matin said.

"The people support the Taliban because they don't loot and they respect the women," he said. [And because whatever else they may be, they are not a foreign, invading, occupying army for the U.S. Empire.]

The American forces keep probing, hoping to lure the Taliban out of the craggy mountain passes. On a recent five-hour trek, Sergeant Shuttlesworth took his men, along with 10 local police officers, down the narrow river valley near here, trying once again to tempt the Taliban into revealing themselves.

"We are the bait," he told the local police chief. "Are you ready to fight?"

TROOP NEWS

Iraq Veterans Against The War

"The conditions the people are living under [in Iraq], conditions that don't seem to be changing: no jobs, no electricity, no clean water," said Sergeant Kelly Dougherty of Colorado Springs, who worked in a Military Police Unit.

"This is a war for empire. You want to support the troops? Demand that they be brought home from Afghanistan and Iraq, that they get the benefits they are entitled to."

**Iraq Veterans Against the War's
website (<http://www.ivaw.net/>)**

MORE:

“If You Really Want Iraqis To Have Democracy Let Them Run Their Own Affairs.”

Interview with Iraq Veterans Against the War Patrick Resta:



“When you break something in a store you don't sit there with crazy glue trying to piece it back together. And you most certainly don't run around with a bat breaking more things. What you do is apologize, write them a check, and get out before you do anymore damage.”

May 4, 2005 Written by Kevin Zeese, Democracyising.us

[Thanks to Phil G. who sent this in.]

The interview below is with Patrick Resta of Iraq Veterans against the War.

Patrick, who served as a combat medic in Iraq, is 26 years old and been married for five years. He grew up in central New Jersey and now lives in Philadelphia. He is a full time nursing student at the Community College of Philadelphia. His aunt and uncle were killed in the World Trade Center on September 11th and about three weeks later he was called to active duty as part of homeland security. He served for one year at Ft. Jackson, SC. Then when he began to get his life back to normal and less than one year

after leaving Ft. Jackson he found out that he was being deployed again, this time to Iraq.

Zeese: Why did you join the National Guard?

Resta: I joined the National Guard for assistance with school. My parents made it clear that they weren't in a position to help me with school so I began considering my options when I was about 16 years old. In New Jersey the National Guard pays for tuition, books, and fees to any state school. If you add on to that a few hundred dollars every month it sounded like a good deal to a 17 year old kid.

Zeese: Were you surprised when you were sent to Iraq?

Resta: I wasn't surprised at all that I was sent to Iraq. What did surprise me though was how my unit and myself were sent into combat unequipped and unprepared and it didn't seem to bother anyone.

I was hearing as early as October 2001 that Iraq would be invaded no matter what. Also interesting to me is the fact that some people have been to Iraq two and three times, yet you still have some people that haven't been there once.

Zeese: Where were you based in Iraq, what was your role there?

Resta: I served as a combat medic in a tank battalion. My job varied from day to day, but basically it was doing on of these three things: going on convoys to other camps to get supplies, going on patrols of towns or highways, or working in our three bed ER where we saw everything from the cold/flu to sprained ankles to gunshot wounds.

Zeese: What did you see in Iraq that convinced you that the U.S. should leave?

Resta: Pretty much everything I saw in Iraq convinced that US forces needed to leave.

The in your face hypocrisy of this occupation was the most disturbing thing for me. Being told I was risking my life to help the Iraqi people and then getting over there and being told the Pentagon had set policy so no Iraqi could be treated unless they were about to die.

The hypocrisy of the occupation was evident when I was told we were going to help rebuild Iraq and then watched as the only things being rebuilt were Saddam's military bases to prepare for a permanent US military presence.

Every reason this administration gave to justify our presence in Iraq was the exact opposite of what was going on.

While in the towns I would talk to Iraqis hoping to hear something that would make the sacrifices of my fellow soldiers worth it. What I found is that we are neither wanted nor welcome. The Iraqi people don't trust us and they don't want us there. Poll after poll has made that clear.

Zeese: The major argument for staying in Iraq is if the U.S. leaves there will be greater chaos. How do you see this -- is the U.S. minimizing the chaos in Iraq?

Resta: I always ask people to describe the situation now. Is it not chaos?

To me the definition of a civil war is when people from a country kill other people from that country.

That's what happening now in Iraq.

US troops are the problem, not the solution. We are reliving the Vietnam War now and it's sad. We're reliving it because the people in power didn't learn anything from that event. They were too busy dreaming up ways to dodge the draft.

Tank battalions will never rebuild power and water purification plants no matter how long they stay in Iraq.

Halliburton and Bechtel didn't build Iraq, so why are they rebuilding it?

If you really want Iraqis to have democracy let them run their own affairs.

When you break something in a store you don't sit there with crazy glue trying to piece it back together. And you most certainly don't run around with a bat breaking more things. What you do is apologize, write them a check, and get out before you do anymore damage.

Zeese: Did you get any sense when you were in Iraq that the U.S. is planning a long-term stay in the country or are we planning a brief stay until things calm down in the country?

Resta: If you go back and look you can see members of this administration talking about an invasion and long occupation of Iraq as long as a decade ago. As I said earlier I saw plenty of bases being built for a permanent US military presence. Things like barracks like you would see back here in the States. While I was in Iraq the Air Force opened up what was referred to as a "million dollar gym" at a base outside Baghdad. I never saw the receipts, but it sounds about right to me. Indoor and outdoor swimming pools. It was incredible to watch it happening and then hear the spin from the American press. You can even go to www.globalsecurity.org and find the specifics of the plan, including what units are going to Iraq for the next few years.

Zeese: Describe the purpose of Iraq Veterans Against the War, how many members you have, what some of your upcoming projects are.

Resta: Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW, www.ivaw.net) has a pretty simple platform. It's ending the occupation, making sure our government gives the veterans of this conflict the care that they are owed, and real aid for the people of Iraq.

We have about 300 members ranging from privates to colonels.

Some are still active duty, others are current members of the National Guard and Reserve, and some have just gotten out of the military.

Those of us that are comfortable speaking out do so often. We're working in a lot of other areas as well, like ending stop loss, counter recruiting, and trying to create a fair and honest conscientious objector process within the military.

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.

DO NOT FUCK WITH TROOPS CHILD CARE!

June 6, 2005
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

It's obvious the reader who wrote the letter "Child care not Army's job" [May 16] has never used the military child-care system, has never visited a military child-care facility and has probably never cared about the quality of life of any soldier under his command.

I have used both on- and off-post child care (both institutional and family style) and can say nothing but good things about the military system.

The only things I can say about the off-post system are bad: My 6-month-old daughter's collarbone was broken by a provider and we were not notified; my son was repeatedly hit by another boy in another facility when he was 1 year old and we were not notified; and an administrator was stealing from the staff and families at a third facility.

Defense Department child care is standardized, certified and inspected on a regular basis. I would use and trust something that adheres to specific task, condition and standard, and is checked, rather than something that isn't.

As soldiers, we're not paid enough to survive on the civilian economy. Even if we were paid enough, the civilian child-care facilities cannot absorb the additional burden of military dependents, especially infant age.

Finally, our personal income-tax structure and very national fabric are based on this same "socialistic" pricing structure; those who make more, pay more to support those who earn less.

With a working wife, I've always been at the top end of the scale and have always paid the most, and I have never objected to subsidizing the health and welfare of junior soldiers.

I want them to be able to work in garrison, in the field or in another country, without having to worry about their families.

I'm about to transfer to Fort Belvoir, Va., and my first concern is not what my job will be, or where I'll live, but whether or not I can get my kids into the day-care system on post. I think that says it all.

Lt. Col. C.J. Wallington
Fort Monmouth, N.J.

[How did he ever make Lt. Col? He makes sense and cares about his troops. In Rumsfeld's DoD, that's two strikes right there.]

MORE:

June 6, 2005
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

This is in response to the letter "Child care not Army's job."

Obviously, this reader does not have children, or as an officer, he had the luxury of being able to afford to have his wife stay home.

Many families are dual military; other soldiers don't make enough for their spouses to stay home. I have yet to encounter an off-post facility that can accommodate the long hours that soldiers put in. When you start your day at 5:30 a.m. and end around 6 p.m., an on-post center is the best fit.

As working parents, we depend on our child-care providers to be the next best thing to our being there. For some, being at work means a mom may be at war. It requires an extra sensitivity that the military centers are trained for.

You personally may not have a use for the center, but it's called taking care of soldiers.

Sgt. Shannon Croteau
Fort Drum, N.Y.

“I Am Sick And Tired Of Our Upper-Echelon Military Leaders Taking Credit For The Missions”

June 6, 2005
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

I just read the article [“Plate saved soldier’s life; he’d like to have it back”] in the May 9 issue about Spc. Anthony Dowden and the body armor that saved his life.

Why on Earth would this be given to Donald Rumsfeld?

Just because he is the defense secretary does not mean he has risked his life in Iraq. This young man deserves to have that armor plate back.

The Defense Department should present this plaque to Spc. Dowden in respect for his close call.

The Pentagon should also give the armor plate to Staff Sgt. Gary Frisbee, who also experienced the lifesaving value of the plate.

I am sick and tired of our upper-echelon military leaders taking credit for the missions that are done by the hardworking noncommissioned officers and other enlisted service members.

If it weren't for the enlisted force, there would be no military.

Melinda Gabriel
Fort Drum, N.Y.

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.

Command “Dishonor The Dead And The Living” “The Shameful Behavior Of Our Leadership”

June 6, 2005
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

I, too, like Meredith Fuchs [“Anonymous honor, May 9], can’t understand why the faces of the soldiers accompanying their fallen comrades home to their final rest should have been blacked out.

It is a petty move on the part of a civilian/military hierarchy to attempt to save face.

Forced to give up the photos they fought to hide, they’ve attempted to devalue them, like children giving up some thing reluctantly and churlishly defacing it before handing it over. They denied access to the photos to minimize the public’s awareness of the sacrifice that only a few Americans have been called upon to make.

In doing so, they dishonor the dead and the living: Standing by a fallen comrade — risking one’s life to retrieve a dead body, standing in respectful silence by the flag-draped coffin of a serviceman or woman who has given all there is to give — is the most admirable thing a soldier can do.

It is something that those of us who have never served feel an almost ineffable reverence for, and I apologize from the depths of my heart for the shameful behavior of our leadership.

Suzanne Cavilia
Glastonbury, Conn.

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 RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Iraqi Army Unit Mutinies:

“We Are Iraqis, Not Americans, We Don't Follow Orders From Americans”

06.04.05 (Reuters) & Aljazeera

An Iraqi army unit has been disbanded after it refused to attend a U.S. training course in Baghdad, former members of the unit said on Saturday.

The soldiers are part of a 90-strong force that calls itself the Defence Force of Rutba,

A former soldier in the force, Ahmed Dhahi, said the disagreement began two months ago when he said the US military first raised the idea of them attending a training course.

"They told us we had no right to refuse, they said the duty of soldiers was to obey orders, but we said: 'We are Iraqis, not Americans, we don't follow orders from Americans'," he said.

"We did not want the locals to think that we were working with the Americans and then threaten us."

"We refused to go because we were afraid that when we came back to Rutba we would be killed," Taha Allawi, a former member of the unit, said. Rutba is in the far west of Iraq, close to the border with Jordan.

He said the unit in question was believed to be a former Iraqi National Guard unit that was due to be integrated into the Iraqi army.

Its members had refused to attend the Kirkush camp where Iraqi officers run courses overseen by US advisers.

Dhahi said that once it became clear that the unit would not attend, the US military took away their weapons, uniforms and identification tags and dismissed the force.

Iraqi units have fled the frontline when ordered to fight anti-US fighters before, but this is believed to be the first case of soldiers refusing to attend training for fear of reprisals.

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

Assorted Resistance Action: More Fighting In Falluja

June 4 (Xinhuanet) & Aljazeera

In Falluja, west of Baghdad, an Iraqi soldier was killed and two were wounded in an attack.

Guerrillas shot dead an Iraqi car driver and trapped his car with explosives which detonated to wound two policemen on Saturday, witnesses said.

"Unidentified attackers opened fire at a car in Amil district, southwestern Baghdad, at about 7:45 a.m. (0345 GMT), killing the driver," a witness, Ahmed Ali told Xinhua.

He said that later the gunmen trapped the driver's car with explosives "which detonated when the police reach the scene, wounding two of them."

The identity of the victim was not immediately known, and the two policemen were evacuated to a nearby hospital, Ali added.

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed and one was wounded in an attack on a checkpoint in Balad, north of Baghdad, on Saturday.

Iraqis Delighted When Occupation Helicopters Go Down

The hard time given by the US warplanes to civilians make them cheer at the news of a helicopter crash or downing by resistance fire.

June 4, 2005 By Samir Haddad, (IslamOnline.net)

US Apache helicopters have become a nightmare for Iraqi farmers and villagers who had thousands of acres of their farmlands destroyed by the flash bombs poured on them almost every day.

"These damned Apaches daily fire their flash bombs, burning vast swathes of land," Abu Mohammad, who owns a farmland near the northern city of Mosul, told IslamOnline.net.

"These bombs remain glowing as they are fired from low altitude with date palms taking the brunt."

He said the fireballs, as Iraqis call them, have burnt and razed thousands of donums of malt and wheat in his Rabiea village.

American attack helicopters usually fired the flash bombs from low altitude, turning the night sky into morning in search for potential resistance fighters.

The bombs have also scorched thousands of date palms spreading along the riverbeds of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Some villagers see the Apache raids as some sort of punishment because the occupation troops repeatedly accused them of giving resistance fighters safe haven in their farmlands.

The deafening sound of the Apaches, which hover over the rooftops of Iraqi houses, has also deprived many Iraqis of a nice sleep since the start of the US occupation in April 2003.

These rooftops used to be the perfect place for Iraqis in summertime to escape the stifling heat and moisture at home. They are not any longer.

“My children are panicked by the disturbing sound of the Apaches and the Chinooks,” Abdel Salam, from southern Baghdad, told IOL.

“Every night I woke up to the sound of these warplanes, reckoning that a US tank had stormed my home,” added Munir Al-Hamdani.

The hard time given by the US warplanes to civilians make them cheer at the news of a helicopter crash or downing by resistance fire.

Up to 25 US helicopters and warplanes crashed or were brought down since the start of the US occupation of the oil rich country.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Pros & Cons Of Tripping In Basic Training

“From: soldier X, as in ex-acid head from long ago”

To: GI Special
Sent: June 04, 2005
Subject: Pros & Cons of tripping in basic training

So what is the down side of tripping on acid?

With age I would come to regard it as a waste of time, and risky to stroll through a dangerous world with my perceptions distorted.

Last time I dropped was Halloween 1980, and even then it was not my idea, just trying to impress the lady that gave it to me. Essentially acid seems to 'magnify where your head is at.' This can be a problem if any underlying mental instabilities are present.

It can also be entertaining if you have a good head on your shoulders, are in safe and pleasant surroundings, and have no appointments to keep for the next 48 hrs.

So why would somebody choose to drop acid in basic training?

Like many of life's choices, that one can be filed under the category "It seemed like a good idea at the time?"

BCT on acid ran the gamut from absurd to paranoid. Not really as complicated as you might think.

Always at least a platoon of guys around demonstrating the socially acceptable behavior at any given moment for you to copy. With absolute requirements of conversation limited to "yes Drill Sgt, no Drill Sgt, & no excuse Drill Sgt" the inability to carry on a lengthy and lucid conversation was no real handicap.

On the absurd side of things came silly hallucinations at inconvenient times. We had an unfortunate national guardsman from Tennessee in my BCT company who was what the Army calls "mental category four." In short, he was mildly mentally retarded. In addition, he had a speech impediment that had him pronounce D sounds as G sounds.

This guardsman was being chewed out in a formation on a muddy parade ground in the rain one afternoon when my partner in hallucinatory crime began giggling uncontrollably in formation. His giggles were contagious, and soon I was giggling as well, with no ability to stop.

Predictably, both soldier Y and myself were soon face down in the mud doing pushups along with the Tennessee Guardsman. During the next break I asked my buddy what was the source of the giggles that cost us both 100 muddy pushups? "Oh man, when that dude with the speech impediment was doing his pushups and counting off 'one grill sgt, two grill sgt' I saw Senior Drill Sgt Fontaine wearing a chef's hat."

Dilated pupils can be an advantage at times, particularly during any night time training. On certain days, myself and soldier Y had the best night vision in the company.

The Night Fire rifle qualification range was a lot of fun. Ooooh tracers! Far out!

The Escape & Evasion training after our improbable single day in the simulated POW camp was less entertaining. The scenario was 'partisans' would raid the camp giving us a 15 minute window of partisan control in which to escape before the camp guards regained control. We then had a few miles of woods to negotiate before coming out on the specified road where we would be free. This was essentially a night land navigation exercise without map and compass.

'Hostile' patrols identified by their white flashlights would try to recapture us, and if we failed to find the correct road for freedom we would also be recaptured.

I carefully noted the position of the moon and the direction of the freedom zone. Being scattered through the woods in three man groups pointed in the wrong direction was no impediment to my lunar based navigation. Many in my company fell into ponds, got lost in a swamp, or were recaptured by a 'hostile' patrol.

The hostile patrols were made up of pairs of trainees from other companies who had completed the POW camp training a week ahead of our cycle. Even my limited math abilities recognized that there were three of us and two of them. When we began to encounter trip wires of barbed wire while running through the woods, I picked up a stout branch to hold in front of me as I ran to snag any hidden wires.

When a pair of 'hostiles' popped up from behind some trees armed with nothing more than a white flashlight and told us we were captured, I smacked the leader on his helmet with my branch with enough vigor to convince them that we were not captured after all. Myself and the other two members of my team were the first to make it to the designated free zone road. This was in part due to my chemically induced exceptional night vision.

Ah, the indiscretions of youth. To this day, whenever I hear anything from the Wings Band On The Run Album on the radio, it reminds me of tripping on acid at 91C school at Ft. Sam Houston.

OCCUPATION REPORT

How 'Bout Elvis; Anybody Seen Him?

04 June 2005 By Luke Baker in Baghdad, REUTERS

"I can say categorically that I am not aware of anybody having a definite sighting of Zarqawi at any particular place at any particular time," the senior US military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told a group of reporters at a briefing in Baghdad. "I can't tell you that we saw him on March 27, or that we saw him in Ramadi hospital ...

"There are a lot of Zarqawi sightings going on and it's a case of which one do you roll to and why is it that that tip is more valuable than the last one," he said, suggesting that many tips on Zarqawi's whereabouts prove to be non-starters.

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